

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ed Wesley

PERSON

Wesley, Edward, 1951-

Alternative Names: Ed Wesley;

Life Dates: January 9, 1951-

Place of Birth: Bolivar County, Mississippi, USA

Residence: Anchorage, AK

Work: Anchorage, AK

Occupations: Community Activist

Biographical Note

Community activist Ed Wesley was born on January 9, 1951 in Bolivar County, Mississippi. He graduated from Pace Elementary in 1965 and then his family moved to Chicago, Illinois where he attend Forestville High school.

In 1972, he was drafted into the United States Army stationed at Fort Greely, Alaska as a military police officer. He attained the rank of Specialist 4 and his general equivalency diploma (GED) from the state of Illinois, and was honored twice as Ft Greely's post soldier of the month. He separated from the military in 1974 with an honorable discharge.

From 1974 to 1977, he worked as security officer on the Trans Alaska Pipeline. In 1977, attended University of Alaska at Anchorage. Wesley's career and work experience includes forty years in several industries in Alaska to include real estate and insurance brokers and tax advisor. He retired in 2015.

Wesley was credited for his leadership as president of the Anchorage NAACP and his role in the creation of the historic thirteen-point, two-page agreement with the Anchorage Police Department on the use of deadly force and related issues against the citizens of the Municipality of Anchorage in 1981. In 1988, he was also credited with helping presidential candidate Jesse Jackson win the Alaska Democratic Presidential Caucus, subsequently served as whip for the Alaska Jesse Jackson delegation at the Democratic convention in Atlanta, Ga. In 2016, Wesley was elected as national committeeman for the Alaska Democratic Party and ran an unsuccessful bid as a Democratic candidate for district J of the Alaska State Senate.

An active community member, Wesley has served on the boards of numerous organizations such as treasurer for the Anchorage Council of PTAs, Deacon of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, Worshipful Master of Mt McKinley Lodge #2 and Grand Jr Warden of Prince Hall Masons State of Alaska and its' jurisdiction, chairman of the 3rd great Alaska high school basketball classic tournament, Municipality of Anchorage Zoning Board of Examiners and Appeals, vice president, Anchorage Board of Realtors, president of Alaska Black Leadership Conference, president of the African American Business Council, president of the African American Historical Society (sponsor of Juneteenth) and Board of Trustees for the State of Alaska Personnel Retirement System. A veteran's advocate for many years, Wesley has served on the Veterans Volunteer Committee at the Alaska Veterans Administration Hospital. He is past commander of American Legion Post 34, where he sponsored activities for Veterans. He has raised funds for local Disabled Veterans to attend the National Wheel Chair Games. He has worked towards and championed youth activities continually in Anchorage. Wesley has been honored by the Alaska State Legislature as a nation builder for his community service and the National Association of Black State Legislators for his community service.

Wesley and his wife Frances, have five adult children, Wendell, Cynthia, Chairita, Kiala and Tamika.

Ed Wesley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on May 19, 2018.

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