

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with James M. Blount

PERSON

Blount, James, 1943-

Alternative Names: James M. Blount;

Life Dates: June 5, 1943-

Place of Birth: Newport News, Virginia, USA

Residence: Rochester, NY

Occupations: Newspaper Publisher

Biographical Note

Magazine publisher James M. Blount was born on June 5, 1943 in Newport News, Virginia to Helen Wilson Blount and Walter L. Blount, Sr. Blount graduated from Isle of Wight County Training School in 1961; and received his B.S. degree in industrial management in 1965 at Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia. Blount also took graduate courses in business administration at the University of Scranton in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

From 1966 to 1970, Blount worked as a marketing and proposal developer in the federal systems division of IBM in Owego, New York. In 1970, Blount and his wife, Carolyne S. Blount, relocated to Rochester, New York, where he worked as a sales representative in the office products division of IBM.

Blount is a military veteran, having served in the U.S. Navy Reserve from September 1965 to August 1971, including active duty aboard the USS Claude V. Ricketts DDG-5, a guided missile destroyer, from February 1967 through October 1968. He was involved in the 1967 Middle East war between Israel and the Arab nations.

In 1972, the Blounts became the sole proprietors of About...Time magazine, one of the oldest African American publications in the country. Blount left IBM in 1973, and became the president and publisher of About...Time magazine the following year. Under Blount's leadership, About...Time Magazine published interviews with such figures as Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, National Security Advisor Colin Powell, Secretary of the Army Clifford Alexander, Civil Rights Leaders Leon Sullivan and Dorothy I. Height, U.S. Solicitor General Wade McCree, Children's Defense Fund President Marian Wright Edelman, and Dance Theatre of Harlem founder Arthur Mitchell. In 1984, About...Time published a six-part history series called "Rochester

Roots/Routes.” Other notable pieces published under Blount’s tenure include “The Last Mile of a 400-Year Journey,” “Katrina Echoes: Storm Season Aftermath is Hard to Erase,” and “Strange Fruit: Jena Six and the Quest for American Justice.”

Blount served on the board of education for the Rush Henrietta School District from 1981 to 1987. He also served on the board of directors for the Arts Council of Rochester, Rochester Business Opportunities Corporation, Industrial Management Council, and the Otetiana Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Blount received many awards for his work in the community of Rochester including a Certificate of Appreciation from the Advertising Council of Rochester; the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Service Award from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School; Urban League of Rochester, NY’s Dr. Charles T. Lunsford Lifetime Achievement Award; Harriet Tubman Award, presented by the New York State Governor’s Office; Pioneer Award, presented by the City of Rochester Black Heritage Committee; and U.S. Postal Service Black History Committee Award.

He is a news analyst on Fox Sports radio AM1280 Brown and Allen Show, and was a frequent guest providing public affairs commentary on WXXI public radio’s 1370 Connection show hosted by the late Bob Smith.

Blount and his wife, Carolyne S. Blount, have three children: James Ural, Christina, and Cheryl.

James M. Blount was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 19, 2018.

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