

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Leatrice Branch Madison

PERSON

Madison, Leatrice Branch, 1922-2012

Alternative Names: Leatrice Branch Madison;

Life Dates: September 5, 1922-March 30, 2012

Place of Birth: Washington, District of Columbia, USA

Residence: Shaker Heights, OH

Occupations: Civic Leader

Biographical Note

Civic leader, retired educator, and community activist Leatrice Branch Madison, was born September 5, 1922 in Washington, D.C. to Julia Bailey Branch and Hayes Branch. She was the oldest of three daughters. She attended the racially segregated public schools of Washington, D.C., graduating from Dunbar Senior High in 1939. Madison went on to earn a bachelor's of science degree (cum laude) from Miner Teachers College in Washington, D.C. in 1943 and a master's of arts degree in guidance and personnel from the University of Chicago in 1947.

Madison taught in the public schools of Washington, D.C. from 1943 to 1949 and Cleveland, Ohio between 1949-1951 and again later from 1954-1960, before becoming a fulltime wife, mother, homemaker and community volunteer in 1960. During this time, she also worked as an assistant librarian at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design (1951-1952). Madison has served on the boards of numerous educational and human services organizations, including the Bingham Day Nursery, United Way Services, the Federation for Community Planning, Case Western Reserve University Board of Overseers, and Blue Cross of Northeast Ohio. Madison was a founding member of Heights Citizens for Human Rights—forerunner of Heights Community Congress--an organization established to ensure equal rights and fair housing for minorities moving into Cleveland Heights. She was also a founder of and one of the original board members for HARAMBEE: Services to Black Families, an agency designed to provide parenting skills to teenage parents and to recruit permanent adoptive homes for Black youngsters.

Madison's devotion to community service also inspired committee work with the Urban League of Greater Cleveland, Friends of Karamu, the NAACP Fund Dinner, Case Western Reserve University's Visiting Committee on the Humanities, the Cleveland

Symphony Orchestra Advisory Council, the Planned Parenthood Long Range Planning Committee, and the Juvenile Court Youth Services Advisory Board, among others. In 1963, she helped launch the Cleveland Heights / University Heights Summer School Project, recruiting participants from the Cleveland Public Schools and raising funds to offer financial assistance to those in need. The project, which ended in 1969, helped pave the way for the integration of the Cleveland Heights / University Heights Schools.

Madison is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the NAACP's Distinguished Service Plaque, the Federation for Community Planning's President's Award, Who's Who Among Black Americans, and the University of Chicago Alumni Association's Public Service Award. In 1999, Mrs. Madison and her husband Robert P. Madison received the Cleveland Opera Award for their visionary support of the arts in Cleveland. In 2004, she was honored by the Golden Age Centers for her many years of community service. Madison is an alumna member and former president of the Links, Incorporated, Cleveland Chapter.

Madison and her husband, Robert, reside in Shaker Heights, Ohio. They are the parents of two adult daughters.

Madison was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on June 14, 2004.\

Leatrice Madison passed away on March 30, 2012.

Related Entries

Paul Laurence Dunbar High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Miner Teachers College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

BS

University of Chicago [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

MA

Shaw Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Lucretia Mott Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

District of Columbia Public Schools [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1943 to 1949]

Teacher

Cleveland Public Schools [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 19881001 to 19910630]

Teacher

Harvard University Graduate School of Design [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1985 to 1987]

Assistant Librarian

Cleveland Public Schools [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1981 to 1995]

Teacher

HARAMBEE [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Jack and Jill of America [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

The Links, Inc [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Project Discovery [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

United Way [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

PTA (parent teacher association) [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Heights Community Congress [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Girl Scouts of the USA [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]