

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lois Conley

PERSON

Conley, Lois , 1946-

Alternative Names: Conley, Lois , 1946-;

Life Dates: July 29, 1946-

Place of Birth: St. Louis, Missouri

Residence: St. Louis, Missouri

Occupations: Museum Chief Executive

Biographical Note

Museum chief executive Lois Diane Conley was born in St. Louis, Missouri on July 29, 1946. Conley was born to Leo and Emma Conley, as the second oldest of eight children. Conley attended St. Louis's Waring Elementary School and Vashon High School. After graduating from high school in 1964, Conley attended Saint Louis University where she earned her B.A. degree in communications and her M.A. degree in education.

While researching the black history of St. Louis, Missouri, Conley discovered that notable African Americans, like Madame C.J. Walker and Miles Davis influenced St. Louis history. She became inspired to memorialize their impact and went back to school for museum studies. Conley earned a graduate certificate in museum studies from the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 2001 and founded The Griot Museum of Black History and Culture, the second African American history wax museum in the country. The museum was initially named the Blackworld History Wax Museum, and has since gone through several names before settling on The Griot Museum of Black History and Culture. Under Conley's leadership the museum's exhibitions have expanded beyond just wax sculptures to include a slave ship replica.

Conley has received several awards and honors consisting of the Young Women's Christian Association "Special Leader Award," the Older Women's League "Women of Worth Award," the Coalition of 100 Black Women's "Village Builders' Award" and the Monsanto Y's "Zealot Award."

Lois Conley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on October 19, 2007.

Related Entries

Conley, Mary [GRANDCHILDOf]
Paternal Grandmother

Conley, Lee [GRANDCHILDOf]
Paternal Grandfather

Slaughter, Mary Willie [GRANDCHILDOf]
Maternal Grandmother

Slaughter, Johnnie [GRANDCHILDOf]
Maternal Grandfather

Ali, Hakim [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Conley, Michael [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Conley, Linda Faye [SIBLINGOf]
Sister

Conley, Norris Leo [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Everett, Lynell [SIBLINGOf]
Sister

Conley, LaDoris Jean [SIBLINGOf]
Sister

Conley, Leo Christopher [SIBLINGOf]
Brother

Conley, Erika Dionne [PARENTOf]
Daughter

Lamant, Tracey [PARENTOf]
Daughter

Conley, Leo [CHILDOf]
Father

Conley, Emma [CHILDOf]
Mother

Vashon High School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1960]

Waring Elementary School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1964]

St. Louis University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1987]

B.A.

St. Louis University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1993]

M.A.

University of Missouri, St. Louis [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

St. Louis University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Director of Administration

The Griot Museum of Black History [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1997 to ?]

Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

[MEMBEROF]

,