

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with George H. Lambert

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Lambert, George H., 1951-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with George H. Lambert,
Dates:	February 3, 2017
Bulk Dates:	2017
Physical Description:	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:23:34).
Abstract:	Nonprofit executive George H. Lambert (1951 -) served as president and CEO of the Northern Virginia Urban League in Alexandria, Virginia and the Lorain County Urban League, in Elyria, before being appointed the president and CEO of the Greater Washington Urban League in 2014. Lambert was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on February 3, 2017, in Washington, D.C., District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2017_041
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Nonprofit executive George H. Lambert was born on May 12, 1951 in Washington, D.C. to George H. Lambert, Sr. and Arnitha Green Allen. Lambert graduated from William Penn Senior High School in York, Pennsylvania in 1971. He went on to earn his B.A. degree in urban studies from Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia in 1975.

Upon his college graduation, Lambert worked for two years at the Richmond

Community Action Program. Then, he became a community organizer for the Northern Virginia branch of the Washington Urban League in Alexandria, Virginia. Lambert was hired as the executive director of the Northern Virginia branch of the Washington Urban League in 1980. He also co-founded the Alexandria Forum, as a space for civil rights groups to collaborate on key issues and strategic planning. In 1990, he led the branch's transition into the fully affiliated Northern Virginia Urban League. During his tenure as the executive director, Lambert also served as a senior regional consultant to the National Urban League. Lambert left the Northern Virginia Urban League in the mid-2000s, at which time he served as a senior director for resource development for the United Way of the National Capital area and as the vice president of public affairs at Issue Dynamics, Inc. From 2011 to 2013, he served as the president and chief executive officer of the Lorain County Urban League in Elyria, Ohio. Lambert was then appointed as the president and chief executive officer of the Greater Washington Urban League in 2014. In this role, he created the Thursday Network, which facilitated interactions between African American youth and the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia. Lambert also worked with the Washington Nationals to institute Black Heritage Day at Nationals Park; and he partnered with corporations like Potomac Electric Power Company to offer utility assistance in the African American community.

He was a member of the National Urban League's Association of Executives; the Academy of Fellows. He was also a parishioner of Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

Lambert and his wife, Bernadette Curtis-Lambert, have five children together.

George H. Lambert was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on February 2, 2017.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with George H. Lambert was conducted by Larry Crowe on February 3, 2017, in Washington, D.C., District of Columbia, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Nonprofit executive George H. Lambert (1951 -) served as president and CEO of the Northern Virginia Urban League in Alexandria, Virginia and the Lorain County Urban League, in Elyria, before being appointed the president and CEO of the Greater Washington Urban League in 2014.

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:

Lambert, George H., 1951-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Nonprofit Executive

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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 George H. Lambert, February 3, 2017. 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

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 George H. Lambert, Section A2017_041_001_001, TRT: 1:22:26 2017/02/03

George H. Lambert was born on May 12, 1951 in Washington, D.C. to Arnitha Green Allen and George H. Lambert, Sr. His maternal grandmother, Anna Green, was a domestic, while her husband, Frank Green, worked in the fishing industry in Annapolis, Maryland. They died when Lambert's mother was in high school, so she and her two brothers went to live with her aunt. Lambert's father was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and raised in Orange, Virginia, where his family operated a small farm. He moved to Washington, D.C. to attend Washington Baptist Theological Seminary, where he met Lambert's mother, who was also a student there. Lambert spent his early years in the Barry Farm neighborhood of Washington, D.C., where both of his parents worked as ministers. They later separated and his father moved back to Orange to head his own congregation. Lambert stayed with his mother and brother, Sherman Lambert, in Washington, D.C. When he was thirteen years old, his mother sent him and his brother to live in York, Pennsylvania.

Video Oral History Interview with George H. Lambert, Section A2017_041_001_002, TRT: 2:30:12 2017/02/03

George H. Lambert grew up in Washington, D.C., where he attended the predominately black H.D. Cooke Elementary School, James G. Birney Elementary School

and Randall Junior High School. After Lambert's transgression with friends resulted in police involvement, his mother moved the family to York, Pennsylvania, where he attended the majority white William Penn Senior High School. There, he excelled in advanced placement courses, and read the works of James Baldwin, Malcolm X and James Farmer in an African American history class. He also ran track and participated in the drama theater. After graduating in 1971, he attended Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia, where he majored in urban studies. Lambert served as the vice president of the student government, and brought in notable speakers like Nikki Giovanni, Dick Gregory and Minister Louis Farrakhan. He graduated in 1975, and began working as a community organizer for the Northern Virginia branch of the Washington Urban League.

Video Oral History Interview with George H. Lambert, Section A2017_041_001_003, TRT: 3:30:10 2017/02/03

George H. Lambert attended Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia, where he served as vice president of student government, and successfully advocated for coed dormitories on campus. He also became involved with community organizing during Richmond's attempts to annex sections of Henrico County, Virginia. Lambert handed out leaflets, and informational materials to organize and inform the community. When he graduated in 1975, he accepted a position with the Richmond Community Action Program, where he worked for two years until joining the staff at the Northern Virginia branch of the Washington Urban League in Alexandria, Virginia. There, his work focused on community preservation and providing fair public housing. Lambert left to work for a community based organization in Washington, D.C., but returned to the Northern Virginia branch of the Washington Urban League as the executive director in 1980. Lambert also remembers the legacy of Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry.

Video Oral History Interview with George H. Lambert, Section A2017_041_001_004, TRT: 4:27:46 2017/02/03

George H. Lambert served as director of the Northern Virginia branch of the Washington Urban League in

Alexandria, Virginia, where he focused on youth programming and housing. Lambert also co-founded the Alexandria Forum, which convened local civil rights groups to discuss key issues and strategic planning in the community. In 1990, he led the branch's transition into the fully affiliated Northern Virginia Urban League. As director, Lambert was mentored by former National Urban League presidents Vernon E. Jordan, Jr. and Hugh Price, as well as Ferdinand Day, the first African American chair of the Alexandria City School Board. Lambert took a hiatus from the Northern Virginia Urban League in the mid-2000s. During this time, he worked for a public affairs firm, and completed a brief tour of duty with the United Way of America. In 2011, he became president and CEO of the Lorain County Urban League in Elyria, Ohio. He describes the selection process to become the president of the Greater Washington Urban League.

Video Oral History Interview with George H. Lambert, Section A2017_041_001_005, TRT: 5:33:00 2017/02/03

George H. Lambert became president of the Greater Washington Urban League in Washington, D.C. in 2014. There, he worked with the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia to improve their relationship with the African American community. He created the Thursday Network, where young African Americans were taught how to conduct themselves with members of the police force. Lambert also collaborated with the Washington Nationals baseball team to create Black Heritage Day at Nationals Park. Additionally, Lambert established a radio program on WPGC Radio, and partnered with corporations like Potomac Electric Power Company to offer utility assistance in the African American community. The Greater Washington Urban League's philanthropy also included annual scholarships. He reflects upon the presidency of Barack Obama, and talks about race relations in the United States. Lambert concludes the interview by talking about his family, and describing how he would like to be remembered.