



# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Charlestine Fairley

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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>	Charlestine Fairley
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Charlestine Fairley,
<b>Dates:</b>	April 25, 2007
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2007
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacam SP videocassettes (2:25:40).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Academic administrator and social activist Charlestine Fairley (1938 - ) has dedicated her career to improving education, substance abuse prevention, and counseling services to the disadvantaged. Fairley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 25, 2007, in Edgewater, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2007_162
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Academic administrator and social activist Charlestine Romelle Dawson Hickson Fairley was born on July 24, 1938 in Greenville, Mississippi to Ida Harris Dawson and Kemp Dawson. She was educated in Gulfport, Mississippi, where she graduated from 33rd Avenue High School in 1956. She briefly attended Tougaloo College in Tougaloo, Mississippi before transferring to Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. During a summer break she met William F. Hickson, Jr. a dental student at Meharry Medical College. After a year of courtship, Fairley dropped out of college to move to Nashville, Tennessee to marry Hickson. After the birth of the couple's three children--Nina, Franklin, and Oneal-- Fairley returned to college, completing her B.A. degree in sociology at Delaware State College in 1963. Following her graduation, Fairley worked for the Burlington County, New Jersey Welfare Department as a case worker. Fairley returned to school, earning her M.Ed. degree in counseling from South Carolina State College in 1969 and her Ph.D. degree in education from the University of South Carolina in 1990.

Fairley taught and worked as a special services counselor at Claflin College from 1968 to 1973, when she became coordinator of its Upward Bound and Special Services program. Fairley then directed Claflin's Special Programs for Disadvantaged Students until leaving in 1986 to direct the Upward Bound program at the University of South Carolina. Because Fairley shared the same disadvantaged background as her students, she was especially effective in connecting with them. Her programmatic innovations with Upward Bound's TRIO Achievers were incorporated into the program at the national level. Fairley married Richard L. Fairley in 1989, the same year that she was appointed as a consultant for the U.S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE). Fairley then shifted her career focus to the administration of government substance abuse prevention services, joining the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 1990 as a program officer in the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention. Two years later, Fairley and her husband moved to Annapolis,

Maryland, where she directed Prevention Services for the Anne Arundel County Department of Health until 1997. She coordinated the Anne Arundel County Executive's Criminal Justice Drug Intervention Program from 1998 to 1999. She worked concurrently as a trainer for Maryland's Office of Education and Training for Addiction Services. During this time, she was also an adjunct professor at Nova University and Bowie State University's College of Business, and part-time coordinator of the Annapolis campus of Sojourner-Douglass College. Fairley has served as the full-time director of the Sojourner-Douglass College, Annapolis Campus since 1993.

Fairley is a life member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the National Council of Negro Women, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the American Association of University Women. She is also a member of The Links, Inc., Annapolis Chapter and the 21st Century Club of Annapolis. Fairley belongs to the First Presbyterian Church of Annapolis.

Charlestine Fairley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 25, 2007.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Charlestine Fairley was conducted by Denise Gines on April 25, 2007, in Edgewater, Maryland, and was recorded on 5 Betacam SP videocassettes. Academic administrator and social activist Charlestine Fairley (1938 - ) has dedicated her career to improving education, substance abuse prevention, and counseling services to the disadvantaged.

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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:

Fairley, Charlestine

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews.  
Fairley, Charlestine--Interviews.

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African American educators—Interviews.

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African American college administrators—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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Anne Arundel County (Md.). Health Dept.

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers

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CivicMakers

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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 Charlestine Fairley, April 25, 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 8/9/2011 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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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, April 25, 2007

Video Oral History Interview with Charlestine Fairley, Section A2007\_162\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:00 2007/04/25

Charlestine Fairley shares her family history. Her maternal and paternal grandparents were from Mississippi. When she was a child, Fairley's parents moved to Seattle, Washington, for work. Fairley was left in Mississippi at the insistence of her paternal grandmother, Rosy Dawson, who raised her. Fairley's parents later divorced, and her mother moved to Chicago, Illinois where Fairley would visit her during the summer. Although Fairley was very close to her grandmother, she believes that she has the same quiet-spoken but occasionally fiery nature as her mother Ida. Fairley's father spent most of his life between California and Washington state, working as a car mechanic and later owning his own service station and shop. Except for detailed recollections of the beach and life in the country, Fairley remembers few stories about her early childhood.

