

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ilesanmi Adesida

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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>	Adesida, Ilesanmi
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Ilesanmi Adesida,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 7, 2013
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:23:26).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Electrical engineer Ilesanmi Adesida (1949 - ), served as the Donald Biggar Willet Professor of Engineering and the Dean of the College of Engineering at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and as a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). Adesida was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 7, 2013, in Champaign, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2013_093
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Electrical Engineer Ilesanmi Adesida was born on May 15, 1949 in Ifon, Ondo, Nigeria. Adesida enrolled in the University of California, Berkeley and earned his B.S. degree in 1974; his M.S. degree in 1975; and, his Ph.D. degree in 1979. Adesida was awarded an IBM postdoctoral fellowship from 1979 to 1981. His research interests include nanofabrication processes and ultra-high-speed optoelectronics.

Upon graduation, Adesida served as a research associate at the Cornell Nanofabrication Facility and School of Electrical Engineering at Cornell University from 1979 to 1984. He then returned to Africa and accepted a position as the head of the electrical engineering department at Abubakar Tafawa Belewa University in Bauchi, Nigeria. In 1987, Adesida returned to the United States and worked at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) as a professor of electrical and computer engineering. In 1994, he was appointed as a research professor for the Coordinated Science Laboratory and as a professor in the Beckman Institute of Advanced Science and Technology. Adesida went on to serve in numerous academic and research capacities at UIUC. He served as the associate director for education for the NSF Engineering Research Center for Compound Semiconductor Microelectronics from 1990 to 1997. In 2000, Adesida became the director of the Micro and Nanotechnology Laboratory and was appointed as a professor of materials science and engineering. After serving as Dean of the College of Engineering from 2005 to 2012, Adesida was named provost and vice chancellor for Academic Affairs. A mentor as well as a research manager, he guided the education of nineteen post-doctoral fellows, conferred thirty-four Ph.D. degrees upon his students, and supervised numerous undergraduate research projects.

Adesida has organized and chaired many international conferences, including the International Symposium on Electron, Ion, and Photon Beams and Nanofabrication; the TMS Electronic Materials Conference; and the Topical Workshop on Heterostructure Microelectronics. He also served as the President of the IEEE Electron Device Society and was named a Distinguished Lecturer from 1997 to 2002. In addition, Adesida was a co-founder of

Xindium Technologies, and served as a member of the board of Fluor. He has been a member of the National Academies Board of Army Science and Technology since 2009 and is a member of the National Academy of Engineering.

For his many contributions and service, Adesida was awarded the IEEE EDS Distinguished Service Award in 2011. He was elected as a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the American Vacuum Society (AVS), the Optical Society of America, and the Materials Research Society. Adesida also received the Oakley Kunde Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Education and was elected as a University Scholar at UIUC. He was named as an Outstanding Alumnus of the EECS Department at the University of California, Berkeley in 2009.

Ilesanmi Adesida was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 7, 2013.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Ilesanmi Adesida was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 7, 2013, in Champaign, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Electrical engineer Ilesanmi Adesida (1949 - ) , served as the Donald Biggar Willet Professor of Engineering and the Dean of the College of Engineering at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and as a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

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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:

Adesida, Ilesanmi

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## Subjects:

Adesida, Ilesanmi--Interviews  
African Americans--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:

Electrical Engineer

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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 Ilesanmi Adesida, June 7, 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.

## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Ilesanmi Adesida, Section A2013\_093\_001\_001, TRT: 1:28:41  
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Ilesanmi Adesida describes his family background. He was born on May 15, 1949 in Ifon, Ondo, Nigeria, the same town as his mother, Victoria Omotomiye Adesida, and father, Joshua Adesida Aladekoyi, were born. Joshua Aladekoyi was a farmer and Victoria Adesida was a market woman. His grandfathers were farmers, and his great-great-grandfather was a blacksmith. Adesida comes from the Yoruba ethnic group in southwest Nigeria, and he discusses the history of the Yoruba and other Nigerian ethnic groups. His parents converted to Christianity, which is why they have English first names. Adesida talks about Christianity in Nigeria and the Yoruba religion. He also describes the pre-colonial government structure of the Yoruba, which was democratic in nature.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Video Oral History Interview with Ilesanmi Adesida, Section A2013\_093\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:28  
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Ilesanmi Adesida describes his parents, Victoria Omotomiye Adesida and Joshua Adesida Aladekoyi, their personalities, and who he takes after. His father had two other wives in addition to Adesida's mother, and so Adesida had half-siblings as well as his two younger sisters and younger brother. Adesida attended Anglican schools in Nigeria, living with his cousin who was a schoolteacher. Adesida's generation was the first in Nigeria to have widespread access to public schools and he enjoyed school because it meant he did not have to farm. On October 1, 1960 Nigeria received its independence from the United Kingdom and Adesida remembers the festivities. Adesida remembers Nigerian culture while he was young, remarking on the importance of highlife music and soccer. He also discusses the political parties that existed in Nigeria, Nigeria's first president, Nnamdi Azikiwe, and Nigeria's first prime minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.

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Video Oral History Interview with Ilesanmi Adesida, Section A2013\_093\_001\_003, TRT: 3:28:32  
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Ilesanmi Adesida discusses the talent of the Nigerian people and talks about the unification of Nigeria. In secondary school Adesida had a Peace Corp science teacher who was an electrical engineer and this sparked Adesida's interest in engineering. He graduated from Imade College, his secondary school in Owo, Ondo, Nigeria, from which he graduated from in 1966. After his graduation Adesida worked as a laboratory technician at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan,

Nigeria, while taking night classes. There he worked in the lab of Dr. Grillo and met a Dutch scientist who helped him apply to universities in the United States and obtain scholarships. In 1971 Adesida attended the University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, California and worked as an undergraduate at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory. He talks about his time at the University of California at Berkeley, the Nigerian community there, and his mentors.

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Video Oral History Interview with Ilesanmi Adesida, Section A2013\_093\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:49  
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Ilesanmi Adesida discusses his doctoral dissertation, 'Electron Energy Dissipation in Layered Media,' which examined how electrons lost energy and how electrons can be used to write patterns, which is known as nanofabrication. Upon receiving his Ph.D. degree from the University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, California in 1979 Adesida became a research associate at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York while his wife obtained a medical degree. In 1984 Adesida became a head of the electrical engineering department at the Abubakar Balewa University in Bauchi, Nigeria. He returned to the United States to become a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, Illinois, in 1987. Adesida describes his graduate students, the electrical engineering department, and his positions at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He also discusses his research on gallium nitride.

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Video Oral History Interview with Ilesanmi Adesida, Section A2013\_093\_001\_005, TRT: 5:28:56  
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Ilesanmi Adesida describes his position as vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, Illinois. He talks about the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's African Studies department and its diversity programs. Adesida also explains the importance of state institutions. He discusses the relationship between Africans and African Americans and talks about his wife and five children. Adesida reflects on his life and his legacy and share how he would like to be remembered.

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