

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with William A. Hawkins

---

## 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>	Hawkins, William Anthony, 1947-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with William A. Hawkins,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 17, 2013
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:26:23).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Program director and math professor William A. Hawkins (1947 - ) , former director of Strengthening Underrepresented Minority Mathematics Achievement (SUMMA) at the Mathematical Association of America, received the 2013 Gung and Hu Award for Distinguished Service to Mathematics. Hawkins was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 17, 2013, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2013_159
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

---

## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Program director and math professor William Anthony Hawkins, Jr. was born in Washington, D.C. in 1947. His father, William Anthony Hawkins, Sr., was a postal worker; his mother, Amanda L. Hawkins, a dental hygienist. After graduating from Archbishop Carroll High School in 1964, Hawkins briefly attended Merrimack College before transferring to Howard University. While there, he studied under Dr. Louise Raphael, Professor James Joseph, and Dr. Arthur Thorpe (physics) and went on to graduate with his B.S. degree in

mathematics in 1968. In 1970, Hawkins received his M.S. degree in physics from Howard University and his M.A. degree in mathematics from the University of Michigan. He was awarded a Ford Foundation Fellowship while attending the University of Michigan where he studied under Dr. James S. Milne and graduated from there with his Ph.D. degree in mathematics in 1982.

Hawkins has dedicated over forty-three years to the education of minority students. In 1968, Hawkins was hired as a teacher at Cardozo High School in Washington, D.C., soon discovering his passion for teaching. In 1970, Hawkins was appointed as an instructor at Federal City College (University of the District of Columbia). He went on to serve as chair of the mathematics department of the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) for five years. In 1990, Hawkins took leave from his position as associate professor at UDC and became director of the Strengthening Underrepresented Minority Mathematics Achievement (SUMMA) Program at the Mathematical Association of America. SUMMA has raised more than \$4 million to increase the representation of minorities in mathematics, science, and engineering and to improve the mathematics education of minorities. In 1995, Hawkins returned to UDC as an associate professor in the mathematics department while simultaneously directing the SUMMA program.

Hawkins authored *Attracting Minorities into Teaching Mathematics* 1994, and *Constructing a Secure Pipeline for Minority Students* 1995. Hawkins is a member of the Mathematical Association of America, the National Association of Mathematicians, and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. He received the 2006 Benjamin Banneker Legacy Award from the Banneker Institute of Science & Technology, and the 2013 Gung and Hu Award for Distinguished Service to Mathematics from the Mathematical Association of America.

William Anthony Hawkins, Jr. was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 17, 2013.

---

## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with William A. Hawkins was conducted by Larry Crowe on June 17, 2013, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Program director and math professor William A. Hawkins (1947 - ) , former director of Strengthening Underrepresented Minority Mathematics Achievement (SUMMA) at the Mathematical Association of America, received the 2013 Gung and Hu Award for Distinguished Service to Mathematics.

---

---

## 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:

Hawkins, William Anthony, 1947-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

---

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

---

Mathematical Association of America

---

University of the District of Columbia

---

## **Occupations:**

Program Director

---

Math Professor

---

## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

ScienceMakers|EducationMakers

---

## **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 William A. Hawkins, June 17, 2013. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral

## 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).

---

## 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

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Hawkins, Section A2013\_159\_001\_001, TRT: 1:30:19 2013/06/17

William Hawkins describes his family's background. Hawkins' mother, Amanda Lawyuna Bowman was born in 1909 in Toccoa, Georgia, and moved to Washington, D.C. as a teenager. She attended Armstrong High School. His mother was trained as a dental hygienist at Howard University in 1938, and spent her career working as a dental hygienist in D.C. Hawkins' father, William Anthony Hawkins, Sr., was born in 1909 in Fairmount Heights, Maryland, and spent his career at the U.S. Post Office. Hawkins' parents met in high school, and were married in 1945.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Hawkins, Section  
A2013\_159\_001\_002, TRT: 2:30:22 2013/06/17

