

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Diola Bagayoko

Overview of the Collection

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| Repository: | The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com |
| Creator: | Bagayoko, Diola |
| Title: | The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Diola Bagayoko, |
| Dates: | August 18, 2012 |
| Bulk Dates: | 2012 |
| Physical Description: | 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:15:18). |
| Abstract: | Physicist Diola Bagayoko (1948 -) a native of Mali, West Africa, is the founder of the internationally- renowned Timbuktu Academy and the Southern University System Distinguished Professor of Physics. Bagayoko was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 18, 2012, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview. |
| Identification: | A2012_186 |
| Language: | The interview and records are in English. |

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Scientist and educator Diola Bagayoko was born on December 12, 1948, and earned his B.S. degree in chemistry and physics from the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENSUP) in Mali, West Africa in 1973. Prior to that, he received formal training in the theory and practice of teaching and learning from ENSUP. During his undergraduate education, Bagayoko also taught high school physics and chemistry in Sikasso, Mali, West Africa. In 1978, Bagayoko received his M.S. degree in solid state physics from Lehigh University, and in 1983, he earned his PhD degree in theoretical solid state physics from Louisiana State University. After earning his PhD degree, Bagayoko served as a physics lecturer at the University of Benghazi in Libya, North African. In 1984, Bagayoko became an assistant professor of physics Southern University in Baton Rouge Louisiana. He was promoted to associate professor in 1989.

In 1990-91, Bagayoko established the nationally Timbuktu Academy in Baton Rouge, using experience gained through his years of mentoring. The Timbuktu Academy is a program and resource center based at Southern University that offers pre-college and undergraduate students a chance to pursue scientific fields. Funding comes from the Office of Naval Research, the Department of the Navy, and the National Science Foundation (NSF), among others. Bagayoko has also served as director of the academy since its inception. In 1999, Bagayoko was promoted to distinguished professor in physics and beginning in 2002, he also served as adjunct professor of mathematics and science education.

In addition to his teaching and mentoring, Bagayoko worked as a consultant for several organizations, including the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Bagayoko has published over eighty scientific research articles on condensed matter physics and properties of metals, as well as over fifty papers concerning science education. Diola Bagayoko works in Baton, Rouge, Louisiana, with his wife, who is also on the faculty at Southern University.

Diola Bagayoko was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 18, 2012.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Diola Bagayoko was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 18, 2012, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Physicist Diola Bagayoko (1948 -) a native of Mali, West Africa, is the founder of the internationally- renowned Timbuktu Academy and the Southern University System Distinguished Professor of Physics.

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®.

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.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Bagayoko, Diola

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Bagayoko, Diola--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Southern University A & M College

Occupations:

Physicist

HistoryMakers® Category:

ScienceMakers

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 Diola Bagayoko, August 18, 2012. 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).

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 Diola Bagayoko, Section A2012_186_001_001, TRT: 1:30:24 ?
Diola Bagayoko describes his family background. His mother, Nagnouma Keita, was born in the village of Sakorodaba in Mali, West Africa. His father, Djigui

Bagayoko, was born in the village of Kamalé in Mali and was renowned for his plant knowledge, hunting skills and bravery. The Bagayoko family descended from Fakoli Bagayoko, a famous general who is credited with the establishment of the Malian empire in 1236, and Ahmed Bagayoko, who was a professor at the University of Timbuktu. They are ethnically tied to the Manden group and speak Bambara/Malinke. Bagayoko was born in Bamako, Mali in 1948 and was raised by the Keita family. He describes his family's kinship system and talks about his upbringing in Mali.

African families--Africa, West--Mali.

African military officers--Africa, West--Mali.

Mali (Empire)--History.

Universities and colleges--Faculty--Tombouctou (Mali).

Ethnic groups--Africa, West.

Video Oral History Interview with Diola Bagayoko, Section A2012_186_001_002, TRT: 2:28:44 ?

Diola Bagayoko grew up in Bamako, the capital city of Mali. Prior to the employment of massive deforestation practices in Mali, Bagayoko remembers the flora and fauna as being very green and plentiful during his growing up. Before Mali's independence in 1960, receiving an education before the age of nine was a luxury that was not afforded to the majority of Malian citizens. Bagayoko began the first grade at The School of N'tomikorobougou at around the age of ten. He excelled in school and was even called upon to teach certain subjects in the event of a teacher's absence. Bagayoko describes the differences between his francophone education and the American education system.

Childhood--Africa, West--Mali.

Education Africa, French-speaking West.

Academic achievement--Africa, West--Mali.

