

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Charles Warfield, Jr.

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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>	Warfield, Charles M., Jr., 1949-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr.,
<b>Dates:</b>	December 9, 2013
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2013
<b>Physical Description:</b>	9 uncompressed MOV digital video files (4:37:30).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Broadcast executive Charles Warfield, Jr. (1949 - ) served as president and chief operating officer of ICBC Broadcast Holdings, Inc., and as vice president and general manager of WBLS-FM and WLIB-AM Radio. Warfield was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 9, 2013, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2013_281
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Broadcasting executive Charles M. Warfield, Jr. was born in in Washington, D.C. in 1949. Warfield attended Hampton University and graduated from there with his B.S. degree in accounting in 1971.

Upon graduating, Warfield began his career as a staff auditor at Ernst & Young, and then joined RCA Corporation as supervising senior auditor in 1974. Warfield's broadcasting career includes managing some of New York City's top radio stations including twelve years at Inner City Broadcasting Corporation (ICBC). He joined ICBC as a corporate controller and was promoted to vice president and general manager of WBLS-FM and WLIB-AM Radio. Warfield was later hired at Summit Broadcasting Corporation, where he served as vice president and general manager of WRKS-FM Radio in New York City.

In July of 1997, Warfield was appointed as the vice president and general manager of heritage stations at WDAS-AM/FM in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He later became the senior vice president of urban regional operations for Chancellor Media Corporation in March of 1998, with oversight of KKBT-FM in Los Angeles, California; WJLB-FM and WMXD-FM in Detroit, Michigan; WGCI-AM/FM and WVAZ-FM in Chicago, Illinois; WUSL-FM and WDAS-FM in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and WEDR-FM in Miami, Florida. Warfield was promoted to senior vice president of regional operations in October of 1998, and assumed responsibility for Chancellor Media Corporation's thirty stations in Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Miami and Puerto Rico. From 1997 to 2003, Warfield served as senior vice president of regional operations for AMFM, Inc.; and, from 2000 to 2012, he served as vice president and chief operating officer of Inner City Broadcasting Holdings, Inc. In October of 2012, Warfield was named president and chief operating officer of YMF Media, LLC.

In 2009, Warfield was elected president of the Metropolitan Kalamazoo Branch of the NAACP. The following year, he was appointed as the chairman for the National Association of Broadcasters board of directors. He also served on the Radio Advertising Bureau Executive Committee. Warfield's community involvement includes

organizations such as the American Red Cross, the National Urban League, the Salvation Army, the United Negro College Fund, the Partnership for a Drug Free Greater New York and the Harlem Young Men's Christian Association. In 2010, Warfield received the National Radio Award from the National Association of Broadcasters.

Charles M. Warfield Jr. was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on December 9, 2013.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Charles Warfield, Jr. was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on December 9, 2013, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 9 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Broadcast executive Charles Warfield, Jr. (1949 - ) served as president and chief operating officer of ICBC Broadcast Holdings, Inc., and as vice president and general manager of WBLS-FM and WLIB-AM Radio.

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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:

Warfield, Charles M., Jr., 1949-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Warfield, Charles M., Jr., 1949---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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## Occupations:

Broadcast Executive

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MediaMakers

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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 Charles Warfield, Jr., December 9, 2013. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 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 Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_001, TRT: 1:29:07 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr. was born on September 10, 1949 in Washington, D.C. to Ruby Carroll Warfield and Charles Warfield, Sr. Warfield's father was born in Ellicott City, Maryland, and was the only child of Lillian Morris Warfield, who raised him on her own. He was privately educated at an all-boys school in Virginia. Warfield's mother was born and raised in Nanjemoy, Maryland, and had eight siblings. Warfield grew up in the Anacostia neighborhood of Southeast Washington, D.C. He was the oldest of five brothers: Carroll Warfield; Darnell Warfield, who was born with Down syndrome; and the twins Gerald Warfield and Gerard Warfield. To support the family, Warfield's father held multiple jobs and drove a cab at night, while his mother worked in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. His family often spent the summers and weekends visiting his maternal relatives in Indian Head, Maryland. Warfield also remembers his father's death from cancer in 1985.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_002, TRT: 2:35:40 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr.'s father, Charles Warfield, Sr., was a strict Catholic, and attended mass with his sons at the all-black Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Southeast Washington, D.C. Warfield was rejected from the Our Lady of Perpetual Help School because his mother, Ruby Carroll Warfield, was Baptist. Instead, he began his education at James G. Birney Elementary School, where he was placed on the academic track. Outside of class, Warfield enjoyed reading, collecting comic books and listening to music. He went on to attend the majority-white Kramer Junior High School and the integrated Anacostia High School, where he enrolled in 1964. He developed an interest in mathematics; and, after graduating, he obtained a scholarship to study accounting at the Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia. There, Warfield joined the baseball team and the National Society of Pershing Rifles. He initially struggled to balance his coursework and social life, and received poor grades during his freshman year.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:30 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr. enrolled at the Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia in the late 1960s. During his senior year, the student body mounted protests against the administration. The demonstrators occupied the Administration Building, and firebombed a dormitory. As a result, the college closed early in 1971, and Warfield received his degree by mail. He graduated with honors, and was offered a position at the General Motors Company. Instead, he decided to join S.D. Leidesdorf and Company, a public accounting firm in New York City. After three years, Warfield transitioned to an auditing position at the RCA Corporation. Looking to advance his career, he briefly left the private sector to become an assistant business manager at Medgar Evers College, which was part of the City University of New York. Warfield entered the broadcasting industry in 1977, when a former client, Michael Goldstein, approached him about a controller position at the Inner City Broadcasting Corporation.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_004, TRT: 4:29:10 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr. joined the Inner City Broadcasting Corporation (ICBC) in 1977. Founded by Percy Sutton in 1971, the firm was among the first black-owned media companies, and was home to notable radio hosts like Frankie Crocker, Ken Webb and Vy Higginsen. As the business controller, Warfield was responsible for the company's financial systems and business operations. He also secured a \$15 million business loan, which funded the acquisition of radio

