

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Samuel Howard

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Howard, Samuel H., 1939-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Howard,
Dates:	April 24, 2014
Bulk Dates:	2014
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:34:23).
Abstract:	Corporate executive Samuel Howard (1939 - 2020) was the founder of Phoenix Holdings, Inc. and Phoenix Communications Group, Inc., and the author of 'The Flight of the Phoenix: Thoughts on Work and Life.' Howard was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 24, 2014, in Brentwood, Tennessee. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2014_031
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Corporate executive Samuel Houston Howard was born on May 8, 1939 in Marietta, Oklahoma to Houston and Nellie Gaines Howard. Howard received his B.S. degree in business administration from Oklahoma State University in 1961, and his M.A. degree in economics from Stanford University in 1963.

From 1963 to 1967, Howard worked as a financial analyst with General Electric Company. In 1966 and 1967, he served as a White House Fellow and assistant to U.S. Ambassador Arthur Goldberg. From 1967 to 1968, Howard worked as director of educational computer services at Howard University and as a consultant to the U.S. Health, Education, and Welfare Department. He was then named vice president of finance, secretary and treasurer of TAW International Leasing Corporation, where he worked from 1968 until 1972. In 1972, he founded and served as chairman, president and CEO of Phoenix Holdings, Inc. and Phoenix Communications Group, Inc., which owned and operated broadcasting properties in Tennessee, Kansas and Mississippi.

Howard was hired as vice president of finance and business at Meharry Medical College in 1973. He then joined Hospital Affiliates International, Inc. as vice president of planning of the INA Health Care Group in 1977, and was promoted to vice president and treasurer in December of 1980. Howard was hired by Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) as vice president and treasurer in 1981, and was promoted to senior vice president of public affairs in October of 1985. He resigned from HCA in 1988 in order to chair Phoenix Holdings, Inc. fulltime. In 1993, Howard became chairman, president and CEO of Xantus Corporation, an investor owned company that owns and operates health maintenance organizations.

Howard has been a member, board director or committee member of numerous organizations, including Southeast Community Capital; Nashville Electric Service; National Association of Corporate Directors; Nashville Chamber of Commerce; Federation of American Health Systems; Financial Executives Institute; National Easter Seal Society; National Urban League; Leadership Nashville Foundation; Project Reflect, Inc.; National Conference of

Christians & Jews, Inc. (NCCJ); and United Way, among others. Howard was founder and director of 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee, chairman of the board of the Urban League of Middle Tennessee, and trustee of Fisk University. He served on the Governor's TennCare Roundtable in 1995 and the Boy Scouts Inner City Task Force Committee in 1988.

Howard was inducted into the Oklahoma State University School of Business Hall of Fame in 1983, and received the 1980 and 1984 Federation of American Hospitals President's Achievement Award. In 1994, he received the Nashville NAACP Branch Image Award for Lifetime Achievement and the NCCJ Human Relations Award. Howard received the Outstanding CEO Award among the 100 largest privately-held businesses in Nashville in 1997 and the Nashville Business Journal's 1995 Small Business Executive of the Year Award. He was honored as Nashvillian of the Year in 1998 by the Easter Seal Society of Tennessee and as Philanthropist of the Year in 1997 by the National Society of Fundraising Executives. In 2010, Howard received the White House Fellows John W. Gardner Legacy of Leadership Award.

Howard is the author of *The Flight of the Phoenix: Thoughts on Work and Life*, published in 2007.

Samuel H. Howard was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 24, 2014.

Howard passed away on July 10, 2020.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Samuel Howard was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 24, 2014, in Brentwood, Tennessee, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Corporate executive Samuel Howard (1939 - 2020) was the founder of Phoenix Holdings, Inc. and Phoenix Communications Group, Inc., and the author of 'The Flight of the Phoenix: Thoughts on Work and Life.'

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:

Howard, Samuel H., 1939-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Howard, Samuel H., 1939---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Corporate Executive

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 Samuel Howard, April 24, 2014. 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 Samuel Howard, Section A2014_031_001_001, TRT: 1:28:55 ?

