

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan

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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>	Sullivan, Louis Wade, 1933-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 17, 2019, March 21, 2002, November 29, 2004 and November 6, 2004
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002, 2004 and 2019
<b>Physical Description:</b>	27 Betacame SP videocassettes uncompressed MOV digital video files (13:25:34).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Federal cabinet appointee and college president Dr. Louis Wade Sullivan (1933- ) served as founding dean and president of Morehouse School of Medicine, and as U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services from 1988 to 1993. Sullivan was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 17, 2019, March 21, 2002, November 29, 2004 and November 6, 2004, in Atlanta, Georgia, Chicago, Illinois and Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_028
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Federal cabinet appointee and college president Dr. Louis Wade Sullivan was born on November 3, 1933 in Atlanta, Georgia to Lubirda Priester and Walter Wade Sullivan. After graduating from Booker T. Washington High School, Sullivan received his B.S. degree in biology from Morehouse College in 1954. He went on to receive his M.D. degree from Boston University School of Medicine in 1958,

completing his residency at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center.

In 1960, Sullivan began a pathology fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, before working at Boston City Hospital and studying hematology at the Thorndike Laboratory. He was hired as co-director of hematology at Boston University Medical Center in 1966; and, in 1967, he founded the Boston University Hematology Service. In 1975, Morehouse College Medical Education Program was founded and Sullivan returned to Atlanta to serve as its first dean, teaching biology and medicine and founding the Medical Education Program at Morehouse College. The Morehouse School of Medicine became independent from Morehouse College in 1981, with Sullivan as its president and dean. In 1988, President George H.W. Bush appointed Sullivan to serve as the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services. He returned to Morehouse School of Medicine in 1993 as president, retiring from the position in 2002.

In 1976, Sullivan helped found the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools to promote a national minority health agenda; and, in 1999, he hosted the public television show “Frontiers of Medicine.” In 2003, he was appointed by President George W. Bush to chair the White House initiative on historically black colleges and universities advisory committee. He also served as chairman of the National Health Museum and on the boards of United Therapeutics, Emergent BioSolutions, General Motors, Cigna, and Equifax.

Sullivan has received more than sixty honorary degrees, including an honorary M.D. degree from the University of Pretoria in South Africa. He received the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Award for Humanitarian Contributions to the Health of Humankind from the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases in 2008 and his autobiography received the NAACP Image Award for Literature in 2015.

Sullivan and his wife, E. Ginger Williamson Sullivan, have three children: Paul, Shanta, and Halsted.

Dr. Louis Wade Sullivan was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 21, 2002 and August 17, 2019.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on August 17, 2019, March 21, 2002, November 29, 2004 and November 6, 2004, in Atlanta, Georgia, Chicago, Illinois and Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 27 Betacame SP videocassettes

uncompressed MOV digital video files. Federal cabinet appointee and college president Dr. Louis Wade Sullivan (1933- ) served as founding dean and president of Morehouse School of Medicine, and as U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services from 1988 to 1993.

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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:**

Sullivan, Louis Wade, 1933-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews  
Sullivan, Louis Wade, 1933- --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:**

College President

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Federal Cabinet Appointee

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

MedicalMakers

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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 Dr. Louis W.

Sullivan, August 17, 2019, March 21, 2002, November 29, 2004 and November 6, 2004. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

## Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 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 Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_001\_001, TRT: 1:30:00 2002/03/21

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan describes his mother's and father's backgrounds and details his life growing up in rural Georgia. Sullivan talks about his father's funeral home business and his mother's experiences as a school teacher. Sullivan also describes his childhood personality and outlines his favorite hobbies and activities while he was in school.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_001\_002, TRT: 2:29:35 2002/03/21

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan shares memories from his childhood, including his elementary school and high school experiences. Sullivan describes his early interest in becoming a doctor, which led to his decision to attend Morehouse College on a pre-medical track. Sullivan talks about his experiences at Morehouse,

describing notable professors, the social climate, and the influence of the black community in Atlanta.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_001\_003, TRT: 3:30:35 2002/03/21

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan explains his decision to attend medical school at Boston University and describes his experience there as being overwhelmingly positive, despite it being a mostly white environment. Sullivan discusses his career after graduating from medical school, and discusses his decision to return to Atlanta to found Morehouse School of Medicine. Sullivan explains the historical significance of the Morehouse School of Medicine, and talks about how it originated with a need for more black doctors in the South, particularly in Georgia.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_001\_004, TRT: 4:31:23 2002/03/21

