

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dee Robinson

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Robinson, Dee, 1961-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Dee Robinson,
Dates:	May 3, 2018
Bulk Dates:	2018
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:13:24).
Abstract:	Entrepreneur Dee Robinson was (1961-) founded Unity Square, and initiated a strategic retail partnership; and later. founded RobinsonHill, Inc., a concessions management firm specializing in airports and other non-traditional locations across the U.S. Robinson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 3, 2018, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2018_090
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Entrepreneur Dee Robinson was born on January 21, 1961. She received her B.A. in economics from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and her M.B.A. degree in marketing and policy management from Northwestern University's J. L. Kellogg School of Management in Evanston, Illinois in 1988. She also later completed the Dartmouth College Tuck School of Business Executive Education program in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Robinson worked in banking at Ameritrust and Northern Trust as a commercial loan officer, and served as associate product director for Johnson and Johnson Consumer Products Company, facilitating successful new product national launch campaigns. In 1989, she served as assistant account executive at the Leo Burnett Company managing accounts and strategies for new product introductions.

In 1993, Robinson founded Unity Square merchandising ethnic-inspired products through a strategic retail partnership with Sears. As chief executive officer, she also established RobinsonHill, Inc., a concessions management firm specializing in U.S. airports and other non-traditional locations. In 1998, she secured a Unity Square license and catalog deal with Sears, and purchased a Ben and Jerry's Super Premium Ice Cream and Yogurt franchise. In 2001, Robinson opened Unity Square at Sears on State Street, the Ben & Jerry's shop at Midway Airport, and the first tourist location Ben & Jerry's at Chicago's Navy Pier, in 2003. Robinson entered into a joint venture in 2006 with Hudson News at Chicago O'Hare International Airport, and OTG Management in 2007 with Cibo Wine & Bistro, Cibo Markets and Jet Rock Sports Bar at Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C. along with Cibo Markets at Chicago O'Hare International in 2008. Robinson's RobinsonHill began Hudson News store operations, and opened Cheeburger Cheeburger at Cleveland Hopkins Airport in 2009. She later launched UFood Grill, a second restaurant at Cleveland Hopkins Airport in 2010. Dee Robinson led the Areas USA-RobinsonHill team and secured exclusive rights to develop O'Hare Airport's Food & Beverage Terminal 5 concessions program in 2011. In 2012, the RobinsonHill Group acquired the first Pinkberry frozen dessert restaurant franchise; won the

bid to operate Garrett's Popcorn Shop at Midway Airport, and launched Potbelly Sandwich Shop at Boston Logan International Airport. In 2013, Robinson's RobinsonHill Group celebrated twenty years in the retail and restaurant business.

Robinson has served as board director for Wintrust Bank, the Illinois Gaming Board; Meridian Healthcare Advisory Board, and Committee for Amazon HQ2.

Robinson has received numerous awards and recognitions including, Kellogg Graduate School of Business BMA Entrepreneur of the Year Alumni Award, Women's Leadership Exchange Compass Award, Chicago Defender Woman of Excellence Award, Top 100 under 50 Executive Leaders Award, Black MBA Magazine's Entrepreneur of the Year, Ben & Jerry's Award of Excellence, and Airport Revenue News Best of Award Nominations for Small Retailer and Food & Beverage Operator with Highest Regard for Customer Service, Best Small News & Gift Operator, Best Food & Beverage Brand Operator for UFood Grill, and Best Overall Small Food & Beverage Operator.

Dee Robinson was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on May 3, 2018.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Dee Robinson was conducted by Larry Crowe on May 3, 2018, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Entrepreneur Dee Robinson was (1961-) founded Unity Square, and initiated a strategic retail partnership; and later. founded RobinsonHill, Inc., a concessions management firm specializing in airports and other non-traditional locations across the U.S.

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:

Robinson, Dee, 1961-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Robinson, Dee, 1961- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Entrepreneur

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

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 Dee Robinson, May 3, 2018. 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 Dee Robinson, Section A2018_090_001_001, TRT: 1:28:27 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Dee Robinson, Section A2018_090_001_002, TRT: 2:28:48 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Dee Robinson, Section A2018_090_001_003, TRT: 3:29:10 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Dee Robinson, Section A2018_090_001_004, TRT: 4:29:50 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Dee Robinson, Section A2018_090_001_005, TRT: 5:31:25 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Dee Robinson, Section A2018_090_001_006, TRT: 6:29:04 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Dee Robinson, Section A2018_090_001_007, TRT: 7:16:40 ?