

## INTRODUCTION

# Biography of President Barack Obama

**B**arack H. Obama is the 44th President of the United States of America. His story is the American story — values from the heartland, a middle-class upbringing in a strong family, hard work and education as the means of getting ahead, and the conviction that a life so blessed should be lived in service to others.

With a father from Kenya and a mother from Kansas, President Obama was born in Hawaii on August 4, 1961. He was raised with help from his grandfather, who served in General Patton's army, and his grandmother, who worked her way up from the secretarial pool to middle management at a bank.

President Obama attended Occidental College in Los Angeles and Columbia University in New York City. After working his way through college with the help of scholarships and student loans, President Obama moved to Chicago, where he worked with a group of churches to help rebuild communities devastated by the closure of local steel plants.

He went on to attend law school, where he became the first African American president of the *Harvard Law Review*. Upon graduation, he returned to Chicago to help lead a voter registration drive, teach constitutional law at



the University of Chicago, and remain active in his community.

Obama's years of public service are based on his unwavering belief in the ability to unite people around a politics of purpose. In the Illinois State Senate, he passed the first major ethics reform bill in 25 years, cut taxes for working families, and expanded health care for children and their parents.

As a United States Senator, he reached across the aisle and worked with Republicans to pass ground breaking lobbying reform, supported measures to secure the world's most dangerous nuclear weapons, and he helped to bring transparency to government spending by putting federal spending online.

He was elected the 44th President of the United States on November 4, 2008, and sworn into office on January 20, 2009. At that time, President Obama and his wife, Michelle, were the proud parents of two daughters, Malia, 10, and Sasha, 7.

### RESOURCE:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/president-obama/>

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/obama-jr-barack-1961>