

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Russell Adams

PERSON

## Adams, Russell

**Alternative Names:** Russell Adams; Dr. Russell L. Adams

**Life Dates:** August 13, 1930-

**Place of Birth:** Baltimore, Maryland, USA

**Residence:** Laurel, MD

**Work:** Washington, D.C.

**Occupations:** African American Studies Professor

### Biographical Note

Russell Lee Adams was born on August 13, 1930, in Baltimore, Maryland, to James Russell Adams, a commercial farmer, and Isabelle, a teacher. Adams' family, including his two brothers and a sister, moved to Quitman, Georgia, where he attended elementary and high schools. After graduating with a B.A. from Morehouse College in 1952, Adams attended graduate

school at the University of Chicago, where he earned his M.A. in 1954 and, later, his Ph.D.

From 1958 to 1964, Adams worked in Chicago as a Cook County probation officer. In 1965, he returned to academia as assistant professor at North Carolina Central University in Durham. He worked there until 1969; the next two years he spent at the University of the District of Columbia as associate professor. In 1971, Adams was hired as chair of the Department of Afro-American Studies at Howard University, a position he has held for more than three decades.

A popular keynote speaker, Adams has lectured at many universities, including the University of Maryland, Columbia University, Georgetown University, Rutgers University and Harvard University. As a consultant, he has also developed and evaluated instructional programs and conducted workshops on cultural and curriculum diversity. His clients have included the public school districts of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Wilmington, Delaware; the Montgomery County Board of Education; and black studies programs at a number of American universities.

A prolific writer, Adams has published several books and edited collections, and his work has appeared in numerous periodicals. He writes and reviews articles for the *Journal of Negro Education*. He also served as a primary adviser and contributor to the three-volume Time-Life series *African Americans: Voices of Triumph*.

Adams lives with his wife, Eleanor, in Suitland, Maryland. They have one son, Russell Lowell Adams.

## Related Entries

**University of Chicago** [STUDENT OF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Ph.D.**

**Morehouse College** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**University of Chicago** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**Cook County States Attorney's Office** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1977 to 1980]

**Probation Officer**

**North Carolina Central University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1975 to 2004]

**Assistant Professor**

**University of the District of Columbia** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1974 to 1981]

**Associate Professor**

**Howard University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1971 to 2005]

**Chair of the Department of Afro-American  
Studies**