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## D.C. Oral History Collaborative Collection180

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People's Archive, MLK Library

901 G Street NW  
Washington, DC  
[peoples.archive@dc.gov](mailto:peoples.archive@dc.gov)

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	People's Archive, MLK Library
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## Scope and Contents

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D.C. Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC) is a citywide initiative to train community members in oral history skills, fund new and ongoing oral history projects, connect volunteers with oral history projects, and publicize existing oral history collections. DCOHC is a project of DC Public Library, HumanitiesDC, and the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. This collection contains oral history interviews, transcripts, and indexes produced by DCOHC grantees.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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901 G Street NW  
Washington, DC  
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## Controlled Access Headings

- Oral History
- Digital materials
- Audio
- Video recordings

## Collection Inventory

### Series 1: Whitman-Walker Health Oral History Project

#### Biographical / Historical

Whitman-Walker Health, formerly Whitman-Walker Clinic, is a non-profit community health center in the Washington, DC metropolitan area that specializes in HIV/AIDS treatment and LGBTQ healthcare. Founded as an affirming health center for the gay and lesbian community in 1978, Whitman-Walker was one of the first responders to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in DC and became a leader in HIV/AIDS education, prevention, diagnosis and treatment. In recent years, Whitman-Walker has expanded its services to include primary healthcare services, a stronger focus on queer women's care, and youth services.

#### Scope and Contents

The Whitman-Walker Health Oral History Collection contains 10 audio interviews of members of the Whitman-Walker community. The interviews were conducted by Hannah Byrne and Jewel Addy in late 2017 and early 2018 to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Whitman-Walker Health. Transcripts are included for all interviews.

#### Controlled Access Headings:

- Reproductive health services
- HIV (Viruses)
- Families
- LGBTQ people -- GLBTQ people

### Sub-Series 1: Interviews

#### Title/Description

#### Instances

Barbara Lewis interview, 2017-08-17

#### Biographical / Historical

Barbara Lewis is a healthcare professional, longtime Whitman-Walker Clinic volunteer, and current Physician Assistant at Whitman-Walker Health.

## Scope and Contents

Barbara Lewis discusses her healthcare background, her relationship with Whitman-Walker, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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Carl Corbin interview (part 1 of 2), 2017-08-17

## Biographical / Historical

Carl Corbin is a patient and former Patient Advisory Committee member at Whitman Walker.

## Scope and Contents

Carl Corbin discusses his background, coming to terms with his HIV diagnosis, his relationship with Whitman-Walker, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

---

Carl Corbin interview (part 2 of 2), 2017-08-17

## Biographical / Historical

Carl Corbin is a patient and former Patient Advisory Committee member at Whitman Walker.

## Scope and Contents

Carl Corbin further discusses his background, coming to terms with his HIV diagnosis, his relationship with Whitman-Walker, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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D Magrini interview (part 1 of 2), 2017-09-27

## Biographical / Historical

D Magrini is the Community Commitment and Training Coordinator at Whitman-Walker.

## Scope and Contents

D Magrini discusses growing up in Washington, DC, her military service, her previous non-monogamous marriage, power lifting, the emergence of HIV in DC in the 1980s, and her work in Lesbian healthcare.

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D Magrini interview (part 2 of 2), 2017-10-15

## Biographical / Historical

D Magrini is the Community Commitment and Training Coordinator at Whitman-Walker.

## Scope and Contents

D Magrini further discusses growing up in Washington, DC, her military service, her previous non-monogamous

marriage, power lifting, the emergence of HIV in DC in the 1980s, and her work in Lesbian healthcare.

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Derrick "Strawberry" Cox interview, 2017-07-23

### **Biographical / Historical**

Derrick "Strawberry" Cox is an LGBT activist and patient at Whitman-Walker.

### **Scope and Contents**

Derrick "Strawberry" Cox discusses his background, how he came to use the services at Whitman-Walker, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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Gerard Tyler interview, 2017-11-19

### **Biographical / Historical**

Gerard Tyler is a patient mentor and longtime volunteer at Whitman-Walker's Gay Men's Health and Wellness Clinic.

### **Scope and Contents**

Gerard Tyler discusses growing up in Fairfax Village, being a mentor at Whitman-Walker, his work with Whitman-Walker's STP clinic, his meningitis diagnosis, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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Joanne Sincero interview, 2017-11-13

### **Biographical / Historical**

Joanne Sincero is a Welless Coordinator at Whitman-Walker.

### **Scope and Contents**

Joanne Sincero discusses her work with the Lesbian Services Program at Whitman-Walker, her transition to a full time position with Whitman-Walker, the joys of a queer-friendly workplace, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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Kermit Turner interview, 2017-09-20

### **Biographical / Historical**

Kermit Turner is a longtime patient at Whitman-Walker.

### **Scope and Contents**

Kermit Turner discusses his childhood in Annapolis, MD, being the first African American page at Anne Arundel County Public Library, moving to Boston, his return to

DC, his HIV diagnosis, his relationship with Whitman-Walker, and his Lymphoma diagnosis and subsequent treatment.

---

Shawn Henderson interview, 2017-11-27

### **Biographical / Historical**

Shawn Henderson is an artist and longtime patient at Whitman-Walker.

### **Scope and Contents**

Shawn Henderson discusses his life in Virginia and Washington, DC, his love for sports, parenthood, his religious upbringing, living with HIV, and his experiences at Whitman-Walker as a patient.

## **Sub-Series 2: Transcripts**

Title/Description	Instances
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Barbara Lewis transcript, 2017-09-15

### **Biographical / Historical**

Barbara Lewis is a healthcare professional, longtime Whitman-Walker Clinic volunteer, and current Physician Assistant at Whitman-Walker Health.

### **Scope and Contents**

Barbara Lewis discusses her healthcare background, her relationship with Whitman-Walker, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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Carl Corbin transcript (part 1 of 2), 2017-09-28

### **Biographical / Historical**

Carl Corbin is a patient and former Patient Advisory Committee member at Whitman Walker.

### **Scope and Contents**

Carl Corbin discusses his background, coming to terms with his HIV diagnosis, his relationship with Whitman-Walker, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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Carl Corbin transcript (part 2 of 2), 2017-09-28

### **Biographical / Historical**

Carl Corbin is a patient and former Patient Advisory Committee member at Whitman Walker.

## **Scope and Contents**

Carl Corbin further discusses his background, coming to terms with his HIV diagnosis, his relationship with Whitman-Walker, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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D Magrini transcript (part 1 of 2), 2017-11-08

## **Biographical / Historical**

D Magrini is the Community Commitment and Training Coordinator at Whitman-Walker.

## **Scope and Contents**

D Magrini discusses growing up in Washington, DC, her military service, her previous non-monogamous marriage, power lifting, the emergence of HIV in DC in the 1980s, and her work in Lesbian healthcare.

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D Magrini transcript (part 2 of 2), 2017-11-08

## **Biographical / Historical**

D Magrini is the Community Commitment and Training Coordinator at Whitman-Walker.

## **Scope and Contents**

D Magrini further discusses growing up in Washington, DC, her military service, her previous non-monogamous marriage, power lifting, the emergence of HIV in DC in the 1980s, and her work in Lesbian healthcare.

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Derrick "Strawberry" Cox transcript, 2017-09-05

## **Biographical / Historical**

Derrick "Strawberry" Cox is an LGBT activist and patient at Whitman-Walker.

## **Scope and Contents**

Derrick "Strawberry" Cox discusses his background, how he came to use the services at Whitman-Walker, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

---

Gerard Tyler transcript, 2017-11-27

## **Biographical / Historical**

Gerard Tyler is a patient mentor and longtime volunteer at Whitman-Walker's Gay Men's Health and Wellness Clinic.



## Scope and Contents

Gerard Tyler discusses growing up in Fairfax Village, being a mentor at Whitman-Walker, his work with Whitman-Walker's STP clinic, his meningitis diagnosis, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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Joanne Sincero transcript, 2017-11-20

## Biographical / Historical

Joanne Sincero is a Welless Coordinator at Whitman-Walker.

## Scope and Contents

Joanne Sincero discusses her work with the Lesbian Services Program at Whitman-Walker, her transition to a full time position with Whitman-Walker, the joys of a queer-friendly workplace, and HIV/AIDS in Washington, DC.

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Kermit Turner transcript, 2017-09-28

## Biographical / Historical

Kermit Turner is a longtime patient at Whitman-Walker.

## Scope and Contents

Kermit Turner discusses his childhood in Annapolis, MD, being the first African American page at Anne Arundel County Public Library, moving to Boston, his return to DC, his HIV diagnosis, his relationship with Whitman-Walker, and his Lymphoma diagnosis and subsequent treatment.

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Shawn Henderson transcript, 2017-11-26

## Biographical / Historical

Shawn Henderson is an artist and longtime patient at Whitman-Walker.

## Scope and Contents

Shawn Henderson discusses his life in Virginia and Washington, DC, his love for sports, parenthood, his religious upbringing, living with HIV, and his experiences at Whitman-Walker as a patient.

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## Biographical / Historical

Mount Pleasant is a neighborhood in Ward 1 of Washington, D.C., and is bordered by Adams Morgan, Columbia Heights, and Cleveland Park. In 1991, rioting was sparked in the neighborhood by the shooting of a Salvadoran man by an African American police officer. These interviews touch on memories of the riots, community-police relations, the history of Mount Pleasant, gentrification, and how the neighborhood changed in response to the events of 1991.

## Scope and Contents

The Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Collection contains 10 audio interviews of people who were members of the Mount Pleasant, D.C. community during the riot of 1991. The interviews were conducted by Pat Scallen in late 2017 and early 2018. Transcripts are included for all interviews.

### Controlled Access Headings:

- Riots
- Mount Pleasant (Washington, D.C.)
- Racism
- Police

## Sub-Series 1: Interviews

### Title/Description

### Instances

Alice Kelly interview, 2018-01-10

## Biographical / Historical

Alice Kelly has lived on Lamont Street in Mt. Pleasant since 1983. She has been actively involved in the neighborhood since, serving as chair of the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) as well as working with Historic Mt. Pleasant, Mt. Pleasant Main Street, the Mt. Pleasant Business Association, and the DC Latino Civil Rights Task Force. Ms Kelly has headed the policy office of the District Department of Transportation for the past 14 years.

## Scope and Contents

Alice Kelly discusses her initial move to Mount Pleasant, her original impressions of the neighborhood, the improvements at the local elementary school, community efforts to improve the main street, her involvement with the ANC, and the Mount Pleasant riot.

Arturo Griffiths interview, 2018-01-04

## Biographical / Historical

Arturo Griffiths is a longtime resident of Mt. Pleasant and community activist. Born in Panama, he attended DC public schools from grade school through high school and studied at Howard University. He is a co-founder of the Latin American Youth Center and has worked in a variety of capacities organizing in the past several decades. Currently he runs Trabajadores Unidos, an organization

which supports day laborers in the Washington, DC region.

## **Scope and Contents**

Arturo Griffiths discusses his childhood in Panama, his family's move to DC, learning English, attending Howard University, his political awakening, DC's latino community, Mayor Barry's relationship with the latino community, the ways in which the 1991 riot affected latinos in Mount Pleasant, and the effects of gentrification in the neighborhood.

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Charlene Howard interview, 2017-10-31

## **Biographical / Historical**

Charlene Howard is a longtime Mt. Pleasant resident who lives in the same house that she grew up in on Hobart St NW. Her household is one of the few remaining multi-generational African American families in the neighborhood. She fondly recalls her formative childhood and adolescent years in Mt. Pleasant and reflects upon their importance in shaping her personal values and understanding of the importance of community and diversity. Charlene returned to Hobart St to raise her children and remains actively engaged in local affairs.

## **Scope and Contents**

Charlene Howard discusses her childhood in Adams Morgan, the political activism of Mount Pleasant residents in the 1970s, drug use in Washington DC, police-community language barriers, her memories of the Mount Pleasant riot, and gentrification of the neighborhood.

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Elinor Hart interview, 2017-11-10

## **Biographical / Historical**

Elinor Hart has been a homeowner on Hobart St. in Mt. Pleasant since 1974. During this time she has worked closely with the Mt. Pleasant Main Street Association and Historic Mt. Pleasant. Ms Hart has a strong interest in affordable housing and currently coordinates a school partnership for the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs in addition to promoting statehood for Washington, DC.

## **Scope and Contents**

Elinor Hart discusses moving to Mount Pleasant in 1974, changing demographics of the neighborhood, the controversy of the neighborhood's Historic District designation, her memories of the 1991 riot, police-community relations, and gentrification.

José "Chico" Diaz interview, 2017-12-15

### **Biographical / Historical**

José (Chico) Diaz has been affiliated with the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) for over two decades as a participant in its youth programs and later as an employee. As a child in El Salvador, Mr. Diaz battled polio while living in a zone of conflict between guerrilla and military forces. He arrived in Washington, DC, attended DC public schools, and has since made the District his home. Mr. Diaz is the Director of Information Technology at LAYC.

### **Scope and Contents**

José Diaz discusses moving to the US at age 15, his recovery from polio, Mount Pleasant in the 1980s, tensions between latino and african-american youth, the Mount Pleasant riot, and community-police relations.

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José Sueiro interview, 2017-11-25

### **Biographical / Historical**

José Sueiro has lived in Adams Morgan and has been intimately involved in the Washington, DC Latino community since the 1970s. He has worked with area youth as Executive Director of the Latin American Youth Center and as a soccer coach at local high schools. Mr. Sueiro is also the unofficial scribe of the Latino community, having edited several local newspapers (both in Spanish and in English) focused on DC's Latino community. He worked in city government under Mayor Anthony Williams and currently consults with Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association while running a blog on local Latino affairs, [metrodiversity.com](http://metrodiversity.com).

### **Scope and Contents**

José Sueiro discusses his studies at GW university, his move to Panama, his return to DC, his start in the newspaper industry and work at El Latino, DC police's lack of experience with latino youth, his memories of the Mount Pleasant riot, and Mayor Barry's close relationship to the latino community in DC.

