

President Obama

Written by Delores A. Hampton
Sunday, 03 February 2013 19:30



Barack Hussein Obama was born on August 4, 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Barack Obama is the 44th president of the United States and the first African-American president in American History. Barack Obama has spoken often of his multicultural background: his father was from Kenya, his mother from Kansas, and they met at the University of Hawaii. After his parents divorced and his father returned to Africa, Obama stayed with his mother and was raised in Indonesia and Hawaii. He earned an undergraduate degree from Columbia University in 1983 and a law degree from Harvard in 1991. He then joined the Chicago law firm of Miner, Barnhill & Galland, which specialized in civil rights legislation. He also taught constitutional law for 12 years at the University of Chicago. Barack Obama married the former Michelle Robinson in 1992. They have two daughters: Malia and Sasha. Barack Obama was elected to the Illinois Senate in 1996, and then to the U.S. Senate in 2004, beating Republican candidate Alan Keyes.

Barack Obama shot to national fame after delivering a stirring keynote speech in support of John Kerry at the 2004 Democratic national convention. Obama ran for president in 2008, defeating a Democratic primary field that included New York Sen. Hillary Clinton, the former First Lady. He named Delaware senator Joe Biden to be his running mate at the Democratic Convention that August, and they defeated Republican nominees John McCain and Sarah Palin in the November general election. They took office on January 20, 2009. Barack Obama published the personal memoir *Dreams from My Father* in 1995, and published a second book, *The Audacity of Hope*, in 2006. The title of the latter book was also the title of his 2004 keynote speech, and both books won Grammys for best spoken word album. Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, for "his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples." He ran successfully for re-election in 2012, defeating Republican candidate Mitt Romney on November 6, 2012.

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