

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

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Saffold, Howard, 1941-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Howard Saffold,
Dates:	June 5, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:33:31).
Abstract:	Criminal justice activist, nonprofit chief executive, and police officer Howard Saffold (1941 -) served as the president of the African American Patrolman's League. Saffold was a criminal justice activist and anti-crime specialist. Saffold was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 5, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_091
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Reformer Howard Saffold, a former police officer who has dedicated his life to correcting wrongs in the criminal justice system, was born on January 26, 1941 in Chicago, Illinois to Eva and DeWitt Saffold. Saffold held odd jobs while attending Farragut High School. Upon graduation in 1959, he joined the U.S. Army. He married Carol Randall Saffold in 1960 and completed his military service in 1962. Saffold worked as an expeditor for the regional office of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs before the Chicago Police Department hired him as a beat officer in 1965.

As a police officer, Saffold faced discrimination and witnessed police brutality, causing him to contemplate resigning. When the Afro-American Police League was founded in 1968 by Renault Robinson, he immediately joined, recruited others and eventually served as the League's president. When a 1976 court decision forced the Chicago Police Department to change its discriminatory hiring and promotional practices, membership soared. In 1978, Saffold co-founded the National Black Police Association, serving as its president as well. In 1979, he co-founded Positive Anti-Crime Thrust with fellow Afro-American Police League leader Renault Robinson; promoting cooperation between police and the communities they serve.

When Harold Washington unsuccessfully ran for mayor of the City of Chicago in 1977, Saffold provided security on a volunteer basis. When Washington ran again and won in 1983, one of Mayor Washington's first official acts was to name Saffold as chief of executive security, making Saffold responsible for selecting, training and assigning personnel. Saffold served in the same capacity for Mayor Eugene Sawyer after Mayor Washington's untimely death.

In 1991, Saffold retired from the Chicago Police Department and resurrected the Positive Anti-Crime Thrust. As CEO, he attempts to stem the flow of young black men into the prison system.

Saffold holds a B.S. in Business Administration from Chicago State University and an M.A. in urban studies from

Northeastern Illinois University. He was honored by the Midwest Community Council in 1988, the Peoria Afro-American Police League in 1993 and the South Austin Coalition in 1994. He consults community organizing initiatives and community-based organizations, including prison ministries and public schools.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Howard Saffold was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 5, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Criminal justice activist, nonprofit chief executive, and police officer Howard Saffold (1941 -) served as the president of the African American Patrolman's League. Saffold was a criminal justice activist and anti-crime specialist.

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:

Saffold, Howard, 1941-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Humphries, Mike (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Saffold, Howard, 1941---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Criminal Justice Activist

Police Officer

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 Howard Saffold, June 5, 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 Howard Saffold, Section A2002_091_001_001, TRT: 0:29:19 ?
Howard Saffold discusses his family background and describes his family members. He also recalls his childhood and youth in Chicago, Illinois.
- Video Oral History Interview with Howard Saffold, Section A2002_091_001_002, TRT: 0:30:07 ?
Howard Saffold recounts his high school years, including his involvement in gang activity. He also recalls his military service and explains his decision to become a police officer.
- Video Oral History Interview with Howard Saffold, Section A2002_091_001_003, TRT: 0:32:35 ?
Howard Saffold recalls his training to become a police officer. He discusses at length the relationship between police officers and the black community, and the intersections of racism and police brutality. Saffold also recounts instances of extreme police brutality during the 1968 riots after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Video Oral History Interview with Howard Saffold, Section A2002_091_001_004, TRT: 0:30:57 ?
Howard Saffold recounts police brutality and corruption in the late 1960s, particularly concerning the 1968 Democratic National Convention and the murder of Fred Hampton. He also recalls the founding of the Afro-American Patrolman's League, and the resistance it met.
- Video Oral History Interview with Howard Saffold, Section A2002_091_001_005, TRT: 0:30:37 ?
Howard Saffold lists the different organizations available to African American law enforcement officers, and describes their functions. He then discusses at length the divisions between officers and communities caused by racism.
- Video Oral History Interview with Howard Saffold, Section A2002_091_001_006, TRT: 0:29:58 ?
Howard Saffold details his involvement with the Afro-American Patrolman's League, particularly during Jane Byrne's and Harold Washington's mayoral terms. He also ponders the future of African American police organizations, and shares his work with the Positive Anti-Crime Thrust.
- Video Oral History Interview with Howard Saffold, Section A2002_091_001_007, TRT: 0:29:58 ?
Howard Saffold reflects on his life and career, and shares his opinion of The HistoryMakers.