

## **ALEXIS M. HERMAN**

Born in Mobile, Alabama, she began her career working for Catholic Charities helping young out-of-school men and women find work in the Pascagoula, Mississippi shipyard. At the age of twenty-nine, President Jimmy Carter's appointment made her the youngest director of the Women's Bureau in the history of the Labor Department. And on May 1, 1997, Alexis M. Herman was sworn in as America's 23rd Secretary of Labor and the first African American ever to lead the United States Department of Labor. She also served as a valued member of the National Economic Council.

As Secretary, she focused on a prepared workforce, a secure workforce, and quality workplaces. With that mandate in mind, she consolidated the Department's wide array of skills development programs into a simpler, more efficient system. She led the effort to institute a global child labor standard; moved people from welfare to work with dignity; and launched the most aggressive unemployed youth initiative since the 1970's. Under her tenure unemployment in the country reached a thirty-year low and the nation witnessed the safest workplace record in the history of the Department of Labor. Alexis Herman's actions as Secretary were a reflection of her understanding of the needs of America's workers and the challenges they faced as this nation approached the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Currently, Ms. Herman serves as chair and chief executive officer of New Ventures, LLC. She has continued to lend her expertise and talent to a vast array of corporate enterprises and nonprofit organizations. A recipient of more than twenty honorary doctorate degrees from major colleges and universities around the country, Herman is a trustee of the National Labor College George Meany Center. Presently, she chairs the Toyota Diversity Advisory Board and the Sodexo Business Advisory Board, is a member of the boards of directors of Cummins Inc., Entergy Inc., MGM Mirage, and The Coca-Cola Company, and is the former chairwoman of the The Coca-Cola Company's Human Resources Task Force. Her nonprofit work includes serving as a Trustee for the National Urban League and Social Action for Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

While serving as Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman met and married her life partner, Dr. Charles L. Franklin, Jr. She and Dr. Franklin reside in McLean, Virginia.