African American families—Mississippi.

African Americans--Divorce.

Video Oral History Interview with Charlestine Fairley, Section A2007\_162\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:50 2007/04/25

Charlestine Fairley describes her childhood and the African American community in Gulfport, Mississippi. Her neighborhood was economically diverse with teachers, pier workers and the minister all living on the same block. She recounts stories of playing with the neighborhood children, some of whom are still her friends. Little Rock Baptist Church was the focal point of the Gulfport African American community, and Fairley's family attended almost daily. The church had a great impact on Fairley's life, teaching her to be a leader, to speak before an audience and to teach others. Christmas was an especially memorable time of year. The whole community participated in the Christmas pageant. Fairley then discusses her college years at several African American colleges. She initially enrolled at Tougaloo College but the expense forced her to transfer to Southern University. She transferred again to Delaware State College where she ultimately graduated with her B.A. degree in sociology.

African Americans—Mississippi—Gulfport.

African American religion--Baptists.

African American universities and colleges--United States.

African American college students.

African American churches.

Social customs--African Americans.

Video Oral History Interview with Charlestine Fairley, Section A2007\_162\_001\_003, TRT:

0:28:10 2007/04/25

Charlestine Fairley speaks at length about life in the segregated South. Her parents and family tried to protect her from discrimination, instructing her in advance on what she could and could not do. Fairley had little contact with whites, including those who lived on the fringes of her neighborhood. Fairley describes meeting her first husband, William Hickson, a dental student at Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee. He was a member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and she was a member the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She married him against her family's advice and moved to Nashville before finishing her degree at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She later completed her studies at Delaware State College after the birth of her children. She began her professional career as a case worker for Burlington County, New Jersey, while her husband was stationed at the U.S. Army base in Fort Dix.

African American college students.

African American children---Social conditions--Mississippi.

Segregation--Mississippi.

Race relations--Mississippi--20th century.

Segregation--Southern states.

Video Oral History Interview with Charlestine Fairley, Section A2007\_162\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:50 2007/04/25

Charlestine Fairley discusses her career at Claflin College. She provided students with tutoring, counseling, and the support to succeed in college. Fairley was effective at her job because she shared the same background as many of her students. Fairley was asked to chair Claflin College's branch of the TRIO Achievers, a national program for disadvantaged students. Fairley insisted on designing the program and established a luncheon to showcase the talent and achievement of participants. Her innovative programming was recognized and incorporated into the public relations for the entire TRIO program. Fairley was promoted to Director of Upward Bound for Claflin College at the time that she was separating from her first husband. She later married Richard Fairley despite an initial reluctance to remarry.

Upward Bound Program (U.S.)--South Carolina.

Claflin College (Orangeburg, S.C.)--Counseling in higher education.

African American universities and colleges—United States.

African Americans--Marriage.

African Americans--Divorce.

Video Oral History Interview with Charlestine Fairley, Section A2007\_162\_001\_005, TRT: 0:29:50 2007/04/25

Charlestine Fairley discusses her current position as the director of the Sojourner-Douglass College in Annapolis, Maryland. The college was initially embroiled in controversy when it established the Annapolis branch. The area's affluent and middle-class neighbors were concerned about the college's growth and increased traffic. The London Owners Association sued the school on the grounds that it did not have a covenant. Although some neighbors believed that the lawsuit was racially motivated, Fairley did not think that was the case. Fairley discusses her community involvement in Delta Sigma Theta, The Links, Inc., and church. She also shares stories about her three children and five grandchildren. Fairley describes the impact of a trip to Africa. She felt a kinship with Africans. Fairley had always struggled with the changing names

for black people but embraced a black identity. While in Africa, she felt comfortable as an African American for the first time.

African Americans--Race identity.

Sojourner-Douglass College.

African American universities and colleges—United States.

African American social life and customs.

African Americans--Africa.