

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Charles Tribbett

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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>	Tribbett, Charles
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Charles Tribbett,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 21, 2005
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2005
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:57:59).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Executive recruiter Charles Tribbett (1955 - ) was named by Fortune magazine as one of the fifty most powerful African American executives in America. Tribbett has served as the co-leader Russell Reynolds Associates' CEO and Board Services Practice, specializing in CEOs, boards of directors, and diversity assignments. Tribbett was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 21, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2005_073
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Executive recruiter Charles Tribbett III was born on October 25, 1955, in Alexandria, Louisiana, to Charles Tribbett, Jr. and Dorris Morris Tribbett. Raised in the Chatham and Pill Hill neighborhoods of Chicago, Illinois, Tribbett attended Neil Elementary School, St. Dorothy's Catholic School, and graduated from Mendel Catholic High School in 1973. He received his B.S. degree in political science from Marquette University in 1977 and his J.D. degree from the University of Virginia Law School in 1980.

Starting his career as a securities attorney, Tribbett worked for Reid and Priest; Mayer, Brown, and Platt; and Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom. Tribbett became a partner at Abraham and Sons, a Chicago-based brokerage and investment management group, before joining the executive search firm of Russell Reynolds Associates in 1989. He is now co-leader of the firm's CEO and Board Services Practice, specializing in CEOs, boards of directors, and diversity assignments.

A former chairman of the board for Chicago's McCormick Place convention center, in 2005 Tribbett was elected to the board of directors for the Northern Trust Company. *Fortune* magazine named Tribbett one of the 50 most powerful African American executives.

Charles and his wife Lisa reside in Chicago and have 3 adult children.

Tribbett was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 21, 2005.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Charles Tribbett was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 21, 2005, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Executive recruiter Charles Tribbett (1955 - ) was named by Fortune magazine as one of the fifty most powerful African American executives in America. Tribbett has served as the co-leader Russell Reynolds Associates' CEO and Board Services Practice, specializing in CEOs, boards of directors, and diversity assignments.

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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:

Tribbett, Charles

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Tribbett, Charles--Interviews

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African American executives--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews

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Executive search firms

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African American lawyers--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews

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African American businesspeople--History

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African American families--Illinois--Chicago

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Education--Illinois--Chicago

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Marquette University

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University of Virginia

---

Washington, Harold, 1922-1987

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McCormick Place (Chicago, Ill.)

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Diversity in the workplace--United States

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Minority executives--United States

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Russell Reynolds Associates, Inc.

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Mfume, Kweisi

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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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Russell Reynolds Associates, Inc.

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**Occupations:**

Executive Recruiter

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**HistoryMakers® Category:**

BusinessMakers

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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 Charles Tribbett, March 21, 2005. 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 Charles Tribbett, Section A2005\_073\_001\_001, TRT: 0:28:10 ?

Executive recruiter Charles Tribbett describes his family's background, detailing his grandfather's real estate business and his father's dentist practice. Tribbett recalls memories from his childhood, from his earliest memories catching catfish in Louisiana, to the Chatham neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, where he grew up. Tribbett also describes his childhood personality and interests.

African American executives--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

Executive search firms.

African American lawyers--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

African American businesspeople--History.

African American families--Illinois--Chicago.

Education--Illinois--Chicago.

Marquette University.

University of Virginia.

Washington, Harold, 1922-1987.

McCormick Place (Chicago, Ill.).

Diversity in the workplace--United States.

Minority executives--United States.

Russell Reynolds Associates, Inc.

Mfume, Kweisi.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Tribbett, Section A2005\_073\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Executive recruiter Charles Tribbett details his schooling, describing his transformation from a troublemaker into a straight-A student in college and law

school. Tribbett recalls his primary and secondary school days spent in Catholic schools in Chicago, and explains that he did not become a serious student until his final year at Mendel Catholic High School. Tribbett then talks about his great academic success at Marquette University, where he developed an interest in political science and economics. He explains how he transferred this knowledge to law school at the University of Virginia, where he also excelled and was recruited to be a corporate lawyer in New York immediately following graduation.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Tribbett, Section A2005\_073\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:10 ?  
Executive recruiter Charles Tribbett details his career as a corporate attorney in Chicago in the 1980s, when he became acquainted with Mayor Harold Washington. Tribbett explains how this connection led to his appointment as the chair of McCormick Place and to the boards of numerous community service organizations. Tribbett then explains why he left the legal field to become an executive recruiter at Russell Reynolds Associates. Tribbett describes his efforts to increase executive diversity in corporate America, an ideology he articulates in book about leadership traits he co-authored.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Tribbett, Section A2005\_073\_001\_004, TRT: 0:31:09 ?  
Executive recruiter Charles Tribbett details his philosophy about what makes a good corporate leader and shares his opinions about diversification in corporate America. Tribbett then talks about more of his work at Russell Reynolds Associates, including how he recruited Kweisi Mfume to become CEO of the NAACP. Tribbett discusses his hopes and concerns for the African American community, considers his legacy, and articulates the nature of his job and how it is perceived by the public.