William Hawkins was raised in Washington, D.C., where he attended Richardson Elementary School, George Washington Carver Elementary School, Holy Redeemer, Catholic School and Archbishop Carol High School. He describes his memories of growing up in D.C., and his experience in school, where he enjoyed reading and mathematics. Hawkins describes his parents' personalities, their education and their employment. He talks about his father's service in the U.S. Army, and his career in the U.S. Post Office. He also recalls his paternal aunt, Sarah Bray, talks about the neighborhoods where he lived, and discusses the evolution of Washington, D.C. over the years.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Hawkins, Section  
A2013\_159\_001\_003, TRT: 3:33:59 2013/06/17

William Hawkins attended Archbishop Carol High School in Washington, D.C., and describes his experience there. In 1964, he attended Merrimack College, but transferred to Howard University in 1965. Hawkins describes his decision to attend Howard, talks about his experience there, and his first exposure to undergraduate research in chemistry. He also talks about his mentor, Professor Arthur Thorpe at Howard. In 1968, Hawkins received his B.S. degree in mathematics from Howard University, and then went on to pursue his graduate studies at the University of Michigan. In this section of the interview, Hawkins describes his car accident in the 1960s, and his involvement with SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) in the summer of 1966, where he met Stokely Carmichael.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Hawkins, Section  
A2013\_159\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:36 2013/06/17

In 1969, William Hawkins began his master's degree in mathematics at the University of Michigan, while also pursuing a master's degree in physics at Howard University. In 1974, after working at the University of the District of Columbia for four years, Hawkins returned to Michigan to pursue his Ph.D. degree in mathematics. He describes his experience at the University of Michigan and talks about his mentors. Hawkins describes his dissertation, entitled, 'The Etale Cohomology of Certain  $p$ -Torsion Sheaves', under the tutelage of Professor James Milne. In this section of the interview, he also describes his involvement with the National Technical Association (NTA). He talks about mathematicians, Euphemia Lofton Haynes, Evelyn Boyd Granville, Marjorie Lee Browne, and David Blackwell, and recalls the establishment of the Ishango Society of Mathematics at the University of Michigan, where he heard mathematician Abdulalim Shabazz speak.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Hawkins, Section  
A2013\_159\_001\_005, TRT: 5:28:36 2013/06/17

In 1982, William Hawkins received his Ph.D. degree in mathematics at the University of Michigan. After graduation, he returned to the faculty of the mathematics department of the newly assembled University of the District of Columbia (UDC). In 1984, Hawkins was named chair of the math department at UDC. In 1990, he was appointed as director of the Office of Minority Participation at the Mathematical Association of America (MAA). In this section of the interview, Hawkins talks

about the demographics of UDC, the math department there, and the need for a public university to serve the District of Columbia. He also discusses the shortcomings of the D.C. public school system, and politics in Washington, D.C. Hawkins talks about historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in the United States, his involvement with the MAA, the Strengthening Underrepresented Minority Mathematics Achievement (SUMMA) Program, and his love for teaching.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Hawkins, Section A2013\_159\_001\_006, TRT: 6:30:40 2013/06/17

In 1990, William Hawkins was appointed director of the Office of Minority Participation at the Mathematical Association of America (MAA). In this section of the interview, Hawkins describes the details of MAA's extensive involvement in pre-college programs for underrepresented minorities in mathematics, and the National Research Experience for Undergraduates Program (NREUP). He also discusses the impact of summer undergraduate research programs and summer programs in math and science on minority STEM participation. Hawkins goes on to reflect upon the statistics of minority doctoral graduates in the United States, and his hopes and concerns for the African American community. He closes this section of the interview by describing his experience at a Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) march in Grenada, Mississippi in 1966.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Video Oral History Interview with William A. Hawkins, Section



In this closing section of the interview, Hawkins talks about his family, reflects upon his legacy and shares how he would like to be remembered. He also talks about the importance of access to math and science, and being able to read and comprehend information. Hawkins reflects upon undergraduate education and its role in facilitating economic equality, religion and science, and the importance of fairness. He talks about his mother attending his graduation from the University of Michigan when he earned his Ph.D. in mathematics in 1982. He also talks about her apprehension towards his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action programs.