

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Sarah-Ann Shaw

PERSON

Shaw, Sarah-Ann

Alternative Names: Sarah-Ann Shaw;

Life Dates: , -

Place of Birth: Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Residence: Dorchester, Massachusetts

Occupations: Television News Reporter;

Biographical Note

Boston's first African American television reporter, Sarah-Ann Shaw was born, Sarah-Ann King, in Boston, Massachusetts, to Annie Bell Bomar King and Norris King, Jr. Growing up in Roxbury, Shaw's father, who was active in the Roxbury Democratic Club, took her to lectures at Jordan Hall, the Ford Hall Forum, and Tremont Temple; there, young Shaw met Paul Robeson. Shaw's mother worked along side the selfless Melnea Cass. Shaw attended William P. Boardman Elementary School and Henry Lee Higginson Elementary School, was a Girl Scout, and was active at St. Mark's Social Center. A student at Girls Latin School, Shaw was involved with the NAACP Youth Movement; graduating in 1952, Shaw enrolled at Boston University, but left school in 1955 to get married.

Increasingly involved in community activities, Shaw worked with St. Mark's Social Center and as a member of the Boston Action Group (BAG). Shaw joined other activists like Otto P. and Muriel S. Snowden in 1957; national Student Movement head, Bill Strickland then asked her to head the Boston Northern Student Movement where she coordinated student led voter education, high school tutoring, and economic housing education with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), BAG, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the Unitarians. In 1968, Shaw became involved with Ray Richardson's Say Brother public affairs show on WBEZ-TV; she would go on to appear on the program more than twenty times. In 1969, Shaw was hired by WBZ-TV 4 as Boston's first African American reporter; she remained a news reporter at WBZ TV 4 for more than thirty years. As a civil rights organizer and human services advocate, Shaw demonstrated a rare ability to unite Boston residents and tackle big picture issues. At WBZ, Shaw anchored another black oriented public affairs program, Mzizi Roots.

Shaw, who helped define minority affairs programming and news content, received numerous journalistic awards for her work, including an award from the Boston Radio-Television News Directors Association, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Association of Black Journalists in 1998, and the Yankee Quill Award from the New England Society of Newspaper Editors. Shaw also volunteered for Boston Partners in Education; served as a board member of Boston Neighborhood Network; and served as the President for both the Boston Coalition of Black Women, and the League of Women for Community Service.

Related Entries

William P. Boardman Elementary School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Henry Lee Higginson Elementary School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Boston Latin Academy [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Higginson-Lewis K-8 School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Boston University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Boston Action Group [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from ? to ?]

Activist

Boston Northern Student Movement [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from ? to ?]

Director

'Say Brother' [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from ? to ?]

Television Host

WBZ-TV [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from ? to ?]

News Reporter

National Association for Black Journalists [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

League of Women for Community Service [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

President

Boston Coalition of Black Women, Inc. [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

President