

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Gloria Rookard

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Rookard, Gloria Shuler
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Gloria Rookard,
Dates:	August 2, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	3 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:24:30).
Abstract:	Nurse and chief executive officer Gloria Rookard (1932 -) served as co-founder and treasurer of the National Black Nurses Association. She later founded Universal Nursing Services. Rookard was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 2, 2002, in Akron, Ohio. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_132
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Gloria Mae Rookard, a native of Akron, Ohio, was born on January 3, 1932 to Maurine and Claude Shuler. The second of nine children, Rookard helped care for her siblings and grew up to become a nurse who cared deeply for patients and those in need. She has been active in seeking equal access to health care for all Americans.

Rookard (then Shuler) married Howard Rookard in 1952. That same year, she became a registered nurse and began working at Akron General Hospital, where she eventually was promoted to head nurse. Rookard acted as the clinic coordinator for the Migrant Health Clinic from 1968 to 1969, when she became the manager of ancillary services for a local organization called Visiting Nurse. In 1971, she was invited to help found the National Black Nurses' Association. Serving as the first membership chairwoman, she caused the organization to grow significantly. Having pursued business classes at the University of Akron, she also served as a treasurer. She began working for Headstart as a clinic coordinator in 1974. Earning a P.N.A. from Cincinnati University, she became a certified pediatric nurse practitioner. In 1982, she founded Universal Nursing Services, Inc. and still serves as their president and C.E.O.

Rookard has served as president of the Ohio Pediatric Nurses' Association and managing editor and invited founder of the Contemporary Nurses' Educational Foundation. She has also served as board member for the American Diabetic Society, the Fallsview Psychiatric Hospital and Goals for Greater Akron. President Carter designated her as a Presidential Appointee on the American Family. The NAACP and Wesley Temple A.M.E. church have also benefited from her membership. She and her husband have five children-Howard, Douglas, David, Derrick and Deanna.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Gloria Rookard was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 2, 2002, in Akron,

Ohio, and was recorded on 3 Betacame SP videocassettes. Nurse and chief executive officer Gloria Rookard (1932 -) served as co-founder and treasurer of the National Black Nurses Association. She later founded Universal Nursing Services.

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:

Rookard, Gloria Shuler

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Rookard, Gloria Shuler--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Nurse

Chief Executive Officer

HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers

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 Gloria Rookard, August 2, 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 Gloria Rookard, Section A2002_132_001_001, TRT: 0:29:40 ?
Gloria Rookard was born on January 3, 1932 in Akron, Ohio to Maurine Shuler, who was born in 1909 in Sumpter, South Carolina, and Claude Shuler, Sr., who was born in 1905 also in Sumpter. Her parents married and moved to Akron, Ohio to raise their family away from the violence against African Americans in the South, which both of her parents and their families experienced. Her father witnessed a friend's lynching, which led him to move north, and her maternal grandmother, who raised Rookard's mother, was a product of rape. Her parents created a supportive home for their eleven children, and they were encouraging of Rookard's education. Rookard attended Robinson Elementary School and

East High School in Akron, graduating from there in 1950. She encountered discrimination when applying to nursing schools in Akron before receiving guidance from her high school principal to apply to People's Hospital in Akron. She was accepted, but could not attend unless the nursing school found three other African Americans to provide a support system for her. Rookard attended nursing school at People's Hospital from 1950 to 1952 with three other black students, with whom she developed long-lasting relationships. While at nursing school, she met her husband, Howard Rookard, who she married shortly before her graduation in 1952.

Video Oral History Interview with Gloria Rookard, Section A2002_132_001_002, TRT: 0:30:20 ?

Gloria Rookard attended nursing school at People's Hospital in Akron, Ohio from 1950 to 1952. While a student there, she met her husband, Howard Rookard, and they eloped shortly before her graduation, upsetting both her father and her nursing department administration. Rookard describes the intense training she received at People's Hospital, and she reflects on the limitations and expectations for women in their career options in the 1950s. She then worked at Akron General Hospital in various nursing departments from 1952 to 1968, during which time she gave birth to and raised her five children. Rookard then entered the field of public health nursing, working for Migrant Health from 1968 to 1969, addressing the needs of the migrant worker population in Northeast Ohio. While there, she addressed concerns such as venereal diseases and birth control. Rookard then worked for the Visiting Nurse Service as a public health nurse from 1969 to 1974, and then began working for the Head Start program from 1974 to 1979, conducting physical examinations of up to four thousand young children a year.

Video Oral History Interview with Gloria Rookard, Section A2002_132_001_003, TRT: 0:24:30 ?

Gloria Rookard was recruited by her old roommate at People's Hospital nursing school in Akron, Ohio, Betty Jo Davidson, to work in public health, first at the Visiting Nurse Association, from 1969 to 1974, and then with the Head Start Program from 1974 to 1979. During this time, she addressed public health concerns around Akron and Northeast Ohio. Rookard also helped found the National Black Nurses Association in 1971. While at Head Start, she experienced discrimination from some of the nurses there, and she later left to begin her own business in 1982, Universal Nursing Service, a company that provides various home nursing services around the region. As the founder and president, Rookard employed two hundred forty employees, including three of her children. She describes the services they provided to a diverse and changing population in need of home health services. Rookard describes specific health concerns affecting the black community, such as obesity and diabetes, and she then reflects on her legacy.