

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Faye Beverly Bryant

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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>	Bryant, Faye B.
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Faye Beverly Bryant,
<b>Dates:</b>	February 5, 2013 and March 11, 2008
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2008 and 2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 Betacame SP videocassettes uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:49:13).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Association chief executive and school superintendent Faye Beverly Bryant (1937 - ) was the twenty-first International President of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and served between 1982 and 1986. She also was the first African American to serve as Assistant Superintendent for Enrichment Programs in the Houston Independent School District. Bryant was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 5, 2013 and March 11, 2008, in Houston, Texas. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2008_043
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

21st International President of Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) Sorority, Inc., Faye Beverly Bryant (1982-1986) was born on March 15, 1937, in Houston, Texas. Under Bryant's leadership, the theme of the AKA Sorority became P.O.W.E.R. During her tenure, Bryant also created the Alpha Kappa Alpha Connection, completed construction on the Sorority's national headquarters and initiated the African Village Development Program in collaboration with Africare.

Bryant was initiated into the Alpha Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority at Howard University in 1955. After graduating from Howard University with her B.A. degree, Bryant returned to Houston and transferred her affiliation to the Alpha Kappa Omega Chapter of Houston in 1957. She went on to earn her M.A. degree in counseling and guidance from the University of Houston. In Houston, Bryant was instrumental in establishing the Epsilon Lambda Chapter at the University of Houston and worked as a teacher in the Houston Independent School District where the 18th International President of AKA Sorority, Ms. Mattelia B. Grays, served as Deputy Superintendent. After teaching at Booker T. Washington High School and serving as a counselor at Bellaire High School, Bryant worked as the Director of Magnet Schools for the Houston Independent School District. She was later hired as the Deputy Superintendent of Human Resources and the Deputy Superintendent for School Administration. She also served as Interim Superintendent of the Houston Independent School District.

In 1982, Bryant succeeded Barbara K. Phillips as International President of the AKA Sorority and Programs of service, Organizational impact, Women in global issues and Economic development and Renewal (P.O.W.E.R.) became the agenda for the Sorority. Bryant's administration also sought to improve the communication with individual members by approving cluster meetings where AKA Sorority members from various chapters could convene. In addition, Bryant initiated a governmental relations team to represent the Sorority at various government affairs. Bryant added the Alpha Kappa Alpha Connection to the Sorority's list of programs and registered new voters for the 1984 U.S. Presidential election. During her tenure, Bryant met with the Council of Presidents of the eight predominantly black Greek organizations and launched a drive to leverage the collective power of Greek organizations.

In 1998, Bryant became the first African American to serve as Deputy Superintendent for School Administration in the Houston Independent School District. In 2002, Bryant retired from the school board as Executive Deputy Superintendent after forty-two years of service.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Faye Beverly Bryant was conducted by Denise Gines and Larry Crowe on February 5, 2013 and March 11, 2008, in Houston, Texas, and was recorded on 8 Betacame SP videocassettes uncompressed MOV digital video files. Association chief executive and school superintendent Faye Beverly Bryant (1937 - ) was the twenty-first International President of the

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and served between 1982 and 1986. She also was the first African American to serve as Assistant Superintendent for Enrichment Programs in the Houston Independent School District.

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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:**

Bryant, Faye B.

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

**Subjects:**

African Americans--Interviews

Bryant, Faye B.--Interviews

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African American Greek letter societies--Interviews

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African American women educators--Interviews

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African American women teachers--Interviews

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African American women executives--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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Houston Independent School District

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Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

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**Occupations:**

School Superintendent

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Association Chief Executive

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# HistoryMakers® Category:

EducationMakers|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 Faye Beverly Bryant, February 5, 2013 and March 11, 2008. 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 Faye Beverly Bryant, Section  
A2008\_043\_001\_001, TRT: 0:29:50 2008/03/11

Faye Beverly Bryant was born on March 15, 1937 in Houston, Texas. She was initiated into Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (AKA) during her freshman year at Howard University in Washington, D.C. She graduated in 1958, and joined Houston's Alpha Kappa Omega Chapter, later serving as its basileus. In 1968, she was elected as AKA's south central regional director. In 1982, she succeeded Barbara Kinard Phillips as the twenty-first supreme basileus of AKA. During her tenure, she established the national POWER program, which emphasized service and female empowerment. For the 1984 presidential elections, Bryant started a drive that registered over one hundred thousand voters. In 1984, she oversaw the completion of the new AKA national headquarters in Chicago, Illinois. She faced her greatest challenge as supreme basileus in 1986 when the NAACP boycotted the AKA's convention venue in Dearborn, Michigan. Bryant reflects upon her leadership style, and remembers former supreme basileus Marjorie Holloman Parker.

African American women educators--Interviews.

African American women teachers--Interviews.

African American women executives--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Faye Beverly Bryant, Section  
A2008\_043\_001\_002, TRT: 0:27:30 2008/03/11

Faye Beverly Bryant was elected as the twenty-first supreme basileus of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (AKA) in 1982. During her tenure, Bryant implemented the nationwide POWER program; the Women Involved in Global Concerns program; and the African Village Development Program, a collaboration with Africare. Bryant led the AKA's seventy-fifth anniversary boulé in Washington, D.C. in 1983, which was attended by poet Maya Angelou, former California Congressman Ronald Dellums and Miss America winner Suzette Charles. In 1984, she oversaw the completion of the AKA national headquarters building in Chicago, Illinois. In 1986, Bryant was succeeded as supreme basileus by Janet Jones Ballard.

Bryant shares her hopes, concerns and vision for the future of the sorority, as well as her visions for the perfect sisterhood. She then reflects upon her legacy within Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and describes how she would like her tenure as supreme basileus to be remembered.

