

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Priscilla Taylor

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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>	Taylor, Priscilla, 1949-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Priscilla Taylor,
<b>Dates:</b>	March 11, 2017
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2017
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 uncompressed MOV digital video files (1:57:46).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Legislator Priscilla Taylor (1949 - ) served on the Palm Beach County Commission for twelve years and became mayor of Palm Beach County in 2014 Taylor was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 11, 2017, in West Palm Beach, Florida. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2017_072
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Legislator Priscilla Taylor was born on December 31, 1949 in Fort Pierce, Florida. Taylor earned her B.S. degree from Barry University in Miami, Florida in 1997 and earned her M.B.A. degree from Palm Beach Atlantic University in West Palm Beach, Florida in 1999.

Before attending Palm Beach Atlantic University, Taylor worked in the insurance industry and founded her own company. In 1999, Taylor was elected to public office for the first time as a commissioner for the Palm Beach County Commission. In that position, Taylor was integral to bring in the Ballpark of the

Palm Beaches, the spring-training facilities for the Houston Astros and Washington Nationals baseball teams. She was re-elected twice and held the position of chairwoman in 2001 and 2003. Taylor was then elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2004, where she represented the 84th District of Florida. During her time in the House of Representatives, Taylor served as the Democratic Party Whip from 2004 until 2006. In 2009, she resigned from her seat in the Florida House of Representatives when Governor Charlie Crist appointed her to the Palm Beach County Commission. Taylor was re-elected to that position in 2010 and served until 2012. She was then appointed as mayor of Palm Beach County in 2014. Taylor campaigned for a seat in the United States House of Representatives in 2016.

Taylor was also active in a number of community organizations, including the Greater Palm Beaches Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc. Taylor also served as a board member for Columbia Hospital, the Criminal Justice Commission, the Epilepsy Foundation, and the Urban League. She served as the southeast director of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women as well.

Taylor was recognized for her service to the community through a number of awards and honors. She was the recipient of the Sojourner Truth Award and the A. Philip Randolph Institute's Distinguished Legislative Service Award. Taylor was also named as one of the "25 Most Influential Black Women" by *Success Magazine* in 2006.

Taylor has two children, Vita and Sean.

Priscilla Taylor was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 11, 2017.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with The Honorable Priscilla Taylor was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 11, 2017, in West Palm Beach, Florida, and was recorded on 4 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Legislator Priscilla Taylor (1949 - ) served on the Palm Beach County Commission for twelve years and became mayor of Palm Beach County in 2014

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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:

Taylor, Priscilla, 1949-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Taylor, Priscilla, 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:**

Legislator

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

PoliticalMakers

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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 The Honorable Priscilla Taylor, March 11, 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 (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 The Honorable Priscilla Taylor,  
Section A2017\_072\_001\_001, TRT: 1:29:04 2017/03/11

The Honorable Priscilla Taylor was born on December 30, 1949 in Fort Pierce, Florida to Mary Taylor Bacon and Willie Johnson, who were teenagers at the time. Because of her parents' young age, Taylor was raised by her maternal grandparents, Iretha Minus Taylor and Charles Taylor, Jr. Her grandfather, worked in a packinghouse in Fort Pierce, while her grandmother worked in domestic service. Her mother went on to marry Pete Bacon, Jr., with whom she had four children. Taylor's father left Fort Pierce shortly after Taylor was born, and moved to Rochester, New York, where he later raised a family. In Fort Pierce, Taylor attended a Presbyterian church with her maternal aunt, Irma Taylor. She was educated at the all-black Frances K. Sweet Elementary School and Lincoln Park Academy, and excelled in mathematics. During Taylor's sophomore year in 1964, the local school system was integrated. From that time, she was bused to the formerly all-white Dan McCarty High School.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Priscilla Taylor,  
Section A2017\_072\_001\_002, TRT: 2:29:12 2017/03/11

The Honorable Priscilla Taylor was a member of the first integrated class at Dan McCarty High School in Fort Pierce, Florida. While there was no violence against the African American students, Taylor and her peers were discouraged from participating in extracurricular activities. After graduating in 1967, Taylor was recruited to become the secretary to the regional manager at the BellSouth Corporation. She went on to work at the

Grumman Aerospace Corporation, and then became an insurance agent at The Travelers Indemnity Company and the Allstate Corporation. Taylor opened her own insurance agency in Palm Beach County, Florida in 1986. Around this time, she enrolled at Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida, where she obtained her bachelor's degree and master's degree. She also became involved with the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. In 1999, Taylor was elected to the Port of Palm Beach District Commission.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Priscilla Taylor,  
Section A2017\_072\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:44 2017/03/11

The Honorable Priscilla Taylor became the first African American woman to serve on the Port of Palm Beach District Commission in 1999. Five years later, she was elected to the Florida House of Representatives, where her African American peers included Arthenia Joyner and Chris Smith. During her term as a state representative, Taylor served on numerous committees and as the minority whip for the Democratic Party. She also worked closely with the Innocence Project to secure the release of wrongfully convicted African Americans. Taylor was named one of the twenty-five most influential black women in Florida by Success magazine in 2006, and was recognized by the A. Philip Randolph Institute in 2007. Taylor also opposed the passage of Florida's stand your ground law, which was used to defend the shooter who killed black teenager Trayvon Martin in 2012. Taylor also talks about the controversial results of the presidential election in 2000, and the policies of President Barack Obama.

Video Oral History Interview with The Honorable Priscilla Taylor,  
Section A2017\_072\_001\_004, TRT: 4:29:46 2017/03/11

The Honorable Priscilla Taylor was appointed to the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners by Governor Charlie Crist in 2009. In this role, she created the Peace in the Hood program and the Mayor's Ball, which raised funds to address homelessness in Palm Beach County, Florida. She advocated for people who were previously incarcerated through the ban the box initiative and the Criminal Justice Commission Reentry

Program. She was also instrumental in bringing the Fitteam Ballpark of the Palm Beaches to West Palm Beach, Florida. In 2014, Taylor was selected to serve as chairwoman of the commission. She mounted a campaign for the U.S. Congress in 2015, but withdrew from the race due to a lack of funds. At this point, Taylor talks about the redevelopment of Belle Glade, Florida. She also reflects upon her legacy and political philosophy, as well as her hopes and concerns for the African American community. Taylor concludes the interview by describing how she would like to be remembered.