

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Kathryn Chenault

PERSON

Chenault, Kathryn Annette, 1955-

Alternative Names: Kathryn Chenault;

Life Dates: May 25, 1955-

Place of Birth: Washington, District of Columbia, USA

Residence: New York, New York

Occupations: Civic Leader

Biographical Note

Foundation executive and lawyer Kathryn Chenault was born on May 25, 1955 in Washington, D.C. to Elaine Marie Bridgette Hancock and Charles Cassell. She received her B.A. degree in political science in 1977 from Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts and her J.D. degree in 1980 from New York University School of Law in New York City.

After graduating from New York University School of Law in 1980, Chenault was hired as an associate attorney at Donovan, Leisure, Newton & Irvine in New York City. She then joined the United Negro College Fund in 1984, where she went on to serve as vice president of national, corporate, and foundation support programs.

Chenault has served on numerous boards. Her board service includes the International Council of The Museum of Modern Art, Tufts University, New York University School of Law, the Pratt Institute, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Harlem Children's Zone, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Ethical Culture Fieldston School, the Bard College Center for Curatorial Studies, the National Parks Foundation, the Kids of NYU Medical Foundation, the Hospital for Special Surgery, the Municipal Arts Society, the Harlem Partnership for Children, and the Gracie Mansion Conservancy Board of Advisors. She also has been active with the Abyssinian Development Corporation. Chenault established the Kathryn Cassell Chenault Scholarship Fund at Tufts University in 2010. In 2016, she served as a member of the design committee for the Obama Presidential Library. In 2020, Chenault and her husband, Ken Chenault, established the Kathryn and Kenneth Chenault Scholarship at the Pratt Institute.

Chenault is the recipient of several honors and awards. She was an honoree at the 2006 Black Alumni of Pratt "Celebration of the Creative Spirit" benefit dinner and received

the Mission Society Dina Merrill Hartley Public Service Award, the Young Achievers Special Recognition Award, the Beat the Odds Children's Defense Fund Children's Champion Award, the Abyssinian Development Corporate Renaissance Award, the International School Award Excellence in Public Education Award, the Gordon Parks Patron of the Arts Award, and the Sound Shore Medical Center Autumn Gala Award. Chenault also has been honored for Outstanding Partnership and Commitment to WNET and the New York Community and holds an honorary doctorate from the Pratt Institute.

Chenault and her husband, Ken Chenault, live in New York City. They have two sons, Ken Chenault, Jr., and Kevin Chenault.

Kathryn Chenault was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on December 9, 2021.

Related Entries

Tufts University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.A.

New York University School of Law [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

J.D.

Donovan, Leisure, Newton & Irvine [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1980 to ?]

Associate Attorney

United Negro College Fund [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1985 to ?]

Vice President of Corporations and Foundations

Tufts University [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Trustee

Studio Museum of Harlem Annual Gala [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Co-chair

Pratt Institute [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Trustee

Obama Presidential Library Design Committee [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Gracie Mansion Conservancy Board of Advisors [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Studio Museum of Harlem [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Harlem Children's Zone [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Ethical Culture Fieldston School [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Bard College Center for Curatorial Studies [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

NYU School of Law [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Trustee

National Parks Foundation [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

International Council of The Museum of Modern Art [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Harlem Partnership for Children [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Kids of NYU Medical Foundation [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Hospital for Special Surgery [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Municipal Arts Society [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Abyssinian Development Corporation [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

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