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Mark Poletunow interview, 2017-11-18

### **Biographical / Historical**

Mark Poletunow served the Latino community in DC for over two decades as a Capuchin friar. During this time, he worked at the Capilla Latina (now Our Lady Queen of the Americas Catholic parish), served as associate pastor at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, coordinated Hispanic Catholic catechism for the Archdiocese of Washington,

and was the Executive Director of the Hispanic Catholic Center. Mr. Poletunow currently is president of the Malvern Retreat Center in Malvern, PA.

## **Scope and Contents**

Mark Poletunow discusses his arrival in DC, teaching English as a second language to Spanish-speaking people, identification with immigrant communities, his work at the Spanish Catholic Center, poor treatment of the latino community by DC police, his memories of the Mount Pleasant riot and their aftermath.

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Pedro Avilés interview, 2017-11-15

## **Biographical / Historical**

Pedro Avilés is a Salvadoran American and a longtime resident of Mt. Pleasant. He has worked closely with and has represented the Latino community in Washington, DC in a variety of positions, including serving as a founding member and the executive director of the DC Latino Civil Rights Task Force. Mr. Avilés is an organizational development specialist who has consulted for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, the World Bank, the government of El Salvador, and a variety of non-profit agencies.

## **Scope and Contents**

Pedro Avilés discusses moving to Adams Morgan in 1974, his memories of Mount Pleasant, his involvement with the Sacred Heart Church Theatre Group, racial identity, tensions between teachers at DC Public Schools and non-English-speaking students, his memories of the Mount Pleasant riot, his subsequent involvement with DC's Latino Task Force, and police-community relations in DC.

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Robert Fleming interview, 2017-10-30

## **Biographical / Historical**

Robert Fleming is a longtime resident and homeowner in Mt. Pleasant. He moved into the neighborhood in 1975 and from the beginning was intimately involved in neighborhood affairs. He served three terms as an ANC commissioner during the 1980s and co-founded Neighbors Consejo, a local community organization that provided bilingual rehabilitation services to indigent alcoholics. Mr. Fleming has organized workshops on home security and street safety for women and is a founding board member of the Mount Pleasant Village, a mutual support organization for seniors.

## Scope and Contents

Robert Fleming discusses moving to Mount Pleasant, his struggle with alcohol, his involvement in the Mount Pleasant ANC, his memories of the Mount Pleasant riot, gentrification, public intoxication, the improvements in community policing in the neighborhood after the riot, and inter-community relations in Mount Pleasant.

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Suann Hecht interview, 2017-11-17

## Biographical / Historical

Suann Hecht is a social worker and community activist who has worked with at-risk youth in Washington, DC for 22 years. Known affectionately as Mama Suann during her time at the Latin American Youth Center's Drop-in Center, Ms Hecht has since devoted her efforts to working with juveniles in detention centers and as wards of the city. She retired in 2017 and spends her time between Columbia Heights and Latin America.

## Scope and Contents

Suann Hecht discusses moving from New York City to a group house in Mount Pleasant in 1972, her memories of the neighborhood, her involvement with the Latin America Youth Center, the city's handling of the Mount Pleasant riot, the demographics of the neighborhood, and the aftermath of the riot.

## Sub-Series 2: Transcripts

Title/Description	Instances
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Alice Kelly transcript, 2018-02-02

## Biographical / Historical

Alice Kelly has lived on Lamont Street in Mt. Pleasant since 1983. She has been actively involved in the neighborhood since, serving as chair of the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) as well as working with Historic Mt. Pleasant, Mt. Pleasant Main Street, the Mt. Pleasant Business Association, and the DC Latino Civil Rights Task Force. Ms Kelly has headed the policy office of the District Department of Transportation for the past 14 years.

## Scope and Contents

Alice Kelly discusses her initial move to Mount Pleasant, her original impressions of the neighborhood, the improvements at the local elementary school, community efforts to improve the main street, her involvement with the ANC, and the Mount Pleasant riot.

Arturo Griffiths transcript, 2018-02-09

### **Biographical / Historical**

Arturo Griffiths is a longtime resident of Mt. Pleasant and community activist. Born in Panama, he attended DC public schools from grade school through high school and studied at Howard University. He is a co-founder of the Latin American Youth Center and has worked in a variety of capacities organizing in the past several decades. Currently he runs Trabajadores Unidos, an organization which supports day laborers in the Washington, DC region.

### **Scope and Contents**

Arturo Griffiths discusses his childhood in Panama, his family's move to DC, learning English, attending Howard University, his political awakening, DC's latino community, Mayor Barry's relationship with the latino community, the ways in which the 1991 riot affected latinos in Mount Pleasant, and the effects of gentrification in the neighborhood.

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Charlene Howard transcript, 2018-01-25

### **Biographical / Historical**

Charlene Howard is a longtime Mt. Pleasant resident who lives in the same house that she grew up in on Hobart St NW. Her household is one of the few remaining multi-generational African American families in the neighborhood. She fondly recalls her formative childhood and adolescent years in Mt. Pleasant and reflects upon their importance in shaping her personal values and understanding of the importance of community and diversity. Charlene returned to Hobart St to raise her children and remains actively engaged in local affairs.

### **Scope and Contents**

Charlene Howard discusses her childhood in Adams Morgan, the political activism of Mount Pleasant residents in the 1970s, drug use in Washington DC, police-community language barriers, her memories of the Mount Pleasant riot, and gentrification of the neighborhood.

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Elinor Hart transcript, 2018-01-25

### **Biographical / Historical**

Elinor Hart has been a homeowner on Hobart St. in Mt. Pleasant since 1974. During this time she has worked closely with the Mt. Pleasant Main Street Association and Historic Mt. Pleasant. Ms Hart has a strong interest in affordable housing and currently coordinates a school partnership for the Washington Lawyers Committee for

Civil Rights and Urban Affairs in addition to promoting statehood for Washington, DC.

## **Scope and Contents**

Elinor Hart discusses moving to Mount Pleasant in 1974, changing demographics of the neighborhood, the controversy of the neighborhood's Historic District designation, her memories of the 1991 riot, police-community relations, and gentrification.

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José "Chico" Diaz transcript, 2018-02-02

## **Biographical / Historical**

José (Chico) Diaz has been affiliated with the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) for over two decades as a participant in its youth programs and later as an employee. As a child in El Salvador, Mr. Diaz battled polio while living in a zone of conflict between guerrilla and military forces. He arrived in Washington, DC, attended DC public schools, and has since made the District his home. Mr. Diaz is the Director of Information Technology at LAYC.

## **Scope and Contents**

José Diaz discusses moving to the US at age 15, his recovery from polio, Mount Pleasant in the 1980s, tensions between latino and african-american youth, the Mount Pleasant riot, and community-police relations.

---

José Sueiro transcript, 2018-02-08

## **Biographical / Historical**

José Sueiro has lived in Adams Morgan and has been intimately involved in the Washington, DC Latino community since the 1970s. He has worked with area youth as Executive Director of the Latin American Youth Center and as a soccer coach at local high schools. Mr. Sueiro is also the unofficial scribe of the Latino community, having edited several local newspapers (both in Spanish and in English) focused on DC's Latino community. He worked in city government under Mayor Anthony Williams and currently consults with Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association while running a blog on local Latino affairs, metrodiversity.com.

## **Scope and Contents**

José Sueiro discusses his studies at GW university, his move to Panama, his return to DC, his start in the newspaper industry and work at El Latino, DC police's lack of experience with latino youth, his memories of the



Mount Pleasant riot, and Mayor Barry's close relationship to the latino community in DC.

---

Mark Poletunow transcript, 2018-01-27

### **Biographical / Historical**

Mark Poletunow served the Latino community in DC for over two decades as a Capuchin friar. During this time, he worked at the Capilla Latina (now Our Lady Queen of the Americas Catholic parish), served as associate pastor at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, coordinated Hispanic Catholic catechism for the Archdiocese of Washington, and was the Executive Director of the Hispanic Catholic Center. Mr. Poletunow currently is president of the Malvern Retreat Center in Malvern, PA.

### **Scope and Contents**

Mark Poletunow discusses his arrival in DC, teaching English as a second language to Spanish-speaking people, identification with immigrant communities, his work at the Spanish Catholic Center, poor treatment of the latino community by DC police, his memories of the Mount Pleasant riot and their aftermath.

---

Pedro Avilés transcript, 2018-02-09

### **Biographical / Historical**

Pedro Avilés is a Salvadoran American and a longtime resident of Mt. Pleasant. He has worked closely with and has represented the Latino community in Washington, DC in a variety of positions, including serving as a founding member and the executive director of the DC Latino Civil Rights Task Force. Mr. Avilés is an organizational development specialist who has consulted for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, the World Bank, the government of El Salvador, and a variety of non-profit agencies.

### **Scope and Contents**

Pedro Avilés discusses moving to Adams Morgan in 1974, his memories of Mount Pleasant, his involvement with the Sacred Heart Church Theatre Group, racial identity, tensions between teachers at DC Public Schools and non-English-speaking students, his memories of the Mount Pleasant riot, his subsequent involvement with DC's Latino Task Force, and police-community relations in DC.

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Robert Fleming transcript, 2018-01-24

### **Biographical / Historical**

Robert Fleming is a longtime resident and homeowner in Mt. Pleasant. He moved into the neighborhood in

1975 and from the beginning was intimately involved in neighborhood affairs. He served three terms as an ANC commissioner during the 1980s and co-founded Neighbors Consejo, a local community organization that provided bilingual rehabilitation services to indigent alcoholics. Mr. Fleming has organized workshops on home security and street safety for women and is a founding board member of the Mount Pleasant Village, a mutual support organization for seniors.

## Scope and Contents

Robert Fleming discusses moving to Mount Pleasant, his struggle with alcohol, his involvement in the Mount Pleasant ANC, his memories of the Mount Pleasant riot, gentrification, public intoxication, the improvements in community policing in the neighborhood after the riot, and inter-community relations in Mount Pleasant.

---

Suann Hecht transcript, 2018-01-26

## Biographical / Historical

Suann Hecht is a social worker and community activist who has worked with at-risk youth in Washington, DC for 22 years. Known affectionately as Mama Suann during her time at the Latin American Youth Center's Drop-in Center, Ms Hecht has since devoted her efforts to working with juveniles in detention centers and as wards of the city. She retired in 2017 and spends her time between Columbia Heights and Latin America.

## Scope and Contents

Suann Hecht discusses moving from New York City to a group house in Mount Pleasant in 1972, her memories of the neighborhood, her involvement with the Latin America Youth Center, the city's handling of the Mount Pleasant riot, the demographics of the neighborhood, and the aftermath of the riot.

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## Series 3: Buzzard Point Oral History Project

### Biographical / Historical

Buzzard Point is an industrial area in Washington D.C. that is currently being redeveloped. It will be the site of the largest PEPCO substation in the city and the new D.C. United soccer stadium, as well as new high-rise condominiums and retail. These oral history interviews document family history in the neighborhood and experiences with pollution and gentrification.

## Scope and Contents

The Buzzard Point Oral History Collection contains 9 audio interviews of residents of the Buzzard Point, D.C. community. The interviews were conducted by Jesse Card in 2017. Transcripts are included for all interviews.

### Controlled Access Headings:

- Buzzard Point (Washington, D.C.)
- Community development, Urban
- Neighborhood associations
- Gentrification

## Sub-Series 1: Interviews

### Title/Description

### Instances

Linda Brown Interview, 2017-07-25

### Biographical / Historical

Linda is a native Washingtonian, growing up and spending much of her adult life in Northwest Washington, DC in/around Columbia Heights and attending McKinley Technical High School in Eckington, Northeast Washington, DC. She has lived in public housing in Southwest for 10 years, currently at Greenleaf Senior with her daughter, Chaya. Much of Linda's adult life has been defined by her role as a caretaker for Chaya and the struggles that has necessitated due to historical inadequacies in DC disability services. Linda is active in advocating for increased disability services, organizing opportunities and activities for youth through the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, and, more recently, in organizing for increased housing rights for disadvantaged and low-income families through Empower DC.

### Scope and Contents

Linda Brown discusses growing up in Washington, DC and moving to Southwest; the experience of raising her daughter, Chaya, a child with disabilities, and their relationship with the community; her role as an advocate for people with disabilities and her involvement with several organizations, such as TASH, University Legal Services, and Empower DC; public housing; and the redevelopment and historical value of the Southwest neighborhood.

Carolyn Mitchell Interview, 2017-08-07

### Biographical / Historical

Carolyn came to DC from Detroit, MI in 2004. She works for the American Society of Landscape Architects and spent much of her time since moving to DC helping to develop community-led visions for the future of development in Southwest. Like many Southwest

residents, she has become disenchanted with the process and promises of public participation programs, feeling that officials consistently ignore the plans she and other community members create, opting instead for development initiatives that hurt rather than help residents who currently live in the neighborhoods near the Buzzard Point industrial area.

## **Scope and Contents**

Carolyn Mitchell discusses moving to Washington, DC and her time spent living in Southwest; her work with the American Society of Landscape Architects; changes and issues within the Southwest neighborhood; her involvement in the community and experience working with local organizations; and gentrification and redevelopment throughout Southwest.

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Vanessa Ruffin-Colbert Interview, 2017-08-22

## **Biographical / Historical**

Vanessa is a native Washingtonian, living much of her life in Southwest in the very home in which she was born. She has always been very active in her community and has come to be a significant point of access for community members to public officials and offices to ensure public services are benefitting residents of Southwest DC. She has also been passionate about expanding access to and involvement in the arts.

## **Scope and Contents**

Vanessa Ruffin-Colbert discusses her early life in Washington, DC and experience living in Southwest; her involvement in the community and relationship with the children and families in the area; changes and issues related to the neighborhood and its residents; redevelopment and construction in Southwest; and her continued efforts and hopes to improve the community.

