

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Gloria Travis Tanner

PERSON

Tanner, Gloria Travis, 1934-

Alternative Names: The Honorable Gloria Travis Tanner;

Life Dates: July 16, 1934-

Place of Birth: Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Residence: Denver, CO

Occupations: State Senator

Biographical Note

Former Colorado state senator Gloria Travis Tanner was born on July 16, 1934, in Atlanta, Georgia, to Blanche Arnold Travis and Marcellus Travis. Tanner received her B.A. degree in political science and graduated magna cum laude from Metro State College in 1974. She received her M.A. degree in urban affairs from the University of Colorado in 1976. In addition, Tanner graduated from the American Management Association Program for Women in Top Managerial Positions and the Women in Leadership Program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Tanner worked as an administrative assistant for the Office of Hearings and Appeals at the United States Department of the Interior from 1967 to 1972. She worked as a reporter and feature writer for the Denver Weekly News, one of the leading African American newspapers in the Denver area, from 1972 through 1976. From 1976 to 1978, Tanner was the executive assistant to Colorado lieutenant governor George L. Brown, one of the first black lieutenant governors since Reconstruction. She then worked for Senator Regis Groff as the executive director of his communications office. Tanner was elected as a member of the Colorado State House of Representatives for District 7 in 1985 and served as the House Minority Caucus leader from 1987 through 1990. She was the second African American to be elected to a leadership position in the Colorado House of Representatives. In 1994, Tanner was appointed to the Colorado State Senate to replace Regis Groff who resigned to take a position elsewhere. She was the first African American woman to serve as a Colorado state senator, and held the seat until the year 2000. During her seventeen years in public service, she initiated and sponsored legislation on key issues such as marital discrimination in the workplace, parental

responsibility, worker's compensation cost savings, civil rights for women and minorities, and parental rights for adoptive parents.

Tanner is a widow and has three children: Terrance Ralph, Tanvis Renee, and Tracey Lynne.

Related Entries

David T. Howard High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Gray Street School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Metropolitan State University of Denver [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Colorado Denver [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Master's Degree

U.S. Air Force [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Town and Country Real Estate, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Real Estate Agent

Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Real Estate Agent

Colorado Governor [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Assistant to the Lieutenant Governor

U.S. Department of the Interior [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1955 to ?]

General Rose Memorial Hospital [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1956 to ?]

Nurse's Aide

Colorado House of Representatives [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1984 to ?]

Representative

National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Founder

Center for American Women and Politics [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Co-Founder

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Regina's Social and Civic Club [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Women's Forum of Colorado [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Colorado Black Round Table [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Colorado Black Women for Political Action [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Founder

Regis Groff for Senator Campaign [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Campaign Manager