

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Damian Mills

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Mills, Damian, 1973-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Damian Mills,
Dates:	August 11, 2018
Bulk Dates:	2018
Physical Description:	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:14:27).
Abstract:	Automobile sales entrepreneur Damian Mills (1973-) was elected president of the Chrysler Minority Dealers Association in 2014. He founded Mills Automotive Group in Smithfield in 2008, and expanded to include eight dealerships in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Maryland. Mills was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 11, 2018, in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2018_149
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Automobile sales entrepreneur Damian Mills was born on August 16, 1973 in Garyville, Louisiana to Carol and Joseph Mills. He graduated from East Saint John High School in Reserve, Louisiana in 1991. Mills, a business economics major, started in the auto industry in 1992 as a salesperson while attending North Carolina A&T State University, in Greensboro, North Carolina. He worked for Crown Automotive Group, where he became one of the top sales associates within the company. He was then promoted to finance and insurance manager, and became the youngest general manager of Crown Dodge. He was then made partner in 1998 at the age of twenty-five.

In 2000, Asbury Automotive, one of the largest automotive groups in the country, acquired Crown Automotive, and promoted Mills to sales director where he was responsible for over twenty-two dealerships in three states. In 2004, Mills became a dealership owner, leaving Asbury and purchasing Classic Ford of Smithfield, in North Carolina. He later established Mills Automotive Group in Smithfield, North Carolina in 2008. The Mills Automotive Group expanded to include: two South Carolina stores; Classic Lincoln of Columbia and Stateline Fiat of Fort Mill; and three North Carolina locations: Classic Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep-Ram of Pineville, Classic Ford-Lincoln of Shelby and Classic Hyundai of Wilkesboro. In 2013, he opened his seventh dealership, Classic Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge-Ram in Goldsboro, N.C, and followed with the opening in 2014 of Classic Kia of Ellicott City, Maryland, the eighth member of his auto stores group.

Mills was credited for his efforts to establish the Chrysler Minority Dealer Association Future Dealers Alliance, to mentor and nurture future minority dealership managers. In 2010, Mills Automotive Group was ranked 224 on the *Black Enterprise* African American Business Enterprises list. In 2013, Damian Mills was recognized for his auto industry achievements, in the *Automotive News* “40 under 40” issue. In 2014, he was elected president of the Chrysler Minority Dealers Association, the national trade association representing ethnic minority owners of Fiat Chrysler Automobile dealerships, and he served in this role through 2016. The Mills Automotive Group was

ranked 7th on the *Black Enterprise* BE100 Auto Dealer List in 2014, 6th in 2016, and 5th in 2017.

Damian Mills and his wife Beverly have three adult children including Cierra, Michala and Chancellor.

Damian Mills was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 11, 2018.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Damian Mills was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 11, 2018, in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Automobile sales entrepreneur Damian Mills (1973-) was elected president of the Chrysler Minority Dealers Association in 2014. He founded Mills Automotive Group in Smithfield in 2008, and expanded to include eight dealerships in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Maryland.

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:

Mills, Damian, 1973-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Mills, Damian, 1973- --Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Automobile Sales 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 Damian Mills, August 11, 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 Damian Mills, Section A2018_149_001_001, TRT: 1:30:28 ?

- Video Oral History Interview with Damian Mills, Section A2018_149_001_002, TRT: 2:28:27 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damian Mills, Section A2018_149_001_003, TRT: 3:30:02 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damian Mills, Section A2018_149_001_004, TRT: 4:28:26 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Damian Mills, Section A2018_149_001_005, TRT: 5:17:04 ?