

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Eddie Jenkins, Jr.

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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>	Jenkins, Eddie, 1950-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	February 14, 2007 and September 11, 2007
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2007
<b>Physical Description:</b>	9 Betacame SP videocassettes (4:16:38).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Labor lawyer and football player Eddie Jenkins, Jr. (1950 - ) an attorney and former NFL wide receiver for the undefeated 1972 Miami Dolphins World Championship Team; he also served as chairman of the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission. Jenkins was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 14, 2007 and September 11, 2007, in Boston, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2007_068
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Professional athlete and attorney Eddie Joseph Jenkins, Jr. was born on August 31, 1950, in Jacksonville, Florida. Jenkins's parents, Essie Rae Jenkins and Eddie Jenkins, Sr., moved the family to "da Ville" in Flushing, New York in 1955. Jenkins attended Public School #154 and was mentored by Coach Vince O'Connor at St. Francis Preparatory School, where he excelled in sports and participated in Outward Bound on Hurricane Island in Maine. Graduating in 1968, Jenkins enrolled at College of the Holy Cross where his classmates included future attorney Ted Wells, author Ed Jones, and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. Graduating with his B.A. degree in 1972, Jenkins was drafted by the National Football League; there, Jenkins became part of the 1972 World Champion Miami Dolphins, the only team in NFL history to go undefeated. Winning the 1973 Super Bowl, Jenkins's teammates included football legends, Paul Warfield, Larry Little, Marlon Briscoe, and Mercury Morris. Jenkins also played with the New York Giants, the Buffalo Bills, the New England Patriots and the Green Bay Packers.

Jenkins entered Suffolk University Law School in 1975 and earned his J.D. degree in 1978, after which he went to work for the United States Labor Department where he was instrumental in the landmark labor decision *David Pasula v. Consolidation Coal Company* in 1980. In 1986, Jenkins established the law offices of Eddie Jenkins and Associates and began teaching as an adjunct professor of law at Suffolk University Law School. The murder of Charles Stuart's wife caused Jenkins to run against Newman Flanagan for District Attorney of Suffolk County in 1990; he won 38 percent of the vote against the incumbent. In 1993, Jenkins ran for an at-large seat on the Boston City Council and finished fifth; he also co-founded 1000 Black Men with Northeastern University's Joseph Warren. In 1993, Jenkins unsuccessfully ran for Boston City Council. In 2002, Jenkins ran again for District Attorney of Suffolk County.

In 2003, Jenkins was appointed chairman of the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABCC)

by commonwealth of Massachusetts Treasurer Timothy Cahill. As chairman of ABCC, Jenkins was charged with the enforcement, oversight and regulation of over 22,000 liquor licenses. Jenkins's community involvement included the Dorchester YMCA, the Multicultural Aids Coalition (MAC), the Vivienne S. Thomson Disability Center, and New Covenant Christian Church Sunday School. Jenkins's son, Julian Jenkins, was drafted as a defensive end by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 2006.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr. was conducted by Larry Crowe on February 14, 2007 and September 11, 2007, in Boston, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 9 Betacame SP videocassettes. Labor lawyer and football player Eddie Jenkins, Jr. (1950 - ) an attorney and former NFL wide receiver for the undefeated 1972 Miami Dolphins World Championship Team; he also served as chairman of the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission.

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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:

Jenkins, Eddie, 1950-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Burghelea, Neculai (Videographer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Jenkins, Eddie, 1950- --Interviews

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African American athletes--Interviews

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African American lawyers--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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National Football League.

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**Occupations:**

Labor Lawyer

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Football Player

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**HistoryMakers® Category:**

LawMakers|SportsMakers

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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 Eddie Jenkins, Jr., February 14, 2007 and September 11, 2007. 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 Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:52  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. was born on August 31, 1950 in Jacksonville, Florida to Essie Rae Jenkins and Eddie Jenkins, Sr. His mother's twin brother, Rayfield Jenkins, played with Charles Sifford on Jacksonville's segregated golf courses. Jenkins' maternal grandmother was a part-Cherokee woman who married a white man with whom she had twenty-one children. Jenkins' father was also of Native American ancestry. His paternal grandfather was enslaved and later became a sharecropper. After the death of Jenkins' paternal grandmother, his father was raised by an aunt. Jenkins was raised in the Durkeeville area of Jacksonville before his family moved to Flushing, New York. His father worked as a dining car waiter before becoming a merchant marine and later, a mailman; he also coached baseball in the neighborhood. Jenkins' father has memories of watching Hank Aaron play baseball in Jacksonville before Aaron moved on to the Majors. Jenkins also talks about Florida's history and Zora Neale Hurston's legacy in the state.

African American athletes--Interviews.

African American lawyers--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:49  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. moved to "da Ville", a largely Jewish area of Flushing, New York with sections of African American families, when he was five years old. He recalls his observations of Jewish culture, community life in "da Ville", and his negative experience with academic placement in the public school system. As a young boy, Jenkins played stickball, skelly, handball, and football. His football talent was noticed by St. Francis Preparatory School, an all-male Catholic school in Fresh Meadows, New York and he was recruited to play basketball and football. Jenkins remembers his long daily commute to St. Francis where his football team was coached by Vincent O'Connor who led his players to an undefeated season and a championship. Also on the team were Larry DiNardo and Paul Houlihan. Jenkins' basketball teammates at St. Francis included Jim O'Brien and Kevin Stacom. In high school, Jenkins was given a scholarship from Harvard University to participate in the Hurricane Island Outward Bound Program in Maine.

Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:10  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. describes his experience in the Hurricane Island Outward Bound program in Maine including three days alone on an island. In 1968, Jenkins enrolled at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts with Jeff Dickerson, Tom Boisture, and HistoryMaker Theodore Wells. Jenkins recalls the institution's sports history and his own football career at Holy Cross.

During Jenkins' sophomore year, the majority of the football team was stricken by a season-ending outbreak of hepatitis A. His senior year, Jenkins scored a 99-yard touchdown, tying the NCAA record for reception of the longest pass from scrimmage. He describes student activism at Holy Cross including a campus walkout by black students. The walkout was mediated by college president, Father John Brooks, who worked with the students to make the campus more inclusive for black students. Jenkins also describes lively debates between future Supreme Court Justice Clarence Wells and HistoryMaker Theodore Wells in the Black Student Union.

Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:13  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. recalls neighbors from his childhood in the "da Ville" section of Flushing, New York, including Billie Holiday and Assata Shakur. While a student at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, Jenkins was a classmate and friend of HistoryMaker Theodore Wells, Pulitzer Prize winner Edward Jones, and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. Jenkins describes his disappointment in Thomas' contributions to the African American community. Jenkins graduated from Holy Cross in 1972 wearing African regalia and was drafted by the Miami Dolphins. At training camp, Jenkins impressed Dolphins coach Don Shula, and made the final cut for the team which included NFL stars like Paul Warfield, Marlin Briscoe, Mercury Morris, Larry Csonka, and Jim Kiick. Jenkins describes the 1972 Miami Dolphins' historic undefeated season en route to 1973 Super Bowl VII. He also talks about weight training in the NFL and contrasts football at the collegiate and professional levels.

Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_001\_005, TRT: 0:30:56  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. talks about playing football with the Miami Dolphins under Coach Don Shula where his teammates included Marlin Briscoe, Paul Warfield, Bob Griese, and Larry Little. Jenkins describes the skill sets of Dolphins running backs, Jim Kiick and Mercury Morris, and Morris' turn as a jailhouse lawyer. After two Super Bowl-winning seasons with the Miami Dolphins, Jenkins was traded to the New York Giants in 1974. He was then cut from the Giants and spent a brief stint on the Buffalo Bills where he met running back O.J. Simpson who stunned Jenkins in his interactions with Bills coach Lou Saban. Jenkins moved on to the New England Patriots and the Green Bay Packers before deciding to pursue a legal career at Suffolk University Law School in Boston, Massachusetts where he struggled to transition from football to law. After graduating in 1978, Jenkins was hired by the U.S. Department of Labor where he worked on *David Pasula v. Consolidation Coal Company*, a landmark labor case.

Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_001\_006, TRT: 0:29:38  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. talks about *David Pasula v. Consolidation Coal Company* (1980), a landmark labor case he tried with Kenneth Yablonski while at the U.S. Department of Labor. He then served as assistant district attorney (DA) in the Middlesex District Attorney's office where he successfully prosecuted the rape case of a Harvard University student by a convict defended by Henry Owens. Racial profiling and police brutality in the black community during the investigation of Carol Stuart's death in the Charles Stuart case led Jenkins to run for Suffolk County DA against incumbent, Newman Flanagan. Jenkins lost, but he made history as the first black man to run for DA in Massachusetts. Jenkins recalls Ralph Martin's appointment and track record as the Suffolk County DA.

He also talks about his volunteer work and his role in the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission. Jenkins remembers inspiring words from Johnnie Cochran and shares his admiration of HistoryMaker Massachusetts governor Deval Patrick.

Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_002\_007, TRT: 0:29:54  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. describes Urban Edge, a non-profit housing corporation in Boston, Massachusetts which develops affordable housing. Initially opposed to the Urban Edge's efforts to bring Pine Street Inn, a homeless shelter, into his community, Jenkins later became the chairman of Urban Edge. With Urban Edge, Jenkins worked to combat predatory lending practices in the Boston area and on the organization's housing development at Jackson Square. Through the TV show "The Public Advocate," Jenkins highlighted local non-profits and interviewed celebrities like Spike Lee, Muhammad Ali, and Sinbad. His radio show, "Basic Training," which featured guests like HistoryMaker Reverend Charles Stith, was targeted toward the homeless and intended to be a source of positive black representation in the media. Jenkins talks about the Michael Vick dogfighting scandal, financial investments by athletes, and a Businessweek article on Father John Brooks, president of College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_002\_008, TRT: 0:29:05  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. describes the legacy of Father John Brooks, a Jesuit who served as president of College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. Father Brooks advocated on behalf of African American students at Holy Cross who have gone on to lead successful careers including Pulitzer Prize winner Edward Jones, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, and HistoryMaker Theodore Wells. Jenkins describes his plans for the future, his desire to increase financial literacy, his family, and the impact of his religious faith on his life. He also reflects upon his hopes and concerns for the African American community, what he would differently, and his legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Eddie Jenkins, Jr., Section A2007\_068\_002\_009, TRT: 0:16:01  
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Eddie Jenkins, Jr. describes his book project and the writing advice he received from Pulitzer Prize winner, Edward Jones. He also talks about how he would like to be remembered and closes his interview by narrating his photographs.