

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr.

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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>	Duke, Leslie D., Sr., 1924-2007
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 30, 2003
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2003
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:22:21).
<b>Abstract:</b>	General practitioner Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. (1924 - 2007 ) has practiced medicine for more than 40 years. Duke was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 30, 2003, in Silver Spring, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2003_149
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. spent his life serving patients in his hometown of Washington, D.C. Born on March 21, 1924, Duke came up through the city's public schools.

Duke's education was interrupted by military service. After high school, he entered the Army, serving from November 1943 to April 1946, advancing to the rank of sergeant. During World War II, Duke saw action in the Pacific Theater, and served during the Battle of Iwo Jima. At war's end, Duke returned home to Washington to resume his studies.

In his youth Duke had planned to become a doctor. He studied zoology at Howard University with the intention of going into medicine, and received his B.S. in 1950. After earning his M.D. from Howard in 1957, Duke began his forty-one-year career in general medicine. From 1959 to 1962 he was a medical officer attached to Fort Meade. He later was on the staff at Walter Reed General Hospital for sixteen years, and concurrently launched his own private practice, which he maintained for thirty-eight years until his retirement in 1998.

Duke was an active member of the National Medical Association for more than forty years, and belonged to the Pro-Duffers, a golf club, for more than twenty years. In 1957, Duke married Dolores Douglass. They have two adult children, Leslie Jr. and Lori. The Dukes lived in Silver Spring, Maryland, prior to his death on January 21, 2007.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. was conducted by Nefertiti Makenta on June 30, 2003, in Silver Spring, Maryland, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. General practitioner Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. (1924 - 2007 ) has practiced medicine for more than 40 years.

## 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:

Duke, Leslie D., Sr., 1924-2007

Makenta, Nefertiti (Interviewer)

Katz, Ivan (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Duke, Leslie D., Sr., 1924-2007--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:

General Practitioner

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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. Leslie D. Duke, Sr., June 30, 2003. 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).

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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. Leslie D. Duke, Sr., Section A2003\_149\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:45 ?

Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. was born on March 21, 1924 to James and Jennie Duke. His mother was born and raised in Washington, D.C., where his maternal grandfather worked at the White House. His father was born in Louisa County, Virginia. Duke grew up in several Washington, D.C. neighborhoods. His mother worked for the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and his father was a Pullman Porter. He passed away at age fifty-two from a stroke. Duke had two brothers, James Duke, Jr. and Earland Alvin Duke. Duke recalls his earliest childhood memory, in which he was hit by an automobile and placed under observation at a hospital for eleven days. He also recalls playing football with friends in Washington, D.C.'s Logan Circle neighborhood. Duke attended Camp Lichtman, a Negro YMCA camp, where he remembers playing ball. He went to Garrison Elementary School, Shaw Junior High School, and Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C. Duke lists his elementary school teachers and talks

about his interest in baseball and math.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr., Section A2003\_149\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:45 ?

Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. attended Sunday school at Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. Duke went to Paul Laurence Dunbar High School in D.C. through his junior year, where he took many math courses. His sophomore year, he was diagnosed with a sleep condition. He describes possible causes of the disorder and how it affected his life. Duke finished his final high school courses in 1944, the same year he was drafted into the U.S. Army. He completed basic training at Camp Plauche in New Orleans, Louisiana and Camp Gordon Johnston in Carabelle, Florida and was then sent to Iwo Jima, Japan for thirteen months. When he returned to Washington, D.C., he enrolled at Howard University, where he eventually decided to be a pre-med major. Duke's interest in medicine was motivated, in part, by his desire to understand his sleeping condition. Duke was accepted into Howard's College of Medicine, where he studied under R. Kelly Brown, Burke "Mickey" Syphax, and Jack E. White. He graduated in 1957.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr., Section A2003\_149\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:11 ?

Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. earned his M.D. degree from Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, D.C. in 1957. Duke recalls a story from an anatomy class and talks about what he learned in medical school about other doctors and his sleeping disorder. While in school, he interned at Howard University Hospital. After earning his degree; Duke completed his residency at Provident Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, then practiced at Fort Meade in Maryland as a civil service physician. In 1962, Duke was hired as a general practitioner at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in D.C., where he remained until 1977. Additionally, he had a private practice, which he ran from the time he began at Fort Meade until 1998. Duke describes being discriminated against by patients and the types of cases he saw, including diagnosing a young girl with Rocky Mountain spotted fever. He talks about his memory abilities and compares the medical program at Howard to Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr., Section A2003\_149\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:40 ?

Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. began working when he was fourteen, after his father's death. He worked as a paper boy, a station manager, a drugstore porter, and for the government prior to being drafted in 1944. Duke describes the benefits of growing up in Washington, D.C. during segregation. He also talks about U Street in D.C., where he went to see movies every week in his youth. Later, while serving in the U.S. Army during World War II, Duke chose to disobey an officer, potentially saving his fellow soldiers' lives. As a medical student interning at Howard University Hospital, Duke met his wife Dolores Douglass Duke, who was a pharmacist. Duke talks about his wife, their children, and their travels. He also talks about his mother, and his successes in life relative to his brothers. Duke reflects on the pitfalls of going into medicine for young African Americans. He describes his hopes for the African American community and reflects upon his legacy and how he would like to be remembered.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr., Section A2003\_149\_001\_005, TRT: 0:20:00 ?

Dr. Leslie D. Duke, Sr. narrates his photographs.