

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with A. Bruce Crawley

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Crawley, A Bruce, 1946-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with A. Bruce Crawley,
Dates:	September 9, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:30:40).
Abstract:	Public relations chief executive and public relations manager A. Bruce Crawley (1946 -) founded the public relations firm Crawley, Haskins & Rodgers, where he serves as president and CEO. Crawley also founded the African American Chamber of Commerce of Philadelphia. Crawley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 9, 2002, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_182
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

A. Bruce Crawley, one of six children, was born on March 24, 1946, in Philadelphia to Edith Marie Jenkins and Joseph McHerrin.

Mostly educated in Catholic schools, Crawley graduated from St. Joseph's Preparatory School in 1963 and St. Joseph's University in 1967. He studied marketing and management and has succeeded admirably in those fields. His first job after earning his bachelor's degree was at First Pennsylvania Bank. Crawley was promoted to posts as director of branch marketing, vice president and advertising director before becoming senior vice president and director of public and investor relations. Crawley won the Bank Marketing Association's Penny Award for outstanding public relations programs and annual reports. He also testified before the U.S. Senate Small Business Subcommittee and the U.S. Senate Banking Committee.

Crawley earned a master's degree in journalism from Temple University in 1983. He left First Pennsylvania Bank in 1989 to found the public relations firm Crawley, Haskins & Rodgers, where he serves as president and CEO. Crawley also founded the African American Chamber of Commerce of Philadelphia.

Crawley has served as chairman of the Philadelphia Urban League and the Public Relations Society of America's National Multicultural Affairs Committee, and as public relations chairman for the Pennsylvania State Caucus of Black Legislators. Other civic commitments include membership on the board of Independence Blue Cross, the National Urban League and Claridge Casino Hotel. Crawley has been politically active as well, serving as campaign manager and consultant for numerous elected officials.

Crawley has one adult child, Christopher Bruce Crawley, and has been married to Pamela Browner-Crawley since 2000.

Crawley was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on September 9, 2002.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with A. Bruce Crawley was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 9, 2002, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Public relations chief executive and public relations manager A. Bruce Crawley (1946 -) founded the public relations firm Crawley, Haskins & Rodgers, where he serves as president and CEO. Crawley also founded the African American Chamber of Commerce of Philadelphia.

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®.

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.

Controlled Access Terms

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

Persons:

Crawley, A Bruce, 1946-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Bieschke, Paul (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Crawley, A Bruce, 1946---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Public Relations Manager

Public Relations Chief Executive

HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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 A. Bruce Crawley, September 9, 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).

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.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with A. Bruce Crawley, Section A2002_182_001_001, TRT: 0:30:15
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A. Bruce Crawley talks about his family background. Crawley was born on March 24, 1946 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Edith Marie Crawley and Joseph McHerrin. Crawley's maternal grandfather was Theodore Roosevelt Crawley from Virginia, and his ancestors include Julia Etta and Lott Carey. Crawley's parents never married, and his father only visited occasionally when he was a child. Crawley's mother worked as a school crossing guard and meter maid while raising six children. She divorced his abusive stepfather when he was fourteen years old and instilled the values of responsibility and independence in her children. Crawley grew up in the Richard Allen projects in North Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where he remembers playing with other children and watching as the neighborhood became dilapidated and gang-infested. Crawley attended Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, a Catholic elementary school in his neighborhood.

Video Oral History Interview with A. Bruce Crawley, Section A2002_182_001_002, TRT: 0:30:15
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A. Bruce Crawley describes his education. Crawley was a good student and received a scholarship to attend St. Joseph's Preparatory School where he learned how to speak proper English, played basketball, and participated in track and the band. Crawley describes having to navigate two different cultural worlds at home and at school. He maintained his friendship with people from the housing projects, including a gang leader who Crawley later helped find a job. When he chose to go on an annual outing to an amusement park with his housing project rather than march in a Memorial Day parade, he was no longer allowed in the marching band. Crawley also did not understand how to apply to college but his friend gave him an application for St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Crawley was accepted, got financial assistance, majored in marketing, and graduated in 1967. Crawley served in the U.S. Army Reserves and his first job after earning his bachelor's degree was at First Pennsylvania Bank.

Video Oral History Interview with A. Bruce Crawley, Section A2002_182_001_003, TRT: 0:29:50
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A. Bruce Crawley talks about gaining an appreciation for his African American heritage through his neighborhood barber. While attending St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Crawley recalls a disagreement over a Western-centric view of history. After sharing a book that Daud gave him asserting the influence of North Africa on Greek culture, the professor spent a lecture lambasting the argument. During his twenty years at First Pennsylvania Bank, Crawley was promoted to several positions including director of branch marketing, vice president and advertising director before becoming senior vice president and director of public and investor relations. Crawley earned a master's degree in journalism from Temple University in 1983. In 1989, he founded the public relations firm Crawley, Haskins & Rodgers, where he served as president and CEO. Crawley also founded the African American Chamber of Commerce of Philadelphia and supports African Americans in politics.

Video Oral History Interview with A. Bruce Crawley, Section A2002_182_001_004, TRT: 0:29:15
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A. Bruce Crawley talks about his career in advertising and public relations. Crawley is proud of his work to establish the United Bank of Philadelphia, the first African American commercial bank in Philadelphia since 1956, through networking and creating a communications plan. Crawley's firm was also actively involved in John Street's City Council and Mayoral campaigns during the 1990s. Crawley shares his views on the importance of African American

businesspeople being politically active. Crawley described the challenges facing black advertising agencies including the difficulty of getting government contracts, large advertising firms taking over small African American firms, and overcoming racial prejudice. Crawley hopes that African Americans will be more attentive to economic integration and spend their money on black businesses in order to help black businesses grow and to allow capital to stay within the black community.

Video Oral History Interview with A. Bruce Crawley, Section A2002_182_001_005, TRT: 0:31:05
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A. Bruce Crawley talks about starting the Leadership Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Michael Nutter, Blondell Reynolds Brown, Mike Haskins, and Vincent Hughes were among the notable people who participated in the Leadership Institute. Crawley reflects upon his legacy and concludes by narrating his photographs.