

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Alfred Liggins, III

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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>	Liggins, Alfred C., 1965-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Alfred Liggins, III,
<b>Dates:</b>	October 20, 2004
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2004
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:01:40).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Broadcast chief executive Alfred Liggins, III (1965 - ) is the president and chief executive officer of Radio One. In 2004 he launched TV One, a cable network for African American adults. Liggins was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on October 20, 2004, in Lanham, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2004_211
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Alfred Charles Liggins III was born on January 30, 1965, in Omaha, Nebraska. Liggins spent his early childhood in Omaha and at the age of seven moved to Washington, D.C. when his mother, radio mogul Cathy Hughes, took a job at Howard University. When he was sixteen, Liggins's mother and stepfather purchased AM radio station WOL. At first Liggins hosted a teen talk show on WOL, though he was more interested in the record industry than the radio business. In 1983, Liggins earned his high school diploma from Wilson High School in Washington.

After graduation, Liggins drove cross-country to California where he began working in direct mail advertising before landing a job in the record industry. From 1983 until 1984, Liggins worked in sales and management for Light Records and as a production coordinator for singer Patrick Anderson. After a job with Motown Records fell through, Liggins decided to move back to Washington, D.C. in 1985 to help his mother, who was by then divorced and running the fledgling radio station alone. Liggins attended night school at the University of the District of Columbia, and worked at the radio station during the day. From 1986 until 1994, Liggins worked in the sales department at WOL, quickly climbing from representative to sales manager, helping the station rise in ratings and into the black. At Liggins's urging the family business began to grow with the purchase of FM stations in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, Maryland, thus the beginning of the Radio One empire.

In 1994, Liggins took over the day-to-day operations of the family business, becoming the president and chief executive officer of Radio One, with his mother retaining ownership. In 1995, Liggins earned his MBA degree from the Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania. In 1999, under Liggins's leadership, Radio One went public and made history as the first female African American owned company on the stock exchange. In 2000, Radio One purchased twenty-one radio stations from Clear Channel, more than doubling the company's revenue. Radio One eventually became the nation's largest radio company, targeting African American and urban listeners with fifty-one stations in more than twenty cities.

In 2004, Liggins expanded Radio One's media sphere when he launched TV One, a cable network for African American adults. Liggins has been the recipient of numerous awards including Ernst and Young's Entrepreneur of the Year.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Alfred Liggins, III was conducted by Racine Tucker Hamilton on October 20, 2004, in Lanham, Maryland, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Broadcast chief executive Alfred Liggins, III (1965 - ) is the president and chief executive officer of Radio One. In 2004 he launched TV One, a cable network for African American adults.

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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:**

Liggins, Alfred C., 1965-

Hamilton, Racine Tucker (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Liggins, Alfred C., 1965---Interviews

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African American businesspeople--Interviews

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African American executives--Interviews

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African Americans in radio broadcasting--Interviews

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African Americans in the mass media industry--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:**

Broadcast Chief Executive

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

MediaMakersI

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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 Alfred Liggins, III, October 20, 2004. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

## 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 Alfred Liggins, III, Section  
A2004\_211\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:40 2004/10/20

African American businesspeople--Interviews.

African American executives--Interviews.

African Americans in radio broadcasting--Interviews.

African Americans in the mass media industry--  
Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Alfred Liggins, III, Section  
A2004\_211\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:20 2004/10/20

Video Oral History Interview with Alfred Liggins, III, Section  
A2004\_211\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:00 2004/10/20

Video Oral History Interview with Alfred Liggins, III, Section  
A2004\_211\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:40 2004/10/20