

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes

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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>	Haynes, Allegra "Happy", 1953-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes,
<b>Dates:</b>	November 7, 2008
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2008
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:26:23).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Academic administrator and city council member The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes (1953 - ) served on the Denver City Council from 1990 to 2003, and as council president from 1998 to 2000. In 2005, she became assistant for community partnerships to the superintendent of Denver Public Schools. Governor Bill Ritter appointed Haynes to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education in September of 2008. Haynes was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 7, 2008, in Denver, Colorado. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2008_130
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Allegra Rene “Happy” Haynes was born on March 4, 1953, in Denver, Colorado. Haynes graduated from Denver's East High School in 1971. She received her B.A. degree in political science (with honors) from Barnard College at Columbia University in New York in 1975. Later in life, Haynes returned to school and received her M.A. degree in public affairs from the University of Colorado in 2002. She also attended Leadership Denver, the Denver Community Leadership Forum, the Rocky Mountain Program, and the State and Local Program at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

Haynes began her tenure with the City of Denver as an aide to former Councilman Bill Roberts in 1979. From 1983 to 1990, Haynes worked as an administrative aide to the former Mayor of Denver, Federico Peña, the city's first Latino mayor. Haynes served on the Denver City Council from 1990 to 2003 and as council president from 1998 to 2000. She was Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper's liaison to the city council from 2003 to 2005 and she played a key role in the development of Denver International Airport. In October of 2005, Haynes retired from the City of Denver after twenty-six years to join the new superintendent of Denver Public Schools, Michael Bennet, as his assistant for community partnerships. Governor Bill Ritter appointed Haynes to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education in September of 2008.

Haynes resides in the Park Hill neighborhood of Denver. She is single, an avid jazz enthusiast, and enjoys science fiction and gardening. She regularly participates in numerous sports and outdoor activities.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes was conducted by Denise Gines on November 7, 2008, in Denver, Colorado, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Academic administrator and city council member The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes (1953 - ) served on the Denver City Council from 1990 to 2003, and as council president from 1998 to 2000. In 2005, she became assistant for community partnerships to the superintendent of Denver Public Schools. Governor Bill Ritter appointed Haynes to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education in September of 2008.

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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:

Haynes, Allegra "Happy", 1953-

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Haynes, Allegra "Happy", 1953- --Interviews

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African American school administrators--Colorado--Denver--Interviews

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Women city council members--Colorado--Denver--Interviews

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State governments--Officials and employees--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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Denver (Colo.). City Council

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## Occupations:

City Government Administrator

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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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 The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes, November 7, 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 The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Section  
A2008\_130\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:32 ?

The Honorable Allegra “Happy” Haynes was born on March 4, 1953 in Denver, Colorado to Anna Garcia Haynes and LeRoy Haynes. Her maternal great-grandparents, Cleofas Lujan and Lorenzo Lujan, were of Hispanic descent and worked as sheep herders in northern New Mexico. Haynes’ maternal grandparents, Lorraine Garcia and Jacob Garcia, lived in the Five Points neighborhood of Denver, and became key members of the Hispanic community. Haynes’ paternal grandparents, Pauline Anderson Haynes and Elmer Haynes, Sr., settled in Denver’s Cherry Creek area, and founded a landscaping business. As a child, Haynes lived with her maternal great-grandmother, grandparents, and mother on a farm in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, where she learned about her Hispanic heritage. Though Haynes’ mother was a homemaker for most of her childhood, she later became the executive director of the Mile High Early Learning Centers in Denver. Haynes’ father worked in electronics and coached wrestling alongside his brother, Clifford Haynes.

African American school administrators--Colorado--Denver--Interviews.

Women city council members--Colorado--Denver--Interviews.

State governments--Officials and employees--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Section  
A2008\_130\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:24 ?

The Honorable Allegra “Happy” Haynes was born in the Auraria area of Denver, Colorado, but moved to her maternal grandparents’ farm in Wheat Ridge, Colorado soon after. She then returned to Denver in 1956 to the City Park neighborhood. There, Haynes spent her childhood playing basketball, listening to jazz music and gardening in her backyard. She and her friends also rode their bicycles together, and rescued stray dogs around the neighborhood. Haynes learned to swim at the Sportland YMCA in Denver. Originally an all-white YMCA, Haynes’ family were the first to integrate the facility. Haynes attended Denver’s Park Hill Elementary School until the second grade when she transferred to the newly built Barrett Elementary School. There, Haynes was taught by Evie Garrett Dennis who later became the superintendent of the Denver Public Schools. Throughout her elementary school years, Haynes continued to compete in basketball and swimming with the hopes of becoming an Olympic swimmer.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Section  
A2008\_130\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:53 ?

