

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with George Keith Martin

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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>	Martin, George Keith, 1953-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with George Keith Martin,
<b>Dates:</b>	December 6, 2016
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2016
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:32:55).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Lawyer George Keith Martin (1953 - ) became a partner at the law firm of McGuireWoods L.L.P. in 1990. He was also the University of Virginia board of visitor's first African American rector. Martin was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 6, 2016, in Richmond, Virginia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2016_120
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Lawyer George Keith Martin was born on September 24, 1953 in Fort Lee, Virginia to Dr. Henry S. Martin and Ruby Grant Martin. Martin was raised in Washington D.C. while his mother, a civil rights attorney, headed the Office of Civil Rights in the United States Department of Health, Education and Water. Martin earned his B.A. degree in speech communications from the University of Virginia in 1975, and his J.D. degree from the Howard University School of Law in 1978, where he was the managing editor of the *Howard Law Journal*.

Martin began his legal career in 1978 as a litigation associate at the law firm of Hirschler, Fleischer, Weinberg, Cox & Allen in Richmond, Virginia. In 1984, he became a partner at the law firm of Wilder, Gregory & Martin – a firm founded by L. Douglas Wilder, the first African American governor of Virginia. In 1990, Martin joined McGuireWoods L.L.P. as a partner and was later promoted to managing partner. Martin practiced construction, commercial real estate and local government law, representing multiple real estate clients including Fortune 100 and Fortune 500 companies, schools, and state legislature. In addition to working as a corporate attorney, Martin served as a school administrator, beginning in 1999. That same year, he was appointed to James Madison University's board of visitors by Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore, serving until 2003. In 2002, Martin was appointed to the board of visitors at Regent University School of Law. In 2011, he was appointed by Virginia Governor Robert McDonnell to the University of Virginia's board of visitors. The following year, Martin was elected the first African American rector of the University of Virginia's board of visitors.

Martin served on the Virginia Board of Bar Examiners in 1991, and as general counsel for the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority. He also consulted on multiple construction and redevelopment projects across the country, and volunteered as a child minister at Faith Landmarks Ministries in Henrico County, Virginia beginning in 1985. Martin was the recipient of multiple awards for his work and community service, including the Raven Award from the University of Virginia and the Jasper Trailblazer Award from Richmond's Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Martin and his wife, Anita Martin, have three children: Hayley, Kelly and Mallory.

George Keith Martin was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on December 6, 2016.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with George Keith Martin was conducted by Larry Crowe on December 6, 2016, in Richmond, Virginia, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Lawyer George Keith Martin (1953 - ) became a partner at the law firm of McGuireWoods L.L.P. in 1990. He was also the University of Virginia board of visitor's first African American rector.

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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:

Martin, George Keith, 1953-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Martin, George Keith, 1953- --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:

Lawyer

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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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 George Keith Martin, December 6, 2016. 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 George Keith Martin, Section A2016\_120\_001\_001, TRT: 1:26:38 ?

George Keith Martin was born on September 24, 1953 in Fort Lee, Virginia to Henry Martin, Jr. and Barbara Faulkner Martin. His paternal great-great-

grandfather, Moses Martin, came to the United States from Haiti in the late 1800s. Martin's paternal grandfather was a physician and a graduate of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, and his father studied at Virginia State University and the Howard University College of Dentistry. Martin's mother was born to Henry Faulkner and Ethel Charity Faulkner, who struggled financially during the Great Depression. She studied at the Virginia State College campuses in Petersburg and Norfolk, and became a teacher. Martin's parents divorced when he was young, and his father married attorney Ruby Grant Martin in 1960. His family integrated the Maymont neighborhood of Richmond, Virginia, where Martin attended George Washington Carver Elementary School and Binford Middle School. He graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School, which was located far from his home.

Video Oral History Interview with George Keith Martin, Section A2016\_120\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:33 ?

George Keith Martin attended the predominantly white Thomas Jefferson High School in Richmond, Virginia during the late 1960s. He excelled in his math and chemistry classes, and was elected to the student government. During this time, his stepmother, Ruby Grant Martin, headed the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Office for Civil Rights under President Lyndon Baines Johnson. In 1968, she received the Federal Woman's Award in recognition of her civic service. Upon graduating from high school in 1971, Martin enrolled at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia. There, he joined the Lambda Zeta chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and served on the executive board of the Black Student Alliance. His classmates included the future Virginia Supreme Court Chief Justice Leroy R. Hassell, Sr., and lawyer Clarence Cain, who filed an employment discrimination lawsuit against Hyatt Legal Services after being terminated because of his HIV status.

Video Oral History Interview with George Keith Martin, Section A2016\_120\_001\_003, TRT: 3:33:07 ?

George Keith Martin enrolled in the Echols Scholars Program at the University of Virginia in 1971. He received support from the dean of students, Linwood Jacobs, who was a friend of his father, Henry Martin, Jr. In addition to his studies, Martin was involved with volunteer work through the Madison House, his chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Upon graduating in 1975, he completed a summer internship at the Children's Defense Fund. That fall, Martin enrolled at the Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C. There, he edited the Howard Law Journal alongside Larry Newsome, Rick Hyde and Marvin Hassan. While in law school, Martin served as a summer associate at Hirschler, Fleischer, Weinberg, Cox and Allen, and then at Danzansky, Dickey, Tydings, Quint and Gordon, where he worked for four years after graduating. Then, Martin joined McGuireWoods LLP. At this point, he talks about the law firm's history and the tobacco industry in Virginia.

Video Oral History Interview with George Keith Martin, Section A2016\_120\_001\_004, TRT: 4:32:34 ?

George Keith Martin was involved in the Theater Row restoration project in Richmond, Virginia during the 2000s. The initiative was an attempt to revitalize the city's economy while preserving its historic architecture. From that time, Martin was involved in numerous community and educational organizations, including the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Higher Education and the boards of James Madison University and the University of Virginia (UVA). During his board service at

UVA, President Teresa A. Sullivan was the target of an attempted ouster by Rector Helen Dragas and Vice Rector Mark Kington. After they were removed from their posts, Martin was elected to the position of rector. Shortly afterwards in 2014, Rolling Stone magazine published an article about the group sexual assault of a female student on the UVA campus, which was later found to be falsified. Martin also assisted in the creation of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia.

Video Oral History Interview with George Keith Martin, Section A2016\_120\_001\_005, TRT: 5:32:03 ?

George Keith Martin took part in L. Douglas Wilder's campaign for lieutenant governor of Virginia in 1986. At this point in the interview, Martin talks about his awards and honors, as well as his involvement in educational organizations. He describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community, and shares his advice for aspiring African American lawyers. Additionally, Martin talks about his marriage to Anita L. Martin. He reflects upon his life, legacy and how he would like to be remembered, and concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.