

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Constance W. Rice

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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>	Rice, Connie, 1956-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Constance W. Rice,
<b>Dates:</b>	October 8, 2017
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2017
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 uncompressed MOV digital video files (1:57:42).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Nonprofit executive and academic administrator Constance W. Rice (1944 - ) was senior vice chancellor of the Institutional Advancement for Seattle Community College District and founded the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation USA. Rice was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on October 8, 2017, in Seattle, Washington. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2017_181
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Nonprofit executive and academic administrator Constance W. Rice was born in Brooklyn, New York. She attended P.S. 144 and Erasmus Hall High School in New York City and enrolled at Howard University. She transferred to Queens College, and received her B.S. degree in sociology and anthropology in 1966. Rice received her M.A. degree in public administration and her Ph.D. in higher education administration from the University of Washington.

In 1966, Rice began working under Whitney Young at the National Urban League. The following year, she moved to Seattle, Washington and began working at the Washington Employment Security Department as a youth counselor. She later accepted an editorial position at *The Trumpet*, a newsletter focused on housing and social services and operated by the Central Area Motivation Program. In 1984, Rice founded CWR, Inc., a public relations firm. She also served as assistant executive director of the Washington Education Association and later led the Center for Urban Studies at Western Washington State University. In 1992, Rice became vice chancellor of the Institutional Advancement for Seattle Community College District. She then became interim president of North Seattle Community College in 1995, before she returned to the Seattle Community College District as senior vice chancellor in 1997. Rice also helped establish the National Coalition of 101 Black Women, which focused on networking and employment opportunities. During her husband's tenure as mayor of Seattle, Rice created the Health and Nutrition Project at Washington State University.

Rice was appointed as a trustee of Evergreen State College in 1989. In 1999, she became president and founder of Strategic Education Centers, to support the educational evolution of children in Africa and the United States, which also helped establish two after-school centers in Swaziland. She continued this work as the founder and executive director of the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation USA, which established two schools in Swaziland. In 2013, she was appointed by Washington Governor Jay Inslee to the University of Washington's Board of Regents, and the following year, she became a senior executive fellow for Casey Family Programs.

Rice has held leadership positions on numerous boards, including the Seattle Community College District, Seattle Art Museum Executive Board Community and Education Engagement Committee. Rice was the chair of Women and Ethnic Studies at Shoreline Community College and served as a gubernatorial appointee to the Washington Student Achievement Council and as vice chair. Rice served on the University of Washington Visiting Committee for the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance. She was the national western area vice director of The Links, Incorporated, and served on the Board of Directors Downtown Rotary, the Rainier Club, The Seattle Foundation, and Swedish Hospital.

In 2018, Rice received the Women of Influence Lifetime Achievement Award from the *Puget Sound Business Journal*.

Rice and her husband Norman B. Rice, have one child, Mian Rice.

Constance W. Rice was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on October 8, 2017.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Constance W. Rice was conducted by Larry Crowe on October 8, 2017, in Seattle, Washington, and was recorded on 4 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Nonprofit executive and academic administrator Constance W. Rice (1944 - ) was senior vice chancellor of the Institutional Advancement for Seattle Community College District and founded the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation USA.

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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:

Rice, Connie, 1956-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

## Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Rice, Connie, 1956---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:

Academic Administrator

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Nonprofit Executive

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

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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 Constance W. Rice, October 8, 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).

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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 Constance W. Rice, Section A2017\_181\_001\_001, TRT: 1:31:40 ?

Constance W. Rice was born on June 23, 1944 in Brooklyn, New York to Beulah Marshall Williams and Elliott Williams. Her maternal grandparents, Mack Marshall and Nellie Marshall, lived in Filbert, Pennsylvania, where her grandfather worked as a coal miner and maintained a small farm. Rice's mother graduated from high school in Filbert, and later moved to Brooklyn, where she worked in domestic service. Rice's father was born in Warrenton, North Carolina, where his family worked as sharecroppers. He joined the U.S. military, and served as a mess sergeant in Germany during World War II. Upon his return to the United States, he moved to New York City, where he found work as a subway system operator through the Amalgamated Transit Union. He also met Rice's mother, with whom he settled in Brooklyn. There, Rice and her family attended the Concord Baptist Church under Reverend Gardner Taylor, who became Rice's mentor. She excelled as a student at P.S. 144, where she was placed in honors classes and skipped two grades.

Video Oral History Interview with Constance W. Rice, Section A2017\_181\_001\_002, TRT: 2:26:53 ?

Constance W. Rice attended Erasmus Hall High School, which was located in the predominantly white Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. She excelled in her classes and befriended Bettina Aptheker, who was the daughter of historian Herbert Aptheker. In 1960, Rice graduated from high school and enrolled at Howard University. There, she studied under John Henrik Clarke, and attended the lectures of Howard Dodson. During the summer after her freshman year, Rice's mother cancelled her enrollment and sent her to Queens College in Queens, New York. There, Rice was part of the first wave of black students to integrate the City University of New York system. After graduating from Queens College in 1966, she secured a position with the National Urban League under Whitney Young. Rice later met and married her first husband, who was a civil engineer. When he was offered a position at The Boeing Company, Rice left the National Urban League and moved with him to Seattle, Washington.

Video Oral History Interview with Constance W. Rice, Section A2017\_181\_001\_003, TRT: 3:27:54 ?

Constance W. Rice moved with her first husband to Seattle, Washington in 1967. She found work as a youth counselor at the Washington Employment Security Department, and enrolled in a graduate program at the University of Washington in Seattle. Later, Rice accepted an editorial position at the Central Area Motivation Program's (CAMP) The Trumpet newsletter, which focused on housing and social services for underserved populations in Seattle's Central Area. During her tenure, the CAMP office was firebombed by white supremacists, and community leader Edwin T. Pratt was assassinated. At that time, CAMP relocated to a vacant fire station. Pratt's vacancy on the board of

the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle was filled by activist Norman Rice, whom Rice later married. Rice earned her Ph.D. degree in 1974, and became the assistant executive director of the Washington Education Association. She later founded a management consulting firm called CWR, Inc.

Video Oral History Interview with Constance W. Rice, Section A2017\_181\_001\_004, TRT: 4:31:15 ?

Constance W. Rice was the first black woman to receive a Ph.D. from the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington. She later founded CWR, Inc., a management consulting firm that focused on education and public affairs. In this capacity, she headed the Center for Urban Studies at Western Washington State University in Bellingham, Washington, where she implemented a program that offered experiential credit towards a bachelor's degree for black students. Rice also helped establish the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, which focused on networking and employment opportunities. In 1989, her husband, Norman Rice, was elected mayor of Seattle. During his tenure, Rice organized the Health and Nutrition Project at Washington State University to educate families on shopping habits, gardening, mental health services and community safety. In 2001, she launched the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation in Cape Town, South Africa, where she opened two schools. She also launched a safe sex education campaign in Swaziland.