



SENATOR MARSHA BLACKBURN **BIOGRAPHY**

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Family

Marsha Blackburn grew up in Laurel, Mississippi. She attended Mississippi State University on a 4-H Club scholarship and received her B.S. in 1973. While a student, she was elected president of Associated Women Students and was selected for numerous honor societies, including Gamma Beta Phi and the MSU Hall of Fame. Marsha and Chuck Blackburn have been married for twenty-seven years. They have two children, Mary Morgan Ketchel, 24, and Chad Blackburn, 21.

Marsha distinguished herself as a hard worker early in life. As an honor student and an outstanding leader, she represented her peers at the National Leadership Conference. She was also named "All American citizen" and was a member of Who's Who in American High Schools.

Political

Marsha Blackburn is known for her leadership in fighting the Tennessee State Income Tax, working to eliminate the loophole that allows illegal aliens to acquire valid Tennessee driver's licenses, and for working to keep the cost of quality childcare affordable. She has sponsored NRA and second amendment legislation, and has set apart herself by working hard for governmental reform.

In 1998 Marsha Blackburn was elected State Senator for Tennessee's 23rd District. She won a three-person primary with 52% of the vote, and, with 68% of the vote, became the first woman ever to represent this district. She was elected minority whip for the 101st General Assembly and was appointed to the General Welfare, Health and Human Services committee, Judiciary committee, and served the Transportation committee as secretary.

Marsha began her political career in 1977 when she was instrumental in founding the Young Republicans of Williamson County, Tennessee. The following year, she volunteered for the first campaign victory for a Republican representative in county history. In the early 1980s, she organized and was an active member of the County Steering Committee, as well as the Election Commission. She has also been a long-time active member of the Williamson County Republican Women's Club.

As Chairman of the Williamson County Republican Party from 1989-1991, Marsha doubled the party's dues-paying membership, established a permanent headquarters, and expanded party fundraising dramatically. All of her hard work paid off in 1990 when Republican victories were realized at every level of government. In 1992, she was elected to be a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Houston, Texas.

In that same year, Marsha ran and was elected for the TN Sixth District Congressional seat, with 52% of the vote in a seven-way race. She was endorsed by the National Federation of

Independent Business in this race. She was the Speaker of the National Federation of Republican Women at the national convention in Las Vegas in 1993.

After a year of heavy involvement in the American Council of Young Political Leaders, she chaired the Governor's Inaugural Ball and the Williamson County Republican Party awarded her with the Great American Patriot Award. From 1995 to 1997, she served as the executive director of the Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission. Marsha reorganized the commission, increasing entertainment business statewide while operating at 15% under budget. In 1996 Marsha was a leader on the American Council Delegation to Finland and Estonia, where she worked with parliamentary members on economic and political issues.

Other honors include:

- State Chair, America Council of Young Political Leaders, 1994
- Voice of the Victim Award, Williamson County Domestic Abuse Council, 1999
- Tennessee Economic Council on Women, 2000
- 2001 Pacesetter, Southern Women in Politics, Stennis Center
- State Director, National Foundation of Women Legislators

Professional

Marsha began her professional career as a student manager of Southwestern Company while attending Mississippi State University in 1971. She recruited, trained and managed teams of twenty women each year. Impressively, Marsha earned 100% of her college expenses. In 1973, she became a sales manager in the Division of Times Mirror, Inc. at Southwestern, where she continued recruiting students to sell books and educational materials door to door. Marsha was one of the first two women to hold this position.

Marsha served as Director of Retail Fashion and Special Events for Caster Knott Company Division of Mercantile Stores, Inc. from 1975 to 1978. Caster Knott was a chain of eleven department stores in the Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Marsha oversaw and produced all special events, fashion shows, and retail promotion events. She expanded the coordination between the department and television and advertising networks.

As Executive Director of the Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission from 1995 to 1997, Marsha expanded the industry's revenues from \$2.3 billion to \$4.6 billion, and developed long range plan and comprehensive marketing strategy for department. She established public-private strategic alliances for increased economy and efficiency, held operating expenses to 85% of budget allocation in 1995 and 1996. She established an industry task force, implemented a college internship program, and developed an interactive technology directory, among other accomplishments.

Since 1978 Marsha has been the owner of *Marketing Strategies*, a company serving in promotion, event management and product marketing. Some project examples include, a decade-long commitment, consumer news segments written and presented for the WTVF, CBS affiliate, talk show *Talk of the Town*. Marsha has also been involved in developing marketing calendars, as well as writing and editing magazine fashion columns.

Professional Affiliations:

Brentwood Chamber of Commerce
Country Music Association
Franklin, Williamson County Chamber of Commerce
International Council of Shopping Centers
Maury County Chamber of Commerce
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
National Association of Retail Merchants
Rotary Club of Nashville
Sales and Marketing Executives
Tennessee Economic Council on Women, Founding Board Member
Listed, 1999 Middle Tennessee 100 Most Powerful People, *Business Nashville*
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Listed, 2001 Middle Tennessee 100 Most Powerful People, *Business Nashville*
Listed, 2002 Middle Tennessee 100 Most Powerful People, *Nashville Post*

Civic

Marsha Blackburn has been a civic leader in middle Tennessee for decades. She has served as the Board President of the American Lung Association of Middle Tennessee and as Chairman of the Governor's Prayer Breakfast. Marsha has also been fortunate enough to serve as President of the Nashville Symphony Guild and a Board Member of the Nashville Zoo. She also serves on Cheekwood's Board of Trust. Marsha was named the Greek Woman of the Year in 1999 by Chi Omega Alumnae. Below are listed other organizations and notable honors:

American Lung Association of Tennessee, Development Volunteer of the Year
Arthritis Foundation
Brentwood Chamber of Commerce
Cancer Society
Friends of Cheekwood
March of Dimes
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
Nashville Ballet
Nashville Symphony Association, Executive Committee
Rotary Club of Nashville
Swan Ball
Tennesseans for the Arts
Tennessee Biotechnology Association
Watkins Film School