

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Carla Harris

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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>	Harris, Carla, 1962-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Carla Harris,
<b>Dates:</b>	July 22, 2006
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2006
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:56:20).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Investment banker Carla Harris (1962 - ) is managing director in Global Capital Markets at Morgan Stanley and Company, where she has also served as a senior member of the Equity Syndicate desk and chair of the firm's Private Placement Commitment Equity Committee. Her gospel albums include Carla's First Christmas and Joy is Waiting. Harris was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 22, 2006, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2006_097
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Investment banker Carla Ann Harris was born on October 28, 1962, in Port Arthur, Texas. She was raised in Jacksonville, Florida. Harris began singing at an early age, and by the time she was thirteen years old, she was singing in both Catholic and Baptist choirs. After high school graduation, Harris left Jacksonville and entered Harvard University where she graduated magna cum laude with her A.B. degree in economics and received her M.A. degree in business

administration from Harvard Business School. While at Harvard, she sang with the world renowned Radcliffe Chorale Society, the oldest women's singing group at Harvard and in her own band called Rhythm Company. In 1987, Harris began her career as an investment banker at Morgan Stanley in the Mergers & Acquisitions department. She has become Managing Director in Global Capital Markets for the firm. She is responsible for the structuring, marketing and execution of public and private equity financings. She is also the active chair of the firm's Private Placement Commitment Equity Committee. And, for more than a decade, she was a senior member of the Equity Syndicate desk, where she executed such transactions as initial public offerings for UPS, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, and the \$3.2 billion common stock transaction for Immunex Corporation, the largest biotechnology follow-on offering in U.S. history.

Harris has been named by *Fortune* magazine among The 50 Most Powerful Black Executives in Corporate America. *Black Enterprise* named her one of the Top 50 African Americans on Wall Street. *Essence* magazine named her among The 50 Women Who are Shaping the World. Harvard's *Black Men's Forum* named her Woman of the Year in 2004.

As a gospel singer, in 2000, Harris performed a solo concert at Carnegie Hall and released her first album, *Carla's First Christmas*. The album was featured on *The Evening News with Dan Rather* and was one of the top selling albums on Amazon.com in New York City. In 2006, Harris released her second album, entitled *Joy is Waiting*. She donated the proceeds to two high schools.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Carla Harris was conducted by Shawn Wilson on July 22, 2006, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Investment banker Carla Harris (1962 - ) is managing director in Global Capital Markets at Morgan Stanley and Company, where she has also served as a senior member of the Equity Syndicate desk and chair of the firm's Private Placement Commitment Equity Committee. Her gospel albums include *Carla's First Christmas* and *Joy is Waiting*.

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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:**

Harris, Carla, 1962-

Wilson, Shawn (Interviewer)

Burghilea, Neculai (Videographer)

### **Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Harris, Carla, 1962---Interviews

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African American women executives--Interviews

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Investment advisors--Interviews

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African American gospel singers--Interviews

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African American women singers--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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Morgan Stanley & Co.

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## **Occupations:**

Investment Banker

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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 Carla Harris, July 22, 2006. 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 Carla Harris, Section  
A2006\_097\_001\_001, TRT: 0:30:17 2006/07/22

Carla Harris was born on October 28, 1962 in Port Arthur, Texas. Her mother, Billie Joyce Williams, was born in Shreveport, Louisiana. Williams' mother, Jeanette Williams, was born in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1905 and worked as a domestic. Harris' mother was inspired by her teacher, Arreder P. Guidry, to attend Prairie View A&M University in Prairie View, Texas and Compton College in Los Angeles, California. After graduating from Prairie View A&M, Williams became a physical education teacher at Lincoln High School in Port Arthur, where she remained until the family moved to Jacksonville, Florida in 1971. Harris' father, John Harris, was born on February 2, 1939 in Jacksonville, Florida to Rockefeller Brazle, Sr. and Emma Jane Harris Smith and worked as a commercial fisherman. Emma Smith ran a beer tavern and married Joe Smith around 1961. Harris recalls her childhood in Port Arthur, Texas and Jacksonville, Florida. She attended Bishop Kenny High School and played on Claudezeal

Alvin's bowling team.

African American women executives--Interviews.

Investment advisors--Interviews.

African American gospel singers--Interviews.

African American women singers--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Carla Harris, Section  
A2006\_097\_001\_002, TRT: 0:29:05 2006/07/22

Carla Harris was inspired by her mother and by her bowling coach, Claudezeal Alvin. She talks about how they passed their determination on to her and reflects on how her generation has failed to pass along that same value to their children. Harris describes her consciousness of race in elementary school in Port Arthur, Texas and at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In high school, Harris' guidance counselor tried to discourage her from applying to Ivy League schools. She graduated from Bishop Kenny High School in 1980 and enrolled at Harvard, where she joined the Radcliffe Choral Society and intended to study law and government. She reflects on the racism she faced at Harvard and how it ended her casual use of the N-word. During her freshman year, Harris began studying economics after a professor told her she would not be good at it. In the spring of 1982, Harris participated in the Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO) program which provided minority students with Wall Street internships.

Video Oral History Interview with Carla Harris, Section  
A2006\_097\_001\_003, TRT: 0:30:01 2006/07/22

Carla Harris participated in the Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO) program in 1982 and worked in public finance at Blyth Eastman Paine Webber. In 1984, she received her A.B. degree from Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and, in 1987, she received her M.A. degree from Harvard Business School. In 1987, Harris joined Morgan Stanley, where she worked in mergers and acquisitions before moving to equity capital markets and equity deals. Harris reflects on the importance of mentors and sponsors and the challenges of working on Wall Street as both an African American and a woman. In 1999, Harris worked on the IPO of the United Parcel

Service (UPS). That same year, she worked on three other deals, recorded her first album, “Carla’s First Christmas,” and became a managing director at Morgan Stanley. She reflects on her career, the support of her colleague, William Wright, II, and the diversity of Wall Street. In 2000, Harris performed her first concert at Carnegie Hall in New York City, New York.

Video Oral History Interview with Carla Harris, Section  
A2006\_097\_001\_004, TRT: 0:26:57 2006/07/22

Carla Harris sang at Carnegie Hall in New York City, New York with Mark Howell’s The Voices of the Spirit opening and the Mark Howell Singers as backup vocalists. She reflects upon her career achievements and hopes for the future of her career, her music, and her book. She also reflects on the importance of her spiritual life on the business decisions she makes. She lists the people she admires, including political leaders like Barbara Jordan and Shirley Chisholm and HistoryMakers BeBe Winans, William M. Lewis, Jr., and Deborah Wright. She talks about the National Association of Securities Professionals and the lack of an organization of all African Americans on Wall Street. Harris also talks about her second CD, “Joy Is Waiting,” and how the proceeds from her CDs and concerts benefit Bishop Kenny High School in Jacksonville, Florida and St. Charles Borromeo in Harlem, New York. She describes her involvement with The Apollo Theater Foundation, the New York City Food Bank, and A Better Chance.