

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Richard Holmes

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Holmes, Richard, 1951-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Richard Holmes,
Dates:	August 26, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:24:30).
Abstract:	Energy executive Richard Holmes (1951 -) works for the Georgia Power Company. Holmes was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 26, 2005, in Atlanta, Georgia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_206
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Richard Lewis Holmes, Georgia Power's senior vice president of Corporate Services and Employee and Corporate Relations, was born in Columbus, Georgia on October 17, 1951 to Janice George Holmes and Carl J. Holmes. He attended integrated public schools in several southern cities including Clarksville, Tennessee and Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and attended high school in Columbus, Georgia. From there, he enrolled at Columbus State University, graduating with his B.A. degree in business administration. He also earned his M.B.A. from Atlanta University and a certificate from the Program for Management Development at Harvard University.

While still attending college in 1972, Holmes began working summers at Georgia Power. After graduating in 1974, he was hired in the accounting department and worked over the next twenty-eight years in several capacities for Georgia Power; customer service, regional management, corporate relations manager, assistant to the CEO, vice president of Region Operations, and as vice president of corporate services. Georgia Power is the largest subsidiary of Southern Company, one of the nation's largest generators of electricity. Holmes also served as assistant to the late Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson.

Holmes serves as a board member of the Georgia Department of Community Health, the Kennesaw State University Foundation and Literacy Action. He also belongs to many organizations including One Hundred Black Men of Atlanta, Harvard Club of Atlanta, and the National Eagle Leadership Institute. In 1999, the *Atlanta Business Chronicle* named Holmes as one of the Most Influential Atlantans.

Holmes married, Linda McCrary, and they have two sons, Stephen and Mark.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Richard Holmes was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 26, 2005, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Energy executive Richard Holmes (1951 -) works for the Georgia Power Company.

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:

Holmes, Richard, 1951-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Holmes, Richard, 1951---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Georgia Power Company.

Occupations:

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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 Richard Holmes, August 26, 2005. 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).

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 Richard Holmes, Section
A2005_206_001_001, TRT: 0:29:20 2005/08/26

Richard Holmes was born on October 17, 1951 in Columbus, Georgia to Janice George Holmes and Carl Holmes. Holmes' maternal great-grandparents, Yancy and Babe George, had a large family and owned a farm in Blakely, Georgia, where Holmes' mother grew up. Holmes' maternal family attended Jerusalem A.M.E. Church in Blakely. Holmes' father was also born in Blakely to sharecroppers. Holmes' parents attended Booker T. Washington High School. Holmes' father studied at Fort Valley State University in Georgia for two years before enlisting in the U.S. military in the late 1940s. Throughout his thirty-year military career, Holmes' father attained the rank of sergeant first class, joined the engineering battalion, and served in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. A fan of the New York Dodgers, Holmes' father turned down the opportunity to play with the San Francisco Giants, but played baseball in the military. Holmes describes his parents' personalities and recalls riding his uncle's horse.

Video Oral History Interview with Richard Holmes, Section
A2005_206_001_002, TRT: 0:27:30 2005/08/26

Richard Holmes attended a predominately white school in Clarksville, Tennessee while his father was stationed in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Holmes lived in Tennessee, Kentucky, Colorado, Georgia, and Frankfurt, Germany throughout his childhood. In Germany, Holmes saw castles and played Little League baseball in addition to basketball and football. Due to an illness and transferring schools, Holmes repeated the third grade. Holmes belonged to the ambassadors' social club at Spencer High School in Columbus. After graduating in 1970, Holmes attended Columbus College where he majored in business and marketing, pledged Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and served in student government. Upon graduating, Holmes was pursued by several companies like Shell and Texaco, but ultimately chose to work at Georgia Power Company. Starting in the accounting management training program, Holmes was eventually promoted to customer service

supervisor. Holmes also describes his favorite teachers from high school and college.

Video Oral History Interview with Richard Holmes, Section A2005_206_001_003, TRT: 0:31:10 2005/08/26

Richard Holmes interned at Georgia Power Company during his college summer breaks before being hired full-time as an analyst. He was promoted to senior analyst, then to customer service manager. Holmes was mentored by Jim George and James Davis, two black officers at the company, and one of the company's presidents, Michael D. Garrett. Holmes recounts how Mozella Dansby, an African American employee, shot two managers before killing herself after being passed over for promotions. In response, Georgia Power Company started a fast track management program. Holmes moved to Columbus, Georgia when he was promoted to assistant district manager. On sabbatical from Georgia Power Company, Holmes spoke at the National Urban League conference as the head of Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson's corporate volunteer program. Holmes served as Jackson's special assistant in business affairs and his liaison during the 1996 Summer Olympics. Grateful for his service, Jackson encouraged Holmes' promotion at Georgia Power Company.

Video Oral History Interview with Richard Holmes, Section A2005_206_001_004, TRT: 0:29:30 2005/08/26

Richard Holmes, as director of Maynard Jackson's Corporate Volunteer Program, oversaw the hiring of a police chief and fire chief and the construction of a new building for city hall. After returning to Georgia Power Company, Holmes became corporate relations manager. Georgia Power Company sent Holmes to Harvard Business School in Boston, Massachusetts, where he completed the Program for Management Development. After being promoted to district manager, Holmes moved to Cobb County, Georgia where he also chaired the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce and became acquainted with the district's representative, Newt Gingrich. As region vice president, Holmes was responsible for Georgia Power Company's retail distribution and customer service in the western region of Georgia, which included Atlanta

and Cobb County. Holmes shares an anecdote about Rich's department store in downtown Atlanta. Holmes also describes his admiration for Atlanta mayors Maynard Jackson, Shirley Franklin, and HistoryMaker Andrew Young.

Video Oral History Interview with Richard Holmes, Section
A2005_206_001_005, TRT: 0:27:00 2005/08/26

Richard Holmes joined Georgia Power Company's senior management council in 2002. He talks about the possibility of becoming the CEO of a Georgia Power Company subsidiary. Holmes served on the boards of the Atlanta Beltline and the NAACP. When asked about Georgia Power Company's efforts to assist customers in financial need, Holmes explains the Project Share program, which is a joint effort with the Salvation Army. Holmes describes his concerns for the African American community. He reflects upon his career, legacy, and the importance of preserving history. Holmes concludes the interview by describing how he would like to be remembered.