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Ryan Pierce Interview, 2017-08-28

## **Biographical / Historical**

Ryan is a young professional living in Southwest DC for three and a half years. He works for the National Park Service and volunteers on the History Task Force of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly. In this interview he discusses what makes DC a great place to live while addressing the many challenges associated with development, gentrification, and access to public resources.

## Scope and Contents

Ryan Pierce discusses moving to Washington, DC; his educational background and work related to historic preservation; the history and architecture of Southwest; his involvement with the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) and its History Task Force; redevelopment and gentrification in the area, as well as residents' input and responses to these changes; and his thoughts on the future of the neighborhood.

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Brian Hamilton Interview, 2017-09-06

## Biographical / Historical

Brian—along with his wife, Ruth—is a co-pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Southwest DC. He has lived and worked in the community for 21 years and is passionate about improving community relations and the social and economic conditions of Southwest residents. In this interview he provides a lot of historical analysis to explain how current social and economic conditions came to be, as well as how they might be improved. Brian also discusses the many initiatives Westminster Church has undertaken toward that goal.

## Scope and Contents

Brian Hamilton discusses moving to Washington, DC and living and raising a family in Southwest; his work with the Westminster Presbyterian Church; the history of the neighborhood and the church; the church's involvement in the Southwest community; urban renewal, gentrification, and changes and issues in the neighborhood; and his thoughts and hopes related to the future of the area.

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Bruce Kellogg Interview, 2017-09-19

## Biographical / Historical

Bruce is a retired 35-year resident of Southwest. He has traveled extensively in maritime service and with the Peace Corps and USAID. He married an Afghan during his travels, and his dual-nationality household has been a stable presence in the Carrollsborg neighborhood, with his wife and children also very active in local and international volunteer work.

## Scope and Contents

Bruce Kellogg discusses what brought him to Washington, DC and his time spent living in Southwest; his time spent working and traveling with international agencies and organizations such as the Peace Corps, USAID, and the United Seaman's Service; how he met his wife and the experience of raising their three children in DC; development plans for the neighborhood and residents'

reactions; some of his hobbies and volunteer efforts; and the rivers and waterfront areas in Southwest.

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David Ehrlich Interview, 2017-09-25

### **Biographical / Historical**

David is an 80-year-old resident of Southwest. He is retired, but performs chamber music locally and is, with his wife, very active in local events and the arts. In this interview he highlights some of the changes Southwest has seen over his 38 years living there as well as the many reasons he prefers living in DC to other urban and suburban areas.

### **Scope and Contents**

David Ehrlich discusses what brought him to Washington, DC and the Southwest neighborhood, in particular; his work history and experience as a pianist and chamber music performer; his thoughts on the changes, amenities, and construction and redevelopment in the area; and his and his wife Barbara's travels and involvement in the community.

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Thelma D. Jones Interview, 2017-09-26

### **Biographical / Historical**

Thelma is a passionate and life-long community advocate and retiree of the World Bank. She is a breast cancer survivor who has dedicated significant personal resources and time to helping others across the entire life cycle: from helping the youth of Southwest to become job ready through skills training and mentorship to starting the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund to help reduce incidence and mortality of cancer. In this interview she describes her incredible achievements through local organizations and through her career at the World Bank and discusses challenges associated with ongoing development in Southwest DC.

### **Scope and Contents**

Thelma D. Jones discusses moving to Washington, DC and her time spent living in Southwest; her work with the World Bank and its summer jobs training program for youth; the history of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) and her involvement with the organization and many of its task forces, especially the Youth Activities Task Force; the Southwest Neighborhood Small Area Plan; the creation and mission of the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund; and changes and developments in the Southwest neighborhood.

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Barbara Ehrlich Interview, 2017-09-28

## Biographical / Historical

Barbara is a 47-year resident of Southwest DC, coming to the area by way of Pennsylvania in a mid-life transition to public health work from teaching and working with the U.S. Army. She has been deeply involved in coordinating and planning large festivals along the Southwest waterfront and in establishing the Waterfront Village: a volunteer-driven organization dedicated to supporting senior members of the community in remaining in their homes as they age.

## Scope and Contents

Barbara Ehrlich discusses moving to Washington, DC and her time spent living in Southwest; her educational background and work experience, especially in Public Health; her involvement with local organizations and events such as the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly's Southwest Arts Festival Committee, the DC Arts Commission, the Washington Waterfront Association, and the National Cherry Blossom Festival; changes and developments in the neighborhood; and the concept of aging in place.

## Sub-Series 2: Transcripts

Title/Description	Instances
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Linda Brown Transcript, 2017-07-25

## Biographical / Historical

Linda is a native Washingtonian, growing up and spending much of her adult life in Northwest Washington, DC in/around Columbia Heights and attending McKinley Technical High School in Eckington, Northeast Washington, DC. She has lived in public housing in Southwest for 10 years, currently at Greenleaf Senior with her daughter, Chaya. Much of Linda's adult life has been defined by her role as a caretaker for Chaya and the struggles that has necessitated due to historical inadequacies in DC disability services. Linda is active in advocating for increased disability services, organizing opportunities and activities for youth through the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, and, more recently, in organizing for increased housing rights for disadvantaged and low-income families through Empower DC.

## Scope and Contents

Linda Brown discusses growing up in Washington, DC and moving to Southwest; the experience of raising her daughter, Chaya, a child with disabilities, and their relationship with the community; her role as an advocate

for people with disabilities and her involvement with several organizations, such as TASH, University Legal Services, and Empower DC; public housing; and the redevelopment and historical value of the Southwest neighborhood.

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Carolyn Mitchell Transcript, 2017-08-07

### **Biographical / Historical**

Carolyn came to DC from Detroit, MI in 2004. She works for the American Society of Landscape Architects and spent much of her time since moving to DC helping to develop community-led visions for the future of development in Southwest. Like many Southwest residents, she has become disenchanted with the process and promises of public participation programs, feeling that officials consistently ignore the plans she and other community members create, opting instead for development initiatives that hurt rather than help residents who currently live in the neighborhoods near the Buzzard Point industrial area.

### **Scope and Contents**

Carolyn Mitchell discusses moving to Washington, DC and her time spent living in Southwest; her work with the American Society of Landscape Architects; changes and issues within the Southwest neighborhood; her involvement in the community and experience working with local organizations; and gentrification and redevelopment throughout Southwest.

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Vanessa Ruffin-Colbert Transcript, 2017-08-22

### **Biographical / Historical**

Vanessa is a native Washingtonian, living much of her life in Southwest in the very home in which she was born. She has always been very active in her community and has come to be a significant point of access for community members to public officials and offices to ensure public services are benefitting residents of Southwest DC. She has also been passionate about expanding access to and involvement in the arts.

### **Scope and Contents**

Vanessa Ruffin-Colbert discusses her early life in Washington, DC and experience living in Southwest; her involvement in the community and relationship with the children and families in the area; changes and issues related to the neighborhood and its residents; redevelopment and construction in Southwest; and her continued efforts and hopes to improve the community.



Ryan Pierce Transcript, 2017-08-28

### **Biographical / Historical**

Ryan is a young professional living in Southwest DC for three and a half years. He works for the National Park Service and volunteers on the History Task Force of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly. In this interview he discusses what makes DC a great place to live while addressing the many challenges associated with development, gentrification, and access to public resources.

### **Scope and Contents**

Ryan Pierce discusses moving to Washington, DC; his educational background and work related to historic preservation; the history and architecture of Southwest; his involvement with the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) and its History Task Force; redevelopment and gentrification in the area, as well as residents' input and responses to these changes; and his thoughts on the future of the neighborhood.

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Brian Hamilton Transcript, 2017-09-06

### **Biographical / Historical**

Brian—along with his wife, Ruth—is a co-pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Southwest DC. He has lived and worked in the community for 21 years and is passionate about improving community relations and the social and economic conditions of Southwest residents. In this interview he provides a lot of historical analysis to explain how current social and economic conditions came to be, as well as how they might be improved. Brian also discusses the many initiatives Westminster Church has undertaken toward that goal.

### **Scope and Contents**

Brian Hamilton discusses moving to Washington, DC and living and raising a family in Southwest; his work with the Westminster Presbyterian Church; the history of the neighborhood and the church; the church's involvement in the Southwest community; urban renewal, gentrification, and changes and issues in the neighborhood; and his thoughts and hopes related to the future of the area.

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Bruce Kellogg Transcript, 2017-09-19

### **Biographical / Historical**

Bruce is a retired 35-year resident of Southwest. He has traveled extensively in maritime service and with the Peace Corps and USAID. He married an Afghan during his travels, and his dual-nationality household has been

a stable presence in the Carrollsbury neighborhood, with his wife and children also very active in local and international volunteer work.

## **Scope and Contents**

Bruce Kellogg discusses what brought him to Washington, DC and his time spent living in Southwest; his time spent working and traveling with international agencies and organizations such as the Peace Corps, USAID, and the United Seaman's Service; how he met his wife and the experience of raising their three children in DC; development plans for the neighborhood and residents' reactions; some of his hobbies and volunteer efforts; and the rivers and waterfront areas in Southwest.

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David Ehrlich Transcript, 2017-09-25

## **Biographical / Historical**

David is an 80-year-old resident of Southwest. He is retired, but performs chamber music locally and is, with his wife, very active in local events and the arts. In this interview he highlights some of the changes Southwest has seen over his 38 years living there as well as the many reasons he prefers living in DC to other urban and suburban areas.

## **Scope and Contents**

David Ehrlich discusses what brought him to Washington, DC and the Southwest neighborhood, in particular; his work history and experience as a pianist and chamber music performer; his thoughts on the changes, amenities, and construction and redevelopment in the area; and his and his wife Barbara's travels and involvement in the community.

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Thelma D. Jones Transcript, 2017-09-26

## **Biographical / Historical**

Thelma is a passionate and life-long community advocate and retiree of the World Bank. She is a breast cancer survivor who has dedicated significant personal resources and time to helping others across the entire life cycle: from helping the youth of Southwest to become job ready through skills training and mentorship to starting the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund to help reduce incidence and mortality of cancer. In this interview she describes her incredible achievements through local organizations and through her career at the World Bank and discusses challenges associated with ongoing development in Southwest DC.

## Scope and Contents

Thelma D. Jones discusses moving to Washington, DC and her time spent living in Southwest; her work with the World Bank and its summer jobs training program for youth; the history of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) and her involvement with the organization and many of its task forces, especially the Youth Activities Task Force; the Southwest Neighborhood Small Area Plan; the creation and mission of the Thelma D. Jones Breast Cancer Fund; and changes and developments in the Southwest neighborhood.

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Barbara Ehrlich Transcript, 2017-09-28

## Biographical / Historical

Barbara is a 47-year resident of Southwest DC, coming to the area by way of Pennsylvania in a mid-life transition to public health work from teaching and working with the U.S. Army. She has been deeply involved in coordinating and planning large festivals along the Southwest waterfront and in establishing the Waterfront Village: a volunteer-driven organization dedicated to supporting senior members of the community in remaining in their homes as they age.

## Scope and Contents

Barbara Ehrlich discusses moving to Washington, DC and her time spent living in Southwest; her educational background and work experience, especially in Public Health; her involvement with local organizations and events such as the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly's Southwest Arts Festival Committee, the DC Arts Commission, the Washington Waterfront Association, and the National Cherry Blossom Festival; changes and developments in the neighborhood; and the concept of aging in place.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 4: ARTS DC: CETA and the Arts in the District of Columbia 1977 – 1982

### Biographical / Historical

ARTS DC was a CETA arts program that employed over 300 theater artists, musicians, painters, dancers, poets, and other artists and arts workers in over 100 District of Columbia theaters, dance companies, galleries, music ensembles, and other arts organizations from 1977 to 1982. Artists who were employed in ARTS DC-funded jobs reflect on their ARTS DC experience, how the ARTS DC job affected their artistic careers and lives, and the impact of the program on the DC arts community. Oral history is an ideal tool to connect the stories of individual artists with the larger historical narrative of the DC arts community and of federal support of arts employment going back to the Work Projects Administration of the 1930s, and to document how the District's use of federal CETA funds for arts employment was different from that of other cities. This project was created as part of the D.C. Oral History

Collaborative, a citywide initiative to train community members in oral history skills, fund new and ongoing oral history projects, connect volunteers with oral history projects, and publicize existing oral history collections. The D.C. Oral History Collaborative is a project of D.C. Public Library, HumanitiesDC, and the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. Learn more about the DC Oral History Collaborative on the HumanitiesDC website.

## Scope and Contents

ARTS DC: CETA and the Arts in the District of Columbia 1977 – 1982 collection contains five audio interviews of ARTS DC artists. The interviews were conducted by Jonetta Rose Barras in 2017. Transcript and indexes are included for all interviews.

### Controlled Access Headings:

- Artists
- Arts
- Racism
- Poets

## Sub-Series 1: Interviews

### Title/Description

### Instances

Anne Becker interview, 2017-10-06

### Biographical / Historical

Born in Chicago, Illinois Anne Becker grew-up in the southern Maryland towns of Takoma Park and Silver Spring. She attended Beloit college to study anthropology. After a brief stint studying abroad in France she dropped out, finally finishing her education at Johns Hopkins. Her work and reading have made an impact on the DC poetry scene and beyond, as well as the work that she has done with some of the 20th centuries best loved poets as part of her work for the CETA funded program Watershed.

### Scope and Contents

Poet and CETA Arts DC participant, Anne Becker reflects on her life and work with some of the most celebrated poets of the later half of the 20th century, including work with June Jordan, Dennis Brutus, Shirley Kaufman and Nobel prize winners Joseph Brodsky and Czeslaw Milosz. She also speaks about her seventeen years at Watershed Foundation, the work site for Anne Becker's tenure as an Arts DC CETA participant, where she developed develop her own poetry, eventually becoming the poet laureate for Takoma Park, MD.

