

Maxine May
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Retired

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**Biography Submitted for Consideration for the Commission for the
Department of Aging**

I graduated from high school in 1966 at the age of 16. I started my work career at Wisconsin Bell, presently known as AT&T.

I started there as a clerical worker and became one of the first women to take a non-traditional female job in the Central Office. This was considered semi-skilled labor. During this time I took advantage of the tuition reimbursement program. I attended night school at MATC and then became one of the first women to attend MSOE along with Jan Stempluski of Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

I became one of the first individuals to be promoted from a non skilled job to management at Ameritech. After attending the Assessment Center at Ameritech I became one of the first semi-skilled laborers to successfully complete the Assessment Center which afforded me to become a manager, one of the few to do so. After 27 years, I was downsized and separated from Ameritech.

Afterwards I took on jobs at Barnes and Noble and Victoria Secrets. At Barnes and Noble I started as a book seller and was later promoted to Public Relations Manager. I stayed at Barnes and Noble for 2 years. Later I was recruited by Dr. Ernestine Willis of the Medical College's Center for the Development of Urban Children for the Reach Out and Read Program Administrator. This was a program that was in all FQHCs. Through this program we presented books to children as they came for their well-baby exams in spanish and in english. I was here for about 2 years.

Afterwards I worked with a program called Pro-Trade for two years. This was a trades development program that supported individuals returning to society/ex-offenders. This was funded through Employ Milwaukee and FSET. The goal was to get young men and women into trades and prepare them for the

apprenticeship test, affording them to work in the trades and get into the trade unions.

Once I moved on from Pro-Trade, I worked on Gwen Moore's campaign. After she was successfully elected, I worked for Governor Jim Doyle for about 8 years - the duration of his governorship. I initially started as a volunteer because one of the individuals that worked for him was experiencing health issues. My skills and dedication resulted in me getting hired as a staffer. As an employee I was running his Milwaukee Office on 6th and State St.

I began to volunteer at the MaCannon Brown Homeless Sanctuary. There we served the unhoused as well as the community. We provided hot showers, basic necessities, clothes, a meal, and bus tickets.

During the majority of my professional career I was also involved in the church. I became the superintendent of Children's church at the age of 23. The three churches I served at were Greater Galilee Baptist Church, The Word Center, and Christian Faith Fellowship Church.

I volunteered at Glendale Care and Rehabilitation Center. I started this because my mother was a resident there for many years. I promised, after my mom's passing, that I would stay in contact so that they knew I wouldn't forget about them. I stayed involved with the nursing home for many years by fundraising through my network and helping with bingo prizes and Christmas presents. I also secured commitments from Believers In Christ Church, McGovern Park Senior Center Dancers, World Outreach, and Mission's Team who continue to serve there presently.

One of my longest volunteer activities is with America's Black Holocaust Museum. In 1999, the year that they hosted the Henrietta Marie exhibit, is when I started volunteering at ABHM as a Griot.

In 2025, I completed a Senior Leadership Program through the Department of Aging. The reason I signed up for this program is because I wanted to create opportunities for other minorities to learn about the opportunities and resources for

seniors. It is my belief that many marginalized communities do not know about these opportunities and resources. I would like to enlarge the footprint of minorities within spaces of leadership and decision making. I queried my friends and acquaintances to get their thoughts and with their encouragement I agreed to submit an application,

In every undertaking that I have taken, I wanted it to serve people in a way that would mean something. By joining the commission, I want to create a more diverse committee that is more culturally sensitive and culturally literate. I feel that as a commissioner for the Department of Aging I can serve as an advocate for seniors and marginalized communities.

Signed,

/s/ Maxine May

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