

ZANDRA FLEMISTER
1951-2023

Flemister was born in Frankfurt, Germany to American parents during her father's army service. She grew up in Central Connecticut and graduated from Glastonbury High School in 1969. Subsequently, she graduated from Northeastern University in 1973. In 1974 she joined the Secret Service, making her the first black woman to be hired as an agent.

She protected two presidential daughters, Susan Ford and Amy Carter. She was often specifically requested by Lady Bird Johnson, who enjoyed her company on trips to the National Zoo (though Zandra later wrote that these duties would further hinder her career growth within the agency). Unfortunately she experienced significant racial discrimination which was documented as part of a class action lawsuit which the Secret Service settled for Twenty-four million dollars. Flemister resigned from the agency in 1978 to start a more than three decade career in Foreign Service.

Here she spent time running an interagency visa screening program in Pakistan and South Korea, establishing a multinational anti-visa fraud working group in London and extensive counter-narcotics experience. Here she was described by a peer as "absolutely unflappable in a crisis" and able to "quietly tutor people without humiliating them".

She earned a master's degree in national security logistics from the National Defense University and rose to the level of Consul General in Pakistan. Flemister retired early in 2011 due to the effects of early onset Alzheimer's disease which took her life in 2023.

Information contained herein was compiled by the Historical Society of Glastonbury for the Glastonbury MLK39 Mural Project dedicated in September 2024.

