

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Willie Logan

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Logan, Willie, 1957-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Willie Logan,
Dates:	March 8, 2017
Bulk Dates:	2017
Physical Description:	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:09:31).
Abstract:	Political leader Willie Logan (1957 -) served on the Florida House of Representatives from 1982 to 2000 and is the founder, president, and CEO of the Opa-locka Community Development Corporation. Logan was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 8, 2017, in Opa-Locka, Florida. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2017_066
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Political leader Willie Logan was born on February 16, 1957 in Miami Beach, Florida to Willie Logan, Sr. and Ruth Logan. He graduated from high school in 1975, earned his A.A. degree from Miami-Dade College in Miami, Florida in 1976, and his B.S. degree in accounting from the University of Miami in 1977. He later earned his M.B.A. degree in health care administration from the University of Miami in 1996. Logan worked in the insurance industry and volunteered for various political campaigns. In 1980, Logan founded the Opa-locka Community Development Corporation and became its president and chief executive officer. He was elected as mayor of Opa-locka, Florida, making him the youngest mayor in the United States at the time. Logan served as mayor of Opa-locka until 1982, when he was elected to the Florida House of Representatives. In 1997, Logan was designated by Democratic Party leadership to be the next House Speaker and became the first African American to hold that position. Logan founded the Logan Consulting Group in 1992. In 2000, Logan ran for United States Senate as an independent candidate but ultimately lost the election. He continued to serve as president and chief executive officer of Opa-locka Community Development Corporation.

In the Florida legislature, Logan chaired numerous committees, including the Criminal Justice Budget Committee and the Committee on Finance and Taxation. He served as House Democratic Leader-elect in 1997. He was also a member of the Appropriations and Rules Committees and was the immediate past chair of the Miami-Dade County Legislative Delegation, the Legislature's largest delegation.

Logan has been invited as a featured speaker on the subject of community development, including the Future of Places International Conference on Streets as Public Spaces and Drivers of Urban Prosperity in Argentina and the Project for Public Spaces Conference on Public Markets in Spain. He has also published a chapter entitled, "Revitalization & Transforming the Community," in the book *Shifting from Objects to Places*. Logan also served on the Child Service Council and the Performing Arts Council in the Miami-Dade area.

Willie Logan was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 8, 2017.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Willie Logan was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 8, 2017, in Opa-Locka, Florida, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Political leader Willie Logan (1957 -) served on the Florida House of Representatives from 1982 to 2000 and is the founder, president, and CEO of the Opa-locka Community Development Corporation.

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:

Logan, Willie, 1957-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Logan, Willie, 1957- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Mayor

HistoryMakers® Category:

PoliticalMakers

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 Willie Logan, March 8, 2017. 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 The Honorable Willie Logan, Section A2017_066_001_001, TRT: 1:32:17 ?

The Honorable Willie Logan was born on February 16, 1957 in Miami Beach, Florida to Ruther Brown Logan and Willie Logan, Sr. He traced his maternal lineage to his mother's great-grandfather, who was born into slavery. Logan's mother grew up in Mitchell County, Georgia, where she completed her high

school education, and worked on a cotton farm and in a peanut factory. With hopes of becoming a nurse, Logan's mother enrolled at Fort Valley State College in Fort Valley, Georgia. However, she returned home when her father became ill. Logan's father was also from Mitchell County, Georgia, where he obtained a fifth grade education. While many of Logan's maternal family members migrated to the Northeast, Logan's mother and father joined her half-sister in Jacksonville, Florida. There, they married before his military deployment to Germany and Italy during World War II. Upon his return, the couple moved to Miami, Florida, where Logan's father worked as a general contractor and his mother worked at a dry cleaner.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Willie Logan, Section A2017_066_001_002, TRT: 2:26:59 ?

The Honorable Willie Logan was raised as an only child in an unincorporated town near Opa-locka, Florida. He began his education at Holy Redeemer Catholic School in Miami, Florida. However, Logan's mother, Ruther Brown Logan, disagreed with the school's use of corporal punishment, so he was transferred to Bunche Park Elementary School in Miami Gardens, Florida. Logan was an accomplished student, but faced challenges when he entered the newly integrated North Dade Middle School, where he was taken aback by hostility between students and teachers. Even though Logan's maternal grandfather was an African Methodist Episcopal minister, Logan's immediate family attended church services at a Baptist church, where Logan sang in the choir and taught Sunday School. Logan remembers the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, which stimulated his interest in public service at an early age. He also talks about the shifts in the racial demographics of Miami-Dade County, Florida between the 1960s and the 1980s.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Willie Logan, Section A2017_066_001_003, TRT: 3:29:31 ?

The Honorable Willie Logan attended North Dade Middle School in Miami Gardens, Florida, where white students were bussed in to integrate the school. In 1971, Logan graduated to Hialeah-Miami Lakes Senior High School in Hialeah, Florida, where he joined the football and basketball teams. When he was denied the quarterback position, he decided to finish his last remaining class at another high school, while also completing coursework for his associate degree at Miami-Dade Community College. With the support of his mother, Ruther Brown Logan, he entered the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida in 1975. There, he studied business administration and accounting at the suggestion of a high school teacher. He also pledged Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, and was actively involved in the United Black Students association. Even though the university was officially integrated, the white and black students had little interaction. Logan also remembers the influence of sixth grade teacher, Valdez Murray.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Willie Logan, Section A2017_066_001_004, TRT: 4:28:36 ?

The Honorable Willie Logan was actively involved in the local democratic club while attending the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. He also worked part-time as a bookkeeper; and upon graduating in 1979, considered a career as an accountant but changed his mind after a week in the profession. Logan then worked in the office of Florida State Treasurer and Insurance Commissioner Bill Gunter. A year later, he was hired to install and update the computer systems for George Green's insurance company in the country's Southeast region. Upon his return to Opa-Locka, Florida, Logan decided to run

for mayor against a former police chief who was removed from his position for police brutality. Logan won the mayoral election, and assumed office at twenty-three years old. At this point in the interview, Logan describes Opa-Locka's previous mayors, including its first African American mayor, Albert W. Tresvant, Sr., and the city's Moorish architecture. He also talks about the desegregation of city's parks.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Willie Logan, Section A2017_066_001_005, TRT: 5:12:08 ?

The Honorable Willie Logan won the mayoral election in Opa-locka, Florida in 1980. At twenty-three years old, he was the country's youngest mayor at the time. Within days of his election, Logan attended a meeting about urban policy at the invitation of Mayor Marion Barry. While there, he met other mayors from around the county as well, including Jane Byrne and Tom Bradley. Early on, Logan's office was defunded by the Opa-locka City Commission, who strongly opposed his leadership. During the Mariel boatlift of 1980, he welcomed the thousands of Cuban refugees that settled in the Miami, Florida area. In the years that followed, the Hispanic population in Opa-locka grew to 40 percent while the white population declined. During his tenure as mayor, Logan was featured in African American magazines like Jet and Ebony. He talks about the tumultuous administrations of Opa-locka's previous African American mayors.