

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Damon Lester

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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>	Lester, Damon, 1972-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Damon Lester,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 23, 2018
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2018
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:34:18).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Business executive Damon Lester (1972- ) was named president of National Association of Minority Auto Dealers, an organization developed to assist in promoting minority auto dealers in the United States. He previously served as vice president of operations from 2002. Lester was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 23, 2018, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2018_134
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Business executive Damon Lester was born on December 4, 1972 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Faith and Joe Lester. Lester graduated from St. Barbara Catholic School in 1986, in Philadelphia. Lester graduated from Archbishop John Carroll High School, in 1990, in Radnor, Pennsylvania. He received his B.S. degree in accounting in 1994 from Temple University, in Philadelphia.

Lester served as staff accountant at Milligan And Company, in Philadelphia, one of the largest minority-owned CPA firms in the United States from 1994 to 1998. Lester served as supervisor, audit at Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman in Bethesda, Maryland, where he specialized in creating non-profit organizations through the World Bank and audited international offices of USAID-funded non-profits, from 1998 to 2002. Lester joined the National Association of Minority Auto Dealers (NAMAD) team as vice president of operations, in Largo, Maryland in 2002. The organization was developed to assist in promoting minority auto dealers in the United States. Lester was named president, National Association of Minority Automobile Dealers in 2006. Lester's expertise and strategic relationships with major auto manufacturers positioned him as one of the nation's leading authorities on consumer finance, entrepreneurship and economic diversity issues in the industry. Lester is credited for: his involvement in the Detroit Big Three automobile manufacturers' request for US government financial relief and automobile industry revitalization in 2008; his assistance in negotiations between President Barack Obama's Administration and the Auto Task Force to secure the Memorandum of Understanding with General Motors for "wind-down" dealers, and restructuring of the General Motors Corporation in 2009; as well as NAMAD representation in the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's bulletin of fair practices regarding automobile dealer financing and diversity in the automobile industry in 2013.

Included among Lester's honors and awards, The *Network Journal's* 40 Under Forty Achievement Award in 2009, the FMCRC John Gamboa Community Leadership Award in 2010, Rainbow/PUSH Coalition Emerging Leader

Award in 2011, *Uptown Professional*, DC Catalyst Award in 2014, the *Savoy* Top 100 Black Executives in Corporate America in 2014, the *Real Times Media* Vanguard Award in 2016, *MEA Magazine* Automotive Executive of the Year in 2017, and the Carma Foundation Spotlight Award in 2018.

Lester has served on the board of directors for DC Central Kitchen, Americans Well-Informed on Automobile Retailing Economics (AWARE), and the Automotive Trade Association Executives (ATAE). He was the first African-American board member for AWARE.

Lester's insight and opinions have been featured in dozens of media outlets including *USA Today*, *National Public Radio*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Black Enterprise Magazine*, *Network Business Journal*, and *The New York Times*.

A life member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Lester was involved with Rainbow /PUSH Coalition and the National Association of Black Accountants.

Lester has two sons, Jalen and Justin.

Damon Lester was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 23, 2018.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Damon Lester was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 23, 2018, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Business executive Damon Lester (1972- ) was named president of National Association of Minority Auto Dealers, an organization developed to assist in promoting minority auto dealers in the United States. He previously served as vice president of operations from 2002.

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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:

Lester, Damon, 1972-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Lester, Damon, 1972- --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:**

Business Executive

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

BusinessMakers

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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 Damon Lester, June 23, 2018. 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 Damon Lester, Section A2018\_134\_001\_001, TRT: 1:29:58 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damon Lester, Section A2018\_134\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:25 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damon Lester, Section A2018\_134\_001\_003, TRT: 3:28:36 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damon Lester, Section A2018\_134\_001\_004, TRT: 4:29:07 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damon Lester, Section A2018\_134\_001\_005, TRT: 5:30:36 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damon Lester, Section A2018\_134\_001\_006, TRT: 6:31:54 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damon Lester, Section A2018\_134\_001\_007, TRT: 7:35:42 ?