

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Wayman Smith

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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>	Smith, Wayman, 1940-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Wayman Smith,
<b>Dates:</b>	December 18, 2006
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2006
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:38:32).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Corporate executive, municipal court judge, and city alderman The Honorable Wayman Smith (1940 - 2020) was the first African American to work in the Corporate Affairs Department of Anheuser-Busch, where he served as vice president of corporate affairs. He was also senior partner of The Smith Partnership, P.C. and chairman of Howard University's Board of Directors. Smith was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 18, 2006, in St. Louis, Missouri. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2006_180
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

City councilman, judge and Anheuser Busch executive Wayman Flynn Smith, III, was born June 18, 1940, in St. Louis, Missouri; his father, Wayman, II, and his mother, Edith Maux Smith were college educated. Wayman Smith, II, was the first black certified public accountant in Missouri and later served as a city councilman. Growing up in the area where Dick Gregory and Grace Bumbry were raised, Smith attended Washington Elementary School, Sumner High School, and graduated from Soldan International Studies High School in 1957. Smith began his collegiate career at Washington University but graduated from Monmouth College in New Jersey in 1962. Smith went on to graduate from Howard University Law School in 1965.

Mentored by St. Louis attorneys Margaret Bush Wilson and Frankie Freeman, Smith worked on housing legislation for the Missouri Commission on Human Rights in 1966; this legislation designated the real estate office as a place of public accommodation. Smith entered into private practice in 1968; in 1970, he was appointed a City Court Judge, serving until 1975. Smith then served on the St. Louis City Council from 1975 to 1987 and was once president of the council's Black Caucus. Pressure on Anheuser-Busch by Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr.'s Operation PUSH, resulted in Anheuser-Busch's hiring of Smith in 1980 as the first African American member of the Corporate Affairs Department. Working with Augie Busch, Smith created a \$200 million minority business development program. Smith eventually became vice president of corporate affairs for Anheuser-Busch Companies, and a member of the board of directors of Anheuser Busch, Inc.

Smith served as a member of the board of directors of Howard University from 1989 to the time of his HistoryMakers interview, and chairman from 1991 to 1995. Smith was senior partner at The Smith Partnership, P.C., St. Louis, Missouri, and a partner in the law firm of Wilson, Smith & McCullin. Smith's numerous civic board memberships include: the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation; National Urban League; National

Association of Sickle Cell Disease, Inc.; St. Louis Symphony; and St. Louis Metropolitan YMCA. Chairman of the Board of Regents of Harris Stowe State College, Smith was also listed in *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who in Black America*. Smith held memberships in the American Bar Association, Missouri, Mound City, and National Bar Association, Missouri Chapter.

Smith passed away on September 15, 2020.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Wayman Smith was conducted by Larry Crowe on December 18, 2006, in St. Louis, Missouri, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Corporate executive, municipal court judge, and city alderman The Honorable Wayman Smith (1940 - 2020) was the first African American to work in the Corporate Affairs Department of Anheuser-Busch, where he served as vice president of corporate affairs. He was also senior partner of The Smith Partnership, P.C. and chairman of Howard University's Board of Directors.

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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:

Smith, Wayman, 1940-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Smith, Wayman, 1940- --Interviews

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African American businesspeople--Interviews

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African American executives--Interviews

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African American lawyers--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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Saint Louis (Mo.)

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Anheuser-Busch Companies

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**Occupations:**

Political Leader

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Corporate Executive

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**HistoryMakers® Category:**

BusinessMakers|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 Wayman Smith, December 18, 2006. 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 Wayman Smith, Section A2006\_180\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:03 ?

The Honorable Wayman Smith was born on June 18, 1940 to Edythe Meaux Smith and Wayman Smith, Jr. in St. Louis, Missouri. His maternal grandparents moved from Lebanon, Kentucky to St. Louis in the early 1900s. Smith's maternal grandfather, Fredrick C. Meaux, was a postal carrier there at the time of the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. In St. Louis, Smith's father was born in 1915, and his mother was born in 1917. They both attended segregated Charles H. Sumner High School, which Smith later attended in the 1950s. His mother earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. A writer, she worked for the Pittsburgh Courier before returning to St. Louis to raise her children. There, Smith's younger sister, Robin Smith Patel, became an anchor on the KMOV-TV station, while Smith shared a law practice with his younger brother, Christopher Smith, Sr. Smith also talks about his family members' reluctance to share childhood stories or details about their family history.

