

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Asa Yancey, Sr.

PERSON

Yancey, Asa, 1916-2013

Alternative Names: Dr. Asa Yancey, Sr.;

Life Dates: August 19, 1916-March 9, 2013

Place of Birth: Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Residence: Atlanta, GA

Occupations: Surgeon; Medical Professor; Medical Director

Biographical Note

Surgeon, professor, medical director, and contributor to community service, Asa G. Yancey, Sr., M.D. was born to Daisy L. Sherard Yancey and Arthur H. Yancey on August 19, 1916 in Atlanta, Georgia. Daisy was a housewife, and Arthur worked as a U.S. Post Office mail carrier. Mr. Arthur H. Yancey wrote an autobiographical book in 1959 entitled *Interpositionulification: What the Negro May Expect*. In 1933, Asa G. Yancey graduated as valedictorian from Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta. He earned his B.S. degree with honors four years later from Morehouse College. Yancey was one of four African American students in his class at the University of Michigan Medical School where his elder brother, Bernise, graduated from medical school in 1930.

Upon receiving his M.D. degree from the University of Michigan Medical School in 1941, Yancey first completed a general rotating internship from 1941 to 1942 at what is now Metropolitan General Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio. It was from this experience that he decided to pursue general surgery training. He served as First Lieutenant in The United States Army Medical Corp. before he returned to complete his residency in surgery at Freedmen's Hospital, Howard University, where he trained under the guidance of Dr. Charles R. Drew. In 1945, he was a surgical fellow at the U.S. Marine Hospital in Boston and then became an instructor of surgery at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee. Also about this time, Yancey started his involvement with the National Medical Association (NMA), the largest and oldest national organization for African American physicians.

Following his time in Boston and Nashville, he served as the Chief of Surgery at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama and then the Hughes Spalding Pavilion of Grady Memorial Hospital, Emory University where he established the first

accredited general surgery training program for black surgeons. With his return to Atlanta in 1958, Yancey was invited to join the faculty at Emory University School of Medicine where he became an Instructor of Surgery in 1964. In 1972, Yancey was appointed medical director of Grady Memorial Hospital and associate dean at Emory University Medical School. He was appointed full Professor of Surgery at Emory University Medical School in 1975. He continued to work at the Emory University Clinic and Grady Memorial Hospital until his retirement in 1989.

Yancey has contributed numerous articles to the academic surgical community, and he has been recognized with many awards. His article, "A Modification of the Swenson Operation for Congenital Megacolon," published in a 1952 issue of The Journal of the National Medical Association, describes a surgical procedure that preceded Soave's publication by ten years. Yancey has also written articles exploring issues of medical care, health care, and poverty including "Medical Education in Atlanta and Health Care of Black Minority and Low Income People," and "The Challenge of Providing Health Care for the Poor: Public Hospital Perspective". His book *Portrayal of a Lifespan* describes life as it was for him in the 21st Century. Yancey received the Bennie Service Award, in 1990 and he received an Honorary Doctor of Science from Morehouse College and Howard University. The Society of Black Academic Surgeons established a lectureship in the name of Asa G. Yancey, Sr., M.D. The Emory University Health System recognized his professional contributions over the years by naming a healthcare facility, The Asa G. Yancey Health Clinic, in northwest Atlanta. Yancey was married to the late Carolyn "Marge" E. Dunbar and they have four children: Arthur H. Yancey II, M.D., Carolyn L. Yancey, M.D., Caren L. Yancey-Covington (deceased), and Asa G. Yancey, Jr., M.D.

Dr. Asa G. Yancey was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on March 19, 2012.

Dr. Asa Yancey passed away on March 9, 2013.

Related Entries

Edmund Asa Ware School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Booker T. Washington High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Diploma

Morehouse College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.S.

Michigan Medicine [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.D.

Freedmen's Hospital, Howard University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1942 to 1945]

Resident

United States Marine Hospital [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1945 to 1945]

Fellow in Surgery

Meharry Medical College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1945 to 1948]

Instructor of Surgery

Tuskegee Veteran's Administration Hospital [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1948 to 1958]

Chief of Surgery

Hughes Spalding Pavilion of Grady Memorial Hospital [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1958 to 1972]

Chief of Surgery

Emory University [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1972 to 1989]

Assistant Dean

Grady Memorial Hospital [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1972 to 1989]

Medical Director

American Surgical Association [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

National Medical Association (NMA) [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Southern Surgical Association [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

American Medical Association [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Butler Street YMCA [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

Fulton-Dekalb Hospital Authority [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

