

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Samuel Myers

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Myers, Samuel L. (Samuel Lloyd), 1919-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Myers,
Dates:	September 16, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:17:00).
Abstract:	University president, economics professor, and education advisor Samuel Myers (1919 - 2021) is the former president of Bowie State University. He served as president of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, where he helped ensure the passage of Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Myers was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 16, 2003, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_228
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

University president, education advisor and economics professor Samuel Myers was born April 18, 1919, in Baltimore, Maryland to David and Edith Myers, Jamaican immigrants. He attended the city's segregated schools, graduating from Frederick Douglass High School in 1936. He enrolled in Morgan State College, but later took a semester off in order to earn money by working on a ship. In order to address the severe poverty that he witnessed on his travels, upon his return to Morgan State, Myers decided to major in the social sciences and graduated with his A.B. degree in 1940. He then earned an M.A. from Boston University in 1942 before being drafted to serve in the U.S. Army during World War II, rising to the rank of captain. After the war, he attended Harvard University, studying under John D. Black and John Kenneth Galbraith, and earned his Ph.D. degree in economics in 1949. Myers began his career as an economist with the Bureau of Labor Statistics at the U.S. Department of Labor in 1950. He then spent thirteen years at Morgan State College as a professor and chairman of the Social Sciences Department, where Earl Graves, Sr., the future founder of *Black Enterprise*, was one of his students. Myers then joined the U.S. State Department as an adviser on inter-American affairs from 1963 to 1967. As president of Bowie State University from 1967 to 1977, Myers successfully diffused a nationally-publicized 1968 student boycott, expanded the curriculum and increased student enrollment. In 1977, Myers was chosen to lead the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, where he helped persuade President Jimmy Carter to issue Executive Order 12232 in support of historically black colleges and lobbied Congress to pass Title III of the Higher Education Act. From 1998, Myers served as chairman of Minority Access, an organization that seeks to recruit, retain and graduate minority students from predominantly white institutions. His numerous honors and awards include the Commandeur de L'Ordre National de Cote d'Ivoire and the National Economic Association's Samuel Z. Westerfield Award. Myers lives in Bethesda, Maryland, with his wife, Marion, and has three adult children, Yvette, Tama and Samuel.

Samuel Myers was interviewed by *TheHistoryMakers* on September 16, 2003.

Myers passed away on January 8, 2021.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Samuel Myers was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 16, 2003, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. University president, economics professor, and education advisor Samuel Myers (1919 - 2021) is the former president of Bowie State University. He served as president of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, where he helped ensure the passage of Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

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:

Myers, Samuel L. (Samuel Lloyd), 1919-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Myers, Samuel L. (Samuel Lloyd), 1919- --Interviews

African American college presidents--Maryland--Bowie--Interviews

African American economists--Maryland--Bowie--Interviews

African American veterans--Maryland--Bowie--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Bowie State College

Occupations:

University President

HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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 Samuel Myers, September 16, 2003. 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 Samuel Myers, Section A2003_228_001_001, TRT: 0:26:00 ?

Samuel Myers was born on April 18, 1919 in Baltimore, Maryland to David Elcanah Myers and Edith Alexandria Reed Myers. His father was born in 1882 in Kingston, Jamaica. He came to the U.S. to study, but dropped out of school and became a seaman in Baltimore. Myers' mother was born in 1892 in Port Antonio, Jamaica, where she attended Titchfield High School. She came to the U.S. to visit her sister, who was a seamstress in Baltimore. There she met Myers' father and they got married. Myers talks about his family's participation in the West Indian community and how visits to Jamaica gave him Black role models that he lacked in the U.S. He was raised in a poor neighborhood in northwest Baltimore near the train tracks where he remembers the smell of sewage. However, his parents provided a supportive environment which emphasized education. Myers attended Benjamin Banneker Junior High School and Frederick Douglass High School where he had good teachers and excelled as a student.

African American college presidents--Maryland--Bowie--Interviews.

