

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Patricia DeLeon

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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>	DeLeon, Patricia, 1944-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Patricia DeLeon,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 27, 2013
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:37:14).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Geneticist Patricia DeLeon (1944 - ) was named the Trustees Distinguished Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Delaware in 2009 and received the U.S. Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring in 2012. Martin-DeLeon was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 27, 2013, in Bear, Delaware. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2013_081
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Geneticist Patricia A. DeLeon was born on July 13, 1944 in Port Maria, Jamaica. After graduating from the University of the West Indies with her B.Sc. degree in chemistry and zoology in 1967 and her M.Sc. degree in medical genetics in 1969, DeLeon enrolled at the University of Western Ontario and graduated from there in 1972 with her Ph.D. degree in microscopic anatomy before completing post-doctoral studies in cell biology and cell genetics at McGill University in 1975.

Upon graduation, DeLeon worked in several industry and academic positions. She served as a visiting scientist at the Johns Hopkins University, a visiting faculty at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, and as an adjunct professor at Penn State University College of Medicine. DeLeon joined the faculty of the University of Delaware in 1976, and was named the Trustees Distinguished Professor of Biological Sciences in 2009. Her work has produced three patents issued or pending and over one-hundred publications and abstracts, and has been supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). DeLeon served on the editorial boards of several scientific journals and on the Executive Council of the American Society of Andrology (ASA). She has been a member of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee and the NIH and National Science Foundation Review Panels. In addition, she has mentored more than 100 undergraduate and graduate students in STEM fields.

DeLeon is widely recognized for her contributions to andrology, which deals with male reproductive health. In 2007, she received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring from NSF; and, in 2010, she received the Distinguished Contribution Award from the Excelsior Alumni Association, USA. Inc. and was the Distinguished Alumna and Honoree of the Commemoration and Homecoming Celebrations of the University of the West Indies. The National Institute of Higher Education, Research Science and Technology (NIHERST) awarded DeLeon the Caribbean Women in Science Medal in 2011 and President

Barack Obama presented her with the U.S. Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring in 2012.

Geneticist Patricia A. DeLeon was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 27, 2013.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Patricia DeLeon was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 27, 2013, in Bear, Delaware, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Geneticist Patricia DeLeon (1944 - ) was named the Trustees Distinguished Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Delaware in 2009 and received the U.S. Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring in 2012.

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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:

DeLeon, Patricia, 1944-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

DeLeon, Patricia, 1944- --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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University of Delaware

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## Occupations:

Geneticist

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

ScienceMakers

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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 Patricia DeLeon, March 27, 2013. 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 Patricia DeLeon, Section A2013\_081\_001\_001, TRT: 1:29:55 ?

Patricia DeLeon describes her family's background in Jamaica. Her mother, Louise Green Martin, was born in 1920 in Saint Ann's Bay, Jamaica, and moved to Port Maria when she was young. Following DeLeon's grandmother's death at childbirth, her mother was raised by an adoptive family, with a strong ties to the Catholic Church. DeLeon's father, Leonard Percival Martin, was born in 1918, in the little town of Sandside in Port Maria, Jamaica. DeLeon talks about how her parents met and married in Port Maria. She also describes her father's entrepreneurial skills, and the businesses he had throughout his career. DeLeon also discusses the local dialect of Patois that is widely spoken in Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

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Affirmative action programs.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia DeLeon, Section A2013\_081\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:56 ?

Patricia DeLeon was born and raised in Port Maria, Jamaica, as one of nine children. She describes her childhood in Jamaica, and her memories of growing up there. DeLeon's earliest memories are of nature and science and her experience in the Jamaican outdoors. DeLeon attended an infant school in Port Maria until the third grade, and then went on to attend Port Maria Elementary School. She describes her experience there, as well as at Continuation High School in Highgate, Jamaica. She talks about the teachers who influenced her in school, and how she ranked at the top of her class throughout her schooling. In this section of the interview, DeLeon also talks about her siblings, and describes her parents' personalities.

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Video Oral History Interview with Patricia DeLeon, Section A2013\_081\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:50 ?

