

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Gerald B. Smith

PERSON

Smith, Gerald B., 1950-

Alternative Names: Gerald B. Smith;

Life Dates: September 28, 1950-

Place of Birth: Houston, Texas, USA

Residence: Houston, TX

Work: Houston, TX

Occupations: Investment Banker

Biographical Note

Investment banker Gerald B. Smith was born on September 28, 1950 in Houston, Texas. He graduated from Jack Yates High School in Houston, Texas in 1968, and received his B.B.A. degree from Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas in 1972.

After graduation, Smith became an assistant buyer for men's sportswear at Foley's department store. In 1974, Smith was hired at the investment banking firm of Hibbard, O'Conner & Weeks in Houston, Texas, where he completed the check training program and worked as a trader. In 1979, Smith moved to New York and joined Dillon, Read & Co. as the first African American hired by the firm, where he worked in the fixed income sector, trading and advising in portfolio management. In 1980, Smith became a founding member of the New York Futures Exchange (NYFE), which was established for the trading of futures contracts of financial products. Smith later worked for the Westcap Corporation, where he was responsible for national sales and trading with institutional investors. He also served as senior vice president and director of fixed income securities for Underwood Neuhaus & Co. In 1990, Smith co-founded Smith Graham & Co. Investment Advisors, L.P. in Houston, Texas, along with Ladell Graham.

Smith served as a trustee of various funds of The Charles Schwab Family of Funds and became director of Cooper Industries. He was also a director of Northern Border Partners, L.P. as well as the lead independent director and presiding non-management director of Cooper Industries PLC. From 2009 to 2013, Smith served as director of ONEOK, Inc.; and, from 2011 to 2016, Smith served on the board of The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas – Houston Branch. In 2012, he became director of New York

Life Insurance Co. and independent director of Eaton Corporation PLC. He was also chairman of the Texas Southern University Foundation.

In 2007, Black Enterprise magazine named Smith one of the 50 Most Powerful African Americans on Wall Street. In 2012, he received an honorary doctorate degree from Texas Southern University. Smith and his wife, Anita were recognized as Excellence in Education Honorees at the Annual United Negro College Fund's Gala in 2015, and are both founding donors of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. He was also inducted into the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame and received the United Way Volunteer of the Year Award, the National Black MBA Association's Leadership Empowerment Award, YMCA Annual Tribute to Leadership Award, and the Community Partner's "Father of the Year" Award. In 2015, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from The Greater Houston Black Chamber of Commerce and The National Economic Empowerment & Entrepreneurship Award from The 100 Black Men Association of America.

Gerald B. Smith was interviewed The HistoryMakers on April 26, 2019.

Related Entries

Dodson Elementary [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

James D. Ryan Middle School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Jack Yates High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Texas Southern University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Foley's Department Store [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1972 to 1974]

Assistant Buyer for Men's Sportswear

Hibbard, O'Connor & Weeks [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1974 to 1979]

Dillon Read and Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1979 to ?]

Investment Banker

Westcap Corporation [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Underwood Neuhaus and Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Senior vice president and director of fixed income securities

Smith Graham & Co. Investment Advisors, L.P. [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1990 to ?]

Founder

New York Futures Exchange [MEMBEROf]
[from 1980 to ?]

Founding Member

Cooper Industries [MEMBEROf]
[from 2000 to 2012]

Director

Northern Border Partners, L.P. [MEMBEROf]
[from 2004 to 2013]

Director

ONEOK, Inc. [MEMBEROf]
[from 2009 to 2013]

Director

The Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas - Houston Branch [MEMBEROf]
[from 2011 to 2016]

Board Member

New York Life Insurance Company [MEMBEROf]
[from 2012 to ?]

Director

Eaton Corporation [MEMBEROf]
[from 2012 to ?]

Independent Director