

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Anthony G. Wagner

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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>	Wagner, Anthony G., 1942-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Anthony G. Wagner,
<b>Dates:</b>	October 12, 2005
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2005
<b>Physical Description:</b>	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:41:02).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Chief executive officer Anthony G. Wagner (1942 - ) is the former CEO of the Hospital Systems of the San Francisco Department of Public Health, and serves as vice president of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc. Wagner was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on October 12, 2005, in Oakland, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2005_241
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Health care administrator Anthony Gerald Wagner was born on June 7, 1942, in Alton, Illinois, to Clementine Nolan and Albert Irvin Wagner. Wagner grew up in his neighborhood in Alton surrounded by his school teachers as neighbors. He began to learn to play the piano at the age of six and served as his church's organist for fifteen years until he left his hometown to pursue his education. Wagner attended Dunbar and Douglas Elementary Schools, Elijah P. Lovejoy Middle School, West Junior High School and Alton Senior High School, all segregated except for his senior high school. Wagner went on to earn his B.A. degree in zoology from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. In 1966, he was drafted and served as a chaplain assistant and organist for the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. Wagner conducted research on local lizards he found in Vietnam and sent his reports back to Southern Illinois University. Wagner returned from his term in the service and got married in January of 1971.

Wagner started his career as a pharmaceutical sales representative for the Upjohn Company. He then decided to continue his education and earned his masters degree in hospital and health care administration from the University of Minnesota. While pursuing his masters degree, Wagner moved to California for his residency at the University of California at San Francisco. He was hired by the Health Care Financing Administration and remained there for fifteen years. Wagner left the organization as deputy associate. He then became executive administrator of Laguna Honda Hospital in San Francisco from 1988 to 1998. From 1998 to 2001, Wagner served as chief executive Officer of Community Health Network of San Francisco. In 2001, Wagner became the chief executive officer of the Hospital Systems of the San Francisco Department of Public Health. He served as CEO for two years. In 2005, Wagner became the vice president of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc.

Wagner is a member of the Board of Directors of the Longs Drugs Stores Corporation and serves as vice president for the Institute on Aging. In 2003, the City of San Francisco declared Anthony Wagner Day.

Wagner is married and has two sons. He lives in San Francisco and is an avid hiker.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Anthony G. Wagner was conducted by Loretta Henry on October 12, 2005, in Oakland, California, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Chief executive officer Anthony G. Wagner (1942 - ) is the former CEO of the Hospital Systems of the San Francisco Department of Public Health, and serves as vice president of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc.

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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:

Wagner, Anthony G., 1942-

Henry, Loretta (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Wagner, Anthony G., 1942- --Interviews

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Health services administrators--California--San Francisco--Interviews

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African American executives--California--San Francisco--Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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Kaiser Foundation Health Plan

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## Occupations:

Chief Executive Officer

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MedicalMakers

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## Administrative Information

### Custodial History

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

### Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Anthony G. Wagner, October 12, 2005. 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 Anthony G. Wagner, Section A2005\_241\_001\_001, TRT: 0:28:40 ?

Anthony G. Wagner was born on June 7, 1942 in Alton, Illinois to Clementine Nolan and Albert Irving Wagner. His mother was born in Tamo, Arkansas in 1921 and migrated north to Alton in 1926. She worked in the homes of wealthy families in Fairmount, Illinois and eventually left domestic work for teaching. She was hired as a psychiatric aide in the Alton Mental Health Facility State Hospital where she worked until her retirement. Wagner describes his maternal family, and spending time with his maternal great-grandparents, Doc and Emily Nolan. Wagner's father was born in Glencoe, Missouri. Wagner paternal grandfather once owned a large amount of land in Missouri. Wagner's father migrated to Alton as an adult and was drafted into World War II in 1942. Wagner's parents divorced in 1952; but his father remarried. Wagner talks about his attempts to develop a relationship with his father and half-siblings as an adult as well as his father's funeral.