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan discusses the various strategies used to build Morehouse School of Medicine, including a detailed look at private fundraising and his attempts to secure federal funds. Sullivan then explains how he befriended Vice President George H. W. Bush in the 1980s, which led to Sullivan's eventual appointment as Secretary of Health and Human Services. Sullivan discusses his experience at that post, citing his greatest successes as increasing diversity in the department and raising awareness about nutrition in America.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_001\_005, TRT: 5:04:51 2002/03/21

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan details his experience at Boston University Medical School, naming some of his influential professors and commenting on the academic challenges he faced. Sullivan explains why he became interested in internal medicine and hematology, and comments on various advances in the field of hematology. Sullivan also talks about why becoming a doctor was so important to his family and his community.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_002\_006, TRT: 6:31:15 2004/11/06

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan details his experience as an intern at New York Hospital, naming the doctors who influenced and encouraged him, despite his being the first African American to intern there. Sullivan then explains why he decided to return to Boston to perform research in the field of hematology, and talks about his most important contributions to the field, including the results of his study of the effects of alcohol on bone marrow. Sullivan also discusses his research about sickle cell anemia.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_002\_007, TRT: 7:31:13 2004/11/06

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan continues to discuss the formation of the National Center for Sickle Cell Disease and also explains why he chose to focus on medical research instead of becoming a general practitioner. Sullivan then describes how he developed administrative skills and put them to use during the founding of Morehouse School of Medicine. Sullivan explains the history behind the founding, including the role of the Atlanta University Center consortium.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_002\_008, TRT: 8:31:17 2004/11/06

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan explains why he accepted the offer to become Morehouse School of Medicine's first dean, and outlines the strategy he used to build a faculty, raise funds, and gain full accreditation for the school. Sullivan details the school's relationship with the Atlanta University Center consortium and names the many sources of funding from which Morehouse School of Medicine has benefited.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_002\_009, TRT: 9:31:15 2004/11/06

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan details the founding of the Morehouse School of Medicine, pointing out key sources of funds, individuals instrumental in the development of the school, and the financial challenges that he and other administrators at the school had to overcome. Sullivan also talks about recruiting the first students to attend Morehouse while it was still a two-year

school.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section  
A2002\_028\_003\_010, TRT: 10:31:24 2004/11/29

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan discusses how the Civil Rights Movement brought on a change in the educational climate in Georgia, which allowed for the founding of Morehouse School of Medicine. Sullivan then discusses the school's ties with federal agencies like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and its connection with George H. W. and Barbara Bush, which helped lead to Sullivan's appointment as U.S. Secretary for Health and Human Services in 1989.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section  
A2002\_028\_003\_011, TRT: 11:31:21 2004/11/29

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan details his time as U.S. Secretary for Health and Human services from 1989 to 1993. Sullivan explains why he chose to accept the post, and describes his confirmation process. Sullivan lists his accomplishments at the position, saying he is most proud of his commitment to creating a diverse department, as well as his initiative to improve the diets of Americans with new standards for nutrition labels.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section  
A2002\_028\_003\_012, TRT: 12:31:26 2004/11/29

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan details many of the challenging issues he faced as U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, including his conflict with the tobacco industry over warning labels, his struggle within the administration to create new nutrition labels for food, the AIDS panic in the late 1980s, and a crisis involving imported Chilean grapes. Sullivan talks about the strategies he used to deal with these issues and the responsibilities that are unique to the office.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section  
A2002\_028\_003\_013, TRT: 13:31:24 2004/11/29

Medical school founder Louis Sullivan details his return to Morehouse School of Medicine, explaining why he chose to return, discussing the process of developing a succession program, and outlining his hopes and concerns for the future of the institution. Sullivan then takes time to



consider the state of the medical profession today, his contributions to African Americans, and his legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_003\_014, TRT: 14:29:30 2004/11/29

This tape was not published to THMDA

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_015, TRT: 15:31:48 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_016, TRT: 16:29:07 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_017, TRT: 17:35:58 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_018, TRT: 18:34:11 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_019, TRT: 19:29:16 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_020, TRT: 20:27:54 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_021, TRT: 21:32:00 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_022, TRT: 22:29:15 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_023, TRT: 23:32:42 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_024, TRT: 24:31:52 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_025, TRT: 25:37:01 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_026, TRT: 26:30:28 2019/08/17

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, Section A2002\_028\_004\_027, TRT: 27:17:33 2019/08/17