

ARKANSAS BLACK HISTORY



Image courtesy of Encyclopedia of Arkansas

Lottie Shackelford is an African American politician who gained notoriety when she was elected as the first female and first Black mayor of Little Rock, Arkansas (Pulaski County). A Little Rock native, she was one of four children of Curtis Holt Sr., and Bernice Linzy Holt and a graduate of Philander Smith College, a small, private school and one of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). Shackelford held significant leadership roles in the Democratic Party and became the deputy manager of Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton's campaign for president. When Clinton won the presidency in 1992, Shackelford was appointed as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in Vienna, Austria, and as the first African American woman to the board of directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), an independent federal agency that encourages U.S. businesses to invest in developing countries. As late as 2014, Shackelford led the Women's Caucus of the Democratic National Committee.