Lorenzo A. Calender II interview, 2017-11-02

### Biographical / Historical

Lorenzo A. Calender II was born and raised in Southeast Washington, D.C., where he graduated from Ballou High School. His life and work have revolved around storytelling, including significant contributions to D.C.

radio, youth empowerment, and preserving the art of storytelling.

## **Scope and Contents**

Storyteller Lorenzo A. Calender II speaks about how he came to fall in love with poetry and science fiction at an early age, his work with radio that led him to interview such notable figures as Nikki Giovanni and Stevie Wonder, his work with youth that exposed him to "the power of storytelling", as well as what led him to create the persona, master storyteller Baba-C. Lorenzo Calender was an early recipient of ARTS:DC CETA funding.

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Sheila Crider interview, 2017-11-02

## **Biographical / Historical**

Born in West Virginia, Sheila Crider moved to D.C. at 8 years old when her father got a job as a guard at the Department of Engraving. Sheila Crider grew up in a mixed income black community in Southeast Washington, D.C. A recipient of ARTS DC CETA funding, Sheila is an accomplished poet and visual artist.

## **Scope and Contents**

Sheila Crider reflects on her life in the arts. She speaks about growing up in Southeast Washington DC and falling in love with reading as a child. And reflects on how living in Washington, DC, and the black intellectual movements of the 1970s helped to share her literary works. Time abroad in the Peace Corps, switching from literary to visual arts while living in France, time as an apprentice in Japan, and jobs that she took early a supplementary income, such as 10 years posing as a model for artists at the Corcoran, are some of the other topics that she touches upon. Central to the narrative is her work as a founding member of "Free DC," and the ways that ARTS DC: CETA funding helped her to develop her career.

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George Koch interview part 1, 2017-09-29

## **Biographical / Historical**

George Koch was born and raised in a small town in Ohio, where he came of age in the 1950s. He was one of the first Americans to serve in the Peace Corps, and it's U.S. equivalent VISTA. He attended college at Bowling Green State University and worked in the federal government, where his position on his union's organizing committee led to him becoming active in the labor right and Anti-Vietnam War movement in the 1960s. Having a love for painting, in 1969, just as Washington, DC was reeling from riots that burned huge swaths of the city, George opened an art studio in Adams Morgan, and has

been a prominent member of the Washington, DC arts community ever since.

## Scope and Contents

George Koch reflects on growing up in a family of German immigrants in a small Ohio town. He speaks about the influence of his time in the Peace Corps, in the VISTA program, and his time on the organizing committee of a union for federal employees, and how these came to influence his politics and outlook on life. George talks about how he then solidified his prominent role in the Washington, DC arts community when he opened a studio in Adams Morgan, a year after the 1968 riot that had left much of the city burned.

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George Koch interview part 2, 2017-09-29

## Biographical / Historical

George Koch was born and raised in a small town in Ohio, where he came of age in the 1950s. He was one of the first Americans to serve in the Peace Corps, and it's U.S. equivalent VISTA. He attended college at Bowling Green State University and worked in the federal government, where his position on his union's organizing committee led to him becoming active in the labor right and Anti-Vietnam War movement in the 1960s. Having a love for painting, in 1969, just as Washington, DC was reeling from riots that burned huge swaths of the city, George opened an art studio in Adams Morgan, and has been a prominent member of the Washington, DC arts community ever since.

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Rogelio Maxwell interview, 2017-10-28

## Biographical / Historical

Rogelio Maxwell reflects on the different influences that he brings to his art, as well as his role in the development of Washington, DC's art scene in the 1970s and 80s and how he decided to turn his exhibits into multimedia art experiences. He speaks about learning the congas at a very young age and being quickly recognized for his artistic

talents while growing up in Brooklyn. His life is changed when one of his professors at the School for Visual Arts in Brooklyn encourages to drop out of school and let life influence his art. He then moved to Washington DC where he would eventually open Hardart studio and became a recipient of ARTS DC: CETA funding. Rogelio Maxwell continues to make innovative mixed medium art to this day.

## Scope and Contents

Rogelio Maxwell was born in Panama City, Panama. When he turned nine his mother brought him to Brooklyn, NY, where he was raised, went to school, and eventually attended the college at the School of Visual Arts (SVA). Convinced that he needed to experience life in order to be an artist, he dropped out of art school and made his way to Washington, DC where he would eventually set up a studio. With a background in both visual arts and music, he would eventually combine the two to become a pioneer in the multimedia art that fuses different mediums.

## Sub-Series 2: Transcripts

Title/Description	Instances
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Anne Becker transcript, 2017-10-06

## Biographical / Historical

Born in Chicago, Illinois Anne Becker grew-up in the southern Maryland towns of Takoma Park and Silver Spring. She attended Beloit college to study anthropology. After a brief stint studying abroad in France she dropped out, finally finishing her education at Johns Hopkins. Her work and reading have made an impact on the DC poetry scene and beyond, as well as the work that she has done with some of the 20th centuries best loved poets as part of her work for the CETA funded program Watershed.

## Scope and Contents

Poet and CETA Arts DC participant, Anne Becker reflects on her life and work with some of the most celebrated poets of the later half of the 20th century, including work with June Jordan, Dennis Brutus, Shirley Kaufman and Nobel prize winners Joseph Brodsky and Czeslaw Milosz. She also speaks about her seventeen years at Watershed Foundation, the work site for Anne Becker's tenure as an Arts DC CETA participant, where she developed develop her own poetry, eventually becoming the poet laureate for Takoma Park, MD.

Lorenzo A. Calender II transcript, 2017-11-02

## **Biographical / Historical**

Lorenzo A. Calender II was born and raised in Southeast Washington, D.C., where he graduated from Ballou High School. His life and work have revolved around storytelling, including significant contributions to D.C. radio, youth empowerment, and preserving the art of storytelling.

## **Scope and Contents**

Storyteller Lorenzo A. Calender II speaks about how he came to fall in love with poetry and science fiction at an early age, his work with radio that led him to interview such notable figures as Nikki Giovanni and Stevie Wonder, his work with youth that exposed him to "the power of storytelling", as well as what led him to create the persona, master storyteller Baba-C. Lorenzo Calender was an early recipient of ARTS:DC CETA funding.

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Sheila Crider transcript, 2017-11-02

## **Biographical / Historical**

Born in West Virginia, Sheila Crider moved to D.C. at 8 years old when her father got a job as a guard at the Department of Engraving. Sheila Crider grew up in a mixed income black community in Southeast Washington, D.C. A recipient of ARTS DC CETA funding, Sheila is an accomplished poet and visual artist.

## **Scope and Contents**

Sheila Crider reflects on her life in the arts. She speaks about growing up in Southeast Washington DC and falling in love with reading as a child. And reflects on how living in Washington, DC, and the black intellectual movements of the 1970s helped to share her literary works. Time abroad in the Peace Corps, switching from literary to visual arts while living in France, time as an apprentice in Japan, and jobs that she took early a supplementary income, such as 10 years posing as an model for artists at the Corcoran, are some of the other topics that she touches upon. Central to the narrative is her work as a founding member of "Free DC," and the ways that ARTS DC: CETA funding helped her to develop her career.

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George Koch transcript, 2017-09-29

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committee led to him becoming active in the labor right and Anti-Vietnam War movement in the 1960s. Having a love for painting, in 1969, just as Washington, DC was reeling from riots that burned huge swaths of the city, George opened an art studio in Adams Morgan, and has been a prominent member of the Washington, DC arts community ever since.

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George Koch reflects on growing up in a family of German immigrants in a small Ohio town. He speaks about the influence of his time in the Peace Corps, in the VISTA program, and his time on the organizing committee of a union for federal employees, and how these came to influence his politics and outlook on life. George talks about how he then solidified his prominent role in the Washington, DC arts community when he opened a studio in Adams Morgan, a year after the 1968 riot that had left much of the city burned.

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Rogelio Maxwell transcript, 2017-10-28

## Biographical / Historical

Rogelio Maxwell reflects on the different influences that he brings to his art, as well as his role in the development of Washington, DC's art scene in the 1970s and 80s and how he decided to turn his exhibits into multimedia art experiences. He speaks about learning the congas at a very young age and being quickly recognized for his artistic talents while growing up in Brooklyn. His life is changed when one of his professors at the School for Visual Arts in Brooklyn encourages to drop out of school and let life influence his art. He then moved to Washington DC where he would eventually open Hardart studio and became a recipient of ARTS DC: CETA funding. Rogelio Maxwell continues to make innovative mixed medium art to this day.

## Scope and Contents

Rogelio Maxwell was born in Panama City, Panama. When he turned nine his mother brought him to Brooklyn, NY, where he was raised, went to school, and eventually attended the college at the School of Visual Arts (SVA). Convinced that he needed to experience life in order to be an artist, he dropped out of art school and made his way to Washington, DC where he would eventually set up a studio. With a background in both visual arts and music, he would eventually combine the two to become a pioneer in the multimedia art that fuses different mediums.

## Sub-Series 2: Indexes

Title/Description	Instances
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Anne Becker index, 2017-10-06

### **Biographical / Historical**

Born in Chicago, Illinois Anne Becker grew-up in the southern Maryland towns of Takoma Park and Silver Spring. She attended Beloit college to study anthropology. After a brief stint studying abroad in France she dropped out, finally finishing her education at Johns Hopkins. Her work and reading have made an impact on the DC poetry scene and beyond, as well as the work that she has done with some of the 20th centuries best loved poets as part of her work for the CETA funded program Watershed.

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Lorenzo A. Calender II index, 2017-11-02

### **Biographical / Historical**

Lorenzo A. Calender II was born and raised in Southeast Washington, D.C., where he graduated from Ballou High School. His life and work have revolved around storytelling, including significant contributions to D.C. radio, youth empowerment, and preserving the art of storytelling.

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Sheila Crider index, 2017-11-02

### **Biographical / Historical**

Born in West Virginia, Sheila Crider moved to D.C. at 8 years old when her father got a job as a guard at the Department of Engraving. Sheila Crider grew up in a mixed income black community in Southeast Washington,

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Rogelio Maxwell index, 2017-10-28

## Biographical / Historical

Rogelio Maxwell reflects on the different influences that he brings to his art, as well as his role in the development of Washington, DC's art scene in the 1970s and 80s and

how he decided to turn his exhibits into multimedia art experiences. He speaks about learning the congas at a very young age and being quickly recognized for his artistic talents while growing up in Brooklyn. His life is changed when one of his professors at the School for Visual Arts in Brooklyn encourages to drop out of school and let life influence his art. He then moved to Washington DC where he would eventually open Hardart studio and became a recipient of ARTS DC: CETA funding. Rogelio Maxwell continues to make innovative mixed medium art to this day.

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## Series 9: D.C. Jazz Festival Oral History Project, 2017

### Biographical / Historical

This project captures the history and topical insights of community members who have contributed to jazz in Washington, D.C. The project interviewed musicians, historians, educators, media, and presenters.

### Scope and Contents

The D.C. Jazz Festival Oral History Project contains four audio interviews conducted by Rusty Hassan and Willard Jenkins in 2017. Indexes and transcripts are included for all interviews.

#### Controlled Access Headings:

- Festivals
- Music

## Sub-Series 1: Interviews, 2017

### Title/Description

### Instances

Brother Ah interview part 1, 2017-08-21

### Biographical / Historical

Robert 'Bob' Northern, known professionally as Brother Ah, is an American jazz French hornist. Born in North Carolina and raised in The Bronx, Northern studied at

the Manhattan School of Music and at the Vienna State Academy in the 1950s. He is perhaps best known as a session musician, working extensively in the 1950s and 1960s with musicians such as Donald Byrd, John Coltrane, Gil Evans, Sun Ra, McCoy Tyner, Roland Kirk, and the Jazz Composers Orchestra. He also worked with Don Cherry, Thelonious Monk, Freddie Hubbard, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Eric Dolphy, Charlie Haden, and John Lewis.

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## Scope and Contents

In this oral history Broth Ah speaks about his life in, and love for, Jazz music. He speaks about his family migrating north after his father had a confrontation with the Klu Klux Klan. As a young child growing up in Harlem and the Bronx in New York City, he learned the Bugle. He then enrolled in a prestigious performing arts school in New York, there he felt pressure from being one of just six black students. Military service in Korea interrupted his college education. In New York, he played in the most prestigious venues in the world, including Carnegie Hall, where he experienced racial discrimination, and legendary Jazz Clubs such as Birdland where he got to know Miles Davis and John Coltrane. He then moves to be a music professor at Dartmouth and Brown. The remainder of the oral history is dedicated to Brother Ah's time in Washington D.C. He speaks about encountering Washington, D.C. as "Chocolate City," and the thrill of playing at the Lincoln Theatre and Howard Theatre. The reader is informed that D.C. had the best ribs in America. He speaks about a lecture series on Jazz that he gave at the Smithsonian and, later, University of the District of Columbia. A wonderful story about how firefighters helped him to save his instruments. In recent years,

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Brother Ah interview part 2, 2017-08-21

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Charles Fishman interview part 1, 2017-09-01

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Charles Fishman, born in Brooklyn, New York, February 13, 1942, is Founder of the D.C. Jazz Festival. A Grammy Award-winning producer, he is also the founder and president of Charismatic Productions, a Washington, D.C.-based production, and consulting established in 1986. Recognized internationally among the foremost producers of Jazz concerts, festivals, and tours, Fishman has produced projects at such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Theatre, The National Mall, Place des Artes, Filene Center at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, other notable venues. He was the personal manager and producer of jazz legend Dizzy Gillespie until the Maestro's death. He has produced nine audio recordings and five television programs that have been aired on PBS, ABC, Bravo, the BBC and other international networks. Washingtonian Magazine (October 2008) listed Fishman as "one of the 50 men and women who have transformed Washington into one of the nation's liveliest centers for the performing arts."

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Finally, he speaks about moving to D.C. and continuing to spread Jazz in the nation's capital.

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Charles Fishman interview part 2, 2017-09-01

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Judith Korey interview part 1, 2017-09-08

### **Biographical / Historical**

Judith A. Korey, born and raised in Philadelphia, PA on October 8, 1947, is Professor of Music at the University of the District of Columbia, joined the faculty of the University's predecessor institution, Federal City College in 1972. She currently serves as the Music Program Coordinator in the Division of Arts and Humanities, College of Arts and Sciences and previously acted as chairperson for the Department of Visual and Performing Arts. She is a graduate of Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, and the Catholic University of America,

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In addition to her administrative and teaching assignments, Professor Korey is curator of the University's acclaimed jazz research and resource center, the Felix E. Grant Jazz Archives. She has represented the Archives on panels and presentations at conferences, forums and festivals. In 2016, the Felix E. Grant Jazz Archives was chosen by the Howard University Jazz Ensemble to receive the prestigious "Benny Golson Jazz Master Award."

Professor Korey also coordinates the Music Program and JAZZAlive events calendars. Produced by the Jazz Studies program and the Felix E. Grant Jazz Archives, the JAZZAlive events series presents a diversity of jazz related events year-round culminating with the Calvin Jones BIG BAND Jazz Festival, an annual event that has been overwhelmingly supported by area audiences since 1987. She has worked collaboratively with UDC-TV to produce programming from the JAZZAlive events that are broadcast regularly on the station.

In 2008 Prof. Korey was awarded the University of the District of Columbia's Dr. Cleveland Dennard Service Award, which is presented to an individual who has demonstrated a long-term commitment of outstanding service to the University. In 2015 she received the Accomplishment in Leadership Award from the College of Arts and Sciences, and in 2016 the University presented her with the Pathmaker Leadership Award. Professor Korey was also honored with the 24th Annual Mayor's Arts Award for Excellence in Service to the Arts-2009, and the Jazz Journalist Associations Jazz Hero Award in 2017.

## Scope and Contents

Judith Korey, she speaks about growing up in a musical family and building an interest in Jazz through a teenage love of the Blues. Seeing Buddy Guy play at her college was a milestone in the development of her musical interests. She went on to study for a doctorate at Catholic University, during which time she started teaching music theory at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). At UDC she would eventually design the music program. She talks about was launching a Big Band Festival in 1987 that has run for 32 years and counting, and about starting WD.C.U, the University of the District of Columbia's radio station. Throughout the oral history the reader gets a strong sense of Judith's passion for sharing jazz with the D.C. community and beyond.

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Judith Korey interview part 4, 2017-09-08

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## Rusty Hassan interview, 2017-07-21

### Biographical / Historical

Rusty Hassan, born in Bound Brook, NJ November 26, 1945, and raised in Greenwich, CT, has been the producer and host for weekly jazz radio programs for the past fifty years, starting as a student at Georgetown University on WGTB. Since then he has hosted shows on WAMU, WD.C.U and WPFW. He currently hosts Thursday Night Jazz on WPFW 89.3FM. Among the prominent jazz artists he has interviewed include Dexter Gordon, Art Blakey, Mary Lou Williams, Ramsey Lewis, Jimmy Heath, and numerous others.

He was a union representative with the American Federation of Government Employees for thirty-four years. He has taught jazz history courses at American University, Georgetown University, University of Maryland University College and the Smithsonian Institution. He currently teaches at the University of the District of Columbia. The D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities recognized him with a special award for his contribution to the community with his years of broadcasting in Washington, D.C.

### Scope and Contents

Rusty Hassan talks about falling in love with Jazz music as a teenager, especially the music of John Coltrane and how the music gave him an education about race in America. He then speaks about moving to Washington, D.C. to attend Georgetown University where he continues his interest in Jazz, eventually getting involved in labor and community organizing while attending D.C.'s legendary jazz clubs including Blues Alley and the Cellar Door. He continues to stay involved in the jazz world by DJing for WAMU and WPFW, while he

develops his career in labor. Finally, he speaks about how he continues to cultivate more enthusiasm for jazz through teaching courses on jazz at universities around D.C.

## Sub-Series 2: Indexes, 2017

Brother Ah index, 2017

### Biographical / Historical

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Charles Fishman index, 2017

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Judith Korey index, 2017



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Rusty Hassan index, 2017

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## **Sub-Series 3: transcripts, 2017**

Title/Description	Instances
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Brother Ah transcript, 2017

## **Biographical / Historical**

Robert 'Bob' Northern, known professionally as Brother Ah, is an American jazz French hornist. Born in North Carolina and raised in The Bronx, Northern studied at the Manhattan School of Music and at the Vienna State Academy in the 1950s. He is perhaps best known as a session musician, working extensively in the 1950s and 1960s with musicians such as Donald Byrd, John Coltrane, Gil Evans, Sun Ra, McCoy Tyner, Roland Kirk, and the Jazz Composers Orchestra. He also worked with Don Cherry, Thelonious Monk, Freddie Hubbard, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Eric Dolphy, Charlie Haden, and John Lewis.

He lived in New York City from 1963 to 1971, and after a period of increasing interest in non-Western music, visited and studied in Africa (Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania) during seven consecutive summers (1972 -1977). In the 1970s he released several albums as a bandleader; his 1974 release *Sound Awareness* featured Max Roach and M'Boom. These albums were reissued on CD on the Ikef Records label in the 2000s. In addition to horn playing, Northern also branched into percussion and flute performance later in his career. He taught at Dartmouth College from 1970 to 1973, Brown University from 1973 to 1982 and then at the Levine School of Music in Washington, D.C. from 1982. Northern is also the founder of the World Music Ensemble, a group which explores African, Japanese, Spanish, East Indian, Native American and American musical traditions and the founder of The Sounds of Awareness Ensemble which explores the sounds of nature and music. Northern, as Brother Ah, hosts a weekly jazz oriented radio program, *The Jazz Collectors*, on station WPFW in Washington.

## **Scope and Contents**

In this oral history Broth Ah speaks about his life in, and love for, Jazz music. He speaks about his family migrating north after his father had a confrontation with the Klu Klux Klan. As a young child growing up in Harlem and the Bronx in New York City, he learned the Bugle. He then enrolled in a prestigious performing arts school in New York, there he felt pressure from being one of just six black students. Military service in Korea interrupted his college education. In New York, he played in the most prestigious venues in the world, including Carnegie Hall, where he experienced racial discrimination, and legendary Jazz Clubs such as Birdland where he got to know Miles Davis and John Coltrane. He then moves to be a music professor at Dartmouth and Brown. The remainder of the oral history is dedicated to Brother Ah's time in Washington D.C. He speaks about encountering Washington, D.C. as "Chocolate City," and the thrill of

playing at the Lincoln Theatre and Howard Theatre. The reader is informed that D.C. had the best ribs in America. He speaks about a lecture series on Jazz that he gave at the Smithsonian and, later, University of the District of Columbia. A wonderful story about how firefighters helped him to save his instruments. In recent years, Brother Ah has run a popular Jazz focused radio show on WPFW.

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Charles Fishman transcript, 2017

### **Biographical / Historical**

Charles Fishman, born in Brooklyn, New York, February 13, 1942, is Founder of the D.C. Jazz Festival. A Grammy Award-winning producer, he is also the founder and president of Charismatic Productions, a Washington, D.C.-based production, and consulting established in 1986. Recognized internationally among the foremost producers of Jazz concerts, festivals, and tours, Fishman has produced projects at such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Theatre, The National Mall, Place des Artes, Filene Center at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, other notable venues. He was the personal manager and producer of jazz legend Dizzy Gillespie until the Maestro's death. He has produced nine audio recordings and five television programs that have been aired on PBS, ABC, Bravo, the BBC and other international networks. Washingtonian Magazine (October 2008) listed Fishman as "one of the 50 men and women who have transformed Washington into one of the nation's liveliest centers for the performing arts."

### **Scope and Contents**

In this oral history, Charles Fishman discusses how he developed a love for Jazz music. Though his parents did not allow him to study music in college, it is not long before he makes Jazz into his life's work. An early milestone in his career was opening an Jazz club in Israel. He speaks about how he worked with Jazz legends, including producing a world tour with Dizzy Gillespie. Finally, he speaks about moving to D.C. and continuing to spread Jazz in the nation's capital.

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Judith Korey transcript, 2017

### **Biographical / Historical**

Judith A. Korey, born and raised in Philadelphia, PA on October 8, 1947, is Professor of Music at the University of the District of Columbia, joined the faculty of the University's predecessor institution, Federal City College in 1972. She currently serves as the Music Program Coordinator in the Division of Arts and Humanities,

College of Arts and Sciences and previously acted as chairperson for the Department of Visual and Performing Arts. She is a graduate of Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, and the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. where she received a Master of Arts degree in Musicology with a Major in Music Theory.

In addition to her administrative and teaching assignments, Professor Korey is curator of the University's acclaimed jazz research and resource center, the Felix E. Grant Jazz Archives. She has represented the Archives on panels and presentations at conferences, forums and festivals. In 2016, the Felix E. Grant Jazz Archives was chosen by the Howard University Jazz Ensemble to receive the prestigious "Benny Golson Jazz Master Award."

Professor Korey also coordinates the Music Program and JAZZAlive events calendars. Produced by the Jazz Studies program and the Felix E. Grant Jazz Archives, the JAZZAlive events series presents a diversity of jazz related events year-round culminating with the Calvin Jones BIG BAND Jazz Festival, an annual event that has been overwhelmingly supported by area audiences since 1987. She has worked collaboratively with UDC-TV to produce programming from the JAZZAlive events that are broadcast regularly on the station.

In 2008 Prof. Korey was awarded the University of the District of Columbia's Dr. Cleveland Dennard Service Award, which is presented to an individual who has demonstrated a long-term commitment of outstanding service to the University. In 2015 she received the Accomplishment in Leadership Award from the College of Arts and Sciences, and in 2016 the University presented her with the Pathmaker Leadership Award. Professor Korey was also honored with the 24th Annual Mayor's Arts Award for Excellence in Service to the Arts-2009, and the Jazz Journalist Associations Jazz Hero Award in 2017.

## Scope and Contents

Judith Korey, she speaks about growing up in a musical family and building an interest in Jazz through a teenage love of the Blues. Seeing Buddy Guy play at her college was a milestone in the development of her musical interests. She went on to study for a doctorate at Catholic University, during which time she started teaching music theory at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). At UDC she would eventually design the music program. She talks about was launching a Big Band Festival in 1987 that has run for 32 years and counting, and about starting WD.C.U, the University of the District of Columbia's radio station. Throughout the oral history

the reader gets a strong sense of Judith's passion for sharing jazz with the D.C. community and beyond.

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Rusty Hassan transcript, 2017

### **Biographical / Historical**

Rusty Hassan, born in Bound Brook, NJ November 26, 1945, and raised in Greenwich, CT, has been the producer and host for weekly jazz radio programs for the past fifty years, starting as a student at Georgetown University on WGTB. Since then he has hosted shows on WAMU, WD.C.U and WPFW. He currently hosts Thursday Night Jazz on WPFW 89.3FM. Among the prominent jazz artists he has interviewed include Dexter Gordon, Art Blakey, Mary Lou Williams, Ramsey Lewis, Jimmy Heath, and numerous others.

He was a union representative with the American Federation of Government Employees for thirty-four years. He has taught jazz history courses at American University, Georgetown University, University of Maryland University College and the Smithsonian Institution. He currently teaches at the University of the District of Columbia. The D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities recognized him with a special award for his contribution to the community with his years of broadcasting in Washington, D.C.

### **Scope and Contents**

Rusty Hassan talks about falling in love with Jazz music as a teenager, especially the music of John Coltrane and how the music gave him an education about race in America. He then speaks about moving to Washington, D.C. to attend Georgetown University where he continues his interest in Jazz, eventually getting involved in labor and community organizing while attending D.C.'s legendary jazz clubs including Blues Alley and the Cellar Door. He continues to stay involved in the jazz world by DJing for WAMU and WPFW, while he develops his career in labor. Finally, he speaks about how he continues to cultivate more enthusiasm for jazz through teaching courses on jazz at universities around D.C.

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## **Series 10: Oral History of DanceAfrica, D.C., 2018**

### **Biographical / Historical**

DanceAfrica is a celebration of dance forms of the African Diaspora and is held annually in Washington, D.C., New York, New York, and Chicago, Illinois. The festival includes performance, films, master classes, educational

programming, and a bazaar. This oral history project features six interviews with members of the DanceAfrica, D.C. elders' council.

## Scope and Contents

The Oral History of DanceAfrica, D.C. contains six audio interviews conducted by Sarah Greenbaum and Jonathan Hsu in 2018. Indexes and transcripts are included for all interviews.

### Controlled Access Headings:

- Dance
- Festivals

## Sub-Series 1: Interviews, 2018

### Title/Description

### Instances

Sylvia Soumah interview, 2018-05-18

### Biographical / Historical

Sylvia Soumah is the founder and Artistic Director of Coyaba Dance Theater. She has studied, performed, and taught throughout the D.C. Metro area and abroad. She has studied in Conakry, Guinea with Les Ballets Africains, and Senegal under the director of Bouly Sonko, Artistic Director of the National Ballet of Senegal. She also performs with Erika Thimey Dance Theater and Carla & Company. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, she moved to Washington, D.C. in 1985.

### Scope and Contents

In this oral history Sylvia Soumah reflects on her young life growing up in a Cincinnati, Ohio housing project, falling in love with dance, and building her career in dance in Washington, D.C. In Cincinnati she attended a performing arts high school, upon graduation she worked at a German restaurant, until, at age 20, she left for Washington D.C. While waitressing in Adams Morgan, she began dancing, initially dancing mostly modern and jazz. She talks about discovering African styles of dance initially because the classes were a friendly place for her to bring her child, then instantly becoming hooked and shifting her focus. She first performed at DanceAfrica in 1992. Her love for African dance inspires her to travel to Guinea. She speaks about how she never expected her career to take off, at first her dances focused on issues that were very personal to her. She eventually started a youth academy. She reflects on how the festival has changed a lot, and how the Brookland neighborhood, in which her studio is embedded, has changed.

Melvin Deal interview, 2018-05-14

## **Biographical / Historical**

Melvin Deal has been an integral part of the Washington, D.C. African dance community for over five decades. He is a Washington, D.C. native that started dancing in 1959. He graduated from Howard University in 1965. His contributions include having trained countless at-risk youth in dance, residencies at all the major Washington, D.C. area universities, helping to found the Duke Ellington School for the Arts, and work with the DanceAfrica festival.

## **Scope and Contents**

"Melvin Deal reflects on his work performing, choreographing, managing, and promoting African dance, which he has been involved in for over half a century. He speaks about how when he started dancing it was generally understood that you had to do ballet, if you wanted to be successful. But he was drawn to African dance and decided to follow that desire. At the time, decolonization was happening in Africa. Part of his work was fighting stereotypes about Africa. He reflects that at the time they were being romantic about being Africans. His interests brought him to take his first trip to Africa in 1969. Many of his former students were at-risk youths that credit him with having changed the direction of their lives. Through his African Heritage dancers, he won legitimacy for African culture in the community and the larger city. He speaks about educating a Washington Post writer about Africa dance and how the resulting articles led to a large uptick in attendance at African dance events. He expresses concern about young people's sense of personhood, "I feel like I am someone now", is the feeling he wants young people to feel."

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Baile McKnight interview, 2018-05-17

## **Biographical / Historical**

Baile McKnight is a drummer who drums in African traditions. He has been active in African dance and drumming circles in Washington, D.C., and beyond, for over five decades. He grew-up in Washington, D.C., often traveling to spend time with family in North Carolina.

## **Scope and Contents**

In this interview Baile McKnight reflects on his life and the important role that African drumming has played in it. He talks about how having close connections to family in North Carolina, while growing up in Washington, D.C., and made Baile aware of cultural differences. Travel and the importance of culture plays a major role in his narrative. Another major point of emphasis is his visit to Africa. He feels that his visits to Nigeria played a major



role in helping him to understand African drumming. The history of slavery and the slave trade is another important contributing factor to the cultures of dance and drumming that he believes is important for people to be aware of. McKnight speaks about changes to Washington, D.C. including his observations about displacement in the city. Training and mastery are key elements for drummers that he speaks about. He feels that artists free people's minds and helps to heal their trauma.

Makini Niliwambieni interview, 2018-05-21

### **Biographical / Historical**

Makini Niliwambieni a.k.a. Mama Makin grew up in Trenton, NJ, where she began to study and perform African styles of dance as part of a revival in interests in African cultures that grew alongside the civil rights movement. In 1989 she moved to Washington, D.C., where she continues to choreograph, teach, and perform African styles of dance.

### **Scope and Contents**

Makini Niliwambieni a.k.a. Mama Makini reflects on her life and what brought her to dedicate decades to performing, choreographing, and teaching African styles of dance. She talks about growing-up in Trenton, NJ, where she was exposed to "Black Arts" coming out of the Civil Rights Movement. She first started attending African Dance classes as part of the African People's Action School, which was closely related to the socialist All African People Revolutionary Party founded by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. She speaks about her children and how they enjoyed dance to various degrees. She says her youngest daughter could remember dance moves better than her. She also speaks about her first impressions of Washington, D.C. and how she liked the slower pace of D.C. compared to the New York / Trenton Area. Mama Makini talks about why she likes to choreograph and work with young people. She also discusses how she got into religion, particularly sanatoria, and why she thinks it is important for African-Americans to get a sense of identity from Africa.

Akua Kouyate-Tate interview, 2018-08-13

### **Biographical / Historical**

Akua Kouyate-Tate is Vice President of Education at Wolf Trap Center for the performing Arts. She grew-up in Washington, D.C. and attended D.C. Public Schools. She then attended Boston University, and earned a BA from American University. She has been involved in promoting, performing, and teaching African styles of dance in Washington, D.C. for decades.

## Scope and Contents

Akua Kouyate speaks about and reflects on the important role that dance has played in her life and the importance of DanceAfrica and other programs that connect African-Americans to traditional and contemporary styles of African dance. She speaks about growing up and going to Washington, D.C. public schools. She discovered AfricanDance at a community organization in Southeast Washington, D.C. She developed her interest in dance while a student at Boston University, and continued to study dance after transferring to American University. She speaks about transitioning to making the arts and dance into a career. She had to learn business management skills, as well as how to be a teacher. She has taught at universities around Washington D.C. Throughout her oral history it is clear that dance has been an integral part of her life. She tries to focus on both traditional and contemporary style of dance because "Culture is not static." Experience traveling in travel and how it shaped her. Believes that African traditions are traditions that African Americans are also born into. For this reason, her family practiced Islam and African and African- American traditions. The youth summer employment program as key to her work as a dance teacher.

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Assane Konte interview, 2018-08-09

## Biographical / Historical

Assane Konte is the artistic director, choreographer and costume designer and founding member of the KanKouran West African Dance Company. He has toured the world with African Dance groups and taught at Georgetown, Howard University, George Washington, American University, and George Mason University. His professional dance career started in when he joined Ballet Africaine de Diebel Guee in Dakar at age 15. He later moved from Senegal to the United States where he founded KanKouran and continues to perform.

## Scope and Contents

Assane Konte speaks about the importance that dance has played in his life, growing up in Senegal, and his first impressions of the United States. His life in dance led him to start visiting the United States for dance festivals, which eventually led him to decide to relocate to the U.S. He highlights the importance of hard work and discipline in dancing as well as and how these virtues contribute to other aspects of life. He believes that his upbringing in Senegal helped to teach him these virtues. He has participated in the DanceAfrica festival since its founding in 1987. He speaks about his love for the festival and how

it plays an important role in nurturing cultures related to African dance in the U.S.

## Sub-Series 2: Indexes, 2018

Title/Description	Instances
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Sylvia Soumah interview index, 2018

### Biographical / Historical

Sylvia Soumah is the founder and Artistic Director of Coyaba Dance Theater. She has studied, performed, and taught throughout the D.C. Metro area and abroad. She has studied in Conakry, Guinea with Les Ballets Africains, and Senegal under the director of Bouly Sonko, Artistic Director of the National Ballet of Senegal. She also performs with Erika Thimey Dance Theater and Carla & Company. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, she moved to Washington, D.C. in 1985.

### Scope and Contents

In this oral history Sylvia Soumah reflects on her young life growing up in a Cincinnati, Ohio housing project, falling in love with dance, and building her career in dance in Washington, D.C. In Cincinnati she attended a performing arts high school, upon graduation she worked at a German restaurant, until, at age 20, she left for Washington D.C. While waitressing in Adams Morgan, she began dancing, initially dancing mostly modern and jazz. She talks about discovering African styles of dance initially because the classes were a friendly place for her to bring her child, then instantly becoming hooked and shifting her focus. She first performed at DanceAfrica in 1992. Her love for African dance inspires her to travel to Guinea. She speaks about how she never expected her career to take off, at first her dances focused on issues that were very personal to her. She eventually started a youth academy. She reflects on how the festival has changed a lot, and how the Brookland neighborhood, in which her studio is embedded, has changed.

Melvin Deal interview index, 2018

### Biographical / Historical

Melvin Deal has been an integral part of the Washington, D.C. African dance community for over five decades. He is a Washington, D.C. native that started dancing in 1959. He graduated from Howard University in 1965. His contributions include having trained countless at-risk youth in dance, residencies at all the major Washington, D.C. area universities, helping to found the Duke Ellington School for the Arts, and work with the DanceAfrica festival.

## Scope and Contents

"Melvin Deal reflects on his work performing, choreographing, managing, and promoting African dance, which he has been involved in for over half a century. He speaks about how when he started dancing it was generally understood that you had to do ballet, if you wanted to be successful. But he was drawn to African dance and decided to follow that desire. At the time, decolonization was happening in Africa. Part of his work was fighting stereotypes about Africa. He reflects that at the time they were being romantic about being Africans. His interests brought him to take his first trip to Africa in 1969. Many of his former students were at-risk youths that credit him with having changed the direction of their lives. Through his African Heritage dancers, he won legitimacy for African culture in the community and the larger city. He speaks about educating a Washington Post writer about Africa dance and how the resulting articles led to a large uptick in attendance at African dance events. He expresses concern about young people's sense of personhood, "I feel like I am someone now", is the feeling he wants young people to feel."

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Baile McKnight interview index, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Baile McKnight is a drummer who drums in African traditions. He has been active in African dance and drumming circles in Washington, D.C., and beyond, for over five decades. He grew-up in Washington, D.C., often traveling to spend time with family in North Carolina.

## Scope and Contents

In this interview Baile McKnight reflects on his life and the important role that African drumming has played in it. He talks about how having close connections to family in North Carolina, while growing up in Washington, D.C., and made Baile aware of cultural differences. Travel and the importance of culture plays a major role in his narrative. Another major point of emphasis is his visit to Africa. He feels that his visits to Nigeria played a major role in helping him to understand African drumming. The history of slavery and the slave trade is another important contributing factor to the cultures of dance and drumming that he believes is important for people to be aware of. McKnight speaks about changes to Washington, D.C. including his observations about displacement in the city. Training and mastery are key elements for drummers that he speaks about. He feels that artists free people's minds and helps to heal their trauma.

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Makini Niliwambieni interview index, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Makini Niliwambieni a.k.a. Mama Makin grew up in Trenton, NJ, where she began to study and perform African styles of dance as part of a revival in interests in African cultures that grew alongside the civil rights movement. In 1989 she moved to Washington, D.C., where she continues to choreograph, teach, and perform African styles of dance.

## Scope and Contents

Makini Niliwambieni a.k.a. Mama Makini reflects on her life and what brought her to dedicate decades to performing, choreographing, and teaching African styles of dance. She talks about growing-up in Trenton, NJ, where she was exposed to "Black Arts" coming out of the Civil Rights Movement. She first started attending African Dance classes as part of the African People's Action School, which was closely related to the socialist All African People Revolutionary Party founded by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. She speaks about her children and how they enjoyed dance to various degrees. She says her youngest daughter could remember dance moves better than her. She also speaks about her first impressions of Washington, D.C. and how she liked the slower pace of D.C. compared to the New York / Trenton Area. Mama Makini talks about why she likes to choreograph and work with young people. She also discusses how she got into religion, particularly sanatoria, and why she thinks it is important for African-Americans to get a sense of identity from Africa.

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Akua Kouyate-Tate interview index, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Akua Kouyate-Tate is Vice President of Education at Wolf Trap Center for the performing Arts. She grew-up in Washington, D.C. and attended D.C. Public Schools. She then attended Boston University, and earned a BA from American University. She has been involved in promoting, performing, and teaching African styles of dance in Washington, D.C. for decades.

## Scope and Contents

Akua Kouyate speaks about and reflects on the important role that dance has played in her life and the importance of DanceAfrica and other programs that connect African-Americans to traditional and contemporary styles of African dance. She speaks about growing up and going to Washington, D.C. public schools. She discovered AfricanDance at a community organization in Southeast Washington, D.C. She developed her interest in dance while a student at Boston University, and continued to

study dance after transferring to American University. She speaks about transitioning to making the arts and dance into a career. She had to learn business management skills, as well as how to be a teacher. She has taught at universities around Washington D.C. Throughout her oral history it is clear that dance has been an integral part of her life. She tries to focus on both traditional and contemporary style of dance because "Culture is not static." Experience traveling in travel and how it shaped her. Believes that African traditions are traditions that African Americans are also born into. For this reason, her family practiced Islam and African and African- American traditions. The youth summer employment program as key to her work as a dance teacher.

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Assane Konte interview index, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

Assane Konte is the artistic director, choreographer and costume designer and founding member of the KanKouran West African Dance Company. He has toured the world with African Dance groups and taught at Georgetown, Howard University, George Washington, American University, and George Mason University. His professional dance career started in when he joined Ballet Africaine de Diebel Guee in Dakar at age 15. He later moved from Senegal to the United States where he founded KanKouran and continues to perform.

### **Scope and Contents**

Assane Konte speaks about the importance that dance has played in his life, growing up in Senegal, and his first impressions of the United States. His life in dance led him to start visiting the United States for dance festivals, which eventually led him to decide to relocate to the U.S. He highlights the importance of hard work and discipline in dancing as well as and how these virtues contribute to other aspects of life. He believes that his upbringing in Senegal helped to teach him these virtues. He has participated in the DanceAfrica festival since its founding in 1987. He speaks about his love for the festival and how it plays an important role in nurturing cultures related to African dance in the U.S.

## **Sub-Series 3: transcripts, 2018**

Title/Description	Instances
Sylvia Soumah interview transcript, 2018	

### **Biographical / Historical**

Sylvia Soumah is the founder and Artistic Director of Coyaba Dance Theater. She has studied, performed, and taught throughout the D.C. Metro area and abroad. She

has studied in Conakry, Guinea with Les Ballets Africains, and Senegal under the director of Bouly Sonko, Artistic Director of the National Ballet of Senegal. She also performs with Erika Thimey Dance Theater and Carla & Company. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, she moved to Washington, D.C. in 1985.

## Scope and Contents

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Melvin Deal interview transcript, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

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## Scope and Contents

"Melvin Deal reflects on his work performing, choreographing, managing, and promoting African dance, which he has been involved in for over half a century. He speaks about how when he started dancing it was generally understood that you had to do ballet, if you wanted to be successful. But he was drawn to African dance and decided to follow that desire. At the time, decolonization was happening in Africa. Part of his work was fighting stereotypes about Africa. He reflects that at the time they were being romantic about being Africans. His interests brought him to take his first trip to Africa in 1969. Many of his former students were at-risk youths that

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Baile McKnight interview transcript, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

Baile McKnight is a drummer who drums in African traditions. He has been active in African dance and drumming circles in Washington, D.C., and beyond, for over five decades. He grew-up in Washington, D.C., often traveling to spend time with family in North Carolina.

