

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Donald V. Watkins

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Watkins, Donald V., 1948-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Donald V. Watkins,
Dates:	May 1, 2017
Bulk Dates:	2017
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:37:42).
Abstract:	Lawyer and entrepreneur Donald V. Watkins (1948 -) served as special counsel to the mayor of Birmingham, Alabama from 1985 to 1999 and was chairman and CEO of Masasda Resources Group, LLC Watkins was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 1, 2017, in Birmingham, Alabama. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2017_089
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Lawyer and entrepreneur Donald V. Watkins was born on September 8, 1948 in Parsons, Kansas to Dr. Levi Watkins, Sr. and Lillian Bernice Varnado Watkins. Watkins graduated from the Alabama State University Laboratory School in Montgomery, Alabama in 1966. He then went on to receive his B.A. degree in 1970 from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. Watkins was awarded a Herbert Lehman Scholarship by the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and earned his J.D. degree from the University of Alabama School of Law in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in 1973.

Following his graduation from the University of Alabama, Watkins joined the law office of Fred D. Gray, Rosa Parks' attorney in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1979, he opened his own office in Birmingham, Alabama and became the youngest person ever elected to the Birmingham City Council, which he served on until 1983. From 1985 until 1999, Watkins served as Special Counsel to the Mayor of Birmingham, Richard Arrington, Jr. During his distinguished legal career, Watkins handled a number of landmark cases, including, *Sidney Williams v. The City of Montgomery, Alabama* in 1975, *SCLC v. The City of Gadsden, Alabama* in 1978, *U.S. v. Richard Arrington, Jr.* in 1991, and *U.S. v. U.W. Clemon* in 1996. In 1996 Watkins founded Watkins Pencor, a global energy investment company. In 2000, he co-founded Alamerica Bank in Birmingham. In 2002, he gained national attention when he attempted to purchase a Major League Baseball team. In total, he inquired about purchasing the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, the Montreal Expos, the Minnesota Twins, and the Anaheim Angels. Watkins also co-founded Nabirm Energy Services Ltd. in Windhoek, Namibia in 2011.

Watkins has been an active member of his community throughout his career. He served as chairman and CEO of Masada Resource Group, LLC, as well as chairman of Alamerica Bank. Watkins also served on the board of directors of State Mutual Insurance Company in Rome, Georgia, and as a trustee for Alabama State University. He is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

Watkins has five children.

Donald V. Watkins was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on May 1, 2017.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Donald V. Watkins was conducted by Denise Gines on May 1, 2017, in Birmingham, Alabama, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Lawyer and entrepreneur Donald V. Watkins (1948 -) served as special counsel to the mayor of Birmingham, Alabama from 1985 to 1999 and was chairman and CEO of Masasda Resources Group, LLC

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:

Watkins, Donald V., 1948-

Gines, Denise (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Watkins, Donald V., 1948- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Lawyer

HistoryMakers® Category:

LawMakers

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 Donald V. Watkins, May 1, 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 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).

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 Donald V. Watkins, Section A2017_089_001_001, TRT: 1:21:27 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Donald V. Watkins, Section A2017_089_001_002, TRT: 2:26:35 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Donald V. Watkins, Section A2017_089_001_003, TRT:
3:30:02 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Donald V. Watkins, Section A2017_089_001_004, TRT:
4:28:29 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Donald V. Watkins, Section A2017_089_001_005, TRT:
5:28:29 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Donald V. Watkins, Section A2017_089_001_006, TRT:
6:19:34 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Donald V. Watkins, Section A2017_089_001_007, TRT:
7:03:06 ?