

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ann Fudge

PERSON

Fudge, Ann, 1951-

Alternative Names: Ann Fudge;

Life Dates: April 23, 1951-

Place of Birth: Washington, District of Columbia, USA

Residence: Chestnut Hill, MA

Work: MA

Occupations: Chief Executive Officer

Biographical Note

Chief executive officer Ann M. Fudge was born on April 23, 1951, in Washington, D.C., to Malcolm and Bettye Lewis Brown. In 1973, she graduated from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts with her B.A. degree in management. She earned her M.B.A. degree from Harvard Business School in 1977.

After graduating from Simmons College, Fudge was hired in the human resources department of General Electric. She joined General Mills in Minnesota as a marketing assistant after she earned her M.B.A. degree, and was part of the marketing team around Honey Nut Cheerios cereal. In 1983, she was promoted to marketing director at General Mills; and, in 1986, Fudge accepted a position with Kraft Foods. Then, in 1994, Kraft Foods appointed Fudge the president of the Maxwell House coffee brand, making her the first African American woman to head a major corporate division. As president, she went on to run a successful campaign to rebrand Maxwell House. In 2001, one year after becoming president of Kraft's Beverages, Desserts, and Post division, Fudge retired from the company. After a two-year sabbatical, during which she deepened her involvement with the Boys and Girls Club of America, Fudge returned to the corporate world as the chairman and C.E.O. of Young & Rubicam Brands in 2003 as the head of its advertising network. She remained in this role until 2007.

Throughout her career, Fudge served on several organization's board of directors. She was a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation, museum council member of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, director of Novartis, chair of the advisory panel of the Gates Foundation, vice-chairman of Unilever, chair of the board

of trustees of WGBH Public Media, and a director of Northrup Grumman. In 2008, Fudge joined President Barack Obama's presidential campaign finance committee; and, in 2010, she became a member of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. In 2011, she was inducted into the National Association of Corporate Directors Hall of Fame. Fudge has received achievement awards from Ebony, the Executive Leadership Council, and the Harvard Alumni Association. She was also inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2019.

Fudge and her husband, Richard Fudge, Sr., live in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. They have two sons and five grandchildren.

Ann M. Fudge was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on June 18, 2019.

Related Entries

Harvard Business School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.B.A.

Simmons College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.A.

Young & Rubicam [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 200305 to 200701]

Chairman & CEO

General Foods (Kraft Foods) [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 198608 to 1989]

Associate Director of Strategic Planning

General Mills [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 197709 to 197808]

Marketing Assistant

General Electric [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 197310 to 197508]

Manpower Specialist

General Mills [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1978 to 1980]

Assistant Product Manager

General Mills [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1980 to 1983]

Product Manager

General Mills [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1983 to 198608]

Marketing Director

General Foods (Kraft Foods) [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1989 to 1993]

Vice President of Marketing and Development

General Foods (Kraft Foods) [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1993 to 1994]

Vice President

Kraft Foods, Maxwell House Coffee [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1994 to 2000]

President

Kraft Foods; Beverages, Desserts and Post Division [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2000 to 2001]

President

Liz Claiborne [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Rockefeller Foundation [MEMBEROF]
[from 2006 to ?]

Trustee

President Obama Campaign Finance Committee [MEMBEROF]
[from 2008 to 2008]

Committee Member

Novartis International A.G. [MEMBEROF]
[from 200802 to ?]

Board of Directors

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation [MEMBEROF]
[from 200809 to 201905]

Board of Directors

Unilever [MEMBEROF]
[from 200905 to 2018]

Board of Directors

National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform [MEMBEROF]
[from 2010 to ?]

Commission Member

WGBH Public Media [MEMBEROF]
[from 201503 to ?]

Trustee

Northrop Grumman Corporation [MEMBEROF]
[from 201603 to ?]

Board of Directors

General Electric [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors