

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lois Conley

PERSON

**Conley, Lois, 1946-**

**Alternative Names:** Lois Conley;

**Life Dates:** July 29, 1946-

**Place of Birth:** St. Louis, Missouri, USA

**Residence:** St Louis, Missouri

**Work:** Saint Louis, Missouri

**Occupations:** Museum Chief Executive

## Biographical Note

Museum chief executive Lois Diane Conley was born in St. Louis, Missouri on July 29, 1946. Conley was born to Leo and Emma Conley, as the second oldest of eight children. Conley attended St. Louis's Waring Elementary School and Vashon High School. After graduating from high school in 1964, Conley attended Saint Louis University where she earned her B.A. degree in communications and her M.A. degree in education.

While researching the black history of St. Louis, Missouri, Conley discovered that notable African Americans, like Madame C.J. Walker and Miles Davis influenced St. Louis history. She became inspired to memorialize their impact and went back to school for museum studies. Conley earned a graduate certificate in museum studies from the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 2001 and founded The Griot Museum of Black History and Culture, the second African American history wax museum in the country. The museum was initially named the Blackworld History Wax Museum, and has since gone through several names before settling on The Griot Museum of Black History and Culture. Under Conley's leadership the museum's exhibitions have expanded beyond just wax sculptures to include a slave ship replica.

Conley has received several awards and honors consisting of the Young Women's Christian Association "Special Leader Award," the Older Women's League "Women of Worth Award," the Coalition of 100 Black Women's "Village Builders' Award" and the Monsanto Y's "Zealot Award."

Lois Conley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on October 19, 2007.

## Related Entries

**Vashon High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Waring Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Saint Louis University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**Saint Louis University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**University of Missouri - St. Louis** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**St. Louis University** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Director of Administration**

**Griot Museum of Black History** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1997 to ?]

**Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**