

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Rufus W. McKinney

PERSON

McKinney, Rufus W. (Rufus William), 1930-

**Alternative Names:** Rufus W. McKinney;

**Life Dates:** August 6, 1930-

**Place of Birth:** Jonesboro, Arkansas, USA

**Residence:** Bethesda, Maryland

**Occupations:** Nonprofit Chief Executive;

## Biographical Note

Rufus William McKinney was born in Jonesboro, Arkansas, on August 5, 1930. McKinney was one of twelve children born to his parents, a minister and a homemaker. After graduating from Booker T. Washington High School in Jonesboro, McKinney attended Arkansas AM&N College, earning his B.A. in 1953. Upon graduation, he moved to Indiana, where he attended Indiana University and earned his J.D. in 1956. '

Following his graduation from law school, McKinney was hired by the United States Department of Labor as an attorney and adviser. He remained with the Department of Labor for thirteen years and joined Pacific Light Corporation in 1969 as an attorney. Within two year, he had risen to the position of senior attorney. In 1972, McKinney became assistant vice president with Southern California Gas Company, and in 1975 he was named vice president for national public affairs. He remained with Southern California Gas until his retirement in 1992.

McKinney has been active outside of his career as well. While serving with the Department of Labor in 1963, he became the vice president of the Washington, D.C. chapter of the NAACP, a position he held until 1969. During that time he was also active with the National Urban League. In 1977, he co-founded the American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE), serving as chairman in 1980, and remaining active on the board of directors since. The AABE is devoted to ensuring that minority voices are heard when energy policy is deliberated. McKinney also serves on the Maryland Commission on Human Relations and is a member of the Epsilon Boule Fraternity. McKinney and his wife, Glendonia, live in Maryland. They have four children.

## Related Entries

**Booker T. Washington High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Northside School for Coloreds** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**United States Department of Labor** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1991 to 2010]

**Attorney**

**Pacific Light Corporation** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1969 to ?]

**Attorney**

**Southern California Gas Company** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1972 to ?]

**Assistant Vice President**

**Southern California Gas Company** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1975 to 1992]

**Vice President for National Public Affairs**

**Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity (Boule)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1980 to ?]