### **Scope and Contents**

In this interview Baile McKnight reflects on his life and the important role that African drumming has played in it. He talks about how having close connections to family in North Carolina, while growing up in Washington, D.C., and made Baile aware of cultural differences. Travel and the importance of culture plays a major role in his narrative. Another major point of emphasis is his visit to Africa. He feels that his visits to Nigeria played a major role in helping him to understand African drumming. The history of slavery and the slave trade is another important contributing factor to the cultures of dance and drumming that he believes is important for people to be aware of. McKnight speaks about changes to Washington, D.C. including his observations about displacement in the city. Training and mastery are key elements for drummers that he speaks about. He feels that artists free people's minds and helps to heal their trauma.

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Makini Niliwambieni interview transcript, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

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### **Scope and Contents**

Makini Niliwambieni a.k.a. Mama Makini reflects on her life and what brought her to dedicate decades to performing, choreographing, and teaching African styles



of dance. She talks about growing-up in Trenton, NJ, where she was exposed to "Black Arts" coming out of the Civil Rights Movement. She first started attending African Dance classes as part of the African People's Action School, which was closely related to the socialist All African People Revolutionary Party founded by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. She speaks about her children and how they enjoyed dance to various degrees. She says her youngest daughter could remember dance moves better than her. She also speaks about her first impressions of Washington, D.C. and how she liked the slower pace of D.C. compared to the New York / Trenton Area. Mama Makini talks about why she likes to choreograph and work with young people. She also discusses how she got into religion, particularly sanatoria, and why she thinks it is important for African-Americans to get a sense of identity from Africa.

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Akua Kouyate-Tate interview transcript, 2018

## **Biographical / Historical**

Akua Kouyate-Tate is Vice President of Education at Wolf Trap Center for the performing Arts. She grew-up in Washington, D.C. and attended D.C. Public Schools. She then attended Boston University, and earned a BA from American University. She has been involved in promoting, performing, and teaching African styles of dance in Washington, D.C. for decades.

## **Scope and Contents**

Akua Kouyate speaks about and reflects on the important role that dance has played in her life and the importance of DanceAfrica and other programs that connect African-Americans to traditional and contemporary styles of African dance. She speaks about growing up and going to Washington, D.C. public schools. She discovered AfricanDance at a community organization in Southeast Washington, D.C. She developed her interest in dance while a student at Boston University, and continued to study dance after transferring to American University. She speaks about transitioning to making the arts and dance into a career. She had to learn business management skills, as well as how to be a teacher. She has taught at universities around Washington D.C. Throughout her oral history it is clear that dance has been an integral part of her life. She tries to focus on both traditional and contemporary style of dance because "Culture is not static." Experience traveling in travel and how it shaped her. Believes that African traditions are traditions that African Americans are also born into. For this reason, her family practiced Islam and African and African- American traditions. The youth summer employment program as key to her work as a dance teacher.

Assane Konte interview transcript, 2018

## **Biographical / Historical**

Assane Konte is the artistic director, choreographer and costume designer and founding member of the KanKouran West African Dance Company. He has toured the world with African Dance groups and taught at Georgetown, Howard University, George Washington, American University, and George Mason University. His professional dance career started in when he joined Ballet Africaine de Diebel Guee in Dakar at age 15. He later moved from Senegal to the United States where he founded KanKouran and continues to perform.

## **Scope and Contents**

Assane Konte speaks about the importance that dance has played in his life, growing up in Senegal, and his first impressions of the United States. His life in dance led him to start visiting the United States for dance festivals, which eventually led him to decide to relocate to the U.S. He highlights the importance of hard work and discipline in dancing as well as and how these virtues contribute to other aspects of life. He believes that his upbringing in Senegal helped to teach him these virtues. He has participated in the DanceAfrica festival since its founding in 1987. He speaks about his love for the festival and how it plays an important role in nurturing cultures related to African dance in the U.S.

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## **Series 12: The Brookland Literary And Hunting Club (BLAHC): It's Not What You Think!, 2018**

### **Biographical / Historical**

This project documents the experiences of the five final members (and one spouse) of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club (BLAHC), an invitation-only poker and social club founded in the Brookland neighborhood of Washington, DC, in 1942 by nine accomplished Black men — doctors, lawyers, scientists, university presidents — many with Howard University affiliations. Successive generations of BLAHC members gathered monthly for over 75 years to discuss important topics of the day (the 'literary') and to play poker (the 'hunt').

### **Scope and Contents**

The Brookland Literary and Hunting Club (BLAHC): It's Not What You Think! Oral history project contains six video interviews conducted by Eve K. Austin and Kenneth Campbell in 2018. Indexes and transcripts are included for all interviews.

#### Controlled Access Headings:

- Societies and clubs
- Brookland (Washington, D.C.)

- Poker

## Sub-Series 1: Interviews, 2018

Title/Description	Instances
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James Butts interview, 2018-04-20

### Biographical / Historical

Jim Butts was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1934. His parents were hard working and active in the community and church. He lived through extreme racism, segregation, and discrimination. After attending Talladega College while Bull Connor ruled Alabama, he saw no opportunities to advance as a Black man in Alabama or Kentucky, so he joined the military and was stationed in Germany for 20 months. Then he moved to D.C. to attend Howard University and earn a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. He had a long career in Federal and District government in high-level administrative positions. He has been an activist, leader, and community organizer throughout his life and worked with many civil rights organizations including Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Foundation, Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Model Cities. He believes that youth activism and grassroots community organizing is only way to address the continuing injustices in our society and he is optimistic about current youth movements. He had a long tenure with the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club (BLAHC) and took over many of the duties of Chairman. BLAHC has been a very important organization for accomplished professional Black men to come together to share support, information, and resources, and, of course, to socialize, and play cards. The organization is now losing membership due to aging. Its future is uncertain.

### Scope and Contents

James Butts' oral history focuses on his commitment to public service. He speaks about how proud he is of working on the ground as a social worker and having been appointed by three District Mayors to run a government department. His career developed in tandem with social movements and has been motivated by a concern for justice and the lives of society's most vulnerable. He reflects on how attending university in Alabama during segregation and Bull Connor helped to inform his world view. He moved to Washington, D.C. to earn his Master of Social Work (MSW) at Howard University. After beginning a career in service, his work led him to work with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Later he would play a role in founding the Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Foundation. Butts highlights the 'literary' aspect of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. He speaks about the ways that the club has been

used as a way to discuss social and political issues. He uses Michelle Alexander's *New Jim Crow*, which focuses on mass incarceration, as an example of issues that they would speak about. As members aged, the club became a place for members to discuss health related issues.

Jock Banks interview, 2018-06-19

### **Biographical / Historical**

Jock Banks was born on August 11, 1953. He grew up in D.C., went to public schools, and then American University, Law School. He worked as U.S. Attorney in Attorney General's Office. Mr. Banks is married with two grown children.

### **Scope and Contents**

Jock Banks reflects on growing up in Washington, D.C. The son of a doctor and a teacher, he considers himself to have had a comfortable middle-class upbringing in a house that valued hard work. A lawyer who attended Washington, D.C. public schools then American University, he has seen the city go through many changes. He reflects on demographic shifts, both white flight and the return of white people which made D.C. less of a 'chocolate city'. His parents were both poker players, and his father had been a member of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. Poker has been part of his life since an early age. Born in 1953, he is one of the younger members of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club, which he refers to as 'old man poker'. In the interviews he discusses the history and current demise of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club Poker Group.

Thomas Taylor interview part 1, 2018-05-16

### **Biographical / Historical**

Called by some colleague the 'godfather of daycare' in the Washington, D.C. area, Thomas Taylor was a social worker, who committed his career to developing programs for children and youth. He was particularly dedicated to improving services for early childhood development. Mr. Taylor was born in New Haven, Connecticut in 1926, then moved to Washington, D.C. at age 16 when he enrolled in high school. He has lived in Washington, D.C., area for over 70 years.

### **Scope and Contents**

This interview delves into Thomas Taylor's family history; experiences growing up during segregation; educational experiences; Army service; marriages; family life; and long career as a pioneer in the early childhood education programs of D.C. and the country. Mr. Taylor talks about the founding of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club

poker group and it's members past and present; as well as reflections on health and aging.

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Thomas Taylor interview part 2, 2018-05-16

### **Biographical / Historical**

Called by some colleague the 'godfather of daycare' in the Washington, D.C. area, Thomas Taylor was a social worker, who committed his career to developing programs for children and youth. He was particularly dedicated to improving services for early childhood development. Mr. Taylor was born in New Haven, Connecticut in 1926, then moved to Washington, D.C. at age 16 when he enrolled in high school. He has lived in Washington, D.C., area for over 70 years.

### **Scope and Contents**

This interview delves into Thomas Taylor's family history; experiences growing up during segregation; educational experiences; Army service; marriages; family life; and long career as a pioneer in the early childhood education programs of D.C. and the country. Mr. Taylor talks about the founding of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club poker group and it's members past and present; as well as reflections on health and aging.

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Wilhelmina Banks interview, 2018-05-03

### **Biographical / Historical**

Wilhelmina Banks was born in Richmond, Virginia on June 9, 1928. She recalls growing up in a loving home with close relationships with her parents and aunt. She recalled no personal negative consequences of segregated life. Her parents protected her from strife and conflict, and she had a consistent group of friends around her. She went on to college at Howard University, where she met her future husband, Quentin Banks (now deceased, former member of BLAHC). They had 4 children including Jock Banks (current member of BLAHC). She pursued graduate education in speech and language pathology and was sent to Columbia University because there were no segregated colleges in the south for her to do so. She had a long career for Prince George's County School System as a Speech Language Pathologist. She recalled her experiences playing poker with her husband and other couples and spoke about his love for BLAHC. He loved the poker, but mostly loved the conversations about current events.

### **Scope and Contents**

In this oral history Wilhelmina Banks reflects on raising her family and her work as a speech therapist in the Prince George's County, Maryland schools, where she

worked for 52 years. She sees the literary and hunting club as being important as a place for the men to engage in intellectual exchanges just as much it is a place for them to play poker. A poker player herself, Wilhelmina sees the game as valuable for its social aspects. She speaks about her decision to go to Howard University, where dorm life is a key place for her to make friends. She then talks getting married a year after meeting her husband then spending the rest of her life with him. The oral history also contains her reflections on the benefits of speech therapy and laments budget cuts that have resulted in schools replacing human speech therapists with computers. She spoke about her family's beach house at Highland Beach, a historically Black beach town near Annapolis, MD which was frequented by Frederick Douglass.

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Walter K. Robinson interview, 2018-04-18

### **Biographical / Historical**

Walter K. Robinson, Sr. was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1920, the second son of Dr. John C. Robinson and Mrs. Clara Denning Robinson. In 1941, while attending Howard University in Washington, D.C., he volunteered for the Army Air Corps. He became one of the Tuskegee Airmen. After an injury, recuperation, and completion of training, WWII ended and his service and experiences have been well documented recently. His experiences as a Tuskegee Airman have shaped his life and he carries the work ethic and perseverance he learned there into his entire life. He married his high school sweetheart, Edmonia Bailey. In 1945 he received an honorable discharge and returned to Civilian life. He and his wife moved to D.C. in 1959. He worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 35 years. He rose through the ranks as Clerk, Station Manager, and the second Black Manager of Delivery and Collection for D.C. He and his wife had one son, Walter K. Robinson Jr. Mrs. Robinson died in 2000, after 59 years of marriage. Mr. Robinson still lives in D.C. and is a very active member of the East Coast Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. They won a Congressional Gold Medal as a group in March 2007. In the 1970s, he and his peers came to realize how important their legacy was and they formed the East Coast Chapter.

### **Scope and Contents**

Walter K. Robinson, Sr., talks about his life going up in Baltimore, Maryland; time in the Tuskegee Airman; marrying his high school sweetheart; and his career in the post office in Washington, D.C. During the dialogue he reflects on segregation and desegregation. For decades, the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club has been a place that he goes for relaxation and companionship.

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Frank Sanders interview, 2018-05-10

## Biographical / Historical

Frank Sander is a commissioner for the D.C. Real Property Tax Appeals Commission. A long-time resident of Washington, D.C., Sanders was born and raised in Chicago. He briefly worked as a teacher before going to business school and building a career in real estate. A proud father of two, now grown, children, he continues to live in Washington, D.C. with his wife of over 30 years.

## Scope and Contents

In the interview Frank Sanders talks about his love for poker and how sometimes he can play for 15 hours in one day. This, and his commitment to understanding the history of the African American community in Washington D.C., lead him to join the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. Sanders reflects on growing up in Chicago, Illinois, a city he found to be segregated in a manner so harsh that it was impossible to enter certain neighborhoods, and how he found Washington, D.C. to be a more cosmopolitan place to live. After receiving a degree in teaching, he spent a few years teaching third grade before going back to school to learn finance and business. He began a career in real estate, where he remained until business began to dry-up in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis at which point he joined the D.C. Real Property Tax Appeals Commission. Poker, and the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club, continue to be a source of relaxation and community for him.

## Sub-Series 2: Indexes, 2018

Title/Description	Instances
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James Butts interview index, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Jim Butts was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1934. His parents were hard working and active in the community and church. He lived through extreme racism, segregation, and discrimination. After attending Talladega College while Bull Connor ruled Alabama, he saw no opportunities to advance as a Black man in Alabama or Kentucky, so he joined the military and was stationed in Germany for 20 months. Then he moved to D.C. to attend Howard University and earn a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. He had a long career in Federal and District government in high-level administrative positions. He has been an activist, leader, and community organizer throughout his life and worked with many civil rights organizations including Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Foundation, Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Model Cities. He believes that youth activism and grassroots community organizing

is only way to address the continuing injustices in our society and he is optimistic about current youth movements. He had a long tenure with the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club (BLAHC) and took over many of the duties of Chairman. BLAHC has been a very important organization for accomplished professional Black men to come together to share support, information, and resources, and, of course, to socialize, and play cards. The organization is now losing membership due to aging. Its future is uncertain.

