

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Wayne Riley

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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>	Riley, Wayne, 1959-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Wayne Riley,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 16, 2007
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2007
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:08:51).
<b>Abstract:</b>	College president Wayne Riley (1959 - ) was the president and CEO of Meharry Medical College. Riley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 16, 2007, in Nashville, Tennessee. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2007_092
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Dr. Wayne Joseph Riley, President and CEO of Meharry Medical College was born on May 3, 1959 in New Orleans, Louisiana to Jacqueline Cerf Riley and Dr. Emile Edward Riley. His late father, who grew up with Andrew Young, Dr. Walter Young and Ellis Marsalis spoke of his days at Meharry Medical College. Raised in San Francisco, Buffalo and New Orleans, Riley attended San Gabriel School, Arch Angel Elementary School and St. Francis Cabrini Elementary School. In 1977, Riley graduated from Brother Martin High School in New Orleans as the top student and a member of the National Honor Society. He also was an active member of Youth for (Ernest “Dutch”) Morial for mayor. At Yale University, Riley, an officer in the Black Student Alliance, marched in Washington against South African apartheid in 1979. He graduated in 1981 with his B.S. degree in medical anthropology.

Riley was hired by Mayor Dutch Morial as part of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). By 1986, Riley, at age 26, was elevated to deputy mayor of New Orleans, while taking pre-med courses at Xavier University. In 1991, Riley enrolled in Morehouse School of Medicine. There, under the leadership of Dr. Hugh Glouster and Dr. Louis Sullivan, he served twice as class president and earned his M.D. degree in 1993. Riley completed his residency training in internal medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in 1996. He also holds a M.P.H. degree in Health Systems Management from the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and was awarded an M.B.A. from Rice University’s Jesse H. Jones School of Management in 2002.

Riley was named vice president and vice dean for health affairs and governmental relations for Baylor College of Medicine. There, Riley was instrumental in the development of Baylor’s Community Economic Development program, the M.D./J.D. joint degree program with the University of Houston Law Center and serves on the faculty of the Rice’s Jones Graduate School of Management. He was the first African American corporate officer in Baylor’s one hundred plus year history. In 2004, Riley was named host of Baylor’s *TV Healthline*, which is distributed to more than 80 television markets. In 2005, Riley was elected to the American College of Physicians’ Board of Governors as Governor-elect for the Texas Southern region of the ACP (American College of

Physicians). In 2006, Riley was named the tenth President and CEO of Meharry Medical College, his father's alma mater and the nation's largest private, historically black institution dedicated to educating healthcare professionals. As president, he manages an alliance with Vanderbilt University Medical Center and the funding of Nashville General Hospital. Riley, the recipient of many honors, received the 2006, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Riley is married to Dr. Charlene M. Dewey, and they have two children.

Riley was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 16, 2007.

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# Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Wayne Riley was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 16, 2007, in Nashville, Tennessee, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. College president Wayne Riley (1959 - ) was the president and CEO of Meharry Medical College.

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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:

Riley, Wayne, 1959-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Riley, Wayne, 1959- --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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Meharry Medical College

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## Occupations:

College President

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Healthcare Executive

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers|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. Wayne Riley, March 16, 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.

## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Wayne Riley, Section A2007\_092\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:49 ?

Wayne Riley was born on May 3, 1959 in New Orleans, Louisiana to Jacqueline Cerf Riley and Emile Riley, Jr. Riley's maternal ancestors were African American, French, Cajun and Creole, and farmed sugarcane on their land in Jeanerette, Louisiana. In New Orleans, his mother attended Valena C. Jones Elementary School and St. Mary's Academy, a segregated, all-girls Catholic high school. Riley's paternal grandfather was a truck driver and a jazz musician. As he and Riley's paternal grandmother had limited schooling, they instilled the value of education in Riley's father, who was born in New Orleans in 1934. After graduating from Joseph S. Clark High School, Riley's father attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he studied zoology. He attempted to join the football team, but an injury prevented him from playing. Riley's parents married secretly, before his father left for Meharry Medical College. Drs. Arnold E. Darensbourg and C.C. Haydel delivered Riley at New Orleans' Flint-Goodridge Hospital.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Wayne Riley, Section A2007\_092\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:28 ?

