

SAM DONALDSON

Sam Donaldson recently retired from ABC News after a more-than-twenty year career. Samuel Andrew Donaldson, Jr. was born in El Paso, Texas, and grew up just across the state line in Chamberino, New Mexico. His father died before he was born, leaving his mother and one older brother to run the family's cotton and dairy farm. His mother drove 25 miles every morning and night to take him to school in El Paso.

He became interested in broadcasting at an early age and, after graduating from New Mexico Military institute, majored in telecommunications at Texas Western. He immediately began working at local stations as a disc jockey, announcer and interviewer. While still in El Paso, he had his first taste of television, working as an announcer in the region's first television station.

After a single year of graduate school at the University of Southern California, Donaldson returned to El Paso. At that time an enthusiastic young Republican, Donaldson worked for the Eisenhower campaign over the summer of 1956, arranging the El Paso stop of Vice President Nixon. This was only the first of many encounters with the nation's political leaders, but Donaldson's politics were to change dramatically over the years to come.