

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Patricia Andrews-Keenan

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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>	Andrews-Keenan, Patricia, 1954-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Andrews-Keenan,
<b>Dates:</b>	January 24, 2014
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2014
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:31:13).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Media executive and public relations executive Patricia Andrews-Keenan (1954 - ) was the founder and chief strategist of the Tallulah Group. She worked as an executive in the cable and telecommunications industry for over twenty years. Andrews-Keenan was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 24, 2014, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2014_030
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Media and public relations executive Patricia Andrews-Keenan was born in 1954 to Pearline Henderson and James Andrews. She received her B.A. degree in journalism from Grambling State University in 1977, and went on to graduate from the Executive Leadership Development Program at UCLA's Anderson School.

In 1990, Andrews-Keenan was hired as Director of Public Affairs at Jones Intercable; and, in 1996, she was appointed Vice President of Communications of

AT&T Broadband in Deerfield, Illinois. A year later, Andrews-Keenan became Executive Director of Communications at Tele-Communications, Inc., where she served until 2002, when she was appointed as Comcast's Vice President of Communications in Chicago, Illinois. Then, in 2007, she was hired as Vice President of Corporate Affairs at The Nielsen Company.

In 2008, Andrews-Keenan founded The Tallulah Group, a public relations, communications, media relations and community affairs firm, where she serves as President and Chief Strategist. Her clients have included Quarles & Brady, LLP, Merit Medical, Chicago State University, IlliniCare, LINK Unlimited, Columbia College Chicago, C. Cretors & Company, and the 100 Black Men of Chicago. Additionally, from 2008 until 2010, Andrews-Keenan was an adjunct professor at Columbia College Chicago, where she taught culture, race and media. Andrews-Keenan has served on a number of organizational boards and committees. She has served on the board of directors of the Chicago Children's Choir, and was a past national president of the National Association for Multi-Ethnicity in Communications (NAMIC). She has also served on the boards of Volunteers of America, the Naperville Chamber of Commerce and the DuPage County Girl Scouts. Andrews-Keenan was a former board chair for the Quad County Urban League, and has been appointed to the YMCA's Black and Latino Achievers Steering Committee. In addition, she holds memberships in the Executive's Club of Chicago.

Andrews-Keenan has also received numerous awards for her community relations work, including both a Silver Anvil and Gold Anvil from the Public Relations Society of America, as well as several Beacon Awards from the Association of Cable Communicators (ACC).

Patricia Andrews-Keenan was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on January 23, 2014.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Patricia Andrews-Keenan was conducted by Larry Crowe on January 24, 2014, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Media executive and public relations executive Patricia Andrews-Keenan (1954 - ) was the founder and chief strategist of the Tallulah Group. She worked as an executive in the cable and telecommunications industry for over twenty years.

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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:

Andrews-Keenan, Patricia, 1954-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## **Occupations:**

Media 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 Patricia Andrews-Keenan, January 24, 2014. 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

## 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 Patricia Andrews-Keenan, Section A2014\_030\_001\_001, TRT: 1:20:19 2014/01/24

Patricia Andrews-Keenan was born on July 19, 1954 in New Orleans, Louisiana to Pearline Henderson Chapman and James Andrews. Her maternal grandfather was born to Doreatha Dempsey Henderson, who was an accomplished seamstress. Her maternal grandmother, Katie Douglas Young, was one of eleven children born to Dinah Douglas and Will Douglas in Madison Parish, Louisiana. Andrews-Keenan's mother was also raised in Madison Parish, and moved to New Orleans to find work as a young adult. In New Orleans, she met and married Andrews-Keenan's father, who came from Marion, Louisiana. After five years of marriage, Andrews-Keenan's parents divorced. Andrews-Keenan was a toddler at the time, and was sent to live with her maternal great aunt and uncle, Emma Douglas Rucker and James Rucker, in Tallulah, Louisiana. The town was strictly segregated, and had a thriving African American community. The residents included Zelma Wyche, who was one of the first black police chiefs in the country.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Andrews-Keenan, Section A2014\_030\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:39 2014/01/24

