

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Sampson Davis

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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>	Davis, Sampson
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Sampson Davis,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 16, 2003
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2003
<b>Physical Description:</b>	3 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:28:03).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Emergency physician Dr. Sampson Davis (1973 - ) co-wrote a book chronicling he and his friends' lives titled, "The Pact: Three Young Men Make A Promise and Fulfill A Dream." They also started a health education and mentoring foundation called The Three Doctors. Davis was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 16, 2003, in Newark, New Jersey. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2003_134
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Dr. Sampson Davis was born in Newark, New Jersey, on January 19, 1973. He was the fifth of six children, and after graduating from University High, a magnet school in Newark, he went on to attend Seton Hall University. Davis was accepted into the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, and received his medical degree in 1999 at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Things were not easy for Davis growing up. He lived in an area of high crime and poverty, surrounded by drug use and gangs. Davis, along with his friends Rameck Hunt and George Jenkins, decided they wanted something more from life and set out to become doctors. They formed a tight-knit group, studying together throughout high school and later attended college together. All three were accepted to medical school, and they all succeeded in their shared dream to become doctors. Today, Davis is the attending emergency room physician at Beth Israel Medical Center in Newark, the same hospital where he was born. He also tours the country speaking to youths about the opportunities available to them other than gangs.

Davis, Hunt and Jenkins are known as the Three Doctors, and they have written a book about their experiences, *The Pact: Three Young Men Make A Promise and Fulfill A Dream*, which spent six weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list. He is also a co-founder of the Three Doctors Foundation, which brings health education and mentoring to inner-city youth. Davis and the other doctors have been featured in *People*, *Reader's Digest* and *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. In 2000, Davis and his friends were honored with an Essence Award.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Sampson Davis was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 16, 2003, in Newark, New Jersey, and was recorded on 3 Betacame SP videocassettes. Emergency physician Dr. Sampson Davis

(1973 - ) co-wrote a book chronicling he and his friends' lives titled, "The Pact: Three Young Men Make A Promise and Fulfill A Dream." They also started a health education and mentoring foundation called The Three Doctors.

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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:

Davis, Sampson

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Davis, Sampson--Interviews

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Emergency physicians--Interviews

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African American educators--Interviews

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African American civic leaders--Interviews

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Community activists--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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## Occupations:

Emergency Physician

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers

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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 Dr. Sampson Davis, June 16, 2003. 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 Dr. Sampson Davis, Section A2003\_134\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:26 ?

Dr. Sampson Davis was born on January 19, 1973 in Newark, New Jersey. His mother, Ruthener Lawson Davis, was born on June 5, 1932 in Longwood, South Carolina and his father, Kenneth O'Neal Davis, was born on December 12, 1926 in Hemingway, South Carolina. Davis' grandmother had died young, leaving his mother to care for her family when she was eight. Davis' father fought in the U.S. Army during World War II, and got married around 1947. In the 1950s, Davis' parents moved to Newark, New Jersey, where his father fueled airplanes and his mother raised their six children. Davis grew up in the Dayton Street Projects in inner-city Newark and began selling drugs and stealing to raise money after his parents' separation. He reflects on the importance of his relationship with his father and the pressure to commit crimes in his inner city neighborhood with no role models. As a juvenile, Davis decided to turn his life around after being arrested for armed robbery. He enrolled at University High School in 1985.

Emergency physicians--Interviews.

African American educators--Interviews.

African American civic leaders--Interviews.

Community activists--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Sampson Davis, Section A2003\_134\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:48 ?

Dr. Sampson Davis attended University High School in Newark, New Jersey. There he met HistoryMakers Dr. George Jenkins and Dr. Rameck Hunt. The three of them skipped class one day and hid in the library to escape a security guard. There, they overheard a seminar on careers in medicine and made a pact that the three of them would attend medical school and become doctors together. Though Davis had no intention of becoming a doctor, he attended Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey and the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (which was then part of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey), where he received his M.D. degree in 1999. Davis reflects on the difficulty of medical school and the educational disadvantages he had to overcome. He also reflects on how his pact with Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Hunt prevented him from quitting school. After graduation, Davis began his residency at the hospital where he was born, Beth Israel Medical Center in Newark, New Jersey.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Sampson Davis, Section A2003\_134\_001\_003, TRT: 0:28:49 ?

Dr. Sampson Davis completed his residency in Emergency Medicine at the hospital where he was born, Beth Israel Medical Center in Newark, New Jersey. Davis reflects on the importance of returning to his childhood community to practice medicine, returning as a positive role model, and how community involvement can prevent emergencies before they occur. In 1999, Davis established The Three Doctors Foundation with HistoryMakers Dr. George Jenkins and Dr. Rameck Hunt to give back to the community by providing education and role models for inner-city youth. Davis also co-wrote the book "The Pact" with Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Hunt about their childhood and their experience becoming doctors. Davis ends the interview by describing his hopes and concerns for the African American community and reflecting upon his legacy.