

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Monica Stewart

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Stewart, Monica, 1952-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monica Stewart,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 24, 2001
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2001
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:28:02).
<b>Abstract:</b>	State representative and state government official The Honorable Monica Stewart (1952 - ) was elected to the Illinois General Assembly in 1981, where she served on the Executive and Public Utilities Committees. Since 1994, Stewart has served as the director of the Illinois Office of Trade and Investment in South Africa. Stewart was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 24, 2001, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2001_084
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Monica Faith Stewart was born on September 3, 1952, in Chicago, Illinois, to Clarence and Lois Stewart. She graduated in 1975 from Vassar College with a degree in history. Stewart is also a graduate of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

Stewart first got involved with politics during Ralph Metcalfe's campaign for United States Congress. Then in 1977, Stewart ran for office for the first time. She ran for Alderman for Chicago's 8th Ward and won. Stewart was also a part of Harold Washington's 1983 mayoral campaign. Stewart later had a falling out with Harold Washington which symbolizes her independent thinking as a politician.

In 1981, Stewart was sworn in as a State Representative in the Illinois General Assembly, where she served on the Executive and Public Utilities Committees. Stewart was also part of the Rape Study Commission. Since her first visit to South African as an international observer for the 1994 election that made Nelson Mandela president, she has served as the Director of the Illinois Office of Trade and Investment in that country, providing consultation for the public and private sectors. Stewart was also appointed to the South African law project in 2000.

Stewart has also lectured in public administration and was director of Policy and Development for the North Central Regional Education Laboratory. Stewart has served on the board of directors of the Peace Museum and the Paul Hall Boys Club.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Monica Stewart was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on

August 24, 2001, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. State representative and state government official The Honorable Monica Stewart (1952 - ) was elected to the Illinois General Assembly in 1981, where she served on the Executive and Public Utilities Committees. Since 1994, Stewart has served as the director of the Illinois Office of Trade and Investment in South Africa.

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## Restrictions

### Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

### Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

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## Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

- Stewart, Monica, 1952-
- Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)
- Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

- African Americans--Interviews
- Stewart, Monica, 1952---Interviews
- African American women politicians--Illinois--Interviews
- African American women legislators--Illinois--Interviews
- Public officers--Interviews
- Illinois. General Assembly. House of Representatives

Chicago (Ill.)--Politics and government

African American families--Illinois--Chicago

Segregation--Illinois--Chicago

Vassar College

Electricians--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews

Metcalf, Ralph H.

Equal rights amendments--United States

Washington, Harold, 1922-1987

Sex discrimination in employment--Illinois--Chicago

Women government executives--Interviews

Davis, Corneal A., 1900-

Mandela, Nelson, 1918-

International trade

Illinois--Commerce

Foreign trade promotion--Illinois

South Africa--Economic conditions

Ryan, George H.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Illinois

Illinois

# Occupations:

State Representative

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State Government Official

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# HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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# Administrative Information

## Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

## Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monica Stewart, August 24, 2001. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

## Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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# Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

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# Detailed Description of the Collection

## Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monica Stewart, Section A2001\_084\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:30 ?

Illinois legislator Monica Faith Stewart begins by describing her family background, sharing stories passed down from her mother and father's ancestors. She describes her parents and her siblings, and recalls her childhood growing up on Chicago's South Side. Stewart recalls her early awareness of race and segregation in her neighborhood.

African American women politicians--Illinois--Interviews.  
African American women legislators--Illinois--Interviews.  
Public officers--Interviews.  
Illinois. General Assembly. House of Representatives.  
Chicago (Ill.)--Politics and government.  
African American families--Illinois--Chicago.  
Segregation--Illinois--Chicago.  
Vassar College.  
Electricians--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.  
Metcalf, Ralph H.  
Equal rights amendments--United States.  
Washington, Harold, 1922-1987.  
Sex discrimination in employment--Illinois--Chicago.  
Women government executives--Interviews.  
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Mandela, Nelson, 1918-.  
International trade.  
Illinois--Commerce.  
Foreign trade promotion--Illinois.  
South Africa--Economic conditions.  
Ryan, George H.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monica Stewart, Section A2001\_084\_001\_002,  
TRT: 0:30:38 ?

Illinois legislator Monica Faith Stewart reflects on her childhood, describing her personality, aspirations, influences and education. She explains her decision to attend Vassar College and tells of her political awakening there. After graduating, Stewart tells of her first work on a political campaign for U.S. Congressman Ralph Metcalfe. Stewart then describes her own campaigns for alderman of Chicago's 8th Ward and state representative in the Illinois General Assembly.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monica Stewart, Section A2001\_084\_001\_003,  
TRT: 0:31:10 ?

Illinois legislator Monica Faith Stewart details her tenure in the Illinois House of Representatives. She explains her disillusionment with the machinations of Democratic machine politics and how she found herself on the outside of mainstream thought on issues such as the Equal Rights Amendment and congressional redistricting. She tells of how her independent streak brought her to the attention of Harold Washington, who soon became her mentor. Stewart also talks about her involvement with the Illinois Black Caucus and "Catfish Row", and describes specific challenges she faced as a female representative.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monica Stewart, Section A2001\_084\_001\_004,  
TRT: 0:31:09 ?

Illinois legislator Monica Faith Stewart continues to share stories from her tenure as an Illinois representative, describing interpersonal relationships between legislators and recalling her friendship with Corneal Davis. Stewart then details her work on Harold Washington's mayoral campaign and explains why she did not serve in his administration following the election.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Monica Stewart, Section A2001\_084\_001\_005,  
TRT: 0:24:35 ?

Illinos legislator Monica Faith Stewart discusses her work with Nelson Mandela on his historic Presidential election in South Africa. She also details how she was appointed Foreign Trade Representative for the state of Illinois under Governor George Ryan. Stewart explains how her new post allows her to work with governments in South Africa and other nations toward improving their economies. Finally, Stewart assesses her legacy and explains black politicians' unique responsibilities to their constituents.