

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Ray Miller

Overview of the Collection

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| Repository: | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com |
| Creator: | Miller, Ray, 1949- |
| Title: | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Ray Miller, |
| Dates: | April 2, 2012 |
| Bulk Dates: | 2012 |
| Physical Description: | 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:53:11). |
| Abstract: | State senator and state assemblyman The Honorable Ray Miller (1949 -) was regarded as the "Father of Head Start Funding" in Ohio because of his sponsorship of legislation that established the nation's first state-level funding for the Head Start Program. Miller was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 2, 2012, in Columbus, Ohio. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| Identification: | A2012_095 |
| Language: | The interview and records are in English. |

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Retired State Senator Ray Miller was born in Hampton, Virginia on April 6, 1949. Miller graduated from East High School in Columbus, Ohio. He then attended Ohio State University and graduated with his B.S. degree in political science and his M.A. degree in public administration in 1971 and 1973, respectively. Miller was hired as the vice president for Columbus State Community College from 1975 to 1978. In 1976, he was appointed assistant director of legislation for the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees union (AFSCME)/Ohio Council 8. Miller then worked as a deputy special assistant to President Jimmy Carter from 1979 to 1980. After working for the White House, he returned to his vice president post at Columbus State Community College from 1975 to 1978. Miller returned to the post again from 1981 to 1986 and finally from 1987 to 1993. He was elected to the Ohio State House of Representatives in 1981 and again in 1998. In all, Miller served sixteen years in the Ohio House of Representatives, becoming dean of the state legislative body during his tenure. Miller was also appointed president of the National Urban Policy Institute in 1997 and president/CEO of the Professional Employment Services of America, a year later. In 2003, he was elected to the Ohio State Senate, becoming the fourteenth African American elected to the Ohio Senate in the state's 205-year history. Miller also served as the minority whip of the Senate before his retirement in 2010. During his tenure as state senator, Miller was chief sponsor for legislation that helped to create the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, the Community Mental Health Act of 1988 and the Ohio Commission on Minority Health, where he served as founder and chairman. Additionally, Miller is regarded as the "Father of Head Start Funding" in Ohio because of his sponsorship of legislation that established the nation's first state-level funding for the Head Start Program.

Miller also authored legislation which established the Institute for Urban Education at Central State University. He also established a 25% set aside for minority health programs from Ohio's \$10 billion Tobacco Settlement Agreement. Miller is also the chief sponsor of legislation that led to the creation of the Ohio African-American Hall of Fame.

He has garnered numerous awards for his service, including Trailblazer Award from the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus; International Pathfinder Award from the World Congress on the Family; a Distinguished Legislator of the Year Award from the American Public Health Association and the President's Award from the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Miller is the president of The Center for Urban Progress in Columbus, Ohio. He and his wife, Marty, have one son, Ray III.

Raymond Miller was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 2, 2012.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Ray Miller was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 2, 2012, in Columbus, Ohio, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. State senator and state assemblyman The Honorable Ray Miller (1949 -) was regarded as the "Father of Head Start Funding" in Ohio because of his sponsorship of legislation that established the nation's first state-level funding for the Head Start Program.

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:

Miller, Ray, 1949-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Miller, Ray, 1949- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Ohio. General Assembly. Senate

Ohio. General Assembly. House of Representatives

Occupations:

State Senator

State Assemblyman

HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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 Ray Miller, April 2, 2012. 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 The Honorable Ray Miller, Section A2012_095_001_001, TRT: 1:29:34 ?

Ray Miller describes his family background. His mother, Inez Smith Miller, was born March 19, 1930 in Hampton, Virginia to a family of farmers. Her entire family lived together on Semple Farm Road in Hampton and attended Ebenezer Baptist Church there. Inez was a domestic worker; and her sister, Elnora Bellhops, has been researching their family history. Miller's father, Inus Ray Miller Sr. was born in 1926 in Glasgow, Kentucky. He served in the U.S. Air Force, and Miller recalls moving frequently as a child; first from Hampton, Virginia to San Antonio, Texas; then Wichita Falls, Texas; and finally to Lockbourne, Ohio; where his parents divorced, due, in part, to his father's alcoholism. The remaining members of Inus, Sr.'s family live in Indianapolis, Indiana. Miller talks about discovering late in life that Inus, Sr. was not in fact his biological father. He does not know who his biological father is, and has not sought to find out.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Ray Miller, Section A2012_095_001_002, TRT: 2:28:31 ?

Ray Miller recalls his childhood. After his parents divorced, Miller's father, Inus Ray Miller Sr., moved to Indianapolis, Indiana. Miller lived with his mother, Inez Smith Miller, in Columbus, Ohio, where she remarried. Miller recalls visiting his father later in life who he describes as intelligent, but suffering from alcoholism and emphysema. He recalls his earliest childhood memories from Hampton, Virginia and San Antonio, Texas. His father was in the U.S. Air Force, and Miller describes how he was promoted only to be demoted because of his alcoholism and recklessness. Miller describes the sights, sounds, and smells of growing up and his love of newspapers. He disliked his stepfather, George Emerson, his pets that included a spider monkey and his children. He attended Booker T. Washington School in Wichita Falls, Texas; and Greenlawn and Fair Avenue Elementary Schools, Franklin and Champion Junior High schools, and East High School in Columbus, Ohio.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Ray Miller, Section A2012_095_001_003, TRT: 3:28:37 ?