Samuel Howard was born on May 8, 1939 in Marietta, Oklahoma to Nellie Gaines Howard and Houston Howard. His paternal grandfather was a peanut farmer in Ryan, Oklahoma. His father attended school in Marietta, and later worked as a laborer at Montgomery Ward. Howard's mother was raised in Burneyville, Oklahoma, where her father, Samuel Gaines, was a sharecropper. She completed the twelfth grade, and went on to work as a domestic in Lawton, Oklahoma. She was a devoted Baptist who valued religion over formal education. With Howard's father, she attended Union Baptist Church in Lawton, while Howard and his siblings were members of Lawton's Bethlehem Baptist Church. They rented a house near the railroad tracks in Lawton, until Howard's father bought a house on Carver Avenue. Howard attended kindergarten through the twelfth grade at the segregated Douglass School in Lawton. He had two younger sisters, Callie Howard and Lula Howard; and a younger brother, Maurice Howard.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Howard, Section A2014_031_001_002, TRT: 2:28:11 ?

Samuel Howard grew up in Lawton, Oklahoma during 1940s and 1950s. He sometimes saw movies at the Ritz Theatre downtown, where African American patrons sat upstairs behind a glass barrier. Howard began his education the Douglass School in Lawton, where he played on the football team. He also served as president of the student council, and as the assistant band director under Levi Presley. He worked at a nearby grocery store before and after school, and he was employed at the Lawton Meat Supply Company during the summer after his senior year. In 1956, Howard enrolled in the Division of Business at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma, where he was one of twenty-six African American students. He paid for his education by working as a teaching assistant in the statistics department, and as a dorm monitor at Cordell Hall. He also joined the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and the Blue Key Honor Society. At this point in the interview, Howard talks about race relations in Oklahoma.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Howard, Section A2014_031_001_003, TRT: 3:29:44 ?

Samuel Howard graduated from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma in 1961. He received a scholarship to pursue a graduate degree in economics at Stanford University in Stanford, California. Around this time, he met his future wife, Karan Howard, who moved with him to California. Upon completing his master's degree, Howard became the first African American trainee in the Financial Management Program at General Electric. There, he developed skills in accounting and computation. In 1966, Howard was admitted to the White House Fellows program. For the opportunity, he moved with his wife to the Riverdale area of the Bronx, New York. He commuted each day to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York City, and he frequently

traveled to Washington, D.C. During this time, Howard served under the UN Ambassador Arthur Goldberg, who was instrumental in the negotiations that ended the Six-Day War in the Middle East in 1967.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Howard, Section A2014_031_001_004, TRT: 4:30:02 ?

Samuel Howard served as a White House Fellow under United Nations Ambassador Arthur Goldberg in 1967. He briefly served as the director of computer services at Howard University, and then returned to New York City. There, Howard and Thomas A. Wood cofounded TAW International Leasing, Inc., a capital leasing company that operated in Africa. In 1972, Howard founded Phoenix Communications Group, Inc., which acquired WVOL Radio in Berry Hill, Tennessee; WQQK Radio in Goodlettsville, Tennessee; and KTPK Radio in Topeka, Kansas. Around this time, Dr. Lloyd C. Elam, the president of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, recruited Howard to serve as his vice president of finance. In 1977, Howard became a vice president at Hospital Affiliates International, Inc. Four years later, he joined the Hospital Corporation of America. In 1993, Howard founded the Xantus Corporation, a health maintenance organization in Nashville. He sold his radio stations after declaring Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2000.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Howard, Section A2014_031_001_005, TRT: 5:28:19 ?

Samuel Howard founded the Xantus Corporation, a Medicaid health maintenance organization (HMO) based in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1993. After receiving unprofitably low premiums from the state, he heeded an attorney's advice and entered the company into receivership. In response, the State of Tennessee charged him with absconding with money. Howard was eventually exonerated, but his reputation was damaged. He went on to operate the Arkansas Managed Care Organization, Inc., a preferred provider organization (PPO). He also invested in Mama Turney's Homemade Pies, Inc. Howard served on the boards of Nashville Electric Service and Pathway Lending, and as chairman of the Urban League of Middle Tennessee. His book, 'The Flight of the Phoenix: Thoughts on Life and Work,' was published in 2007. At this point, Howard talks about his children, Anica Howard and Samuel Howard II. He also describes his proposed changes to Medicare, and his hopes and concerns for the African American community.

Video Oral History Interview with Samuel Howard, Section A2014_031_001_006, TRT: 6:09:12 ?

Samuel Howard helped found the 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee, Inc., which was based in Nashville, Tennessee. Through the organization, Howard supported the educational pursuits of young African American men, for whom the organization raised over \$300,000 in scholarships. Howard talks about the separation between his business and his family life. At the time of the interview, he had been married to his wife, Karan Howard, for fifty-one years. Howard concludes the interview by reflecting upon his legacy and how he would like to be remembered.