

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Roberto "Bert" Ifill

PERSON

Ifill, Roberto Norman, 1954-

Alternative Names: Roberto "Bert" Ifill; Bert Ifill

Life Dates: April 12, 1954-

Place of Birth: Brooklyn, New York, USA

Residence: Silver Spring, Maryland

Occupations: Academic Administrator

Biographical Note

Academic administrator and economics professor Roberto "Bert" Ifill was born on April 12, 1954 in Brooklyn, New York to Eleanor Edmay Husbands and Rev. Oliver Urcille Ifill, Sr. He received his A.B. degree in economics in 1976 from Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire and his M.A. and M.Phil. degrees in 1979 and Ph.D. degree in 1992 in economics from Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut.

From 1983 to 1989, Ifill taught economics at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, where he also served as assistant dean and dean of freshmen. In 1989, he was hired by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York City as a program associate for higher education and public affairs with particular responsibility for liberal arts colleges. In 1993, Ifill was hired as a program associate for academic planning and advising and as an associate dean at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut, where he also taught economics and served as dean of planning and assistant to the president. In 1997, he was hired as special assistant to the president for diversity and campus community, assistant to the president and director of the council for multicultural affairs at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he also taught economics. From 2001 to 2003, Ifill held a research fellowship at the American Council on Education, where he studied college savings plans and diversity initiatives for colleges and universities. In 2008, he was hired as a visiting professor at St. Mary's College of Maryland in St. Mary's City, Maryland, where he taught economics and served as interim dean of students from 2012 to 2014. From 2015 to 2017, Ifill served as an executive search consultant at the higher education search firm AGB Search in Washington, D.C. Ifill has drafted and facilitated strategic plans for several institutions including Connecticut College, the Lyman Allyn Art Museum, the Garde Arts Center, and others.

Ifill joined the board of trustees of Simmons University in 2021, where he has served as vice chair. He also has served on Simmons University's Dean's College Advisory Council of the Gwen Ifill College of Media, Arts, and Humanities, named after his late sister and noted PBS-TV journalist Gwen Ifill (1955-2016). Ifill also has chaired the boards of the Playwright's Center and the Theatre Lab for the Dramatic Arts and served on the boards of the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, the Lyman Allyn Art Museum, Western Vocal Wind Ensemble, the Cantate Chamber Singers, and the Yale Glee Club Associates and as a member of Omicron Delta Kappa.

Ifill and his wife, Gisèle Becker, live in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Roberto "Bert" Ifill was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on May 11, 2022.

Related Entries

Classical High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Dartmouth College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.A.

Yale University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.A.

Yale University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.Phil.

Yale University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Ph.D.

Brookings Institution [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1987 to 1988]

Predoctoral Fellow

Williams College [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1983 to 1989]

Assistant Dean, Dean of Freshmen, Professor of Economics

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1989 to 1993]

Program Associate

Connecticut College [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1993 to 1997]

Associate Dean, Assistant to the President, Professor of Economics

Macalester College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1997 to 2001]

**Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Campus Community,
Professor of Economics**

St. Mary's College of Maryland [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2008 to 2017]

Interim Dean of Students

AGB Search [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2015 to 2017]

Executive Search Consultant

Lyman Allyn Art Museum [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1996 to 1996]

Acting Interim Director

American Council of Education [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2001 to 2003]

Research Fellow

Self-employed [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2003 to 2008]

Freelance writer, professional singer

Theatre Lab of the Dramatic Arts [MEMBEROf]
[from 2017 to ?]

Chair

Cantate Chamber Singers [MEMBEROf]
[from 2003 to 2005]

Board

**Dean's Advisory Council of the Gwen Ifill College of Media, Arts, and Humanities
at Simmons University** [MEMBEROf]
[from 2019 to 2020]

Member

Simmons University [MEMBEROf]
[from 2020 to ?]

Vice Chair of Board

Omicron Delta Kappa [MEMBEROf]
[from 2012 to 2017]

Member

Yale Glee Club Associates [MEMBEROf]
[from 2005 to 2011]

Board

Western Wind Vocal Ensemble [MEMBEROF]
[from 2001 to 2008]

Board

Playwrights Center [MEMBEROF]
[from 1998 to 2001]

Board & President

Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery [MEMBEROF]
[from 1997 to 2000]

Board

Lyman Allyn Art Museum [MEMBEROF]
[from 1996 to 1997]

Board

Gwen Ifill Papers, Simmons University.