Patricia DeLeon attended Continuation High School in Highgate, Jamaica, before attending Excelsior School, in Kingston, Jamaica, which offered her a college preparatory track. In 1959, DeLeon enrolled at Excelsior School at the age of fifteen, and describes her academic foundation there. While there, she convinced the principal, A. W. Powell, to give her a grant that would reduce the cost of her tuition and fees. DeLeon talks about her rich experience at Excelsior, and the influence of her biology teacher, Errol Miller. She then attended the University of the West Indies, Mona, where she studied zoology, botany and chemistry. DeLeon talks about her undergraduate mentor, Dr. Ivan Goodbody, a professor of zoology, who supervised her undergraduate research project on tunicate ecology. In 1967, DeLeon earned her B.Sc. degree in chemistry and biology from the University of the West Indies.

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Video Oral History Interview with Patricia DeLeon, Section A2013\_081\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:55 ?

Patricia DeLeon attended the University of West Indies, where she studied zoology, botany and chemistry. After receiving her B.Sc. degree in 1967, she went on to pursue her M.Sc. degree in medical genetics. DeLeon describes her master's degree research under the tutelage of pathologist, Molly Thorburn, and her findings on the effects of cannabis on chromosomes, which she published in the premiere journal, 'The Lancet'. DeLeon also discusses the implications of her master's degree research, the effects of cigarette smoking on fetal development, and her research on the effect of plant toxins on chromosomes. In 1969, she went on to pursue her Ph.D. degree at the University of Western Ontario in Canada, where she worked with Professor Evelyn Shaver. In this section of the interview, DeLeon describes her doctoral dissertation on chromosomal abnormalities caused by aged sperm. She also talks about Jamaica's independence from Great Britain in 1962.

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Video Oral History Interview with Patricia DeLeon, Section A2013\_081\_001\_005, TRT: 5:28:30 ?

In this section of the interview, Patricia DeLeon describes her doctoral dissertation on chromosomal abnormalities caused by aged sperm. From 1972 to 1976, she pursued a postdoctoral fellow at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, where she learned new techniques in molecular biology, and also served as a lecturer in genetics. In 1976, DeLeon was appointed as an assistant professor of human genetics at the University of Delaware. She discusses her experience while applying for tenure in 1980, and while being promoted to become a full professor in 1990. DeLeon describes her laboratory's research on determining the role of the SPAM1 protein in facilitating fertilization by sperm, and discusses the impact of her findings. In this section of the interview, DeLeon also talks about her close relationship with her sister, and the lack of diversity in the science faculty at the University of Delaware.

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Video Oral History Interview with Patricia DeLeon, Section A2013\_081\_001\_006, TRT: 6:31:12 ?

Patricia DeLeon is an internationally recognized scientist in the field of andrology. She discusses the implications of her research on potential treatments for male infertility. DeLeon also describes her research on the Junctional Adhesion Molecule A (JAM-A) protein in sperm motility, and talks about her scientific publications. From 1993 to 1994, DeLeon served as a visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine where she began to transition into molecular biology, to be able to study genes on chromosomes. She describes her involvement in the Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) program at the University of Delaware, being recognized by her alma maters in the Caribbean and Canada, and the students whom she has mentored. In 2007, DeLeon received the National Science Foundation (NSF) Presidential

Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring. She describes her experience of accepting the award from President Barack Obama in 2010.

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Video Oral History Interview with Patricia DeLeon, Section A2013\_081\_001\_007, TRT: 7:29:14 ?

Since 1976, Patricia DeLeon has served on the faculty of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Delaware. In 2009, she was appointed as the Trustees Distinguished Professor of Biological Sciences. DeLeon describes the division of her teaching and research responsibilities at the University of Delaware. She also mentions the funding for her research and her efforts to apply her career's findings towards viable treatments for infertility. In this section of the interview, DeLeon reflects upon her career and her choices as well as on her legacy. She also describes her hopes and concerns for the African American community. DeLeon closes this section of the interview by talking about her family.

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Video Oral History Interview with Patricia DeLeon, Section A2013\_081\_001\_008, TRT: 8:10:42 ?

Patricia DeLeon has served as the only faculty representative on the University of Delaware's Board of Trustees for nineteen years. She discusses her service, and talks about her international business travels. In this closing section of the interview, DeLeon shares how she would like to be remembered, and describes her photographs.

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