

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Walter I. Delph

PERSON

Delph, Walter I., 1944-

Alternative Names: Dr. Walter I. Delph; Walter Delph, Jr.; ; Dr. Walter Delph, Jr.

Life Dates: March 25, 1944-

Place of Birth: New York, New York, USA

Residence: New York, NY

Work: New York, NY

Occupations: Urologist

Biographical Note

Urologist Dr. Walter Ivey Delph, Jr. was born on March 25, 1944 in Harlem, New York to Dr. Walter Ivey Delph, Sr., a real estate entrepreneur and family doctor, and Minnette Tillman Delph. Delph's father was financier and builder of the Ivey Delph Apartments at 19 Hamilton Terrace in Harlem, New York, the first Black apartment project to be backed by a Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgage. Designed by Vertner Tandy, the first licensed African American architect in New York, Ivey Delph tenants included Marilyn Keets, Buck Clayton and Ted Sturgis.

Raised on Harlem's Sugar Hill in the 1950s, Delph got his first haircut from Dr. Robert Craft, surrounded by members of the "Black Royalty" who frequented his home. Visitors included Duke Ellington, a young Thurgood Marshall and Jackie Robinson. As a teen, Delph worked at a dry cleaner, at the Ivey Delph in the summer time, and accompanied his father on house calls. Delph's father's patients included Ralph Bunche and Delph's godfather, Adam Clayton Powell. Adam Wells mentored Delph after he lost his father at age sixteen.

After a lackluster academic start, Delph found his passion in high school science. Accepted at Adelphi University, Delph earned his B.A. degree and advanced to a memorable career at Howard Medical School where he was trained and mentored by colleagues of his father. During high school, Delph trained in surgery at Montefiore Hospital. Delph returned to Montefiore Hospital after medical school for a residency in general surgery, but soon switched to a relatively nascent field, urology. Delph's career has spanned vast improvements in urological treatment and endured major shifts in medicine, including the advent of the HMO.

Delph, the former Director of Urology at North General Hospital, the American Cancer Society since 1982 and served as the president of the Students American Medical Association (SAMA) when he was at Howard University and supports the Schomburg Center for Black Research. Delph served on the board of the YMCA from 1978 to 1982 and the New York Urban League from 1982 to 1987.

Delph is currently married to Aminta Griffith. He has three children: Andrea, Walter, III and Channing Delph.

Delph was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 27, 2007.

Related Entries

Dalton School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Riverdale Country School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Adelphi University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

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

Montefiore Medical Center [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1969 to 1970]

Intern

Montefiore Medical Center [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1973 to 1978]

Resident in Urology

St. Luke's Hospital [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1978 to ?]

Urologist

Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1982 to ?]

Instructor

Harlem YMCA [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

New York City Police Department [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Police Surgeon

Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Manhattan Central Medical Society [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

President