

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Roger L. Gregory

PERSON

Gregory, Roger

**Alternative Names:** The Honorable Roger L. Gregory;

**Life Dates:** July 17, 1953-

**Place of Birth:** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

**Residence:** Midlothain, VA

**Work:** Richmond, VA

**Occupations:** Judge

## Biographical Note

Judge Roger L. Gregory was born on July 17, 1953 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but raised in Petersburg, Virginia. He graduated from Petersburg High School in 1971, and enrolled at Virginia State University, where

he graduated summa cum laude in 1975, and earned his J.D. degree from the University of Michigan Law School in 1978.

In 1978, Gregory became the first African American attorney at the law firm of Butzel, Long, Gust, Klein & Van Zile in Detroit. In 1980, he joined the Richmond law firm of Hunton & Williams LLP. Gregory was nominated by President Bill Clinton to be the first African American judge on the Richmond-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, but the Senate refused to hold Gregory's confirmation hearing. He was then nominated by President George W. Bush and confirmed in 2001. In 2014, he joined the majority opinion on *Bostic v. Schaefer*, which overturned Virginia's ban on same-sex marriage. Also that year, Gregory authored the court's unanimous opinion on *King v. Burwell*, which upheld tax subsidies for health insurance purchased on federal exchanges under the Affordable Care Act. In 2016, Gregory became the first African American chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

Gregory has served on numerous boards, including: Richmond Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Richmond Arts Council, Virginia State University Foundation, Richmond Bar Association, and Central Virginia Legal Aid Society. He served as president of the Friends Association for Children and the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia. Gregory was chairman of the Industrial Development Authority of Richmond and the executive committee of Richmond Renaissance. Gregory also sat on the board of ChildFund International and served on the board of the Virginia Historical Society. He serves as trustee emeritus on the Board of Trustees at the University of Richmond. He serves on the Junior Board of Directors of the John Marshall Foundation. He is a member of the American Bar Association and was keynote speaker for the opening assembly at the 2005 ABA annual meeting in Chicago. He is a member of the National Bar Association and the Old Dominion

Bar Association of which Gregory is a past president. He is a member of the State Bar of Michigan and Virginia.

He was the recipient of many awards, including the 1997 National Conference of Christians and Jews Humanitarian Award. He was featured in Ebony magazine as one of the “56 Most Intriguing Blacks of 2001.” In 2002, he received the Pioneer Visionary Award from the National Black Student Leadership Development Conference. In 2003, Judge Gregory received the Dominion Resources Strong Men and Women: Excellence in Leadership Award. Gregory was also awarded the Old Dominion Bar Association’s L. Douglas Wilder Vanguard Award. He was also awarded the National Bar Association’s Gertrude E. Rush and Equal Justice Awards, and the Thurgood Marshall Award of Excellence. In 2015, he received the Washington Bar Association’s Charles Hamilton Houston Merit Medallion.

Roger L. Gregory was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on December 9, 2016.

## **Related Entries**

**Virginia Avenue Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Peabody High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Petersburg High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**high school diploma**

**Virginia State University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**University of Michigan Law School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**J.D.**

**Butzel, Long, Gust, Klein & Van Zile** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1978 to 1980]

**Associate Attorney**

**Hunton & Williams** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1980 to 1982]

**Associate Attorney**

**Wilder, Gregory & Associates** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1982 to 2001]

**Managing Partner**

**United States Court of Appeals** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 2001 to ?]

**Chief Judge**

**Richmond Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce**  
[MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Richfood Holdings, Inc.** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Virginia State University Foundation** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Friends Association for Children** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**President**

**Black History Museum and Cultural Center of**

**Virginia** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**President**

**Industrial Development Authority of Richmond**

[MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Chairman**