Wayne Riley's father, Emile Riley, Jr., graduated from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee in 1960, one year after Riley's birth. Because of his father's medical career, Riley lived briefly in San Francisco, California; Heidelberg, Germany; and Buffalo, New York, where Riley and his sister integrated a Catholic school. In 1969, his family returned to New Orleans, Louisiana, where he grew up with his four younger siblings in Pontchartrain Park, a middle-class, African American neighborhood. His paternal grandfather, who lived nearby, was a barber and worked at the Rudderex Manufacturing Company clothing factory. In addition to building model vehicles and playing marbles, Riley enjoyed reading, and focused on his academics. He continued his schooling at St. Gabriel the Archangel School, which had recently been integrated. His family also attended New Orleans' annual Mardi Gras celebrations. Riley enjoyed New Orleans' jazz, as well as the music of the Commodores, The Isley Brothers and The O'Jays.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Wayne Riley, Section A2007\_092\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:04 ?

Wayne Riley grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana, where his father practiced medicine at Flint-Goodridge Hospital. He attended Martinez Kindergarten School, St. Gabriel the Archangel School, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini School and then Brother Martin High School. There, Riley served on the newspaper and yearbook staffs, and the student council. Motivated by his father to attend an Ivy League school, Riley matriculated at Yale University, where he majored in anthropology. Upon graduating in 1981, he returned home to consider his career path, and New Orleans' Mayor Ernest Morial encouraged him to apply to work at city hall. That fall, Riley joined Morial's administration in the Office of Employment, Training and Development. He then assisted Vernel Bagneris in running Morial's reelection campaign, successfully mobilizing African American voters. As a result of his efforts, Morial appointed Riley as his public liaison assistant. In this role, he accompanied the mayor to civic functions and board meetings.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Wayne Riley, Section A2007\_092\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:09 ?

Wayne Riley served as the public liaison assistant to Mayor Ernest Morial of

New Orleans, Louisiana, and met renowned civil rights leaders like Andrew Young and Vernon E. Jordan, Jr. at civic functions. Riley grew close to Morial, who appointed him as the deputy mayor of New Orleans in 1985. In that position, Riley managed the intergovernmental relations of Morial's administration. In 1986, after Morial completed his second mayoral term, Riley began his graduate studies at the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine in New Orleans. While he aspired to attend Meharry Medical College, his father's alma mater, he earned his medical degree from Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia under the mentorship of Dr. Louis Sullivan. He was trained in internal medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, and remained there as an instructor, until Dr. Peter Traber asked him to join Baylor's senior management team as the vice president of external affairs.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Wayne Riley, Section A2007\_092\_001\_005, TRT: 0:29:14 ?

Wayne Riley met his wife, Charlene M. Dewey, while they were students at Morehouse College of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2004, Riley became the vice president of external affairs at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas. Days before Hurricane Katrina, Riley convinced his parents, who were living in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, to move in with his family in Houston. Riley describes the failings of New Orleans' flood control system, and the impact of the hurricane on city culture and longstanding institutions like Dooky Chase's Restaurant. In 2006, after Riley's father passed away, Heidrick and Struggles International Inc. began its search for the presidency of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee. While Riley initially refused the interview offer, search executive J. Veronica Biggins asked him to reconsider. Riley then sought advice from Drs. Louis Sullivan and Risa Lavizzo-Mourey before agreeing. One of eight finalists, Riley became Meharry's president designate in November 2006.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Wayne Riley, Section A2007\_092\_001\_006, TRT: 0:30:55 ?

Wayne Riley succeeded Dr. John E. Maupin, Jr. as president of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee in 2006. Riley describes the history and mission of the college, as well as the school's research endeavors in areas such as HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, women's health and sickle cell anemia. At the time of the interview, Meharry Medical College was fully accredited, and received financial support from federal institutions like the National Institutes of Health; the State of Tennessee; and Meharry Medical College alumni. Riley had two daughters, Erin Riley and Alexis Riley, with his wife, Charlene M. Dewey, who was a physician and fellow graduate of Morehouse College of Medicine. Riley describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community, and reflects upon his life and legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Wayne Riley, Section A2007\_092\_001\_007, TRT: 0:09:12 ?

Wayne Riley narrates his photographs.