

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable James B. Lewis

PERSON

Lewis, James B. (James Beliven), 1947-

Alternative Names: The Honorable James B. Lewis;

Life Dates: November 30, 1947-

Place of Birth: Roswell, New Mexico, Chaves

Residence: Albuquerque, NM

Occupations: State Treasurer

Biographical Note

State government official James B. Lewis was born on November 30, 1947 in Roswell, New Mexico, to Dorris Ward and William Reagor. Lewis graduated in 1966 from Gallup High School in Gallup, New Mexico and attended Bishop College in Dallas, Texas, where he earned his B.S. degree in education. After serving as a military policeman, and as an administrator at the University of Albuquerque, he attended the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque, where he earned his M.A. degree in public administration in 1977. Lewis went on to earn his A.S. degree in business administration from the National College of Business in 1980.

Lewis worked as a white collar crime investigator in the Bernalillo County District Attorney's Office before being elected Bernalillo County Treasurer in 1982. He was then appointed as State Treasurer of New Mexico in 1985 after the incumbent Treasurer resigned. Lewis then won the election for the state treasurer position in 1986. In 1991, Lewis was appointed Chief of Staff for Governor Bruce King. Lewis held state level administrative positions in the New Mexico State Land Office and the New Mexico State Corporation Commission, before becoming City Administrator for Rio Rancho, New Mexico in 1996. Lewis became Assistant Secretary of Energy in 1999 for the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity. He ran unsuccessfully for Mayor of Albuquerque in 2001, but was offered the position of chief operating officer for the City. Lewis would go on to serve as the chief administrative officer for Albuquerque in 2004, before winning re-election as New Mexico State Treasurer. Lewis instituted various business practices while in office, serving two consecutive terms.

Lewis received numerous awards for his public service at the city, county, state, and federal levels. He was inducted into the New Mexico African American Hall of Fame, the NAACP Albuquerque Chapter Hall of Fame, and received the Legion of Honor

Award from the Kiwanis Club of Albuquerque in 2005. He was named one of New Mexico's 100 Influential Power Brokers in 2008, and received the Jesse M. Unruh Award in 2011, the highest honor awarded by the National Association of State Treasurers. Lewis was a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and served as president of the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers, and Treasurers, as well as the National Association of State Treasurers.

Lewis is a widower, and has four children.

James B. Lewis was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 25, 2015.

Related Entries

University of New Mexico [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Masters - Public Administration

National American University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

BS & AA

Bishop College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

BS

Gallup High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Diploma

Lincoln Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

John Marshall Elementary [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Northwestern University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

New Mexico State Personnel Office [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1973 to 1974]

Public Services Careers Program Coordinator

University of Albuquerque [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1974 to 1977]

Administrator/Educator

Bernalillo County District Attorney's Office, Second Judicial District [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1977 to 1983]

Administrator/Investigator

Bernalillo County New Mexico [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1983 to 1985]

County Treasurer

State of New Mexico [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1985 to 1990]

State Treasurer

Office of New Mexico Governor Bruce King [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1990 to 1994]

Chief of Staff

State of New Mexico Corporation Commission [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1995 to 1996]

Chief Clerk/CEO

State of New Mexico Land Office [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1995 to 1995]

Director of Oil, Gas and Minerals Division

City of Rio Rancho [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1996 to 1999]

City Administrator

U.S. Department of Energy [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1999 to 2001]

Director/Assistant Secretary

City of Albuquerque [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2001 to 2004]

Chief Operating Officer

City of Albuquerque [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2004 to 2005]

Chief Administrative Officer

State of New Mexico [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2006 to 2014]

State Treasurer

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Life Member

New Mexico African American Chamber of Commerce [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Member

State Board of Finance [MEMBEROf]

[from 1985 to 2014]

Board Member

New Mexico Educational Retirement Board [MEMBEROf]

[from 1985 to 2014]

Board Member

New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority [MEMBEROf]

[from 1985 to 2014]

Board Member

New Mexico Public Employees Retirement Association [MEMBEROf]

[from 1985 to 2014]

Board Member

New Mexico Educational Assistance Foundation [MEMBEROf]

[from 1989 to 2014]

Board Member

State Treasurer's Investment Committee [MEMBEROf]

[from 2006 to 2014]

President

Martin Luther King Commission [MEMBEROf]

[from 2006 to 2014]

Board Member

New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority [MEMBEROf]

[from 2006 to 2014]

Board Member

Western State Treasurers Association [MEMBEROf]

[from 2007 to 2009]

President

New Mexico Investments and Pensions Oversight Committee [MEMBEROf]

[from 2007 to 2008]

Advisory Member

Renewable Energy Transmission Authority [MEMBEROf]

[from 2007 to 2014]

Member

Governor's Task Force on Ethics and Reform [MEMBEROf]

[from 2007 to 2008]

Member

National Association of State Treasurers [MEMBEROF]
[from 2010 to 2013]

President and Senior Vice President

National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers and Treasurers [MEMBEROF]
[from 2013 to ?]

President