

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Al Zollar

PERSON

Zollar, Al, 1950-

Alternative Names: Al Zollar;

Life Dates: May 18, 1954-

Place of Birth: Kansas City, Missouri, USA

Residence: New York, NY

Occupations: Corporate Executive

Biographical Note

Corporate executive Alfred “Al” Zollar was born in 1954 in Kansas City, Missouri. He attended Paseo High School in Kansas City and then graduated from Mills High School in Millbrae, California. He went on to receive his M.A. degree in applied mathematics from the University of California at San Diego in 1976.

Zollar joined IBM Corporation in 1977 as a systems engineer trainee in the company’s San Francisco office. After working in systems engineering for ten years, he was transferred to IBM’s White Plains, New York headquarters in 1986 as a member of the corporate staff. Zollar was promoted to product manager for IBM’s relational database software DB2 in 1989; and was made laboratory director at the IBM Software Group laboratory in Raleigh, North Carolina in 1993. In 1996, IBM bought software maker Tivoli and appointed Zollar senior vice president of development. He was promoted again to general manager of IBM’s Network Computing Software Division in 1998; and, in 2000, was named president and chief executive officer of IBM’s Lotus Development Corporation. Three years later, Zollar left Lotus to become the general manager of iSeries, IBM’s range of servers aimed at small and medium-sized companies. He then served as general manager of IBM Tivoli Software, a global, multi-billion dollar business within IBM’s software division, from 2004 until 2011. Zollar retired from IBM in January of 2011 and became an executive partner of the Siris Capital Group in 2014.

Zollar has served on the boards of the Chubb Corporation and PSEG Incorporated. He is also a member of the Executive Leadership Council, and a lifetime member of the National Society of Black Engineers. He was ranked #15 on Fortune magazine’s 2002 list of Most Powerful Black Executives; named one of the 50 most important African Americans in technology by US Black Engineer & Information Technology magazine

in 2004; one of the 100 most powerful executives in corporate America by Black Enterprise magazine in 2009; and one of fifty distinguished alumni of the University of California at San Diego in 2011. In addition, Zollar was a Harvard University Fellow in the 2011 cohort of the Advanced Leadership Initiative, and was issued a U.S. patent for “Trust and Identity in Secure Calendar Sharing Collaboration,” in 2012.

Alfred “Al” Zollar was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on May 9, 2014.

Related Entries

Paseo High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Mills High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

High School Diploma

University of California, San Diego [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.A.

IBM [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1977 to 1986]

Systems Engineer

IBM [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1986 to 1989]

Member of Corporate Staff

IBM [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1989 to 1993]

Product Manager, DB2

IBM [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1993 to 1996]

Laboratory Director, IBM Software Group

IBM [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1996 to 1998]

Senior Vice President of Development, Tivoli

IBM [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1998 to 2000]

General Manager, Network Computing Software Division

IBM [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2000 to 2003]

President and CEO, Lotus Development Corporation

IBM [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2003 to 2004]

General Manager, iSeries

IBM [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2004 to 2011]

General Manager, Tivoli

Siris Capital Group [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2014 to ?]

Executive Partner

Chubb Corporation [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

PSEG Incorporated [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Executive Leadership Council [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

National Society of Black Engineers [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Lifetime Member