

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Jennifer Jones

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Jones, Jennifer Lynn, 1960-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jennifer Jones,
Dates:	August 29, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	3 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:12:05).
Abstract:	Municipal court judge The Honorable Jennifer Jones (1960 -) is the first African American woman to serve as judge in the state of Kansas, and is a former Assistant District Attorney of Muskogee, Oklahoma, where she developed a specialty in prosecuting sex offense and juvenile cases. Jones was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 29, 2002, in Wichita, Kansas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_172
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Judge Jennifer Lynn Jones holds the distinction of being the first African American woman to serve as a judge in the State of Kansas. Born in Wichita Kansas on September 25, 1960 to Nannie Hatch and Leamon Jones, both Oklahoma natives, Jennifer was the fifth of seven children. She attended Wichita's Southeast High School where she graduated in 1978.

After high school, Jones enrolled at Emporia State University and then transferred to the University of Missouri at Columbia where, in 1982, she received her bachelor's degree in Social Work. Determined to continue her education, Jones was accepted to the University of Oklahoma Law School. While there, she was a member of many clubs and societies and served as President of the Black Law Students Association. Jones received her J.D. degree in May, 1985. Following law school, Jones began her career in the office of the District Attorney of Muskogee, Oklahoma. While working for the District Attorney, she developed a specialty in prosecuting sex offenses, child abuse and juvenile cases. In May 1988, she returned to Wichita for a position with the law firm of Bruce and Davis. She became a partner at the firm in 1992. That same year, Jones ran for and was elected Sedgwick County District Court Judge, making her the first African American woman to hold the position of judge in the State of Kansas.

In January of 2001, Judge Jones was appointed to the Municipal Court for the City of Wichita, Kansas. Although the duties of this position demand a lot of her time and energy, she strives to remain active in her community, church and the lives of her two children. Judge Jones also has the honor of being selected by the Kansas Supreme Court to serve as a member of the Commission on Judicial Qualifications. The commission reviews ethical violations of judges throughout the State of Kansas.

Jennifer Jones was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 29, 2002.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Jennifer Jones was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 29, 2002, in Wichita, Kansas, and was recorded on 3 Betacame SP videocassettes. Municipal court judge The Honorable Jennifer Jones (1960 -) is the first African American woman to serve as judge in the state of Kansas, and is a former Assistant District Attorney of Muskogee, Oklahoma, where she developed a specialty in prosecuting sex offense and juvenile cases.

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:

Jones, Jennifer Lynn, 1960-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Jones, Jennifer Lynn, 1960---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Wichita (Kan.)

Occupations:

Municipal Court Judge

HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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 Jennifer Jones, August 29, 2002. 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 Jennifer Jones, Section A2002_172_001_001, TRT: 0:29:15 ?

Jennifer Jones was born on September 25, 1960 to Nan and Leamon Jones in Wichita, Kansas. Her mother was born in Checotah, Oklahoma; her father was

born in Rennesville, Oklahoma. Jones' maternal ancestors were from Mississippi; her paternal ancestors hailed from Texas. When Jones was a young girl, her father was employed as a sanitation worker and her mother was a domestic worker. In later years, her father became an aircraft worker at Boeing and her mother worked as a teacher's aide. Jones grew up in a lower middle class neighborhood in Wichita, Kansas where she attended Fairmont Elementary School, Munger School, Curtis Middle School, and Southeast High School, graduating in 1978. She describes her memories of childhood along with her grade school and high school experiences. Jones also talks about her decision to attend Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas to study rehabilitation services.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jennifer Jones, Section A2002_172_001_002, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

Jennifer Jones enrolled at Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas in 1978. While at Emporia State, Jones realized that she no longer wanted to pursue a career in rehabilitation services. She transferred to the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri, graduating with a bachelor's degree in social work in 1982. During Jones' senior year at Mizzou, she did her practicum at Fulton State Hospital in Fulton, Missouri working with children as well as criminally insane men in the Biggs Forensic Unit. While working with the children and accompanying them to juvenile court, Jones decided to become a lawyer. Jones graduated from the University of Oklahoma College of Law in 1985. She describes her law school experience and the mentorship of Professor David Hall. After law school, Jones worked at the District Attorney's Office in Muskogee, Oklahoma from 1985 to 1988. Jones then returned to Wichita, Kansas in 1988 and began working for the law firm of Bruce and Davis as an associate. She became a partner at the firm in 1992.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Jennifer Jones, Section A2002_172_001_003, TRT: 0:13:10 ?

Jennifer Jones continues to describe her experience at the law firm of Bruce and Davis where she became a partner in 1992. That same year, Jones successfully ran for District Court Judge in Wichita, Kansas, and became the first African American judge in the State of Kansas. Jones describes her experience in juvenile court and her commitment to bringing stability as a judge to juvenile court which customarily had a high degree of judge turnover. She served as a judge for two terms before losing in an election for a third term in 2000. After the loss, Jones was appointed as a judge in the Municipal Court of Wichita, Kansas.