Ray Miller talks about his school years in Columbus, Ohio. Having moved frequently while living with his father, Inus Ray Miller Sr., he was not able to form many strong relationships and was an introverted child. After his parents divorced, his mother, Inez Smith Miller, married George Emerson, a talented musician. Inez had two boys with Emerson; the older died of leukemia, and the younger, also a musician, later became addicted to crack cocaine and was murdered years later, when Miller was an Ohio State Representative. Miller also talks about the Columbus jazz scene. In fifth grade at Fair Avenue Elementary School in Columbus, he participated in the 1961 National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. Miller recalls President John F. Kennedy's assassination and the 1963 March on Washington. While his family was not particularly interested in the ongoing Civil Rights Movement, at age sixteen, he began attending meetings of the Federal Model Cities Program's Model Neighborhood Assembly

in Columbus, Ohio.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Ray Miller, Section A2012_095_001_004, TRT: 4:29:34 ?

Ray Miller attended East High School in Columbus, Ohio from 1964 to 1968. At age sixteen, Miller became involved with the Federal Model Cities Program, running as a delegate for the local Columbus Metropolitan Area Community Action Agency. Although he lost the election, he was appointed to the Neighborhood Assembly by its leaders, including Curtis Brooks of Chicago, Illinois. Miller talks about his box coach's mentorship and losing his younger stepbrother to leukemia. His high school guidance counselor suggested he enlist in the U.S. Army, but he instead became intent on attending Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. He recalls classism at East High School, and how his principal suspended him until his band teacher and Holocaust survivor and later brother-in-law, Inre Szekfu, intervened on his behalf. Miller and his friends formed a band called the Four Mints, with whom he toured the Southeast and opened locally for artists like Curtis Mayfield. He also played for East High School's Hi-Y basketball team.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Ray Miller, Section A2012_095_001_005, TRT: 5:28:42 ?

Ray Miller recounts his years at Ohio State University (OSU) in Columbus, Ohio. After graduating from Columbus's East High School in 1968, he enrolled in the local Franklin University, before transferring to Ohio State University the following spring. There, he became active in the small African American student community and pledged Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, though he dropped out of the pledge class when his academics began to suffer. Miller talks about those advisors who were helpful as well as a racist Latin teacher. Around the time of the 1970 Kent State University shooting in nearby Kent, Ohio, Miller recalls confronting members of the National Guard patrolling OSU's campus and knocking out a student who attempted to access a campus building Miller was blocking during a protest. Miller also talks about OSU black student leader, John Evans, whom he describes as brilliant. He recounts encountering him decades later working as a doorman in California.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Ray Miller, Section A2012_095_001_006, TRT: 6:28:42 ?

Ray Miller talks about his early career as a state legislative aide in Columbus, Ohio. Upon receiving his bachelor's degree from Ohio State University (OSU) in Columbus in 1971, he applied to a legislative fellowship program that combined a graduate degree in public administration from OSU. He also married Marty Miller on December 18, 1971. For his fellowship, he was assigned to Ohio General Assembly Majority Floor Leader William Mallory of Cincinnati and Majority Whip Richard F. Celeste. Miller quickly grew frustrated with Mallory, who he says avoided tackling tough issues, and worked increasingly closely with Celeste, who Miller felt worked harder. Miller found himself shut out by the Black Elected Democrats of Ohio, until State Representative C.J. McLin took him under his wing. In 1976, Miller became a lobbyist for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), a government employees' union, before teaching at Columbus State Community College from 1981 to 1986.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Ray Miller, Section A2012_095_001_007, TRT: 7:28:56 ?

Ray Miller describes working for the White House in Washington, D.C. He reflects upon the positive and negative effects of school desegregation in

Columbus, Ohio, and describes working for the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, a government employees' union. In 1979, Ohio State Representative C.J. McLin encouraged Miller to apply for the job of Director of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance. He accepted the position with some reluctance and began working for President Jimmy Carter as a liaison to members of the U.S. Congress. Miller negotiated with members of the Congressional Black Caucus, including HistoryMakers U.S. Congressman Charles Rangel and Louis Stokes, and tried to communicate with them about what the Carter administration had to offer. Miller felt that Carter had difficulty playing politics. He recalls his dealings with Ron Brown, later U.S. Secretary of Commerce, who was then representing Senator Edward Kennedy in his 1980 presidential campaign.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Ray Miller, Section A2012_095_001_008, TRT: 8:30:35 ?

Ray Miller reflects upon his White House career as Deputy Special Assistant to President Jimmy Carter. During the Iran hostage crisis (1979-1981), Miller met with comedian and HistoryMaker Dick Gregory to discuss strategies for the release of the hostages. Miller reflects upon the Carter administration's relationship with the black community, and lists some of the prominent African Americans in politics at the time, including HistoryMakers Togo D. West Jr., Andrew F. Brimmer, Vernon Jordan, Jr. and Reverend Jesse L. Jackson. He also compares Carter to HistoryMaker Andrew Young. Forseeing Carter's 1980 electoral defeat, Miller was one of the few White House staff who prepared for his career afterwards, accepting a position with the Ohio Chamber of Commerce in Columbus, Ohio. Miller concludes by reflecting upon the presidential administration of HistoryMaker Barack Obama. Miller feels that despite Obama's racial identity, he has done less for African Americans than Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton.