

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Maurice F. Rabb

PERSON

Rabb, Maurice F.

Alternative Names: Dr. Maurice F. Rabb; Maurice Farnandis Rabb

Life Dates: August 7, 1932-June 6, 2005

Residence: Chicago, Illinois

Occupations: Ophthalmologist

Biographical Note

Ophthalmologist Dr. Maurice F. Rabb, Jr., is internationally known for his pioneering work in cornea and retinal vascular diseases. He achieved many firsts as an African American physician. Rabb was born in 1932 in Kentucky, the son of Dr. Maurice Rabb, Sr., a physician and civil rights activist, and Jewel Rabb, a teacher. Because African Americans were banned from attending the University of Louisville, Rabb spent his first two years of undergraduate study at Indiana University. In 1951, when segregation ended in Kentucky, he transferred to the University of Louisville, becoming one of the first African American students admitted there. He graduated from the University of Louisville School of Medicine in 1958.

Rabb did postgraduate training at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, New York, and studied ophthalmology at New York University. He completed his residency in ophthalmology at the University of Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary, where he was the first African American chief resident. After his residency, Rabb established a private practice specializing in retinal diseases in downtown Chicago, something that African Americans were not doing at the time. In his notable career, he served as director of the Illinois Eye Bank and Research Laboratory of the University of Illinois Medical School, director of the Fluorescein Angiography Laboratory at the Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago, and as co-director of the Sickle Cell Center at the University of Illinois Medical Center.

Most recently, he served as a professor of ophthalmology at the University of Illinois College of Medicine, chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at Mercy Hospital, president of the Mercy Hospital Medical Staff, and medical director of Prevent Blindness America. Rabb was the author of numerous articles and a collaborator on several medical films. He was married to Madeline Murphy Rabb, an artist and art consultant. They have two sons, Maurice and Christopher.

Dr. Rabb passed away on June 6, 2005.

Related Entries

Louisville Central High School Magnet Career Academy [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

diploma

Indiana University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Louisville [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Louisville School of Medicine [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1998 to 2003]

Chief Resident

Illinois Eye Bank [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Director

University of Illinois College of Medicine [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1982 to 1986]

Research Director

Michael Reese Hospital [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Fluorescein Angiography Laboratory Director

University of Illinois College of Medicine [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Sickle Cell Center Co-Director

University of Illinois College of Medicine [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Professor

Mercy Hospital [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology

Mercy Hospital [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

President of the Medical Staff

Prevent Blindness America [EMPLOYEE**Of**]

[from ? to ?]

Medical Director