Health services administrators--California--San Francisco--Interviews.

African American executives--California--San Francisco--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Anthony G. Wagner, Section A2005\_241\_001\_002, TRT: 0:30:10 ?

Anthony G. Wagner spent the first three years of his life living with his mother at his maternal grandparents' home in Alton, Illinois, while his father was fighting in World War II. After his father returned home in 1945, his parents bought a house on Bell Street in Alton, where Wagner was raised. Many of his teachers and his middle school principal lived on the same block. He describes visiting his father's extended family, and the sights, sounds, and smells of Alton. Wagner attended Douglass Elementary School, a segregated school in Alton, and Lovejoy Elementary in Alton. Elijah P. Lovejoy was an Alton resident and abolitionist, and founder of the Alton Observer abolitionist newspaper. Wagner graduated from West Junior High School in the ninth grade, and transferred to Alton Senior High. He remembers his elementary and high school teachers, and his childhood interests and extracurricular activities.

Video Oral History Interview with Anthony G. Wagner, Section A2005\_241\_001\_003, TRT: 0:31:00 ?

Anthony G. Wagner was a Boy Scout who enjoyed playing outside. Wagner attended Alton Senior High School in Alton, Illinois where he had an interest in biology and zoology. He enrolled at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Illinois and majored in botany and zoology. However, he dropped out to redesign and remodel his church. In the summer of 1966, Wagner worked as a pathologist's assistant, conducting studies on patients suspected of having cancer, at Alton Memorial Hospital. He was drafted into the military in 1966, and sent to Vietnam in 1967. He remembers the Tet Offensive attack on the Nha Trang U.S. Army Base in 1968 and visiting Chicago during the 1968 riots following Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination. Wagner was discharged from the Army and went on to finish his studies at SIUE. He graduated, and went to work at the P.D. George Company in St. Louis, Missouri. Wagner talks about meeting his wife, and being offered a job at the Upjohn Pharmaceutical Company in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Video Oral History Interview with Anthony G. Wagner, Section A2005\_241\_001\_004, TRT: 0:28:00 ?

Anthony G. Wagner married and moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota to work as a

sales representative at the Upjohn Pharmaceutical Company in 1971. John Westerman, director of University of Minnesota Hospitals and Clinics, recommended that Wagner apply for the university's hospital administration training program. Wagner was accepted at the University of California San Francisco Medical Center and then was hired as the Deputy Associate Director at the Medical Center after completing his residency. In 1989, Wagner was hired as an executive administrator at Laguna Honda Hospital in San Francisco. Wagner explains what a hospital administrator does, and describes working at Laguna Honda. He talks about budgeting and having to make tough decisions and lay-offs. The city of San Francisco named a day after him, "Anthony Wagner Day," and he earned the Managerial Excellence Award for his management philosophy, Labor Management Partnership, that includes employees in administrative decision-making.

Video Oral History Interview with Anthony G. Wagner, Section A2005\_241\_001\_005, TRT: 0:28:10 ?

Anthony G. Wagner joined the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc. as vice president in 2005. He explains the origin of the HMO healthcare plan and the Kaiser Family Foundation's entry into the healthcare business as well as his work to eliminate disparities in healthcare in African American communities. He references the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment as an example of the reasons for African American mistrust of the healthcare system. Wagner describe the California Healthcare Association's plans to address heart disease and prostate cancer in California's predominantly black communities through the Disparities in Health of African Americans in San Francisco Project. He talks about his involvement in civic organizations and professional groups, describes what he does to relax, and talks about spending time with his two sons.

Video Oral History Interview with Anthony G. Wagner, Section A2005\_241\_001\_006, TRT: 0:15:02 ?

Anthony G. Wagner talks about his future travel plans, the building of a home, his maternal family ancestry and how he is related to HistoryMaker Jeff Donaldson. He also talks about the influence of the Christian church in his childhood. Wagner concludes by describing how he would like to be remembered.