

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Kneeland Youngblood

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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>	Youngblood, Kneeland Conner, 1955-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Kneeland Youngblood,
<b>Dates:</b>	October 28, 2004
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2004
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:25:06).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Investment executive and emergency physician Dr. Kneeland Youngblood (1955 - ) worked as an emergency physician in the Dallas area before leaving the medical profession to co-found and become the managing partner of Pharos Capital Group, LLC. In addition to his activities with Pharos Capital Group, Youngblood was appointed by President Clinton to serve on the board of directors of the United States Enrichment Corporation, served as a part of First Lady Hillary Clinton's Health Care Task Force, and sat on the boards of directors of numerous corporations and organizations. Youngblood was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on October 28, 2004, in Dallas, Texas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2004_219
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Physician, businessman, and presidential appointee Dr. Kneeland Youngblood, was born in Galena Park, Texas, on December 13, 1955. At the age of fourteen,

Youngblood was working as a page on the floor of the Texas State Legislature; after graduating from high school, he attended Princeton University, earning his B.A. degree in political science in 1978. While at Princeton, Youngblood spent time studying abroad, attending both Warnborough College in Oxford, England, and the University of Stockholm in Sweden from 1976 to 1977. In 1978, only a few months shy of his graduation, Youngblood took part in a sit-in at Nassau Hall with two hundred other students to protest Princeton's investments in South African businesses, risking the threat of expulsion. Youngblood and the other students were not expelled, and in the autumn of 1978, he began attending the University of Texas Health Science Center, from which he earned his M.D. in 1982. During his studies at the University of Texas, Youngblood traveled to Egypt, where he studied at the Cairo University Medical School.

After earning his M.D., Youngblood moved to New York City, where he held a surgical internship with Columbia University for a year; in 1983, he moved and began his two-year residency in emergency medicine at the Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia. After completing his residency, Youngblood returned to Texas, taking a position as an emergency physician at the Medical Center of Plano, a Dallas suburb. Youngblood remained in Plano until he left the medical profession in 1997, at which time he co-founded and became the managing partner of Pharos Capital Group, LLC., a private equity firm that invests in technology, business services, and health care companies, and manages more than \$200 million in investments.

In 1993, Youngblood was appointed by President Clinton to serve on the board of directors of the United States Enrichment Corporation, a government-owned corporation that provided nuclear fuel to countries hoping to utilize nuclear power. Youngblood remained at the United States Enrichment Corporation until 1998, at one point traveling with a delegation to South Africa, where he met with both F.W. DeKlerk and Nelson Mandela. Youngblood's time in South Africa prompted him to write an essay entitled *From Sit-In to Soweto*, detailing his experiences as a young man protesting South African policies dealing with working with the country. During his tenure with the Clinton Administration, Youngblood was also a part of First Lady Hillary Clinton's Health Care Task Force.

Youngblood served on the board of directors of numerous corporations and organizations, including the Teacher Retirement System of the State of Texas, an \$85 billion pension fund, and the boards of AMR Investments; Starwood Hotels & Lodging, Incorporated; Burger King, Incorporated; and The Gap, Incorporated. Youngblood also served as a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dr. Kneeland Youngblood was conducted by Larry Crowe on October 28, 2004, in Dallas, Texas, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Investment executive and emergency physician Dr. Kneeland Youngblood (1955 - ) worked as an emergency physician in the Dallas area before leaving the medical profession to co-found and become the managing partner of Pharos Capital Group, LLC. In addition to his activities with Pharos Capital Group, Youngblood was appointed by President Clinton to serve on the board of directors of the United States Enrichment Corporation, served as a part of First Lady Hillary Clinton's Health Care Task Force, and sat on the boards of directors of numerous corporations and organizations.