Video Oral History Interview with Faye Beverly Bryant, Section A2008\_043\_001\_003, TRT: 0:27:50 2008/03/11

Faye Beverly Bryant was born on March 15, 1937 in Houston, Texas to Malinda Bryant Stinson and Willie Bryant. Her paternal grandmother, Sophia Ward Bryant, migrated from Alabama to Chappell Hill, Texas, where she married Bryant's paternal grandfather, Toby Bryant. Her maternal grandmother, Malinda Shepherd Edmond, was from South Carolina, and raised her twelve children in East Texas after the death of Bryant's maternal grandfather. Her mother studied education at Sam Huston College in Austin, Texas, and became a first grade teacher. Bryant's father attended Paul Quinn College in Waco, Texas, and later worked as a Pullman porter for the Southern Pacific Railroad. Her parents met and married as college students, and raised Bryant and her older sister, Barbara Bryant Solomon, in the Fifth Ward, Houston's majority African American neighborhood. As a child, Bryant joined the Girl Scouts of the United States of America, and was Houston's first African American scout to attend a Girl Scouts National Convention.

Video Oral History Interview with Faye Beverly Bryant, Section A2008\_043\_001\_004, TRT: 0:29:00 2008/03/11

Faye Beverly Bryant began taking piano lessons with music teacher P.O. Smith when she was four years old. She attended Blanche Kelso Bruce Elementary School in Houston, Texas, where she went on field trips to the symphony, and was taught by Ruby Lockhart Thompson. She then enrolled at E.O. Smith Middle School, where she joined the drama club, and aspired to become a lawyer. There, Bryant was influenced by her teacher Vera Caldwell, who was a soror of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. With the encouragement of Principal Dr. John E. Codwell, Sr. Bryant became an honors student, and a member of the National Honor Society at Phillis Wheatley High School. During her senior year, Bryant's

family moved to Houston's majority white Riverside Terrace neighborhood, where she was active at Wesley Chapel A.M.E. Church. Bryant was selected as her school's Girl of the Year, and graduated as salutatorian of her class in 1954. She then matriculated at Howard University, her sister Barbara Bryant Solomon's alma mater.

Video Oral History Interview with Faye Beverly Bryant, Section A2008\_043\_002\_005, TRT: 5:28:05 2013/02/05

Faye Beverly Bryant attended Howard University in Washington, D.C. in 1954, where she was classmates with art administrator Vantile Whitfield, National Urban League President John E. Jacob and singer Roberta Flack. She majored in political science with a minor in education, and aspired to become a lawyer. She was also mentored by her history professors Lorraine A. Williams and Emmett E. Dorsey. In 1955, she pledged Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; and became involved in service projects at the local high school and hospital. Bryant also learned etiquette from Howard University dean of women Lucy Diggs Slowe, who was a founding member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Additionally, Bryant was active in the university's Student League and women's league, and served as a hostess and tutor for students on campus. Bryant remembers lawyer James M. Nabrit, Jr.; university president Mordecai Johnson; as well as Washington D.C.'s political climate and the Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, 1954 decision.

Video Oral History Interview with Faye Beverly Bryant, Section A2008\_043\_002\_006, TRT: 6:28:53 2013/02/05

Faye Beverly Bryant majored in political science with a minor in education at Howard University, where she focused her studies on American government. She graduated cum laude in 1958, and returned to Houston, Texas, where she obtained a position as the interim program director of the Blue Triangle Branch, YWCA, which served the African American residents of the Sunnyside community. During her tenure there, she hosted the YWCA's international conference on women's rights in Houston, alongside politician Barbara Jordan. In 1959, she was hired by the Houston Independent School District



as a substitute teacher, and later taught history at Booker T. Washington High School. After ten years as a teacher, she worked as a counselor at the majority white Bellaire High School, where she supervised the school's integration plan and mentored its black students. Bryant remembers Houston's Civil Rights Movement, and the Thanksgiving Day football rivalry between Jack Yates Senior High School and Phillis Wheatley High School.

Video Oral History Interview with Faye Beverly Bryant, Section A2008\_043\_002\_007, TRT: 7:30:53 2013/02/05

Faye Beverly Bryant joined the staff of Bellaire High School in Bellaire, Texas in 1969. As one of the two African American counselors there, Bryant educated her white colleagues about historically black colleges and universities to better serve the African American students. In 1975, Bryant was recruited as a counselor representative for the Houston Independent School District by Superintendent Billy Reagan. In this role, she was responsible for developing magnet school programs in the City of Houston. Soon after, she was appointed director. In 1979, she joined the Houston Independent School District's human services department, and recruited teachers to the district. In 1981, she became the deputy superintendent of instruction, where she oversaw the district's academic programs and curriculum. In 1984, her responsibilities expanded to include administration over district superintendents. Bryant remembers notable black Texas politicians like Congress members Sheila Jackson Lee and Mickey Leland.

Video Oral History Interview with Faye Beverly Bryant, Section A2008\_043\_002\_008, TRT: 8:27:12 2013/02/05

Faye Beverly Bryant was elected as the twenty-first president of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in 1982, which coincided with her tenure as deputy superintendent of instruction for the Houston Independent School District. As supreme basileus, she organized a government relations team that encouraged members of the sorority to run for public office. In 1997, Bryant served as interim superintendent of the Houston Independent School District, then as executive deputy superintendent under Superintendent Rod Paige in 1998. In this capacity, she

oversaw the curriculum and programming for over three hundred schools. In 2002, Bryant retired from the Houston Independent School District. She then served on several boards, including the Region 4 Education Service Center and the Houston History Alliance. She describes her hopes and concerns for the African American community. Bryant also reflects upon her career, life and family, and concludes the interview by describing how she would like to be remembered.