

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Goldston, Nathaniel R., 1938-2017
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III,
Dates:	February 25, 2008 and March 26, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007 and 2008
Physical Description:	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:04:37).
Abstract:	Food service executive and food service entrepreneur Nathaniel R. Goldston, III (1938 - 2017) was the founder of Gourmet Services, Inc. and the Atlanta Chapter of 100 Black Men of America. Goldston was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 25, 2008 and March 26, 2007, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_112
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Founder of Gourmet Services, Inc., Nathaniel Russell Goldston, III was born on October 20, 1938, in Omaha, Nebraska, to Nathaniel and Mary Elizabeth Goldston. Goldston's mother worked in food service in the public school system and his father at the local hotels and restaurants. Goldston received his B.S. degree in business administration with a concentration in hotel and restaurant management from the University of Denver in 1962.

Goldston worked at a food service company for ten years after graduating from college; he held positions such as district manager, regional vice president, and senior vice president. After being denied a promotion to chief executive officer due to racial discrimination, Goldston left in 1974 to start his own business, Gourmet Services, Inc. in Charlotte, North Carolina. Gourmet Services, Inc. grew to include contracts at six black colleges and employ 300 individuals; in its first year, the company generated \$2.3 million in revenues. In 1976, Goldston met former Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson, who encouraged him to move Gourmet Services, Inc. to Atlanta. The business continued to grow after relocating, and eventually Gourmet Services, Inc. became the nation's largest African American-owned food service management companies, boasting 2,500 employees; it was ranked fourteenth among the nation's top 50 food service companies.

In 1986, Goldston founded the Atlanta Chapter of 100 Black Men of America along with twenty-one other local businessmen and civic leaders. In 1989, Goldston became the 100 Black Men of America's second national president. Gourmet Services, Inc. has donated millions of dollars in scholarships to students attending historically black colleges and universities; Goldston also established the Mary E. Goldston Foundation to provide scholarships to deserving African American students.

Goldston passed away on July 4, 2017.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III was conducted by Denise Gines on February 25, 2008 and March 26, 2007, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Food service executive and food service entrepreneur Nathaniel R. Goldston, III (1938 - 2017) was the founder of Gourmet Services, Inc. and the Atlanta Chapter of 100 Black Men of America.

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:

Goldston, Nathaniel R., 1938-2017

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Goldston, Nathaniel R., 1938-2017 --Interviews

African American businesspeople--Interviews

African American executives--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Food Service Entrepreneur

Food Service Executive

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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 Nathaniel R. Goldston, III, February 25, 2008 and March 26, 2007. 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 Nathaniel R. Goldston, III, Section A2007_112_001_001, TRT: 0:29:10 ?

Nathaniel R. Goldston, III was born on October 20, 1938 in Omaha, Nebraska to Mary Burton Goldston and Nathaniel R. Goldston, Jr. His maternal grandparents moved to Omaha from Mobile, Alabama when his mother was young. Goldston's paternal grandparents were divorced, and he visited his grandfather, a minister, in Chicago each summer. Goldston's paternal grandmother was Native American, and struggled with alcoholism. In Omaha, his father excelled in track at Technical High School, while his mother attended Omaha Central High School across the street. Goldston grew up in Omaha's housing projects, where his neighbors included future athletes Margaret King and Bob Gibson. He was captain of the safety patrol at Kellom Elementary School, and won three bicycles through a sales contest on his Omaha Star paper route. Goldston also worked for his father, a banquet manager, and helped with the family catering business. His mother was a cafeteria worker, and a waitress at the nightclub where Goldston's uncle was a chef.

African American businesspeople--Interviews.

African American executives--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III, Section A2007_112_001_002, TRT: 0:28:40 ?

Nathaniel R. Goldston, III grew up in a public housing project in Omaha, Nebraska. When he was twelve years old, his family moved to a house owned by his maternal grandfather. There, Goldston worked at his father's catering business, and served clients like Warren Buffett. At sixteen years old, Goldston left his father's business to work for the Union Pacific Railroad as a chair car porter during the summers. During this time, he attended Omaha Central High School. In addition to golfing on the city's public courses, Goldston played football, and earned an athletic scholarship to Doane College in 1956. After his sophomore year of college, he moved to Colorado to enter the University of Denver's hotel and restaurant management program. There, his tuition was paid by an anonymous donor. Although Denver was largely removed from the Civil Rights Movement, Goldston often talked about its importance with the brothers of his integrated fraternity.