stations in Detroit, Michigan; San Francisco, California; and Los Angeles, California in 1978. After Dorothy Brunson stepped down from the role of general manager, she was succeeded by Sutton's son, Pierre Sutton. Shortly afterwards, Pierre Sutton was promoted to the presidency of ICBC, and Warfield accepted the role of vice president and general manager. At this point in the interview, Warfield talks about Percy Sutton's political affiliations, and describes his contributions to the African American community in New York City.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_005, TRT: 5:30:46 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr. served as the controller of the Inner City Broadcasting Corporation (ICBC) from 1977 to 1981. That year, he was promoted to vice president and general manager. During his early career at ICBC, Warfield learned about the radio industry, and helped develop the human resources and finance departments at the company's subsidiary stations. He also learned about the regional differences in music preferences across the United States. At this point, Warfield talks about the Quiet Storm format, which originated at Howard University's WHUR Radio station in Washington, D.C. During the 1980s, the ICBC struggled to pay its debts because of increasing interest rates, and chairman Percy Sutton began investing the company's capital into the television industry. In 1989, Warfield was offered a position at New York City's WRKS Radio, which was one of ICBC's primary competitors. He met with Percy Sutton to talk about his options, and decided to leave the ICBC.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_006, TRT: 6:30:16 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr. was hired as the vice president and general manager of New York City's WRKS Radio in 1989. Against the advice of broadcast researchers, Warfield added new music formats to the program, and introduced shows with hosts like Jeff Fox and Wendy Williams. Within six months, the station surpassed its longtime competitor, WBLS Radio. Warfield left WRKS Radio in 1994, when the station was acquired by the Emmis Communication Company, which also owned WBLS Radio. For the next year, Warfield tried to buy a radio station, but was repeatedly outbid by large corporations. In 1995, he was offered a position at Uptown Records, where he worked for one year. In 1996, Warfield returned to the broadcast industry as the general manager of WDAS Radio in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which was owned by the Chancellor Media Corporation. He was eventually asked to manage all of the company's urban properties, and became the supervisor of ten of the nation's top black radio stations.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_007, TRT: 7:31:24 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr. became a senior vice president of the Chancellor Media Corporation in 1997. In this role, he oversaw thirty urban radio stations across the country. Warfield left the company in 2000, after the Chancellor Media Corporation announced a merger with Clear Channel Communications, Inc. He accepted the position of COO at ICBC Broadcast Holdings, Inc., which was the radio branch of the Inner City Broadcasting Corporation. He was hired to manage a number of new acquired stations that were financed by large loans. At this point in the interview, Warfield talks about the overvaluation of radio stations during the early 2000s. In 2007, Warfield advocated against the introduction of Arbitron's portable people meter. The new ratings system failed to adequately count listeners in urban markets, and decreased the black radio

stations' advertising revenue. Following the stock market crash of 2008, the ICBC's financial difficulties worsened. The company was forced to file for bankruptcy in 2011.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_008, TRT: 8:30:37 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr. served on the board of the National Association of Broadcasters from 2005 to 2011. While there, he partnered with black radio executives like Cathy Hughes to advocate against a legislative proposal that would require radio stations to pay royalties to recording artists. During this time, the Inner City Broadcasting Corporation (ICBC) was unable to pay its creditors and declared bankruptcy. In 2012, the firm was purchased by YMF Media, LLC, which hired Warfield as president and COO. YMF Media, LLC then sold the ICBC's assets to media corporations like the Entercom Communications Company and L and L Broadcasting, LLC. At the time of the interview, Warfield had recently stepped down from the presidency of YMF Media, LLC, where he continued to serve as a senior advisor. At this point in the interview, Warfield talks about the underrepresentation of African Americans among radio executives. He also describes his plans for the future.

Video Oral History Interview with Charles Warfield, Jr., Section A2013\_281\_001\_009, TRT: 9:31:00 ?

Charles Warfield, Jr. talks about his professional career and his contributions to the broadcasting industry. He also describes his hopes and concerns for African American leadership in the radio industry, and his thoughts on the industry's future. Warfield reflects upon his legacy, and concludes the interview by narrating his photographs.