

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Will Griffin

PERSON

Griffin, William, 1970-

Alternative Names: Will Griffin;

Life Dates: November 25, 1970-

Place of Birth: Austin, Texas, USA

Residence: Round Rock, TX

Occupations: Media Executive; Entertainment Chief Executive

Biographical Note

Media entrepreneur William Griffin was born on November 25, 1970 in Austin, Texas. Griffin received his B.A. degree from Dartmouth College, where he was a member of the college's top-ranked debate team and editor-in-chief of the Black Praxis. Griffin then received his J.D. degree from Harvard Law School and authored the Harvard Report on Urban Music. He also completed the Entrepreneurship Curriculum at Harvard Business School and served as director of the Harvard Consultation Project.

Griffin began his professional career as a financial analyst in the Structured Finance Group at Goldman, Sachs & Company. He subsequently worked in the Entertainment and Media Practice Group of McKinsey & Company and then joined News Corp/Fox Entertainment Group, where he was director of the eDirect initiative. In 2000, Griffin was hired as general manager and executive vice president of business development for eUniverse Network, where, in two quarters, he developed and implemented the turnaround strategy that led to profitability for the industry's largest digital entertainment company. Then, after producing films with Reuben Cannon and Bishop T.D. Jakes, Griffin was named president and chief operating officer of Simmons Lathan Media Group, a film and television production and acquisitions company that develops and distributes urban content across a variety of media platforms. In 2005, he founded, in partnership with Russell Simmons and Stan Lathan, Def on Demand (later named Hip Hop On Demand) on Comcast, the industry's only African American owned Video-on-demand channel, where he serves as chairman and chief executive officer.

Griffin's projects have won numerous awards including two NAACP Image Awards (Run's House and Bishop T.D. Jakes' Woman Thou Art Loosed: The Movie) and the IAB/Brandweek Mixx Silver Award for Interactive Television for Hip Hop On Demand.

Will Griffin was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on May 9, 2014.

Related Entries

Harvard Law School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Juris Doctor

Dartmouth College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.A., Anthropology

The Science Academy - Lyndon B. Johnson High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

HS Diploma

Pearce Junior High [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Harris Elementary [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

T.A. Brown Elementary [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Simmons/Lathan Media [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 200205 to 200508]

President

News Corporation [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 199905 to 200005]

Director, Marketing

eUniverse Networks [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 20000606 to 200205]

General Manager

Goldman Sachs [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 199406 to 199508]

Analyst

Mckinsey & Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 199806 to 199905]

Associate

HipHop on Demand [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 200508 to ?]

CEO

Harvard Club of New York City [MEMBEROf]

[from 199806 to ?]

Member

Starcom Mediavest [MEMBEROf]

[from 200206 to 200608]

Advisory Board Member

[MEMBEROf]

[from 200606 to ?]

Advisory Board Member

RRISD [MEMBEROf]

[from 201309 to ?]

Citizen's Board Committee Member