

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with John W. Bluford III

PERSON

Bluford, John Wesley, 1949-

Alternative Names: John W. Bluford III;

Life Dates: May 1, 1949-

Place of Birth: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Residence: Lee's Summit, MO

Work: Lee's Summit, MO

Occupations: Chief Executive Officer; ; ;

Biographical Note

Healthcare executive and healthcare education organization founder John W. Bluford III was born on May 1, 1949, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He attended public schools in Philadelphia and in Columbia, South Carolina, graduating from Columbia's C.A. Johnson High School. Bluford received his B.A. degree in biology in 1971 from Fisk University and his M.B.A. degree in management in 1975 from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. In 1981, he attended the Executive Program in Health System Management at Harvard University.

In 1972, Bluford worked as an epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, and in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1973, he became an administrative resident at Cook County Hospital, in Chicago, Illinois, where he served as evening and weekend administrator from 1974 to 1977. That year, he became an administrator at the Pilot City Health Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Bluford became associate administrator of Minneapolis' Hennepin County Medical Center in 1982. The following year, he founded the Metropolitan Health Plan, a Medicaid HMO, in Minneapolis. He became deputy administrator of Hennepin County Medical Center in 1988 and its CEO in 1993. Bluford became executive director of Truman Medical Centers, in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1999, and its president and CEO in 2002. In 2012, he founded the Bluford Healthcare Leadership Institute in Kansas City, Missouri. Bluford retired as CEO of Truman Medical Centers in 2014.

Bluford has served as chair of the board of the American Hospital Association, the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (later America's Essential Hospitals), the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, and the Missouri Hospital

Association. He also has served on the boards of Fisk University, Morehouse School of Medicine, North Carolina A&T University, Western Governors University, H&R Block Bank, DeCare International, Delta Dental, Joint Commission Resources, Missouri Health Connection, and Summit Bank. Bluford has served as chair of the Centene Corporation's National Hospital Operating Committee and of Walgreens's Health Systems Information Advisory Board. He is a life fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and a member of Sigma Pi Phi and Omega Psi Phi.

Bluford has been the recipient of the American Hospital Association Award of Honor, the National Center for Healthcare Leadership's Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award, Modern Healthcare's CEO/IT Achievement Award, Northwestern University's Laura G. Jackson Award, Kansas City's Nonprofit Professional of the Year Award, the Missouri Hospital Association's Distinguished Service Award and Visionary Leadership Award, the Urban League Difference Maker Award, the NAACP Special Achievement Award, the National Minority Quality Forum Booker T. Washington Award, the Kellogg School of Management Black Management Association Alumni of the Year award, and the Greater Kansas City Labor Management Cooperative Leadership Award. He also was inducted into the Richland One (Columbia, South Carolina, School District) Hall of Fame and has been recognized in Modern Healthcare's 100 Most Influential List.

Bluford and his wife, Joanne, live in Lee's Summit, Missouri. They have three children, John, Jennifer, and Bruce.

John W. Bluford III was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on November 13, 2021.

Related Entries

C. A. Johnson High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Fisk University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

BA

Northwestern University, Kellogg School of Business [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

MBA

Harvard University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Centers for Disease Control [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1972 to 1973]

Epidemiologist

Cook County Hospital [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1973 to 1977]

Administrative Resident, Evening/Weekend Administrator

Pilot City Health Center [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1975 to 1982]

Administrator

Hennepin County Medical Center [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1982 to ?]

Associate Administrator, Deputy Administrator, CEO

Metropolitan Health Plan [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1983 to ?]

Founder

Truman Medical Centers [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1999 to 2014]

Executive Director, President and CEO

Bluford Healthcare Leadership Institute [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2013 to ?]

Founder

Missouri Hospital Association [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Chair

Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Chair

National Association of Public Hospitals [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Chair

American Hospital Association [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Chair, Member

American College of Healthcare Executives [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Life Fellow

Centene Corporation's National Hospital Operating Committee [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Chair

Delta Dental Foundation [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Vice Chair

Walgreens' Health Systems Innovation Advisory Board [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Chair

Joint Commission Resources [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Missouri Health Connection [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Chair

Summit Bank [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Stowers Resource Management, Inc. [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Fisk University [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Morehouse School of Medicine [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Western Governors University [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Audit Committee Member

H&R Block Bank [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

DeCare International [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

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