

BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND OF HERMAN KEITH

Herman Keith was born in Alabama and, at an early age, moved to Welch, West Virginia with his parents. He attended Kimball High School and graduated with honors at the age of sixteen. In 1953, he entered West Virginia State College where he received a degree in Mathematics and Physics. After graduation, Mr. Keith served in the United States Army as an Artillery Unit Officer, 1st Lieutenant.

In 1959, Mr. Keith and his family relocated to Yonkers where he was employed as an Engineer for the Perkin-Elmer Optical Company. In 1963, he became an Underwater Research Scientist for Columbia University. Years later, Mr. Keith managed programs for the Yonkers Community Development Agency. During this time he made clear his deep concerns for the rights of Haitian Refugees, and soon became Program Manager of the Haitian Refugee Assistance Program, Youth Employment Study for the Community Service Society of New York City and a Consultant for the City of Yonkers Police and Fire fighter Recruitment Program.

Despite a demanding schedule, Mr. Keith found time to accept invitations to join boards of community based organizations on which he still serves. Mr. Keith immediately became a force in his community. In addition to becoming active in his church, he began organizing around issues of political empowerment through an organization called Men Concern. At the same time, he was elected President of the local Parent Teachers Association (PTA).

In 1979, Mr. Keith, then president of the Yonkers Branch of the NAACP, spearheaded the landmark desegregation lawsuit against the City of Yonkers. It was his tenacity as a plaintiff in this lawsuit which provided the foundations of equal access to quality integrated education and fair housing opportunities for all.

In 1983, Mr. Keith became the first African-American Lawmaker in Yonkers' history elected to the County Board of Legislators. In 1992, after serving three terms as Minority Whip, Mr. Keith became Minority Leader of the Westchester County Board of Legislators. He is the first African-American to hold one of the most powerful positions in County Government. He served as a Westchester County Legislator from Yonkers' 16th district for 12 years.

Although Legislator Keith is a member of the minority party (Democratic) on the Board, he maintains the respect of all members of the Legislature for his open-mindedness, his ability to get things done, and his deep concern for the delivery of quality service to his constituents.

Mr. Keith has always had an abiding interest in the motivation and positive image building of young African-American males. To this end, Mr. Keith has given his time and energies--speaking at schools, civic organizations, and religious institutions on building a positive self-image and self-worth. Recently, he served as mentor for a special education class in the Yonkers elementary school system.

It should be noted that Herman Keith's accomplishments preceded his political success. For years he has been speaking on issues of concern nationally, and to this end, has been a regular and important resource guest on national news programs, such as MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour, Nightline, Donahue in addition to major national radio stations.

During the 1984 and 1988 Presidential campaigns, Legislator Keith was the Westchester and Rockland counties Coordinator for the Jesse Jackson campaigns. In 1988 Mr. Keith served as a Jesse Jackson delegate and in 1992 he served as Clinton/Gore delegate to the Democratic National Convention.

In 1994 thru present, Herman started his own professional consultant services business where he provides various consulting services in the area of development and construction. His knowledge of housing as it relates

to state and local governments allows him to negotiate contracts or guide businesses thru local government offices. His other many contacts serves as an asset to new and existing business seeking funding, grants or loans for the benefit of their business. He currently serves as President/CEO of Hudson River Consulting Group.

Legislator Keith is married to the former Gail Adams and is the father of five children.

Major Legislation

South Africa Divestment Bill

Banks Community Reinvestment - (requires banks to re-invest in urban communities)

Youth Employment Job Training Programs

Health Care

Invest in Kids Program

JobSTAR

Legislative Committees

Budget & Appropriations

Legislation

Public Safety & Criminal Justice

Rules

Minority Affairs

Banking

Boards of Director

Nepperhan Community Center

Men Concern

Black Democrats of Westchester

Yonkers Municipal Housing Authority

African American Men of Westchester

Yonkers Community Action Program

Rockland Community Mental Health Advisory Board

National Media

Donahue Show (National)

McNeil Lehrer Newshour (National)

Newsmaker

Nightline

All major Network Radio stations

Consultant

City of Yonkers Police & Firefighter Recruitment Program

Housing and Banking Projects

Consultant - Westchester County Waterfront study

Hudson River Land Development