

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Roselyn Payne Epps

PERSON

Epps, Roselyn Payne

**Alternative Names:** Dr. Roselyn Payne Epps;

**Life Dates:** December 11, 1930-September 30, 2014

**Place of Birth:** Little Rock, Arkansas, USA

**Residence:** Washington, D.C.

**Occupations:** Pediatrician

## Biographical Note

Dr. Roselyn Payne Epps was born in Little Rock, Arkansas. Both of her parents were educators, as were her grandparents. Epps attended elementary school at Powell Laboratory School in Savannah, Georgia, and afterwards attended Palmer Memorial High School in Sedalia, North Carolina, before enrolling at Howard University in Washington, D.C. She graduated with a B.S. in 1951, and obtained an M.S., also from Howard, in 1955.

Upon receiving her M.S., Epps became a rotating intern with the United States Public Health Service at Freedmen's Hospital in Washington (later renamed Howard University Hospital). In 1956, she began a pediatric residency with the hospital, and two years later became its chief resident.

In 1961, she became a medical officer with the District of Columbia Department of Health, and in 1973 earned an M.Ph. from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. She continued on with the District of Columbia Department of Health, and in 1980 was appointed the first acting commissioner of health of the District of Columbia.

That year also saw her become a professor of pediatrics and children's health at Howard, and a year later, she received an M.A. from American University in Washington, D.C. She would go on to become the chief of the Child Development Division and director of the Child Development Center at Howard. Among her accomplishments during her time there were overseeing a program that aided disabled children and their parents, and she was the founder of the High Risk Young People's Project, which brought together several university health science departments, community organizations, and government agencies within the district. In 1988, she went to work for the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. Semi-retired

since 1998, she serves as a consultant for the public and private sector. Epps has written more than ninety articles for medical publications, was a co-editor for The Women's Complete Handbook, and was the first African American and female president of the District of Columbia chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She has been involved in various professional and philanthropic undertakings and is the recipient of more than sixty awards. The Council of the District of Columbia declared February 14, 1981, Dr. Roselyn Payne Epps Day in Washington, D.C.

Epps passed away on September 30, 2014, at the age of 83. She was married to Dr. Charles H. Epps, Jr. and they have four children.

Roselyn Payne Epps was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on March 16, 2003.

## Related Entries

**Palmer Memorial High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Powell Laboratory School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Sol C. Johnson High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**American University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Howard University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.S.**

**Howard University College of Medicine** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.D.**

**Johns Hopkins University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Howard University College of Medicine** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Professor**

**Freedmen's Hospital, Howard University** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1955 to ?]

**Intern**

**Freedmen's Hospital, Howard University** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1958 to ?]

**Chief Resident**

**District of Columbia Department of Health** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1961 to ?]

**Medical Officer**

**District of Columbia District of Health** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1980 to ?]

**Acting Commissioner of Health**

**National Cancer Institute** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1988 to ?]

**Girls Inc.** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Chair of national board**

**Hospital for Sick Children** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**President**

**D.C. Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**President**