

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with George Langford

PERSON

Langford, George, 1944-

**Alternative Names:** George Langford;

**Life Dates:** August 26, 1944-

**Place of Birth:** Halifax, North Carolina, USA

**Residence:** Jamesville, NY

**Work:** Syracuse, NY

**Occupations:** Cell Biologist;

## Biographical Note

Biologist and academic administrator George M. Langford was born on August 26, 1944 in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina to Lillie and Maynard Langford. Langford excelled at math in high school and was fascinated by the shapes and structures found under the microscope. He studied biology at Fayetteville State University earning his B.S. degree in 1966. Despite the lack of laboratory facilities, Langford had good mentors who persuaded him to attend graduate school. He earned his M.S. degree in 1969 and his Ph.D. degree in 1971, both in cell biology from the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). He finished his postdoctoral training in 1973 from the cell biology program at the University of Pennsylvania as a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Fellow.

In 1973, Langford joined the faculty of the University of Massachusetts as a professor of cell biology and conducted research at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts in 1976. He continued his career in academia, teaching at Howard University in 1977 and joining the faculty of University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in 1979. He was promoted to a full professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in 1988. Langford's research focused on the nerves of invertebrates as well as cellular motility. He was honored with an appointment to the National Science Foundation (NSF) where he served as director of cell biology from 1988 to 1989. In 1991, Langford joined the faculty of Dartmouth College as the Ernest Everett Just Professor of Natural Sciences and a professor of biological sciences where he remained until 2005. Between 2005 and 2008, Langford was employed at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst as dean of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics and Distinguished Professor of Biology. In 2008, he was engaged by Syracuse

University as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Langford holds memberships in many nationally prominent professional societies including the American Society for Cell Biology, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Corporation of the Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, MA and the Society of Sigma Xi. He served on the National Science Board (NSB) from 1998 to 2004, where he served as chair of the Education and Human Resources Committee and the Vannevar Bush Award Committee. Langford has been recognized numerous times for his work including the Illinois Institute of Technology Professional Achievement Award and the American Society for Cell Biology Ernest Everett Just Lectureship Award. Langford received an honorary Doctorate from Beloit College in 2003. He is married to Sylvia Langford and they have three children.

George Langford was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 6, 2012.

## Related Entries

**Potecasi Graded School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**W.S. Creecy High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Beloit College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Doctor of Humane Letters**

**Woodland Elementary** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Illinois Institute of Technology** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.S. Cell Biology**

**Illinois Institute of Technology** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**PhD Cell Biology**

**University of Pennsylvania** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Postdoctoral Fellow**

**Fayetteville State University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.S. Biology**

**Marine Biological Laboratory** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1976 to 1976]

**Argonne National Laboratory** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 196907 to 197106]

**Graduate Research Fellow**

**University of Pennsylvania** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1968 to ?]

**Postdoctoral Fellow Program in Biophysical Cell Biology**

**University of Massachusetts, Boston** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 197307 to 197606]

**Assistant Professor Department of Biology**

**Howard University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 197707 to 197906]

**Assistant Professor Department of Anatomy, College of Medicine**

**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 197907 to 198806]

**Professor, Department of Physiology, School of Medicine**

**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 197907 to 198806]

**Associate Professor, Dept. of Anatomy, School of Medicine**

**National Science Foundation (NSF)** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 198807 to 198906]

**Program Director Cell Biology Program**

**Dartmouth College** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1977 to ?]

**Ernest Everett Just Professor of Natural Sciences and Professor of Biological Sciences**

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 200508 to 200806]

**Dean, College of Natural Sciences & Mathematics**

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 200508 to 200806]

**Distinguished Professor, Biology**

**Syracuse University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1985 to 1989]

**Dean, The College of Arts and Sciences, Professor of Biology**

**Syracuse University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 200808 to ?]

**Professor, Biology**

**American Society for Cell Biology** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Corporation of the Marine Biological Laboratory** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**North Carolina Society for Electron Microscopy and Microbeam Analysis** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Burroughs- Welcome Fund** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1993 to 1998]

**Chair, Board of Directors**

**National Research Council of the National Academies and Global Affairs  
Committee** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1993 to 1998]

**Committee Member**

**MedTech Science and Technology Committee** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2004 to ?]

**Committee Member**

**National Nanofabrication Infrastructure Network (NNIN) Scientific Advisory Board**  
[MEMBEROF]  
[from 2006 to ?]

**National Research Council of the National Academies Committee on Enhancing  
Master's Degree in the Natural Sciences** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2008 to ?]

**Sherman Fairchild Foundation** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2005 to ?]

**Scientific Advisor Board**

**American Cancer Society** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2008 to 2012]

**Scientific Advisor Board**

**Howard Hughes Medical Institute** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Scientific Advisor Board**

**Howard Hughes Medical Institute** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Reviewer, Undergraduate Science Education Competition**

**Whitney Laboratory for Marine BioSciences** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**University of Florida Scientific Advisor Board**

**National Science Foundation (NSF)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 20081202 to 20021208]

**National Science Board** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1998 to 2004]

**Member**

**American Society for Neurochemistry** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2002 to 2002]

**Symposium Organizer for the 2002 annual meeting entitled "Dynamics of the neuronal cytoskeleton"**

**Howard Hughes Medical Institute** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2012 to ?]

**Board Member**

**Grass Foundation** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2013 to ?]

**Trustee**