Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Billy Joe Evans

Evans, Billy Joe

Alternative Names: Evans, Billy Joe;

Life Dates: August 18, 1942-

Place of Birth: Macon, Georgia

Residence: Ann Arbor, MI (from ? to ?)

Occupations: Chemist; Chemistry Professor

Biographical Note

Chemist and chemistry professor Billy Joe Evans was born on August 18, 1942 in Macon, Georgia. Evans grew up amidst the racism and segregation policies of the south during the 1950s. Evans’ father, Will Evans, worked part-time as a coordinator for the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and went to Washington, D.C. to confer and strategize with founder and President A. Philip Randolph about how labor issues facing African American in Macon. In 1959, he graduated from Ballard High School, the largest high school in Macon, Georgia. Following graduation, Evans entered Morehouse College and he received his B.S. degree in chemistry in 1963. Evans went on to pursue graduate studies at the University of Chicago. The State of Georgia paid the tuition difference between the University of Georgia and the University of Chicago, and in 1968 Evans earned his Ph.D. degree in chemistry. His Ph.D. thesis was entitled: “Order-disorder phenomena and hyperfine interactions in Spinel ferrites.”

Evans accepted a position on the faculty of the University of Michigan in 1970 after performing some post-doctoral work at the University of Manitoba and teaching at Howard University. He has held research positions at the
University of Marburg, the Naval Research Institute, and the Ford Motor Company. Evans initially started his work at the University of Michigan as an assistant professor of geology and mineralogy, but he joined the chemistry department as an associate professor in 1974. Evans has continued to pursue his research in solid state chemistry. His primary interests include the synthesis and characterization of crystal/chemical structures properties that directly affect the quality of human environments. His contributions to the field were recognized by the University of Michigan who promoted him to full professor in 1986. Evans is the principal or co-author of more than 90 scientific publications. Evans is the principal or co-author of more than 90 scientific publications. He has been invited to give lectures at the National Conferences on Magnetism and Magnetic Materials, the International Conference on Magnetism, Gordon Conferences and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Advanced Study Institute. Evans was named professor emeritus of the University of Michigan in 2007.

Evans has been the recipient of many honors and prizes for his dedication to the improvement of the quality and accessibility of higher education for all students and for his work in the sciences. In 1991, he was honored with the Statewide Distinguished Faculty Award. He received the 1997 American Chemical Society Camille and Henry Dreyfus Award for Encouraging Disadvantaged Students in Careers in the Chemical Sciences. Evans’ professional awards include the 1995 Manufacturing Chemists Association Catalysts Award, the 1997 American Chemical Society Camille and Henry Dreyfus Award for Encouraging Disadvantaged Students in Careers in the Chemical Sciences. The following year Evans was named the winner of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering by the National Science Foundation.

Billy Joe Evans was interviewed by 'The HistoryMakers' on 10/22/2012.

**Related Entries**

Rawls, Martha [GRANDCHILDOF]
Maternal Grandmother

Evans, Jesse Niles [SIBLINGOF]
Brother

Evans, Carole Elizabeth [PARENTOF]
Daughter

Niles, Jesse [PARENTOF]
Son

Evans, Martha [SIBLINGOF]
Sister
Evans, Will [CHILDOf]
Father

Evans, Allan [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Evans, Johnathan [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Evans, Olga [SIBLINGOf]
Sister

Evans, Jesse [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Evans, Larry [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Evans, Terry [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Evans, William Joseph [PARENTOf]
Son

Evans, Mildred Owens [CHILDOf]
Mother

Evans, Johnathan [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

George Washington Carver Elementary [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1955-06]

Ballard Hudson High School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1959-06]

Morehouse College [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1963-06]

B.S.

University of California, Berkeley [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Macalester College [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1962]

University of Chicago [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1968-06]
M.S./Phil

[STUDENT OF]
[from ? to ?]

National Bureau of Standards (NBS) [EMPLOYEE OF]
[from 1970-05 to 1976-06]

Consultant

University of Chicago [EMPLOYEE OF]
[from 1968-06 to 1968-09]

Research Associate

Atlanta University [EMPLOYEE OF]
[from 1988-06 to 1989-06]

Department Chair and Professor

Morehouse College [EMPLOYEE OF]
[from 1998-06 to 1999-06]

Chair and Professor

University of Michigan [EMPLOYEE OF]
[from 1970-07 to 2003-05]

Professor, Solid State Inorganic Chemistry

University of Manitoba [EMPLOYEE OF]
[from 1968-09 to 1969-08]

Postdoctoral Fellow

Howard University [EMPLOYEE OF]
[from 1969-09 to 1970-06]

Assistant Professor, Chemistry

Pi Kappa Phi [MEMBER OF]
Member

Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society [MEMBER OF]
Member

Phi Beta Kappa Society [MEMBER OF]
Member

American Chemical Society (ACS) [MEMBER OF]
Member

American Physical Society (APS) [MEMBER OF]