

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Joyce Moore Gray

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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>	Gray, Joyce M.
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Moore Gray,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 13, 2008
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2008
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:57:19).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Education consultant and principal Joyce Moore Gray (1943 - ) was the first African American principal in the history of the State of Utah. She was also founder and president of her own educational consulting company, Jam G Consulting, Inc. Gray was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 13, 2008, in Murray, Utah. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2008_046
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Educational specialist Joyce Moore Gray was born in Portsmouth, Virginia, in 1943. As a child, Gray played the clarinet and was encouraged by her mother and music instructor to become a teacher. She attended Southwestern Elementary School and graduated from Crestwood High School in 1961. Gray received a scholarship to attend Virginia State University where she graduated with her B.S. degree in music. She went on to earn her M.A. degree in education from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

After graduating from college, Gray began her career as a music teacher in Clark County School District, Las Vegas, Nevada. In 1981, she moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, where for one year she taught instrumental music at West Lake Junior High School, Granite School District. The following year, Gray was appointed to serve as that district's Multicultural Programs Coordinator. While serving in that capacity, she also filled the position as Assistant Principal at Central Junior High School.

In 1984, Gray broke the color barrier in educational administration by becoming the first African American principal in the State of Utah. She was selected to be the Principal of Arcadia Elementary School in the Granite School District, Taylorsville, Utah. After six years, Gray continued to defy the odds when she was appointed Principal of Granite School District's Roosevelt Elementary School. During her second year at that school, she was approached by an Assistant Superintendent in Salt Lake City School District and requested to apply to be principal of an intermediate school. In 1992, Gray became Principal of Bryant Intermediate School, Salt Lake City School District, Salt Lake City, Utah. Bryant Intermediate School became one of the nation's top schools and was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. Gray and her school team were invited to the White House to receive this award. During their Washington, D.C. visit, they met President and Mrs. Bill Clinton.

In 1995, Gray's ambition led her to enroll in a doctorate program in Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Utah. She continued to pursue professional goals and applied for a high school principalship.

Another moment in history occurred in 1996 when Gray was selected to be principal of West High School, Salt Lake City School District. Thus, Gray became the first African American high school principal in the State of Utah. Gray's outstanding leadership skills led her to become Utah Principal of the Year in 1999.

Gray earned her doctorate in education from the University of Utah in 2001. She went on to become Director for Career and Technical Education in Salt Lake City School District for two years prior to her retirement in 2005. Gray is now an Educational Consultant and Founder and President of her own company, Jam G Consulting, Inc.

Gray has earned numerous awards during her professional journey. These include: the NAACP Rosa Parks Award, UASCD Educator of The Year, NCCJ Community Award, YWCA Outstanding Achievement Award in Education and the UWEAA President's Award. Her work in the Utah community included: Board member of the United Way of the Greater Salt Lake Area; YWCA Board member; Chair, Utah Governor's Black Advisory Council; Board of Lay Editors for *Salt Lake Tribune's* "Common Carrier" column; Minister of Music and Director at New Pilgrim Baptist Church; Youth Director, NPBC; Chartering President for the Utah Alliance of Black School Educators. Gray is also a chartering member of Upsilon Beta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She currently serves as that chapter's President.

Gray and her husband, Lloyd, reside in Murray, Utah. They have three children and eight grand children

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Joyce Moore Gray was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 13, 2008, in Murray, Utah, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Education consultant and principal Joyce Moore Gray (1943 - ) was the first African American principal in the history of the State of Utah. She was also founder and president of her own educational consulting company, Jam G Consulting, Inc.

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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:

Gray, Joyce M.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

**Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews  
Gray, Joyce M.--Interviews

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African American women teachers--Interviews

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African American women educators--Interviews

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African American school principals--Interviews

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Educational consultants--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:**

Education Consultant

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Principal

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**HistoryMakers® Category:**

EducationMakers

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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 Joyce Moore Gray, March 13, 2008. 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 Joyce Moore Gray, Section A2008\_046\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:27 ?

Joyce Moore Gray was born on August 3, 1943 in Portsmouth, Virginia to Delma Smith Moore and Elmo L. Moore, Sr. Moore Gray's maternal ancestors were farmers in the rural areas near Portsmouth, where her mother was born in 1921. As the oldest daughter in her family, Moore Gray's mother assumed responsibility for her siblings after their mother died. When she was fourteen years old, she married Moore Gray's father, who was also from Portsmouth; and found work as a laundress at the Naval Hospital Portsmouth, where Moore Gray's paternal grandmother, Margaret Trotter Moore, was a dietician. Moore Gray's mother went on to earn a General Educational Development certificate and a practical nursing license, and joined the hospital's pediatric division. Moore Gray's father graduated from Portsmouth's High Street School; and, after serving in the U.S. Navy, became a foreman at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. Moore Gray grew up in Portsmouth, where her paternal grandmother helped raise her and her siblings.