African American college presidents.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Myers, Section A2003_228_001_002, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Samuel Myers enjoyed every subject he studied in school. At Frederick Douglass High School in Baltimore, Maryland he was on the debate team, football team, school newspaper and honor roll. Myers lists his siblings and talks about his family's political views during the Great Depression. After graduating from high school in 1936, Myers attended Morgan State University in Baltimore. After his freshman year, he took a semester off to work as a mess boy on a ship that was traveling to India. His father was the cook on the ship. In India, he was exposed to intense poverty and homelessness. When he resumed his studies, he changed his major to social science with a focus in economics. Myers graduated second in his class at Morgan State in 1940. He then decided to pursue his master's degree at Boston University in Boston, Massachusetts and his doctorate at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Myers interrupted his studies at Harvard when he was drafted to World War II, but returned to complete his degree.

African Americans--Education (Secondary)--Maryland--Baltimore.

African American college students--Maryland--Baltimore.

Economics--Study and teaching.

Morgan State College.

African American universities and colleges--Maryland--Baltimore.

Carroll, Edward.

Boston University.

Harvard University.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Myers, Section A2003_228_001_003, TRT: 0:30:40 ?

Samuel Myers was drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II and was one of the few African Americans selected to attend Officer's Candidate School. Myers was stationed in New Orleans, Louisiana before being deployed overseas; there he met his wife and experienced racial discrimination. Though he was a lieutenant, his segregated company was assigned cleaning rather than combat

duties. He was eventually sent overseas to Okinawa Japan. He rose to the rank of captain while in the army reserves in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Myers complete his doctorate degree at Harvard University in Cambridge in 1949. At Harvard, he studied under economists such as John D. Black, John Kenneth Galbraith, Gottfried Haberler and Joseph A. Schumpeter. After briefly working at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, he returned to Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland to teach; he taught there for thirteen years. Myers explains his love of teaching and talks about teaching students, such as HistoryMaker Earl G. Graves, Sr.

World War, 1939-1945.

United States--Armed Forces--African Americans.

Harvard University.

African American college students--Massachusetts--Cambridge.

Economics--Study and teaching.

Galbraith, John Kenneth, 1908-2006.

Black, John D. (John Donald), 1883-1960.

United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Morgan State College.

Graves, Earl G., 1935-.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Myers, Section A2003_228_001_004, TRT: 0:29:50 ?

Samuel Myers taught at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland for thirteen years. He eventually became head of the social science department and helped establish the department's graduate program. In 1963, he left Morgan State to be an advisor to the U.S. State Department in South America. In 1967, he became President of Bowie State University in Bowie, Maryland. He gives a brief history of the university, describes the changes he made as president, and recalls the student protests at Bowie State in 1968. Throughout the protests, he collaborated with the student protesters. He ultimately refused Maryland Governor Spiro Agnew's request to arrest the protesters; instead, he joined the students in their protest. In the wake of the protests, the enrollment at Bowie State increased and the racial demographics of the student body changed. In 1977, Myers retired from Bowie State and became the founding President of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO).

Morgan State College.

African American college teachers--Maryland--Baltimore.

African American universities and colleges--Maryland--Baltimore.

African American universities and colleges--Maryland--Bowie.

African American college administrators--Maryland--Bowie.

Bowie State College--Presidents.

African American college presidents--Maryland--Bowie.

Student movements--Maryland--Bowie.

African American diplomats.

United States. Dept. of State.

Henry, William E. (William Edward), 1900-1996.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Myers, Section A2003_228_001_005, TRT: 0:20:30 ?

Samuel Myers describes his accomplishments as founding president of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education [NAFEO], which included getting legislation passed under the Title III Act of the Higher

Education Act, for the U.S. government to give money to African American colleges each year. Myers talks about retiring from NAFEO and becoming chairman of Minority Access, Inc. He explains the initiatives of the organization and some of their projects. Myers reflects on his hopes for the African American Community, his life, and how he would like to be remembered.

African American universities and colleges.

Federal aid to higher education--United States.

African American college students.

Minority college students--Recruiting.

African Americans--Education (Higher).