Student teaching--Africa, West--Mali.

Education--United States--20th century.

Video Oral History Interview with Diola Bagayoko, Section A2012_186_001_003, TRT: 3:29:52 ?

Diola Bagayoko attended The School of N'Tomikorobougou in Bamako, Mali. His mentors were his principal, Ousmane Maïga, and Robert Verdier, his teacher from seventh through ninth grade. He did well in all of his subjects and learned how to read and write in Arabic fluently. After graduating from grade school in 1966, Bagayoko began high school at Lycée Prosper Kamara. Although he played soccer and enjoyed having fun, he wanted to excel in school. Bagayoko describes the differences in the Malian and American approaches to STEM education. He also talks about traditional African music and American influences.

Mentoring in education--Africa, West--Mali.

Arabic language--Study and teaching.

High school students--Africa.

Music--Africa, West--History and criticism.

Video Oral History Interview with Diola Bagayoko, Section A2012_186_001_004, TRT: 4:29:28 ?

Diola Bagayoko graduated from Lycée Prosper Kamara High School in 1969. He began his undergraduate studies at Ecole Normale Supérieure de Bamako in Mali, where he studied physics and chemistry education. After earning his B.S. degree in 1973, Bagayoko taught high school physics and chemistry at Sikasso High School in Sikasso, Mali. He later received a fellowship from the African American Institute (AAI) to attend Lehigh University in Bethlehem,

Pennsylvania, where he earned his M.S. degree in solid state physics in 1977. He hated the cold weather and decided to finish his Ph.D. degree in a warmer location, which brought him to Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Under the mentorship of his professor, Joseph Callaway, Bagayoko's dissertation focused on the electronic properties of iron in the face center cubic structure. Bagayoko describes his experiences in college and graduate school and shares his perceptions on STEM education in the U.S.

Physics--Study and teaching (Higher).

Chemistry--Study and teaching (Higher).

Chemistry--Study and teaching (Higher).

Mentoring in science--United States.

Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge, La.). Department of Physics & Astronomy.

Video Oral History Interview with Diola Bagayoko, Section A2012_186_001_005, TRT: 5:29:00 ?

Diola Bagayoko met his wife, Ella Kelley, while studying at Louisiana State University and married in 1980. After completing his Ph.D. in physics in 1983, Bagayoko taught physics for a year at the University of Benghazi in Libya. In 1984, Bagayoko was appointed as assistant professor in physics at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In 1991, Bagayoko established the nationally recognized research and mentorship program, Timbuktu Academy, which targets African American students. While the Academy was initially a small summer program, due to funding from the National Science Foundation and the Office of Naval Research, its offerings expanded to accommodate more high school students and undergraduate students in a variety of STEM disciplines. Timbuktu Academy's success was used as a model for the development and facilitation of other initiatives concerned with improving the quality of STEM education and minority participation in STEM. Bagayoko talks about his professional undertakings and awards.

Physicists' spouses--United States.

Physics--Study and teaching (Higher).

National Science Foundation (U.S.).

Mentoring in education--United States.

Minorities--Education.

Video Oral History Interview with Diola Bagayoko, Section A2012_186_001_006, TRT: 6:29:12 ?

Diola Bagayoko's programs have received funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the Office of Naval Research (ONR). Timbuktu Academy, Bagayoko's mentorship and research program for high school and college students, has a systemic mentoring model that has been adopted by several colleges and organizations around the U.S. Bagayoko is a recipient of numerous prestigious awards for his mentorship and programmatic implementation efforts, including the U.S. Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring, which he was awarded in 1996 and 2002; the 2007 National Benjamin Banneker Legacy Award; and the 2009 Distinguished Faculty Award from the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. Bagayoko reflects upon his legacy, shares his hopes and concerns for the African American community, and talks about the political discord in Mali.

Education--United States.

African Americans--Education.

Educational innovations.

Science--Awards.

Education--Awards.

Video Oral History Interview with Diola Bagayoko, Section A2012_186_001_007, TRT: 7:18:38 ?

Diola Bagayoko, along with his colleagues G. L. Zhao and Troy William, introduced the BZW method, which is a procedure that methodically solves a long standing problem in theoretical solid state physics. The method was enhanced by two of Bagayoko's students, Chinedu Ekuma and Lashounda Franklin. He considers the BZW-EF method to be a part of his legacy and would like to be remembered for his contributions to academia and society as a whole. Bagayoko talks about his colleagues' contributions to his career and describes his photographs.

Physicists--Intellectual life--20th century

Solid state physics--Research.

Photographs.