African American women teachers--Interviews.

African American women educators--Interviews.

African American school principals--Interviews.

Educational consultants--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Moore Gray, Section A2008\_046\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:38 ?

Joyce Moore Gray grew up in Portsmouth, Virginia. Although the community was segregated, she had both black and white playmates during her early childhood. At nine years old, Moore Gray moved with her family to the all-black Victory Manor, a newly built subdivision in Portsmouth. She began her education at Portsmouth's Chestnut Street School, where she was nurtured by her first grade teacher; and later enrolled at Southeastern Elementary School in Chesapeake, Virginia, where she became interested in music and art. In the fifth

grade, Moore Gray joined the school band as a clarinetist, and began to aspire to a career in music education. She went on to attend Chesapeake's segregated Crestwood High School, where she belonged to the band and choir, as well as the business and home economics clubs. Due to her strong musical abilities, she also joined the band at the Norfolk Branch of Virginia State College. Moore Gray describes her first trip to Washington, D.C., and narrates her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Moore Gray, Section A2008\_046\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:19  
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Joyce Moore Gray grew up in Portsmouth, Virginia, where she was baptized at the Mount Calvary Baptist Church. From an early age, she was exposed to music by her parents, who often listened to gospel and blues records. By the time she was a senior at Crestwood High School in Chesapeake, Virginia, Moore Gray aspired to become a music teacher. In 1961, she matriculated at Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia. There, Moore Gray played the clarinet under the direction of Professor F. Nathaniel Gatlin, who encouraged her to remain in school when she considered leaving. For her coursework in music education, she also learned to play string instruments like the violin and cello, and brass instruments like the French horn and tuba. During the Civil Rights Movement, she participated in a sit-in at a restaurant in Petersburg. She also describes her experiences on segregated buses. Moore Gray graduated in 1966, and began working as a music teacher at Jo Mackey Elementary School in North Las Vegas, Nevada.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Moore Gray, Section A2008\_046\_001\_004, TRT: 0:28:53  
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Joyce Moore Gray began her teaching career at the all-black Jo Mackey Elementary School in North Las Vegas, Nevada, where she created the music curriculum. After the Clark County School District implemented a busing program, she taught at the integrated Jacob E. Manch Elementary School and Kermit R. Booker, Sr. Elementary School. In 1975, Moore Gray earned a master's degree in secondary education from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where she once confronted a racist professor. Then, in 1980, she moved to live with her husband, Lloyd Gray, in Salt Lake City, Utah, where she taught for a year at the majority-white West Lake Junior High School. Moore Gray began her career in school administration in 1981, as the Granite School District's multicultural coordinator; and, in 1984, became principal of Salt Lake City's Arcadia Elementary School. She initially faced racial discrimination from the white parents, but gained their support by the end of her six-year tenure. Moore Gray also narrates her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Moore Gray, Section A2008\_046\_001\_005, TRT: 0:29:51  
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Joyce Moore Gray became the first African American principal in the State of Utah in 1984, when she began her tenure at Salt Lake City's Arcadia Elementary School. Six years later, she was reassigned to Roosevelt Elementary School; and, after two years, became the principal of Salt Lake City's Bryant Intermediate School. There, Moore Gray reinstituted the instrumental music program, and helped create the I CARE character development program. Under her leadership, Bryant Intermediate School received the U.S. Department of Education's National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award in 1996. She went on to serve as the principal of Salt Lake City's West High School, which was noted for its International Baccalaureate program. At the time of her arrival, the school was in disarray, and Moore Gray worked closely with the community council and the Parent Teacher Student Association to implement a school

management program. In 2000, Moore Gray earned an Ed.D. degree from the University of Utah in Salt Lake City.

Video Oral History Interview with Joyce Moore Gray, Section A2008\_046\_001\_006, TRT: 0:31:11  
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Joyce Moore Gray served as the principal of West High School in Salt Lake City, Utah from 1996 to 2003. That year, she became the director of career and technical education for the Salt Lake City School District. She retired in 2005, and joined Simmons Associates - The Education Company, a behavioral management firm. She also established her own firm, Jam G Consulting, Inc. Moore Gray received numerous honors for her work as an educator, including Utah's Principal of the Year Award, and the NAACP Salt Lake Branch's Rosa Parks Award. She was president of the Utah Alliance of Black School Educators, and a charter member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's Upsilon Beta Omega Chapter. Moore Gray also raised three children with her husband, Lloyd Gray. She talks about diversity in the State of Utah, her pedagogical philosophy and her concerns for the black community. She also reflects upon her life, legacy and how she would like to be remembered. Moore Gray concludes the interview by narrating her photographs.