African American businesspeople--Interviews.

African American executives--Interviews.

African American lawyers--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Wayman Smith, Section A2006\_180\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:51 ?

The Honorable Wayman Smith's maternal and paternal grandfathers were both postal workers, while his grandmothers were homemakers. His parents, Edythe Meaux Smith and Wayman Smith, Jr., attended college out of state, because of segregation at the University of Missouri. His father attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he pledged Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. He later became Missouri's first African American certified public accountant. Two years after his father earned his degree, Smith's mother graduated from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. In St. Louis, Smith began his education at the segregated Washington Elementary School, and mostly stayed within the confines of his neighborhood. From 1955, Smith attended the majority white Soldan High School, where he was interviewed about school integration for 'The Huntley-Brinkley Report' news program. As a child, Smith preferred science and mathematics to literature. He also participated in student government.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Wayman Smith, Section A2006\_180\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:42 ?

The Honorable Wayman Smith began his high school education at Charles H. Sumner High School in St. Louis, Missouri, and graduated from St. Louis' Soldan High School in 1957. He then matriculated at Washington University in St. Louis. After two years, he transferred to Monmouth College in West Long Branch, New Jersey, where his grades improved. Smith met Senator Stuart Symington through his father, Wayman Smith, Jr., who served on St. Louis' Board of Aldermen. Symington encouraged Smith to study at Howard University School of Law and work as an elevator operator in the U.S. Capitol. There, Smith met and observed senators like Edward M. Kennedy, Strom Thurmond and Jacob K. Javits. He recalls his surprise at the southern senator's friendly conduct towards him. At Howard University School of Law, he studied under faculty like Herbert O. Reid, Sr. and Julian R. Dugas, and helped draft the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Smith also recalls when Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. retired to Bimini to evade allegations of slander.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Wayman Smith, Section A2006\_180\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:09 ?

The Honorable Wayman Smith participated in the drafting of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 while a student at Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C. Upon graduating in 1965, Smith moved to New York City to work for the Wall Street accounting firm of Peat, Marwick, and Mitchell. In 1966, he joined the alumni chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity in Jefferson City, Missouri. There, he also served on the Missouri Commission on Human Rights, where he helped develop fair housing legislation for Columbia, Missouri. Then, Smith opened a private law practice with his brother, Christopher Smith, Sr., in St. Louis. At this time, he also worked with attorneys Anne-Marie Clarke and Margaret Bush Wilson. From 1970 to 1975, Smith served as a city court judge. With the help of educator C.B. Broussard, he secured William Clay, Sr.'s seat on St. Louis' Board of Aldermen in 1975. In 1980, Smith's former client, Anheuser-Busch Companies, hired him as vice president of corporate affairs to address issues of discrimination.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Wayman Smith, Section A2006\_180\_001\_005, TRT: 0:29:27 ?

The Honorable Wayman Smith served as vice president of corporate affairs for Anheuser-Busch Companies in the 1980s. In this capacity, Smith established the corporation's commitment to the African American community, by supporting organizations like Black Entertainment Television, the National Bar Association and the United Negro College Fund. Smith also recalls the development of Anheuser-Busch's Great Kings and Queens of Africa program under the leadership of Henry H. Brown. He also talks about Yusef Jackson and Jonathan Jackson's acquisition of a Chicago-based Anheuser-Busch distributorship. At the time of the interview, Smith represented East St. Louis' Mayor Carl Officer. Smith talks about development opportunities in East St. Louis, where crime and poverty led residents to leave the city in the 1960s. Smith remembers the founding of the Executive Leadership Council, and his friendship with Black Enterprise founder Earl G. Graves, Sr. He concludes this part of the interview by reflecting upon his legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Wayman Smith, Section A2006\_180\_001\_006, TRT: 0:12:20 ?

The Honorable Wayman Smith served as chairman of the board of Harris-Stowe State University in St. Louis, Missouri, and of the Howard University board in Washington, D.C. At the time of the interview, his daughter, Kymberly Smith Jackson, was an assistant U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of California. His

sister, Robin Smith Patel, was an established television anchor. Smith and his brother, Christopher Smith, Sr., practiced law together in St. Louis. Smith reflects upon his life and law career, including his parents' support. He also remembers his father's death. Smith concludes the interview by describing how he would like to be remembered.