

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Wayne M. Hewett

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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>	Hewett, Wayne M., 1964-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Wayne M. Hewett,
<b>Dates:</b>	January 3, 2007
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2007
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:45:48).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Corporate chief executive Wayne M. Hewett (1964 - ) was the Vice President and CEO of Momentive Performance Management for the General Electric Company. Hewett was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 3, 2007, in Wilton, Connecticut. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2007_001
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Corporate executive Wayne Hewett was born on October 28, 1964 in Kingston, Jamaica. Hewett grew up in a house of educated professionals; his father, Audley Maylor Hewett, was a chief executive officer, and his mother, Lorna Shelly Hewett, was a registered nurse and business owner. In the 1970s, the family moved to Miami, Florida where in 1981, Hewett received his diploma from Palmetto High School. He entered Stanford University that same year where he received his B.S. degree in industrial engineering in 1985 and continued his studies to earn his M.S. degree in industrial engineering in 1986.

Hewett began his career working as a member of the Manufacturing Management Program with assignments at GE Simulation & Control Systems and GE Aircraft Engines. In 1988, he graduated from the program and joined GE Corporate Audit Staff as a staff auditor. During the 1990s, he was promoted to Executive Audit Manager of GE Corporate in 1992, and then joined GE Power Generation as manager of Engineering Design Systems in 1993. In 1994, he moved to GE Silicones as Manager of Materials and Logistics, and in 1995, he moved again to GE Plastics as General Manager of Petrochemicals and Global Sourcing.

In 2001, Hewett was named Vice President of General Electric Company and served as president of GE Plastics Pacific, located in Shanghai, China, and President and CEO of GE Toshiba Silicones, located in Tokyo, Japan. Here, he led his teams and divisions to double-digit growth. In 2006, Hewett became the president and chief executive officer of Apollo Management, a private investment firm. He is a member of several organizations including the American Foundation for The University of the West Indies and the Special Olympics of New York.

Hewett resides in Connecticut with his wife and family.

Hewett was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on January 3, 2007.

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# Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Wayne M. Hewett was conducted by Shawn Wilson on January 3, 2007, in Wilton, Connecticut, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Corporate chief executive Wayne M. Hewett (1964 - ) was the Vice President and CEO of Momentive Performance Management for the General Electric Company.

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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:

Hewett, Wayne M., 1964-

Wilson, Shawn (Interviewer)

Burghelea, Neculai (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Hewett, Wayne M., 1964- --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:

Corporate Chief Executive

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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 Wayne M. Hewett, January 3, 2007. 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 Wayne M. Hewett, Section A2007\_001\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:52  
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Wayne M. Hewett was born on October 28, 1964 in Kingston, Jamaica to Lorna James Hewett and Audley Hewett. His mother was raised in Kingston by her grandmother, Louise Alberga, after her immediate family immigrated to New York City. She met Hewett's father while performing with the National Pantomime dance theater in Trinidad, where he was competing on the Jamaican national track team. Hewett's father was also a respected businessman, who was once invited to run for parliament by Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley.

Hewett's father traveled frequently for his career as an insurance salesman, but was nonetheless a strong presence in Hewett's childhood. Hewett was involved in sports programs as a boy, and attended the Mona Preparatory School during his primary school years. He performed well on standardized tests, and was admitted to Kingston College, a preparatory high school where his relatives were alumni. When Hewett was thirteen years old, his family moved to Miami, Florida.

Video Oral History Interview with Wayne M. Hewett, Section A2007\_001\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:21  
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Wayne M. Hewett grew up in a privileged family in Jamaica; but, after moving to Miami, Florida, was no longer among the elite class. He was ostracized by both his white and black peers at Miami Palmetto Senior High School, and primarily socialized with members of Miami's West Indian community. Although pursuing higher education was an uncommon practice in Jamaica, Hewett aspired to attend college. His father, Audley Hewett, was acquainted with a number of university track coaches from his time as president of the Jamaican Amateur Athletic Association, and Hewett was offered several scholarships through his father's connections. However, he opted to study industrial engineering at Stanford University, hoping to escape his family's influence. He matriculated at sixteen years old, and searched the town of Stanford for fellow Jamaicans, without success. Eventually, Hewett expanded his social circle beyond the West Indian community, befriending students of all backgrounds at Stanford University.

Video Oral History Interview with Wayne M. Hewett, Section A2007\_001\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:36  
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Wayne Hewett attended Stanford University in Stanford, California, where he joined the Stanford African Student Association and deejayed on KZSU Radio. He befriended students of all backgrounds, and was occasionally criticized by his African American peers for associating with whites. The track coach, Brooks Johnson, was acquainted with Hewett's father, and helped Hewett adjust to life on the West Coast. Hewett studied industrial engineering, and joined the National Society of Black Engineers. He was named a fellow to the National GEM Consortium, a minority association that funded his graduate education at Stanford University. While completing a master's degree, Hewett was mentored by Brian Wescott, who introduced him to General Electric (GE). GE offered a strong management training program, but did not recruit at Stanford University, so Hewett attended a recruitment session at a school near his parents' home in Miami, Florida. He entered GE's manufacturing management training program in 1986.

Video Oral History Interview with Wayne M. Hewett, Section A2007\_001\_001\_004, TRT: 0:31:10  
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Wayne M. Hewett spent a summer working at Schlumberger Limited before entering the management training program at General Electric (GE). He worked for one year on simulation and control systems in Daytona Beach, Florida; and for one year manufacturing aircraft engines near Boston, Massachusetts. Hewett was then promoted to the corporate audit staff, where he became the first African American executive audit manager. He caught the attention of executive Dave Calhoun, who offered him a position at GE Industrial Systems, where Hewett managed seven hundred drafters in an engineering design systems position. Based on Calhoun's praise, Dave Cote offered Hewett a job with GE Silicones, where he implemented the Six Sigma management strategy. Hewett also joined GE's African American Forum, which connected him with other

black executives. From 2000 to 2002, Hewett worked for GE Plastics in Tokyo, Japan. He was flying to New York City for a meeting when the World Trade Center was attacked on September 11, 2001.

Video Oral History Interview with Wayne M. Hewett, Section A2007\_001\_001\_005, TRT: 0:30:20  
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Wayne M. Hewett ran the GE Toshiba Silicones Co., Ltd. in Tokyo, Japan for two years, and was then promoted to head General Electric's (GE) plastics operations in Asia. He moved the headquarters from Tokyo to take advantage of the growing market in Shanghai, China. Hewett used his experiences as an immigrant to the United States to inform his approach to the Chinese culture, and had a very successful first year, generating over \$1 billion in revenue. Later, due to his success leading GE Advanced Materials, Hewett was promoted to president and CEO when the division was acquired by the Apollo Global Management, LLC private equity firm, and renamed Momentive Performance Materials, Inc. During his career, Hewett was mentored by African American business leaders like Lloyd G. Trotter, Arthur H. Harper and Robert Wood; and was active with the Executive Leadership Council in Washington D.C. He also contributed to the American Foundation for the University of the West Indies and the Special Olympics of New York.

Video Oral History Interview with Wayne M. Hewett, Section A2007\_001\_001\_006, TRT: 0:14:29  
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Wayne M. Hewett was an executive at General Electric, and often began conversations about race and diversity with the company's other African American businesspeople. He describes his hopes for the African American employees of General Electric and the larger black community; and remembers conversations with his children about race, prejudice and persistence. Hewett reflects upon his racial identity, and concludes the interview by describing his plans for the future.