

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Iris Cooper

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Cooper, Iris, 1953-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Iris Cooper,
Dates:	November 14, 2017
Bulk Dates:	2017
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:00:20).
Abstract:	Entrepreneur Dr. Iris Cooper (1953 -) was co-founder and director of Glory Foods, Inc. and founded the management consultancy firm, JustAskIris! Cooper was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 14, 2017, in Columbus, Ohio. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2017_201
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Entrepreneur Dr. Iris Cooper was born on July 2, 1953 in Evansville, Indiana. She graduated from Bosse High School in Evansville, Indiana in 1971, and attended Fisk University for two years. She transferred to Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana in 1973 and graduated with a B.A. degree in journalism. In 1977, Cooper received an M.B.A. degree in marketing, also from Indiana University. Her D.B.A. degree in entrepreneurship was awarded from Walden University in 2016. Cooper's doctoral study "The First 4 Years: A Small Business Sustainability Study" focused on reducing small business mortality.

Following graduate school, she worked for the Lazarus Department Stores in Columbus, Ohio and became marketing manager of the restaurant division. Cooper transitioned to banking in 1984 and rose to the position of vice president and manager of Community Development Lending at Key Bank. In 1989, she co-founded and served as Vice President of Marketing for Glory Foods, Inc., the first minority- owned food product line in the nation. As the only female owner, Cooper wrote the business plan, created the brand, and conceived the disruptive marketing strategy which introduced pre-seasoned, heat-and-eat "soul food" to the grocery shelves.

Cooper applied her knowledge of financial services in 2001 by opening Pyramid Mortgage Company, targeting self-employed customers. JustAskIris!, also launched in 2001, is her current enterprise and specializes in marketing, strategic planning, and financial management. JustAskIris! business articles appeared in the *Columbus Post* and on WVKO radio show from 2001 to 2006. In 2007, Cooper became director of the entrepreneurship and small business division of the Ohio Department of Development. Under her leadership, Ohio rose from twenty-ninth worst place for small businesses to the ninth best in the nation, and first in the Midwest in four years.

Partnering with Melanie Houston, she co-authored the self-help novel *When the Devil is Beating His Wife: A Christian Perspective on Domestic Violence and Recovery* in 2013. Her current literary project, "*A is for Asset: 26 Ways to Start or Sustain Your Business*" will be digitally published in 2019. Additionally, Cooper teaches business courses at Columbus State Community College and Franklin University, sharing her knowledge and experiences

with the next generation.

Her commitment to community service spans over 30 years in a variety of Central Ohio nonprofits. Cooper was the first female president of Community Capital Development Corporation (CCDC). Other philanthropic positions include board seats at Columbus Area Mental Health, Kelly School of Business at Indiana University, and Strategies Against Violence Everywhere. She was a 2006 YWCA Woman of Achievement and a 2008 Woman of Economic and Leadership Development (WELD). She is an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and the National Coalition of 100 Black Women. Iris recently received the Amos Lynch Legacy Award from the Champions of Diversity organization and the Sharon Burkes Soar Award from Franklin County Children's Services for her advocacy work in Central Ohio.

Cooper has two children, Mica and Malik, and one grandchild, Malachi.

Iris Cooper was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 14, 2017.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Iris Cooper was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 14, 2017, in Columbus, Ohio, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Entrepreneur Dr. Iris Cooper (1953 -) was co-founder and director of Glory Foods, Inc. and founded the management consultancy firm, JustAskIris!

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:

Cooper, Iris, 1953-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Cooper, Iris, 1953- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Entrepreneur

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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 Iris Cooper, November 14, 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 Iris Cooper, Section A2017_201_001_001, TRT: 1:29:46 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Iris Cooper, Section A2017_201_001_002, TRT: 2:29:01 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Iris Cooper, Section A2017_201_001_003, TRT: 3:28:09 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Iris Cooper, Section A2017_201_001_004, TRT: 4:32:22 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Iris Cooper, Section A2017_201_001_005, TRT: 5:27:57 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Iris Cooper, Section A2017_201_001_006, TRT: 6:33:05 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Iris Cooper, Section A2017_201_Cooper_Iris_06_MED_001, TRT: 0:02:18 ?

In honor of BusinessMakers: Breakout Leaders, we salute entrepreneur Dr. Iris Cooper who speaks about founding Glory Foods and her role model, Oprah Winfrey.