Video Oral History Interview with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III, Section A2007_112_001_003, TRT: 0:19:08 ?

Nathaniel R. Goldston, III joined Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and the integrated Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity while attending the University of Denver in Colorado. After graduating in 1962, he worked as a banquet manager for Dillon Hotel Company, and studied at night at the University of Denver College of Law. He briefly worked in accounting at the Allied Chemical Corporation, but left to join Catering Management, Incorporated, where he became a senior vice president. When the founders sold the business, they recommended Goldston as president, but he was denied the position based on his race. Instead, Goldston founded Gourmet Services, Inc. in 1975. The company served college campuses, public schools, corporations and prisons, and employed minority-owned businesses. Gourmet Services, Inc. partnered with the Aramark Corporation for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia. At the time of the interview, Gourmet Services, Inc. employed two thousand employees, and was contracted by eight universities.

Video Oral History Interview with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III, Section A2007_112_002_004, TRT: 0:29:28 ?

Nathaniel R. Goldston, III transferred from Doane College to University of

Denver, which at the time was one of only three universities offering a program in hotel and restaurant management. After graduating in 1962, Goldston was hired by a friend's food service company, Catering Management, Incorporated, where he was paid well and had flexible hours. He was initially assigned as the food service director of Lincoln University, and was later promoted to regional vice president. Goldston sought contracts with historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), which were an untapped market at the time. When the company was sold, Goldston left to found Gourmet Services, Inc., where he built a clientele from his previous contacts. After securing contracts with six HBCUs, Goldston launched his company with \$3 million in sales. His friends, Mayor Maynard Jackson and Alderman Marvin Arrington, convinced him to move to Atlanta, Georgia, which was convenient for travel, and had little industry competition.

Video Oral History Interview with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III, Section A2007_112_002_005, TRT: 0:28:28 ?

Nathaniel R. Goldston, III recruited managers from Catering Management, Incorporated to join Gourmet Services, Inc., which expanded to service airports and government functions. To contend with growing competition, Goldston developed an unlimited feeding option for university contracts. For the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, his company partnered with Aramark Corporation, the top food service company in the country, and continued to operate joint contracts from that time. Goldston expanded into private catering and hotel management, including the historic St. James Hotel in Selma, Alabama. He describes the board of Gourmet Services, Inc., which included executives Charles Teamer, Sr. and J. Veronica Biggins. He also talks about younger managers like his son and daughter, Nathaniel R. Goldston IV and Kimberly Goldston Martin, who both served as executives at Gourmet Services, Inc. Goldston describes his plans for the future of the company, including a food service job training program for prison inmates.

Video Oral History Interview with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III, Section A2007_112_002_006, TRT: 0:28:11 ?

Nathaniel R. Goldston, III catered a meeting of the 100 Black Men, Inc. of New York, and was inspired to found a chapter in Atlanta, Georgia. The 100 Black Men of Atlanta, Inc. created Project Success, a college scholarship program, as a response to low graduation rates at Atlanta's S.H. Archer High School. They organized a fundraising dinner party with a performance by singer Phyllis Hyman and a football game at the Georgia Institute of Technology, and both events sold out. Dillard Munford, the founder of Majik Market, convinced the Gannett Foundation to donate sixty thousand dollars. Project Success changed over the years to select students from several schools based on applications. The program also began working with students from the fourth grade. Other chapters of 100 Black Men created similar programs. After the chapters unified into 100 Black Men of America, Inc., Atlanta hosted the first national conference in 1986.

Video Oral History Interview with Nathaniel R. Goldston, III, Section A2007_112_002_007, TRT: 0:21:32 ?

Nathaniel R. Goldston, III was elected to serve as the second national president of 100 Black Men of America, Inc. in 1988. During his term, he funded the organization's national convention partly out of his own pocket, and mandated that each chapter host student attendees from local programs like Project Success. Goldston estimates that five hundred students had attended college with help from 100 Black Men of Atlanta, Inc.'s Project Success. He describes their

other initiatives, including a program that helps parents develop credit to purchase homes, and another that teaches young people about financial management. The organization also partnered with the Atlanta University Center Consortium to pair college-aged mentors with younger students. Goldston reflects upon his life and legacy; his advice for aspiring businesspeople; and how he would like to be remembered. He concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.