The Honorable Allegra “Happy” Haynes attended the predominately white Aaron Gove Junior High School in Denver, Colorado, following the desegregation of Denver Public Schools. There, Haynes competed in spelling bees, sang in the choir and participated in student government. At this time, Haynes’ parents, Anna Garcia Haynes and LeRoy Haynes, were both involved in civil rights activities in Denver. Haynes was also inspired by the Civil Rights Movement, and advocated for a remembrance ceremony at her school following the death of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Haynes then attended Denver’s East High School, where she lost interest in basketball and swimming as she became more involved in the black student movement. She challenged the school’s dress code that required girls to wear dresses, and helped to found the Black Student Alliance, which argued for the inclusion of African American history in the school’s curriculum, and sponsored guest speakers like the Black Panther Party.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Section  
A2008\_130\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:48 ?

The Honorable Allegra “Happy” Haynes participated in numerous extracurricular activities at East High School and in the community of Denver, Colorado at large. During high school, she was a debutante in the Owl Club of Denver Debutante Cotillion, where she was the only girl to have an Afro. To prepare for the ball, Haynes studied dance and etiquette under dance instructor, Ernestine Smith. She participated in Outward Bound, where she took a group hiking trip to Baja California, Mexico, and spent time with a family there. She also travelled to Europe for three weeks as part of her advanced placement European history class. Haynes first aspired to become a journalist after working with editor, George L. Brown, at The Denver Post during her sophomore and junior years. However, following a teacher’s strike in 1969, Haynes led an impromptu freedom school at Macedonia Baptist Church, which inspired her to become an educator. Upon graduating, Haynes attended Barnard College, an all-girls school in New York City.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Section  
A2008\_130\_001\_005, TRT: 0:29:06 ?

The Honorable Allegra “Happy” Haynes attended Barnard College in New York City in hopes of later attending the Teachers College at Columbia University to receive her master’s degree in education. While at Barnard College, Haynes decided to study political science; and during her summer break, became involved in the local politics of Denver, Colorado, including assisting George L. Brown’s campaign for lieutenant governor. Through these experiences and her coursework on the trial of H. Rap Brown, Haynes decided to become a lawyer. After graduating in 1975, Haynes returned to Denver to work on Brown’s staff in the Citizens’ Advocate Office. Haynes also attended the University of Denver College of Law part-time. From 1979 to 1984, she worked as an aide for City Councilman Bill Roberts. Haynes then became involved with the mayoral campaign of Federico Pena, and joined his staff after his election. She remained on his staff until 1990 when she was elected to represent Denver City Council District 11.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Section  
A2008\_130\_001\_006, TRT: 0:29:00 ?

The Honorable Allegra “Happy” Haynes served as councilwoman on the Denver City Council during the tenures of the city’s first Hispanic and African American mayors, Federico Pena and Wellington Webb, respectively. She played a key role in the development of the Denver International Airport in Denver, Colorado, as well as the passing of several initiatives, including a tax to support children’s programs and a statewide smoking ban. Instead of finishing her law degree, Haynes earned her M.A. degree in public affairs from the University of Colorado Denver. In 2003, she left Denver City Council, and became the city council liaison for the newly elected mayor, John Hickenlooper. Haynes went on to work for the city’s Community Partnerships, and was appointed to the boards of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife and Colorado Commission on Higher Education. In 2008, Haynes served as a national delegate to the Democratic National Convention, where President Barack Obama was selected as the Democratic candidate.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Section  
A2008\_130\_001\_007, TRT: 0:29:40 ?

The Honorable Allegra “Happy” Haynes attended the 2008 Democratic Nation Convention in Denver, Colorado, where President Barack Obama was

announced as the Democratic presidential candidate. Following President Obama's election at the time of the interview, Haynes talks about his platform regarding sustainable energy and the Iraq War. Haynes cofounded and served on the board of several Colorado based organizations, like the Colorado Black Women for Political Action, the Colorado Women of Color and the Stapleton Development Corporation. She also served as vice president of the Colorado Children's Campaign. In her spare time, she enjoys listening to jazz musicians like Dianne Reeves, John Coltrane and Miles Davis. Haynes describes how she would like to be remembered and shares her advice for future generations. She also reflects upon her life and legacy. Haynes concludes the interview by narrating her photographs.