

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Wendell Campbell

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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>	Campbell, Wendell, 1927-2008
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Campbell,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 14, 2002 and August 21, 2002
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2002
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 Betacame SP videocassettes (3:02:17).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Architect Wendell Campbell (1927 - 2008 ) was the founder of the National Organization of Minority Architects. Campbell was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 14, 2002 and August 21, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2002_146
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Wendell Campbell was born on April 27, 1927 in East Chicago, Indiana. Three months after he graduated from high school as a National Honor Society scholar, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. Campbell eventually received his B.A. in Architecture and City Planning at the Illinois Institute of Technology, where he was offered a full-tuition scholarship from Commonwealth Edison, in 1957.

He worked as an architect from 1956 until 1966, when he became president of Campbell & Mascai architectural/urban planning company. In 1966, he became the CEO of Wendell Campbell Associates, Inc., which has since changed its name to Campbell Tiu Campbell to reflect the contributions of partners Domingo Tiu

and Campbell's daughter Susan. Noted projects for the firm include: the DuSable Museum of African American History, the McCormick Place Expansion, King Drive Gateway, redevelopment plans for the City of New Orleans and the new Bronzeville Military Academy.

Campbell was a founder and the first president of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), founded in 1971. He served on the Board of Directors for the Illinois Chapter of NOMA, the Cosmopolitan Chamber of Commerce, the Mercy Hospital and Medical Center, the Black Ensemble Theater, the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the Chicago Architectural Assistance Center, and the South Side YMCA. He was also a member of the City of Chicago Capital Improvement Advisory Council and the City of Chicago Committee on Standards and Tests.

Campbell was dedicated to improving the quality of affordable housing in metropolitan centers through the design of "Smart Homes," housing that brings 21st century technology to the varied needs of today's urban families.

Campbell married June Crusor Campbell in 1954. They lived in Chicago and had two daughters, Susan Campbell Smith and Leslie Campbell.

Campbell passed away on July 16, 2008 at age 81.

Wendell Campbell - Short

Unidentified/AMC - 144 words

Wendell Campbell was born on April 27, 1927, in East Chicago, Indiana. Campbell received his B.A. in architecture and city planning at the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1957. In 1966, he became the CEO of Wendell Campbell Associates, which since changed its name to Campbell Tiu Campbell to reflect the contributions of partners Domingo Tiu and Campbell's daughter, Susan. Campbell was a founder and the first president of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), founded in 1971. He has served on various boards of directors and has had numerous professional and civic affiliations. Campbell is dedicated to improving the quality of affordable housing in metropolitan centers through the design of "smart homes," housing that brings twenty-first-century technology to the varied needs of today's urban families. Campbell married June Crusor Campbell in 1954. They have two daughters, Susan Campbell Smith and Leslie Campbell.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Wendell Campbell was conducted by Adele Hodge on August 14, 2002 and August 21, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 7 Betacame SP videocassettes. Architect Wendell Campbell (1927 - 2008 ) was the founder of the National Organization of Minority Architects.

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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:

Campbell, Wendell, 1927-2008

Hodge, Adele (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

## **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Campbell, Wendell, 1927-2008--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:**

Architect

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

BusinessMakers

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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 Wendell Campbell, August 14, 2002 and August 21, 2002. The HistoryMakers® African

## 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 Wendell Campbell, Section  
A2002\_146\_001\_001, TRT: 0:31:00 2002/08/21

Wendell Campbell was born on April 27, 1927 to Selma and Herman Campbell in East Chicago, Indiana. Campbell's great-great-grandmother was President Howard Taft's cook. His grandmother owned a rooming house for steel mill workers in East Chicago. His mother died when Campbell was a young boy. After her death, Campbell and his five siblings were raised by his father and his maternal grandmother, Mary Smith. Campbell's father was a quiet man who worked as a contractor. As a child, Campbell worked closely with his father, who taught him about construction. Campbell's first experience with racial discrimination occurred in grade school when he went to the local movie theater with friends and was asked to move to a different seat. The experience stayed with him, and as a high school student, Campbell became the president of the local chapter of the NAACP. After he graduated in 1945, Campbell sued the theater and

launched a successful picketing campaign against all theaters in East Indiana for illegal discrimination in 1947. Campbell also used the NAACP to successfully desegregate the town's swimming pools.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Campbell, Section A2002\_146\_001\_002, TRT: 0:25:11 2002/08/21