Patricia Andrews-Keenan was raised by her maternal great aunt and uncle, Emma Douglas Rucker and James Rucker, in Tallulah, Louisiana. Their only biological child was an

adult at the time, so Andrews-Keenan grew up as an only child. She began her education at the all-black Wright Elementary School. There, she excelled in reading and writing with the support of her fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Bowie. Andrews-Keenan was also taught by Myrtle Washington Wyche, who was married to Tallulah's first African American police chief, Zelma Wyche. When Andrews-Keenan reached the seventh grade, the local schools were integrated, and she was bused to the formerly all-white Tallulah High School. There, Andrews-Keenan and her African American classmates were antagonized by their white peers during the early years of integration. Andrews-Keenan joined the pep squad, and served on the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Upon graduating in 1973, she enrolled at Grambling State University in Grambling, Louisiana.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Andrews-Keenan, Section A2014\_030\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:24 2014/01/24

Patricia Andrews-Keenan graduated from Tallulah High School in Tallulah, Louisiana in 1973. Her son, Richard Andrews, was born shortly afterwards. Wanting to stay close to home, Andrews-Keenan enrolled at Grambling State University in Grambling, Louisiana. She joined the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the Student Government Association, and became the editor of The Gramblinite student newspaper. She also completed an internship at The News-Press in Fort Myers, Florida. Upon graduating in 1977, Andrews-Keenan moved with her mother, Pearline Henderson Chapman, to Denver, Colorado, where she joined the staff of the Denver Weekly News. After a few years, Andrews-Keenan transitioned to a customer service role at Mountain Bell, and then joined the Internal Revenue Service. Dissatisfied with the work, she began searching for a new career path. In 1987, Andrews-Keenan was introduced to cable industry pioneer Gayle Greer, who helped her obtain a fellowship from the Walter Kaitz Foundation.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Andrews-Keenan, Section A2014\_030\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:58 2014/01/24

Patricia Andrews-Keenan received her initial training in the cable television industry through a one-year fellowship

from the Walter Kaitz Foundation. After completing the program in 1988, Andrews-Keenan was hired by Syntel, Inc., a phone and cable company in Oak Brook, Illinois. Eight months later, the company was acquired by Jones Intercable. Andrews-Keenan was kept on the payroll as a marketing manager, and was later promoted to director of public affairs. During this time, the City of Naperville sued Jones Intercable for noncompliance with national cable regulations. The company was then acquired by Tele-Communications, Inc. (TCI), and its viewership expanded to include the City of Chicago, Illinois and the surrounding suburbs. Then, TCI was bought by AT&T Broadband LLC, which was in turn bought by the Comcast Corporation in 2000. Andrews-Keenan remained with the company during these acquisitions, and eventually became the vice president of communications at the Comcast Corporation.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Andrews-Keenan, Section A2014\_030\_001\_005, TRT: 5:29:36 2014/01/24

Patricia Andrews-Keenan joined the National Association of Minorities in Cable in 1988. She served as a chapter secretary, and was elected president of the organization in 2000. During her presidency, Andrews-Keenan was instrumental in the creation of the association's mentoring program, as well as the executive leadership program at the Anderson School of Management in Los Angeles, California. She also served on the national board of the Women in Cable Telecommunications. Andrews-Keenan continued working for the Comcast Corporation, and was promoted to vice president of communications for the Chicagoland area in 2002. Five years later, she accepted the position of vice president of corporate affairs at Nielsen Media Research. After one year, Andrews-Keenan left to found a public relations firm called the Tallulah Group. That year, she also began teaching a course at Columbia College Chicago. At this point, Andrews-Keenan reflects upon her career, and talks about the future of the cable industry.

Video Oral History Interview with Patricia Andrews-Keenan, Section A2014\_030\_001\_006, TRT: 6:14:17 2014/01/24

Patricia Andrews-Keenan worked in the cable industry for

over twenty years. During that time, she served a public relations executive at AT&T Inc., Comcast Corporation and their subsidiaries. At this point in the interview, Andrews-Keenan describes her experiences of racial and gender discrimination in the workplace. In 2008, she left the Comcast Corporation to start her own company, the Tallulah Group. Andrews-Keenan talks about her plans for the future, and describes her son, Richard Andrews, whom she raised as a single parent. She also reflects upon her life and legacy, and her hopes and concerns for the African American community. Andrews-Keenan concludes the interview by describing how she would like to be remembered.