



Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Monica Cost

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Cost, Monica
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Monica Cost,
Dates:	April 10, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	5 Betacam SP videocassettes (2:04:53).
Abstract:	Real estate broker Monica Cost (1971 -) was the first African American female real estate broker for a major real estate firm in Massachusetts. Cost was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 10, 2007 in Boston, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_130
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Real estate broker Monica Diane Cost was born on January 18, 1971 in Atmore, Alabama to Veronica Mason Hairston and Chalmers Hairston, III. Growing up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Cost attended Samson Freedman Pre-School, Anna Blankston (A.B.) Day School, Abington Friends School and Baldie Middle School. Studying and working at Seafood America, Cost graduated fifth in her class from Lanckenau College Preparatory School in 1988. At Hampton University, where she attended college for three years, Cost studied accounting and held internships at Mellon Bank and Prudential Insurance. Cost graduated in 1994, from Temple University with her B.S. degree in accounting and finance.

Hired by Prudential Insurance first as a healthcare benefits analyst then as an auditor, Cost traveled the country studying and correcting Prudential's systems and controls. In 1996, Cost moved to Boston, Massachusetts, and joined TJX Companies as an auditor. Cost, while serving as TJX's associate human relations officer, started diversity groups for women and people of color in 1998. In 1999, Cost was appointed finance analyst and in 2000, accounting supervisor. Accepting a job with Reebok in 2000, Cost was mentored by Jimmy Jones in human relations, and served as financial analyst, senior financial analyst and compensation analyst; she also participated in The Partnership, a leadership program to support aspiring people of color in the corporate world. In 2004, Cost joined Cushman and Wakefield and became the first African American and one of the youngest individuals to hold the operations manager position within that organization. Cost also became the first African American broker in the New England area for Cushman & Wakefield and the first African American female broker in a major real estate firm in Massachusetts.

Cost served on the boards of The Partnership and the Crittendon Women's Union; she also was a participant on the advisory board of the Epiphany School and the planning committee for the Paul and Phyllis Fireman One Family Campaign, mentoring one of their scholars. Cost served as president of The Partnership Alumni

organization and chaired the Girl Scouts' Leading Women Awards. In 2006, Cost was a Leading Woman herself; in 2000 she was a YMCA Black Achiever; and in 2004 the Chamber of Commerce Future Leader. "The Boston Herald" named Cost one of The Hub's Future Leaders. Cost counsels young professionals on how to succeed in business through her consulting firm, Evidently Assured (www.evidentlyassured.com). She has also been featured as a motivational speaker at Northeastern University, Boston University and the University of Suffolk.

Cost is the author of the blog "Out of Living in the Land of Make Believe."

A longtime resident of the Boston area, Cost is married to Donald M. Cost with two sons, Christopher and Cameron.

Monica Diane Cost was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 10, 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Monica Cost was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 10, 2007, in Boston, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 5 Betacam SP videocassettes. Real estate broker Monica Cost (1971 -) was the first African American female real estate broker for a major real estate firm in Massachusetts.

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:

Monica Cost.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer).

Burghelea, Neculai (Videographer).

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews.

Monica Cost--Interviews.

African American businesspeople--Interviews.

Real estate agents--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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 Monica Cost, April 10, 2007. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 8/25/2011 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, April 10, 2007

Video Oral History Interview with Monica Cost, Section A2007_130_001_001, TRT: 0:30:07
2007/04/10

Monica Cost slates the interview and lists her favorites. She talks about her mother, Veronica Hairston, who was a teacher and attained her bachelor's degree at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama. Cost recalls that every summer the family would visit her maternal grandparents in Alabama and as they got older they would visit on holidays. Cost's father is Chalmers Hairston, III he worked in the U.S. Coast Guard. He left the family when Cost was five years old, leaving her mother to raise her and her sister, Tiffany. Her mother provided the best that she could always stressing the importance of education to her girls. Cost describes the Mount Airy, Pennsylvania community and the activities that she and her sister partook in. Attending and participating in the Bethel A.M.E. church was a major part of Cost's young life.

African American families--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.

African American single mothers.

African American single parents.

African American churches.

African American children--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--Social life and customs.

Video Oral History Interview with Monica Cost, Section A2007_130_001_002, TRT: 0:30:08
2007/04/10

Monica Cost talks about her educational experiences from daycare to college. She attended Lankenau High School, a college preparatory school. The school focused on academics rather than on extracurricular activities. However, her mother kept she and her sister busy in many other activities after school and on the weekends. In addition, at fifteen, Cost began to work first as a waitress at Seafood America and then as a telemarketer. She attended Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia, where she majored in accounting and pledged the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Cost discusses the circumstances that led her to transfer to Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and her job at Prudential Life Insurance. Cost left Prudential in 1996 for TJX Companies, where she faced a workplace that was comprised of people who had little interaction with people of color.

African Americans--Education (Elementary).

African Americans--Education (Secondary).

African Americans--Education (Higher).

African American women--Massachusetts--Boston.

African American couples.

African American youth--Social life and customs.

Auditing

High school students--Employment.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

Hampton University (Va.).

Temple University.

Prudential Insurance Company of America.

TJX Companies.
Executives--United States.
Corporations--United States--Finance.

Video Oral History Interview with Monica Cost, Section A2007_130_001_003, TRT: 0:31:11
2007/04/10

Monica Cost talks about being an auditor and associate relations specialist at TJX Companies. In human relations, she was in charge of diversity issues and she started two groups, for women and for people of color. Cost moved on to work at Reebok in the retail department because of the smaller work environment. She describes the mission and organization of The Partnership, which was started by corporate leaders of color and non-color to retain and support professionals of color. Due to her connections, Cost was hired at Cushman and Wakefield where she was the operations manager and later became the first African American female broker at a major firm in Boston, Massachusetts. She provides her perspective on the lack of people of color in the brokerage industry. In addition, Cost speaks about making a deal happen, her challenges and what she wants to do after her broker career.

TJX Companies.
African American women--Massachusetts--Boston.
African American businesspeople.
Cushman & Wakefield of Massachusetts.
Broker.
Real estate business.
Diversity in the workplace.

Video Oral History Interview with Monica Cost, Section A2007_130_001_004, TRT: 0:30:30
2007/04/10

Monica Cost states that she wants to write a book, be on the speaking circuit and be in the business of helping start ups connect with people. To potential brokers, Cost advises that they should get a mentor who is doing the job well and to be open to change. She notes that she has been successful because she has taken risks and she discusses two of the risks that she had taken. Cost speaks about the impact that an efficacy workshop sponsored by the Partnership had on her and her ideas about learning. Thus, she wants to implement the same type of workshop for young adults because she has concerns about the direction that African American youth are going in, related to education. Cost talks about meeting her husband, Donald, and their two sons, Christopher and Cameron. She narrates personal, family and school photos.

African American families--Massachusetts--Boston.
Finance--Vocational guidance.
Banks and banking--Vocational guidance.

Video Oral History Interview with Monica Cost, Section A2007_130_001_005, TRT: 0:02:57
2007/04/10

Monica Cost narrates family, personal, college and school photos.