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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:**

Youngblood, Kneeland Conner, 1955-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Youngblood, Kneeland Conner, 1955---Interviews

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African American businesspeople--Interviews

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African American executives--Interviews

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Business consultants--Interviews

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Investment advisors--Interviews

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African American physicians--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:**

Emergency Physician

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Private Equity Chief Executive

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers|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 Dr. Kneeland Youngblood, October 28, 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 Dr. Kneeland Youngblood, Section  
A2004\_219\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:20 2004/10/28

Dr. Kneeland Youngblood was born in Galena Park, Texas on December 13, 1955. His mother, Georgia Conner Youngblood was born in Waco, Texas. She came from a family with a tradition of becoming doctors, including her father, who was also a jazz musician and friends with Billy Strayhorn. She attended Nazareth College in Rochester, New York and later worked as a medical technologist alongside Dr. Charles R. Drew. Youngblood's father, Theodore Roosevelt Youngblood Jr., worked as an optometrist and waiter and was the first African American doctor to have privileges at Brackenridge Hospital in Austin, Texas. His father graduated from Samuel Huston College and worked as a teacher and eventually as head maitre'd at the Driskill Hotel in Austin. President Lyndon Johnson recruited him to be head of service for the White House, but he declined. Youngblood was raised in Galena Park before moving to Dallas. As a teenager, he worked as a page in the Texas Legislature and spent a summer as an exchange student in Greece.

African American businesspeople--Interviews.

African American executives--Interviews.

Business consultants--Interviews.

Investment advisors--Interviews.

African American physicians--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Kneeland Youngblood, Section  
A2004\_219\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:50 2004/10/28

Dr. Kneeland Youngblood attended Fidelity Elementary School then Fidelity Manor Junior-Senior High School in Galena Park, Texas. In seventh grade, he chose to transfer to the all-white Galena Middle School a year before it fully integrated, a process Youngblood helped by participating in a bi-racial committee for the school. He was a competitive child who enjoyed reading and football. While working as a page in the Texas Legislature, he encountered Barbara Jordan, Sissy Farenthold and Ben Barnes. He spent a summer in Greece as an exchange student, which gave him a more expansive and critical outlook on U.S. foreign policy. After graduating from

Jesuit College Preparatory in Dallas, Youngblood matriculated at Princeton University in New Jersey. While he studied political science, took pre-medical studies and became involved with the Third World Center. He also spearheaded political organizing on campus and led a takeover of Nassau Hall to protest South African apartheid.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Kneeland Youngblood, Section A2004\_219\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:40 2004/10/28

Dr. Kneeland Youngblood was torn between pursuing law and medicine as an undergraduate at Princeton University in New Jersey. After studying at Stockholm University in Sweden and Warnborough College in Oxford, England, he chose medicine. In 1978, he returned to Dallas to attend University of Texas Health Science Center. In 1981, he attended Cairo University Medical Center in Egypt to finish his elective courses and travel the region. This trip influenced him to pursue emergency medicine and increased his interest in politics. After working in emergency medicine for ten years, Youngblood began political fundraising. He held a successful fundraiser for U.S. Senator Bill Bradley, which led Ann Richards to call on him for help with her race to become governor of Texas. Youngblood continued fundraising, organizing events for HistoryMaker Carol Mosely Braun and Barbara Jordan. Once Richards was elected, she placed Youngblood on a tax policy committee, which provided his introduction to the business world.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Kneeland Youngblood, Section A2004\_219\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:00 2004/10/28

Dr. Kneeland Youngblood became acquainted with the business world through his political appointments on a tax policy committee and the Teacher Retirement System of Texas. President Bill Clinton appointed Youngblood to the board of United States Enrichment Corporation, a government-owned uranium company, in 1993. In 1997, Youngblood began Pharos Capital Group, LLC out of a desire to benefit the African American community, which often had little access to the capital necessary for entrepreneurship. After Youngblood achieved his goal of joining the corporate board of American Airlines, he also

joined the board of Starlight Hotels and Resorts. At the time of the interview, Youngblood was involved with a cholesterol screening company that he believes will especially benefit African Americans with combating heart disease. He explains how private equity functions in expanding business opportunities and its risks and trade-offs. He also speaks about the black community's historical lack of access to capital.

Video Oral History Interview with Dr. Kneeland Youngblood, Section A2004\_219\_001\_005, TRT: 0:25:16 2004/10/28

Dr. Kneeland Youngblood explains the basics of private equity investing. In this part of the interview, he identifies the necessary factors for a successful career in investing, including knowing one's strengths and weaknesses and maintaining commitment to long-term goals. He talks about the opportunities available to young African Americans who are interested in business and offers advice to those aspiring to a career in finance. Though he plans to continue supporting worthy political candidates, Youngblood does not see himself ever running for political office. Youngblood talks about his wife and six children, and his parents' support and how it aided his success. He describes his hopes and concerns for the African American community and how he would like to be remembered. He reflects upon his legacy. Youngblood concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.