Wendell Campbell was a high school student during World War II. Due to a teacher shortage, Campbell often taught woodshop and mechanical drawing classes at his high school in East Chicago, Indiana. After graduating in 1945, Campbell was drafted into the U.S. Army. In 1957, Campbell graduated from the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, Illinois with a bachelor's degree in architecture and city planning. Campbell struggled to find a job because of racial discrimination. He returned to East Chicago to work on urban renewal at the Purdue Calumet Development Foundation. After ten years, Campbell left the Foundation to form his own firm, Wendell Campbell Associates in 1966. In his firm's nascency, Campbell experienced racially-based friction with a local church that eventually evolved into an enduring relationship. Campbell's design of another church, St. Mark A.M.E. Zion Church won a national award. Campbell also talks about the social impact of World War II on African Americans, his elementary school teachers and his wife, June Campbell, with whom he has two daughters.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Campbell, Section A2002\_146\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:00 2002/08/21

Wendell Campbell narrates his photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Campbell, Section A2002\_146\_001\_004, TRT: 0:11:05 2002/08/21

Wendell Campbell narrates his photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Campbell, Section A2002\_146\_002\_005, TRT: 0:29:21

Wendell Campbell charts his career trajectory, from working for his father, a contractor, to forming his own architectural firm, Wendell Campbell Associates in 1966 after working at the Purdue Calumet Development Foundation in East Chicago, Indiana for ten years. While a

student at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, Illinois, Campbell studied under Mies van der Rohe and Ludwig Hilberseimer of Germany's famous Bauhaus School. At the Purdue Calumet Development Foundation, Campbell designed a building for senior citizens and learned how to apply for federal grants. Campbell relates the story of how his daughter, Susan Campbell, became a name partner at his firm, which was re-named Campbell Tiu Campbell to reflect the contributions of his daughter and Domingo Tiu. The firm enjoyed a high rate of client referrals. Campbell also talks about fighting racial discrimination at the Indiana Dunes and the use of construction bonds.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Campbell, Section A2002\_146\_002\_006, TRT: 0:31:07

Wendell Campbell's projects in Chicago, Illinois include Farragut High School, the Public Building Commission, King Drive Gateway, and McCormick Place. Campbell worked closely with Mayor Harold Washington on the design of the Harold Washington Library. He worked with Mayor Richard G. Hatcher to design community centers, fire stations, schools, and the Genesis Convention Center in Gary, Indiana. Campbell is a founding member of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). The organization was created in 1972 in response to the dearth of black architects in the American Institute of Architects (AIA). In 1975, Campbell began instituting technological developments at Wendell Campbell Associates to keep his architectural firm competitive. Campbell describes Smart Homes in Chicago, which use federal funds to build affordable, technologically-equipped homes for low-income families in the inner city. Campbell also talks about renowned architects like Marshall Purnell, Paul Devrouax, Harold Williams, Paul Williams, and HistoryMaker John Chase.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Campbell, Section A2002\_146\_002\_007, TRT: 0:23:33

Wendell Campbell continues to talk about Smart Homes, affordable homes in the inner city, Chicago, which are built on vacant lots and foreclosed properties. Every Smart Home is equipped with a computer and is used to create

jobs in the community. Campbell also adapted the Smart Home model for multi-family. Campbell has been a life-long mentor of young and aspiring architects. He talks about his wife, June Campbell, and shares the story of how they met. Campbell describes how he would like to be remembered.