## Scope and Contents

James Butts' oral history focuses on his commitment to public service. He speaks about how proud he is of working on the ground as a social worker and having been appointed by three District Mayors to run a government department. His career developed in tandem with social movements and has been motivated by a concern for justice and the lives of society's most vulnerable. He reflects on how attending university in Alabama during segregation and Bull Connor helped to inform his world view. He moved to Washington, D.C. to earn his Master of Social Work (MSW) at Howard University. After beginning a career in service, his work led him to work with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Later he would play a role in founding the Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Foundation. Butts highlights the 'literary' aspect of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. He speaks about the ways that the club has been used as a way to discuss social and political issues. He uses Michelle Alexander's *New Jim Crow*, which focuses on mass incarceration, as an example of issues that they would speak about. As members aged, the club became a place for members to discuss health related issues.

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Jock Banks interview index, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Jock Banks was born on August 11, 1953. He grew up in D.C., went to public schools, and then American University, Law School. He worked as U.S. Attorney in Attorney General's Office. Mr. Banks is married with two grown children.

## Scope and Contents

Jock Banks reflects on growing up in Washington, D.C. The son of a doctor and a teacher, he considers himself to have had a comfortable middle-class upbringing in a house that valued hard work. A lawyer who attended Washington, D.C. public schools then American University, he has seen the city go through many changes. He reflects on demographic shifts, both white flight and the return of white people which made D.C. less of a 'chocolate city'. His parents were both poker players, and



his father had been a member of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. Poker has been part of his life since an early age. Born in 1953, he is one of the younger members of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club, which he refers to as 'old man poker'. In the interviews he discusses the history and current demise of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club Poker Group.

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Thomas Taylor index, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

Called by some colleague the 'godfather of daycare' in the Washington, D.C. area, Thomas Taylor was a social worker, who committed his career to developing programs for children and youth. He was particularly dedicated to improving services for early childhood development. Mr. Taylor was born in New Haven, Connecticut in 1926, then moved to Washington, D.C. at age 16 when he enrolled in high school. He has lived in Washington, D.C., area for over 70 years.

### **Scope and Contents**

This interview delves into Thomas Taylor's family history; experiences growing up during segregation; educational experiences; Army service; marriages; family life; and long career as a pioneer in the early childhood education programs of D.C. and the country. Mr. Taylor talks about the founding of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club poker group and it's members past and present; as well as reflections on health and aging.

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Wilhelmina Banks interview index, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

Wilhelmina Banks was born in Richmond, Virginia on June 9, 1928. She recalls growing up in a loving home with close relationships with her parents and aunt. She recalled no personal negative consequences of segregated life. Her parents protected her from strife and conflict, and she had a consistent group of friends around her. She went on to college at Howard University, where she met her future husband, Quentin Banks (now deceased, former member of BLAHC). They had 4 children including Jock Banks (current member of BLAHC). She pursued graduate education in speech and language pathology and was sent to Columbia University because there were no segregated colleges in the south for her to do so. She had a long career for Prince George's County School System as a Speech Language Pathologist. She recalled her experiences playing poker with her husband and other couples and spoke about his love for BLAHC. He loved the poker, but mostly loved the conversations about current events.

## Scope and Contents

In this oral history Wilhelmina Banks reflects on raising her family and her work as a speech therapist in the Prince George's County, Maryland schools, where she worked for 52 years. She sees the literary and hunting club as being important as a place for the men to engage in intellectual exchanges just as much it is a place for them to play poker. A poker player herself, Wilhelmina sees the game as valuable for its social aspects. She speaks about her decision to go to Howard University, where dorm life is a key place for her to make friends. She then talks getting married a year after meeting her husband then spending the rest of her life with him. The oral history also contains her reflections on the benefits of speech therapy and laments budget cuts that have resulted in schools replacing human speech therapists with computers. She spoke about her family's beach house at Highland Beach, a historically Black beach town near Annapolis, MD which was frequented by Frederick Douglass.

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Walter K. Robinson interview index, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Walter K. Robinson, Sr. was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1920, the second son of Dr. John C. Robinson and Mrs. Clara Denning Robinson. In 1941, while attending Howard University in Washington, D.C., he volunteered for the Army Air Corps. He became one of the Tuskegee Airmen. After an injury, recuperation, and completion of training, WWII ended and his service and experiences have been well documented recently. His experiences as a Tuskegee Airman have shaped his life and he carries the work ethic and perseverance he learned there into his entire life. He married his high school sweetheart, Edmonia Bailey. In 1945 he received an honorable discharge and returned to Civilian life. He and his wife moved to D.C. in 1959. He worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 35 years. He rose through the ranks as Clerk, Station Manager, and the second Black Manager of Delivery and Collection for D.C. He and his wife had one son, Walter K. Robinson Jr. Mrs. Robinson died in 2000, after 59 years of marriage. Mr. Robinson still lives in D.C. and is a very active member of the East Coast Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. They won a Congressional Gold Medal as a group in March 2007. In the 1970s, he and his peers came to realize how important their legacy was and they formed the East Coast Chapter.

## Scope and Contents

Walter K. Robinson, Sr., talks about his life going up in Baltimore, Maryland; time in the Tuskegee Airman; marrying his high school sweetheart; and his career in the post office in Washington, D.C. During the dialogue he

reflects on segregation and desegregation. For decades, the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club has been a place that he goes for relaxation and companionship.

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Frank Sanders interview index, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

Frank Sander is a commissioner for the D.C. Real Property Tax Appeals Commission. A long-time resident of Washington, D.C., Sanders was born and raised in Chicago. He briefly worked as a teacher before going to business school and building a career in real estate. A proud father of two, now grown, children, he continues to live in Washington, D.C. with his wife of over 30 years.

### **Scope and Contents**

In the interview Frank Sanders talks about his love for poker and how sometimes he can play for 15 hours in one day. This, and his commitment to understanding the history of the African American community in Washington D.C., lead him to join the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. Sanders reflects on growing up in Chicago, Illinois, a city he found to be segregated in a manner so harsh that it was impossible to enter certain neighborhoods, and how he found Washington, D.C. to be a more cosmopolitan place to live. After receiving a degree in teaching, he spent a few years teaching third grade before going back to school to learn finance and business. He began a career in real estate, where he remained until business began to dry-up in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis at which point he joined the D.C. Real Property Tax Appeals Commission. Poker, and the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club, continue to be a source of relaxation and community for him.

## **Sub-Series 3: transcripts, 2018**

Title/Description	Instances
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James Butts interview transcript, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

Jim Butts was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1934. His parents were hard working and active in the community and church. He lived through extreme racism, segregation, and discrimination. After attending Talladega College while Bull Connor ruled Alabama, he saw no opportunities to advance as a Black man in Alabama or Kentucky, so he joined the military and was stationed in Germany for 20 months. Then he moved to D.C. to attend Howard University and earn a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. He had a long career in Federal and District government in high-level administrative positions. He has been an activist, leader, and community

organizer throughout his life and worked with many civil rights organizations including Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Foundation, Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Model Cities. He believes that youth activism and grassroots community organizing is only way to address the continuing injustices in our society and he is optimistic about current youth movements. He had a long tenure with the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club (BLAHC) and took over many of the duties of Chairman. BLAHC has been a very important organization for accomplished professional Black men to come together to share support, information, and resources, and, of course, to socialize, and play cards. The organization is now losing membership due to aging. Its future is uncertain.

## Scope and Contents

James Butts' oral history focuses on his commitment to public service. He speaks about how proud he is of working on the ground as a social worker and having been appointed by three District Mayors to run a government department. His career developed in tandem with social movements and has been motivated by a concern for justice and the lives of society's most vulnerable. He reflects on how attending university in Alabama during segregation and Bull Connor helped to inform his world view. He moved to Washington, D.C. to earn his Master of Social Work (MSW) at Howard University. After beginning a career in service, his work led him to work with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Later he would play a role in founding the Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Foundation. Butts highlights the 'literary' aspect of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. He speaks about the ways that the club has been used as a way to discuss social and political issues. He uses Michelle Alexander's *New Jim Crow*, which focuses on mass incarceration, as an example of issues that they would speak about. As members aged, the club became a place for members to discuss health related issues.

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Jock Banks interview transcript, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Jock Banks was born on August 11, 1953. He grew up in D.C., went to public schools, and then American University, Law School. He worked as U.S. Attorney in Attorney General's Office. Mr. Banks is married with two grown children.

## Scope and Contents

Jock Banks reflects on growing up in Washington, D.C. The son of a doctor and a teacher, he considers himself to have had a comfortable middle-class upbringing in a house that valued hard work. A lawyer who

attended Washington, D.C. public schools then American University, he has seen the city go through many changes. He reflects on demographic shifts, both white flight and the return of white people which made D.C. less of a 'chocolate city'. His parents were both poker players, and his father had been a member of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. Poker has been part of his life since an early age. Born in 1953, he is one of the younger members of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club, which he refers to as 'old man poker'. In the interviews he discusses the history and current demise of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club Poker Group.

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Thomas Taylor transcript, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

Called by some colleague the 'godfather of daycare' in the Washington, D.C. area, Thomas Taylor was a social worker, who committed his career to developing programs for children and youth. He was particularly dedicated to improving services for early childhood development. Mr. Taylor was born in New Haven, Connecticut in 1926, then moved to Washington, D.C. at age 16 when he enrolled in high school. He has lived in Washington, D.C., area for over 70 years.

### **Scope and Contents**

This interview delves into Thomas Taylor's family history; experiences growing up during segregation; educational experiences; Army service; marriages; family life; and long career as a pioneer in the early childhood education programs of D.C. and the country. Mr. Taylor talks about the founding of the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club poker group and it's members past and present; as well as reflections on health and aging.

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Wilhelmina Banks interview transcript, 2018

### **Biographical / Historical**

Wilhelmina Banks was born in Richmond, Virginia on June 9, 1928. She recalls growing up in a loving home with close relationships with her parents and aunt. She recalled no personal negative consequences of segregated life. Her parents protected her from strife and conflict, and she had a consistent group of friends around her. She went on to college at Howard University, where she met her future husband, Quentin Banks (now deceased, former member of BLAHC). They had 4 children including Jock Banks (current member of BLAHC). She pursued graduate education in speech and language pathology and was sent to Columbia University because there were no segregated colleges in the south for her to do so. She had a long career for Prince George's County School System as a Speech Language Pathologist. She recalled

her experiences playing poker with her husband and other couples and spoke about his love for BLAHC. He loved the poker, but mostly loved the conversations about current events.

## Scope and Contents

In this oral history Wilhelmina Banks reflects on raising her family and her work as a speech therapist in the Prince George's County, Maryland schools, where she worked for 52 years. She sees the literary and hunting club as being important as a place for the men to engage in intellectual exchanges just as much it is a place for them to play poker. A poker player herself, Wilhelmina sees the game as valuable for its social aspects. She speaks about her decision to go to Howard University, where dorm life is a key place for her to make friends. She then talks getting married a year after meeting her husband then spending the rest of her life with him. The oral history also contains her reflections on the benefits of speech therapy and laments budget cuts that have resulted in schools replacing human speech therapists with computers. She spoke about her family's beach house at Highland Beach, a historically Black beach town near Annapolis, MD which was frequented by Frederick Douglass.

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Walter K. Robinson interview transcript, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Walter K. Robinson, Sr. was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1920, the second son of Dr. John C. Robinson and Mrs. Clara Denning Robinson. In 1941, while attending Howard University in Washington, D.C., he volunteered for the Army Air Corps. He became one of the Tuskegee Airmen. After an injury, recuperation, and completion of training, WWII ended and his service and experiences have been well documented recently. His experiences as a Tuskegee Airman have shaped his life and he carries the work ethic and perseverance he learned there into his entire life. He married his high school sweetheart, Edmonia Bailey. In 1945 he received an honorable discharge and returned to Civilian life. He and his wife moved to D.C. in 1959. He worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 35 years. He rose through the ranks as Clerk, Station Manager, and the second Black Manager of Delivery and Collection for D.C. He and his wife had one son, Walter K. Robinson Jr. Mrs. Robinson died in 2000, after 59 years of marriage. Mr. Robinson still lives in D.C. and is a very active member of the East Coast Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen. They won a Congressional Gold Medal as a group in March 2007. In the 1970s, he and his peers came to realize how important their legacy was and they formed the East Coast Chapter.

## Scope and Contents

Walter K. Robinson, Sr., talks about his life going up in Baltimore, Maryland; time in the Tuskegee Airman; marrying his high school sweetheart; and his career in the post office in Washington, D.C. During the dialogue he reflects on segregation and desegregation. For decades, the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club has been a place that he goes for relaxation and companionship.

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Frank Sanders interview transcript, 2018

## Biographical / Historical

Frank Sander is a commissioner for the D.C. Real Property Tax Appeals Commission. A long-time resident of Washington, D.C., Sanders was born and raised in Chicago. He briefly worked as a teacher before going to business school and building a career in real estate. A proud father of two, now grown, children, he continues to live in Washington, D.C. with his wife of over 30 years.

## Scope and Contents

In the interview Frank Sanders talks about his love for poker and how sometimes he can play for 15 hours in one day. This, and his commitment to understanding the history of the African American community in Washington D.C., lead him to join the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club. Sanders reflects on growing up in Chicago, Illinois, a city he found to be segregated in a manner so harsh that it was impossible to enter certain neighborhoods, and how he found Washington, D.C. to be a more cosmopolitan place to live. After receiving a degree in teaching, he spent a few years teaching third grade before going back to school to learn finance and business. He began a career in real estate, where he remained until business began to dry-up in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis at which point he joined the D.C. Real Property Tax Appeals Commission. Poker, and the Brookland Literary and Hunting Club, continue to be a source of relaxation and community for him.

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