

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Frank Greene, Jr.

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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>	Greene, Frank, 1938-2009
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Frank Greene, Jr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 31, 2002
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:14:03).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Entrepreneur and investment chief executive Frank Greene, Jr. (1938 - 2009 ) was a Silicon Valley venture capitalist who founded Technology Development Corporation. Greene was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 31, 2002, in Sunnyvale, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_036
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

In the world of business, Frank S. Greene, Jr. is a true renaissance man. He is a venture capitalist, electronics technologist and high-tech business executive. Greene was born on October 19, 1938, in Washington, D.C. to Frank S. Greene, Sr. and Irma Olivia Swygert. Greene has extensively studied electrical engineering, earning a B.S. from Washington University in St. Louis (1961), a M.S. from Purdue University (1962) and a Ph.D. from Santa Clara University (1970).

After completing his master's degree, Greene served in the United States Air Force as an Electronics Officer for four years, during which time he helped develop high performance computers for the National Security Agency. In 1965, he began working in research and development for Fairchild Semiconductor, where he assisted in the development of a patented memory chip design, the fastest at the time. In 1971, Greene became the founding CEO of Technology Development Corporation, a computer software and technical services company that would grow from four employees to over 300 by 1985, with annual revenues of over \$30 million. As an offshoot of Technology Development Corporation, Greene founded Zero One Systems, Inc. in 1985. In 1993, he served as the founding General Partner of New Vista Capital, and the subsequent New Vista Capital Funds. With New Vista, he organized and developed a private equity venture capital fund and acts as a business and financial advisor to start up technology companies.

In addition, Greene has shared his expertise in the classroom, teaching courses in both computer sciences and electrical engineering at Stanford University, Santa Clara University, Howard University and Washington University in St. Louis.

Having sat on the boards of directors of Technology Development Corporation, Networked Picture Systems, Comsis Corporation, Beyond Software, Inc., Greene currently serves on the boards of Broadware, Compliance Coach, Quippe Technologies, ZNYX and Epicentric. In addition, he participates in community activities as a Board Member for the National Conference for Community and Justice and the American Musical Theater of San

Jose and as a member of the Home Savings Community Partnership Council.

Greene was the recipient of the Purdue University Outstanding Electrical Engineer Award in 1999; was inducted into the Silicon Valley Hall of Fame in 2001; and was awarded the title of the Santa Clara University Distinguished Engineering Alumnus in 1993.

Mr. Greene passed away on December 26, 2009.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Frank Greene, Jr. was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on March 31, 2002, in Sunnyvale, California, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Entrepreneur and investment chief executive Frank Greene, Jr. (1938 - 2009 ) was a Silicon Valley venture capitalist who founded Technology Development Corporation.

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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:

Greene, Frank, 1938-2009

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Greene, Frank, 1938-2009--Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

Entrepreneur

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Investment Chief Executive

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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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 Frank Greene, Jr., March 31, 2002. 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 Frank Greene, Jr., Section A2002\_036\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:37 ?

Frank Greene describes his family background. His father, Frank Greene, Sr., was born in Augusta, Georgia in 1909 to a prominent blacksmith. Greene moved to Washington, D.C. in the early 1930s to attend Howard University. Upon graduating, Greene worked for the Bureau of Printing and Engraving. He later worked for the Army Corps of Engineers, where he met and married administrative assistant Olivia Swygert. The couple gave birth to their first child, Frank Green, Jr. on October 19, 1938. In 1947, the Greene Family was transferred to St. Louis, Missouri where the senior Greene worked for the Army of the Materiel Command. Frank Greene's earliest childhood memories include experiencing blackouts in World War II-era Washington, D.C., and picking blackberries behind the family's home. In St. Louis, Greene attended Cole School and Sumner High School, where he excelled in math and science. After graduating in 1957, Greene enrolled at Washington University, where he graduated at the top third of his class in 1961.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Greene, Jr., Section A2002\_036\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:16 ?

As a student at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, Frank Greene was a member of a human rights organization that participated in the early Civil Rights Movement. Greene shares the lessons he learned, as well as the leaders whom he admired like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Reverend Jesse Jackson, and Julian Bond. Greene was involved in Washington University's R.O.T.C. program, and was commissioned into the U.S. Air Force upon graduating in 1961. Upon receiving his M.S. degree in electrical engineering from Purdue University in 1962, Greene was assigned to work for the National Security Agency in Washington, D.C. Greene retired from the Air Force in 1965 and accepted a position at Fairchild Semiconductor's Research and Development Laboratory in San Jose, California. At Fairchild, Greene developed cutting-edge technology, including the fastest and largest memory chip at the time, and the world's fastest computer, the Illiac IV. Greene left Fairchild in 1971 to start Technology Development Corporation.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Greene, Jr., Section A2002\_036\_001\_003, TRT: 0:27:38 ?

While working in Fairchild Semiconductor's Research and Development Laboratory, Frank Greene also pursued his Ph.D. degree in electrical engineering at Santa Clara University in Santa Clara, California. Greene graduated in 1970, and left Fairchild in 1971 to found Technology Development Corporation. The company provided software and technical services to government agencies, including NASA. TDC wrote some of the software for the B-1 bomber, and for the computers controlling the main engines of the Challenger space shuttle. By 1985, TDC had \$30 million in revenue, and was taken public soon thereafter. Greene split the company into two in 1985, creating a spinoff corporation, Zero-One Systems, which he eventually sold. Greene served as the Chief Executive Officer of Network Picture Systems for a little over a year in the late 1980s, and was making plans to start a venture capital fund by 1989. He became a founding partner of New Vista Capital in 1993.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Greene, Jr., Section A2002\_036\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:06 ?

In 1993, Frank Greene became a managing partner of New Vista Capital. The venture capital fund invested in startup companies primarily focused on technology and software development. The companies in his venture capital portfolio included the minority-managed technology company, Epicentric, speak to his ability to deal with all types of people, build strong relationships, and his

willingness to ask for help. In addition, his ability to listen, observe, and learn has contributed to his ability to network, negotiate, and sell. Greene comments on America's business trends and business culture, and feels that business opportunities will continue to open up. However, minorities in particular must focus on seeking out and embracing opportunity, rather than waiting for opportunity to find them. Greene also shares a story about his relationship with his Jewish squash partner.

Video Oral History Interview with Frank Greene, Jr., Section A2002\_036\_001\_005, TRT: 0:18:26 ?

Frank Greene talks about the importance of seeking out opportunity, as well as his personal life and family. Greene enjoys playing tennis and squash, skiing, and traveling with his son and daughter. He comments on the significance and culture of Silicon Valley in California, as well. Greene attributes Silicon Valley's growth to its culture of opportunity, and its residents' willingness to develop new ideas and try new things. He also credits the area's burgeoning technology with building the area's population and economy. Greene reflects upon his life, his legacy, and how he would like to be remembered. He closes the interview by narrating his photographs.