

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Reginald Webb

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Webb, Reginald, 1948-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reginald Webb,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 30, 2004
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2004
<b>Physical Description:</b>	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:06:20).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Restaurant owner and operator Reginald Webb (1948 - ) operates eleven McDonalds franchises in Southern California and has spearheaded minority initiatives in McDonalds corporate structure. In addition to his franchises, Webb is the chairman of the National Leadership Council for McDonald's owner/operators, an organization that encompasses 11,000 of the nation's 13,000 McDonald's restaurants. Webb was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 30, 2004, in Rosemont, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2004_153
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Businessman and McDonald's franchisee Reginald "Reggie" Webb was born in South Bend, Indiana, on March 25, 1948. Growing up, Webb went to the South to live with his great-grandparents for a year to help on their farm in 1958. In 1959, he moved with his grandmother to California, settling in South Central Los Angeles. While attending high school at Manual Arts, Webb was mentored by his minister, the Reverend T.M. Chambers, and by an elderly Jewish woman his grandmother worked for named Sally Smalley.

In 1966, Webb joined the U.S. Coast Guard, serving until 1969. In the Coast Guard, Webb was first stationed in Connecticut, and later served in California during the peace movement of the 1960s, as well as the assassination of Dr. King and the emergence of the Black Panthers. After his honorable discharge from the Coast Guard, Webb attended California State University in Los Angeles, where he studied political science. While attending school, he also became involved with the War on Poverty. In 1973, Webb joined the accelerated management development program of McDonald's, and after spending time training in the restaurants, he was moved into the corporate division. After holding numerous positions with the company, Webb decided to become a franchisee in 1985, largely due to his desire to stay in Southern California. He started with two franchises in Pomona, California, and today he operates eleven restaurants in Southern California.

In addition to his franchises, Webb is the chairman of the National Leadership Council for McDonald's owner/operators, an organization that encompasses 11,000 of the nation's 13,000 McDonald's restaurants. Additionally, he served as the chairman and CEO of the National Black McDonald's Operators Association from 1994 to 1997, where he was instrumental in helping more African Americans to become franchisees. In 2004, Webb was honored with the 365Black award from McDonald's.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Reginald Webb was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 30, 2004, in Rosemont, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Restaurant owner and operator Reginald Webb (1948 - ) operates eleven McDonalds franchises in Southern California and has spearheaded minority initiatives in McDonalds corporate structure. In addition to his franchises, Webb is the chairman of the National Leadership Council for McDonald's owner/operators, an organization that encompasses 11,000 of the nation's 13,000 McDonald's restaurants.

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## Restrictions

### Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

### Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

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## Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

Webb, Reginald, 1948-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Webb, Reginald, 1948---Interviews

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Restaurateurs--Interviews

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African American businesspeople--California--Los Angeles--Interviews

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African Americans--Genealogy

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African American families--Indiana

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South Bend (Ind.)--Social life and customs

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Racism--Alabama

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Fatherless families--Indiana--South Bend

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Los Angeles (Calif.)--Social life and customs

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United States. Army. Reserve Officers' Training Corps

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United States. Coast Guard--African Americans

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Civil rights movement

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Fast food Restaurants--California--Los Angeles

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Convenience foods--Nutrition

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Advertising--Food

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African Americans--Nutrition

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Minorities--Employment--United States

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Diversity in the workplace--United States

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## **Organizations:**

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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McDonald's Corporation.

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## **Occupations:**

Restaurant Owner and Operator

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## **HistoryMakers® Category:**

## Administrative Information

### Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

### Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Reginald Webb, August 30, 2004. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Reginald Webb, Section A2004\_153\_001\_001, TRT: 0:28:30 ?

Reggie Webb speaks of the family history on his mother's side. He remembers stories his grandmother told him about the simple rural life in Arkansas as well as racism that the family encountered there. He speaks in depth about his mother's childhood and how her family migrated to South Bend, Indiana where the family found work and quickly adapted to the environment. Webb knows less of his father's history and tells of how his parents were only married for a year before his father basically left his life. Webb remembers many positive memories of growing up in South Bend. South Bend was a safe and quiet place for Webb to grow up. Although he did not have to deal first hand with many Civil Rights issues there, he was aware of the problems African Americans were facing in other parts of the country.

Restaurateurs--Interviews.

African American businesspeople--California--Los Angeles--Interviews.

African Americans--Genealogy.

African American families--Indiana.

South Bend (Ind.)--Social life and customs.

Racism--Alabama.

Fatherless families--Indiana--South Bend.

Los Angeles (Calif.)--Social life and customs.

United States. Army. Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

United States. Coast Guard--African Americans.

Civil rights movements.

Fast food Restaurants--California--Los Angeles.

Convenience foods--Nutrition.

Advertising--Food.

African Americans--Nutrition.

Minorities--Employment--United States.

Diversity in the workplace--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Reginald Webb, Section A2004\_153\_001\_002, TRT: 0:28:50 ?

After third grade Reggie Webb started a string of relocations that sent him to Texas and Arkansas before he was able to settle down with his grandmother in Los Angeles, California. Although he found it to be an awful place at first, he made the best of his situation and integrated himself into life there. As was the case in South Bend, Indiana, the church was a major part of Webb's life. Webb tells a story of the flashy ministers who were seen around the neighborhood and looked at in the same way famous entertainers were. Webb also tells of his earliest jobs where he sold and delivered newspapers. m. Although school was not high on Webb's priority list, he did find satisfaction in the discipline that the ROTC offered. After high school graduation Webb joined and was happy with the fact that he would not have to go to Vietnam. Being one of the few blacks in the Coast Guard, Webb did experience some racially tense times but enjoyed the new places and experiences the Coast Guard brought to him.

Video Oral History Interview with Reginald Webb, Section A2004\_153\_001\_003, TRT: 0:29:10 ?

While in the United States Coast Guard in the late 1960s, Reggie Webb was active, if only on the fringe, of the Civil Rights Movement in California. Before leaving the Coast Guard Webb claimed he was the fastest Morse Code typist on the West Coast of the United States. Within a few days of leaving the Coast Guard Webb was working as a car salesman and attending college at California State University, Los Angeles. Then decided to move into a private industry. Webb was impressed with McDonald's Corporation's young and dynamic attitude as well as its high potential for growth. He was accepted into the accelerated management development program and officially began his long career with the corporation. In 1985, he decided to become a McDonald's franchisee and takes ownership of two locations in Pomona, California. Webb also speaks about the role that McDonald's plays in the black community and the African American franchise owners who are involved.

Video Oral History Interview with Reginald Webb, Section A2004\_153\_001\_004, TRT: 0:30:00 ?

Reggie Webb speaks about McDonald's restaurants that are located in high crime areas. He makes the point that even in neighborhoods in which riots have occurred, McDonald's are usually left unscathed, which he attributes to the local owners being in touch with the community and in providing jobs. He then discusses how African Americans have been portrayed in McDonald's advertisements throughout the years. McDonald's menu is discussed in both its healthy and unhealthy choices. Webb also talks about children's eating habits and the increased trend of less physical activities contributing to the nation's

obesity problem. Webb then speaks about being the Chairman for the National Leadership Council and the goals he hopes the organization will obtain in order to benefit all McDonald's franchisees and the corporation as a whole. Webb also mentions McDonald's Second Generation Program and discusses his children's potential involvement within the corporation as well as his own decision to stay with them for the future.

Video Oral History Interview with Reginald Webb, Section A2004\_153\_001\_005, TRT: 0:09:50 ?

Reggie Webb gives some insight into what McDonald's 365 Black program means to him. He also speaks about how McDonald's has been hiring and supporting African Americans since its early days. Then, Webb lists a few instances in which, if given the opportunity to go back, he'd do differently throughout his life. He speaks about his grandmother's role as a mentor and guiding light in his life. The interview concludes with Reggie Webb telling what he'd like his legacy to be as well as how he'd like to be remembered.