

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Joe Marshall

---

## 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>	Marshall, Joseph, 1947-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Joe Marshall,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 28, 2002
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:01:59).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Nonprofit chief executive and youth advocate Joe Marshall (1947 - ) was the co-founder of the Omega Boys Club in San Francisco, which offered tutoring, basketball and other positive activities to young people in order for them to build positive lives. Marshall received the Freedom Works Award from the U.S. Congress, a MacArthur "Genius Award" and numerous other honors. Marshall was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 28, 2002, in San Francisco, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_037
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

---

## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Joseph Earl Marshall, Jr. was born on May 12, 1947, in St. Louis, Missouri. His father, Joseph Marshall, Sr. worked for a gas company while his mother, Odessa Marshall, worked as a nurse. By splitting shifts, Marshall's parents ensured that one was always home and that all nine of their children could attend college. Inspired by this example and by his grandmother, who told Marshall when he was six, "The more you know, the more you owe," Marshall has become a role model with a monumental mission: to save a generation of African American youth.

Marshall spent much of his own youth in South Central Los Angeles, California, before attending the University of San Francisco, where he majored in political science and sociology. After graduating with a B.A. in 1968, Marshall began teaching middle school in San Francisco. He earned an M.A. in education from San Francisco State University in 1974. Despite his influence as both a teacher and administrator, Marshall saw too many children drop out, go to jail or die. Desperate to address what he saw as a lack of information about how to live, Marshall teamed up with a fellow staff member at Potrero Hill Middle School, Jack Jacqua, to form the Omega Boys Club in 1987.

The Omega Boys Club began with fifteen members and offered tutoring, basketball and other positive activities to fulfill a mission of keeping young people alive, unharmed by violence and free from incarceration while providing opportunities and support for youth to build positive lives. Since that time, over 180 young people supported by the Omega Boys Club/Street Soldiers have gone to college, many of them former gang members and drug dealers. Omega's services include the Omega Academic Preparation and Scholarship Program, a thirty-six-week course which prepares youth for college; the Street Soldiers Violence Prevention Program, which educates community agencies, schools, and inmates in both juvenile and adult correctional facilities about behaviors that increase the risk of violence and how to decrease that risk; the Omega Training Institute, a four-day seminar which teaches Omega's methodology of violence prevention and intervention to youth service providers, teachers, police officers,

lawyers and judges; and the Street Soldiers Radio Show, a nationally syndicated call-in talk show which provides approximately 450,000 listeners in forty cities with weekly counseling.

Marshall earned a Ph.D. in psychology from Wright Institute in Berkeley, California in 1997. He has served as a Planning Board Member of the Surgeon General's Report on Youth Violence and as an advisor for community violence prevention at the Harvard University School of Public Health. He received the Freedom Works Award from the U.S. Congress, a MacArthur "Genius Award" and numerous other honors. He and his wife Sandra have three children.

---

## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Joe Marshall was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on March 28, 2002, in San Francisco, California, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Nonprofit chief executive and youth advocate Joe Marshall (1947 - ) was the co-founder of the Omega Boys Club in San Francisco, which offered tutoring, basketball and other positive activities to young people in order for them to build positive lives. Marshall received the Freedom Works Award from the U.S. Congress, a MacArthur "Genius Award" and numerous other honors.

---

## 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:

Marshall, Joseph, 1947-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Marshall, Joseph, 1947---Interviews

---

## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

---

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

---

Omega Boys Club (San Francisco, Calif.)

---

## Occupations:

Nonprofit Chief Executive

---

## HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

---

## 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 Joe Marshall, March 28, 2002. 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 Joe Marshall, Section A2002\_037\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Youth advocate Joseph Marshall begins by describing his family history and his parents' backgrounds. He recalls early childhood memories from growing up in St. Louis, Missouri, describing his neighborhood, family life, and his personality. Marshall recalls his education in Catholic schools, explaining how he dealt with learning in an all-white environment. After discussing his interests and aspirations as a youth, Marshall remembers his family's move from St. Louis to Los Angeles.

Video Oral History Interview with Joe Marshall, Section A2002\_037\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:16 ?

Youth advocate Joseph Marshall recalls his family's move from St. Louis, Missouri to Los Angeles, and compares his experiences in the two cities as a youth. Marshall describes in detail the violence he encountered on a regular basis in Los Angeles, and explains an encounter he had with a gang. Marshall then describes his high school experience at the prestigious Loyola High School of Los Angeles, and explains why he chose to attend the University of San Francisco. Marshall talks about the Jesuit schooling experience there, and explains how he became aware of the Civil Rights Movement while in college.

Video Oral History Interview with Joe Marshall, Section A2002\_037\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:22 ?

Youth advocate Joseph Marshall describes his activism while attending the University of San Francisco. He explains how he raised awareness of the Civil Rights Movement on campus, and recounts his involvement in a racial-charged riot. He then explains how he became involved with teaching after he graduated from college, and tells of how his experience teaching high school inspired him to found the Omega Boys Club. Marshall shares the organization's mission and ethics, and talks about the club's success. He also considers whether the methodology of the Omega Boys Club could be replicated.

Video Oral History Interview with Joe Marshall, Section A2002\_037\_001\_004, TRT: 0:31:21 ?

Youth advocate Joseph Marshall shares his methodology in shaping successful teenagers, explaining how he eliminates risk factors and encourages youths to be proud of academic achievements. After stressing the importance of black history education, Marshall shares his hopes and concerns for African American youth and considers his legacy.