

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with James B. Lockhart

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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>	Lockhart, James B., 1936-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with James B. Lockhart,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 19, 2004
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2004
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:00:27).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Corporate executive James B. Lockhart (1936 - ) was the former senior vice president for Budget Rent A Car, and served as vice president of public affairs for the Transamerica Corporation. Lockhart was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 19, 2004, in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2004_135
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

James Blakely Lockhart was born in New York City on May 27, 1936. His family moved to South Carolina, where he attended elementary school, and then moved on to North Carolina, where he graduated from the Palmer Memorial Institute in 1954. After high school, Lockhart attended Boston University, earning his B.S. in business administration in 1957. He remained at the school after graduation, earning his J.D. in 1959.

After earning his law degree, Lockhart served in the U.S. Army, achieving the rank of captain and serving as a judge advocate. Following his discharge in 1963, Lockhart went to work for the Treasury Department as an attorney in the office of the chief counsel, where he remained until 1965. That year, he moved to Chicago, where he worked as an assistant corporation counsel to the City of Chicago. In 1967, he joined the law firm of Rivers, Lockhart, Clayter & Lawrence, where he was a partner until 1971. From there, he was hired as senior vice president for Budget Rent A Car. In 1979, when Transamerica Corporation purchased Budget, Lockhart was promoted within Transamerica to vice president of public affairs. He remained there until his retirement in 1998.

Lockhart has received numerous awards throughout his career, and has been involved in organizations across the country. He is the past chair of the Bay Area Urban League, a founder and past chair of the City Club of San Francisco and he is currently the chairman of the social action committee of Sigma Pi Phi fraternity and vice chair of the Boule Foundation.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with James B. Lockhart was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 19, 2004, in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Corporate executive James B. Lockhart (1936 - ) was the former senior vice president for Budget Rent A Car, and served as vice president of

public affairs for the Transamerica 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:

Lockhart, James B., 1936-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Lockhart, James B., 1936---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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Transamerica Corporation.

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## Occupations:

Corporate 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 James B. Lockhart, August 19, 2004. 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 James B. Lockhart, Section A2004\_135\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:47  
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James B. Lockhart was born on May 27, 1936 at French Hospital in New York, New York to Margaret Elizabeth Blakely and Edgar Lee Lockhart. His mother grew up in Kingtree, South Carolina, was strong-willed, lived in New York City as a young woman, and later was a cosmetologist and schoolteacher in Kingtree. His father was born in rural Louisville, Georgia, moved to New York City as a young man to escape farm life and worked as a postal clerk. His paternal grandfather was a painter and successful businessman and funded the one-room, all-black Lockhart School in Louisville, which Lockhart later attended while his father served in World War II. Lockhart's parents never married. For his first eight years, he was raised by his father and stepmother,

Juliet Mann Lockhart. Then he moved to Kingstree and lived with his mother and stepfather, Samuel Lilliewood. There, he attended Tomlinson High School. Lockhart spent summers at Camp Atwater in North Brookfield, Massachusetts and in New York City with his father.

Video Oral History Interview with James B. Lockhart, Section A2004\_135\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:28  
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James B. Lockhart worked on his maternal family's tobacco farm in Kingstree, South Carolina as a child which motivated him to escape rural life. He was also encouraged to excel by his mother and teachers at Tomlinson High School in Kingstree. Lockhart enjoyed travelling between his maternal and paternal families and looked forward to summers with his father in New York City, where he saw Arthur Godfrey's radio broadcast. His mother acted in plays and produced beauty shows in Kingstree, and in the eighth grade Lockhart starred in a school production of J.M. Barrie's 'The Little Minister.' He attended Alice Freeman Palmer Memorial Institute in Sedalia, North Carolina during his high school years on a work scholarship. There, Lockhart played on the football team, served as bell-ringer to call students to chapel, and was impressed by the school's founder, Charlotte Hawkins Brown. Lockhart also talks about his half-siblings in Louisville, Georgia and the children in his New York City neighborhood.

Video Oral History Interview with James B. Lockhart, Section A2004\_135\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:14  
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James B. Lockhart first became interested in a legal career when he helped his cousin study case law in Kingstree, South Carolina. At Alice Freeman Palmer Memorial Institute, he was required to speak extemporaneously during chapel meetings; met famous visitors, including Nellie Lutcher, Nat King Cole, and Illinois Jacquet; and graduated in 1954. He obtained an undergraduate business degree at Boston University in Boston, Massachusetts in 1957 and a J.D. from its School of Law, where classmates included Maynard Jackson and Barbara Jordan, in 1959; Although Boston University was known for admitting African American students, Lockhart's advisors did not support or encourage him. He was drafted into the U.S. military and became a Judge Advocate General. In 1959, he married his first wife Reba Noble and was stationed in Chicago, Illinois, where their son Mark was born. He was appointed City of Chicago assistant corporation counsel in 1965, represented the fire and police departments, and became a precinct captain.

Video Oral History Interview with James B. Lockhart, Section A2004\_135\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:15  
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James B. Lockhart began work at the Bureau of Public Debt office in Chicago, in 1963 and was hired by the City of Chicago Corporation as assistant counsel in 1965, where he worked with HistoryMaker Earl Neal. He was in a Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce meeting when Mayor Richard J. Daley demanded that department stores create a plan to revitalize Chicago's declining downtown area. He was joined Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and HistoryMaker Reverend Jesse L. Jackson's Operation Breadbasket and worked on the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Redress Committee under William Robert Ming. Lockhart entered private practice in 1967 at Rivers, Lockhart, Clayter & Lawrence. He then focused on franchise law and worked for Midas Inc. He was hired by Budget Rent a Car System, Inc. as chief general counsel in 1971 to develop their relationship with Sears Roebuck. He moved to San Francisco, California in 1979 to become a vice president of public affairs at Transamerica Corporation.

Video Oral History Interview with James B. Lockhart, Section A2004\_135\_001\_005, TRT: 0:29:36  
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James B. Lockhart declined a judgeship offered by a Chicago ward committeeman to remain in private practice. He induced the Federal Trade Commission to bring charges against rival car rental companies who had violated restraint of trade laws in airport markets while employed as chief general counsel at Budget Rent a Car System, Inc. In 1979, he initially declined the position as vice president of public affairs at Transamerica Corporation out of concern that he would be a token African American executive but accepted after negotiations. While there, he encouraged the board to investigate predatory lending and tried to include African American and Latino communities in Transamerica's outreach. After moving from Chicago to San Francisco, Lockhart appreciated the change in culture and climate. He worked to fundraise for government officials, including Mayor Dianne Feinstein; developed youth dietary programs; and partnered with Reverend Cecil Williams of GLIDE Memorial United Methodist Church.

Video Oral History Interview with James B. Lockhart, Section A2004\_135\_001\_006, TRT: 0:31:07  
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James B. Lockhart presented awards at a Grand Prix tennis tournament sponsored by Transamerica Corporation and met Arthur Ashe and Stan Smith. He retired in 1998 and has volunteered for Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity. He chaired its Grand Social Action Committee and developed its foundation, which provides scholarships and mentorship to young African American men. At the time of the interview, Lockhart had recently been appointed vice chair of the fraternity board. Lockhart has grandchildren and two sons. Lockhart shares a story about Eppie Lederer, who was married to his boss, James Lederer, at Budget Rent a Car. He reflects upon his life and legacy, and describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community and how he would like to be remembered. Lockhart concludes by narrating his photographs.