

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Julius Taylor

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Taylor, Julius H., 1914-2011
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Julius Taylor,
Dates:	July 13, 2010 and July 14, 2010
Bulk Dates:	2010
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:18:09).
Abstract:	Physics professor and physicist Julius Taylor (1914 - 2011) established the physics department at Morgan State University, and has been lauded for his mentoring and teaching. His research focuses on solid state physics and high-pressure systems. Taylor was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 13, 2010 and July 14, 2010, in Baltimore, Maryland. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2010_066
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Physicist and physics professor Julius Henry Taylor was born on February 15, 1914, in Cape May, New Jersey, to Julia and Coleman Taylor. Taylor was one of six children including Morris, Margaret, Coleman, Elizabeth, and Mildred. He attended Middle Township High School in New Jersey, where he played trumpet in the band and was an avid basketball player and track star. He graduated in 1932, and did not plan to attend college until he met his wife, Patricia Spaulding, who encouraged him to do so and the two married in 1937. The following year, Taylor earned his A.B. degree in physics from Lincoln University. He went on to receive his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in solid state physics from the University of Pennsylvania.

In the 1940s, Taylor published scholarly papers while under contract with the U.S. Navy. In 1945, he became chairman of the Department of Physics at West Virginia State College. Four years later, he joined the faculty at Morgan State University at the insistence of then-president Dr. Martin David Jenkins. Taylor began building the physics department and became its first chairperson in 1954, after earning tenure as a professor. Taylor also started the first golf team at Morgan State University that went on to win the CIAA championship. A well-known golfer, Taylor continued to play 18 holes through 2009. During his years as a professor, Taylor mentored several students at Morgan State University who went on to get their Ph.Ds in physics including Dr. Frederick Oliver who would later be hired as chair of the Physics Department. In 1955, Taylor served as an editor for *The Negro In Science*, a book addressing prominent African American scientists and their research. During his time at Morgan State University, Taylor served as a liaison to the Goddard Space Flight Center and the National Science Foundation, along with several other scientific societies and committees. He also lectured at American University before his retirement in 1986 when he became professor emeritus at Morgan State. After his retirement, Taylor continued to mentor students in junior and senior high schools in the Baltimore Public School System. In 1998, Taylor served as a contractor to NASA.

Taylor is the recipient of two Honorary Doctorate degrees in Science from Grambling State University and Lincoln University. In 1963, he was named Alumnus of the Year by Lincoln University and in 1976, he received a Distinguished Service Citation from the American Association of Physics Teachers. He has been a member and president of the executive committee of the Chesapeake Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers as well as a section representative.

Taylor has two children, Trena Taylor Brown and Dwight Spaulding Taylor.

Julius Henry Taylor was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on July 13, 2010.

Julius Taylor passed away on August 27, 2011.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Julius Taylor was conducted by James Stith on July 13, 2010 and July 14, 2010, in Baltimore, Maryland, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Physics professor and physicist Julius Taylor (1914 - 2011) established the physics department at Morgan State University, and has been lauded for his mentoring and teaching. His research focuses on solid state physics and high-pressure systems.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

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

Restrictions on Use

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

Related Material

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

Controlled Access Terms

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

Persons:

Taylor, Julius H., 1914-2011

Stith, James (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Taylor, Julius H., 1914-2011 --Interviews

African American physicists--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Morgan State University

Occupations:

Physicist

HistoryMakers® Category:

ScienceMakers

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 Julius Taylor, July 13, 2010 and July 14, 2010. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

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

Other Finding Aid

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

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Julius Taylor, Section A2010_066_001_001, TRT: 0:29:25 ?

Julius Taylor was born in 1914 in Cape May, New Jersey. Taylor's mother, Julia Price Taylor worked in a drug store in downtown Cape May Court House, New Jersey. His father, Coleman Taylor, was a concrete mason. Taylor remembers some of the lessons passed down by his father. Taylor grew up with his four siblings in Cape May Court House, New Jersey, a town that Taylor describes as being very insular. Taylor attended Middle Township Elementary School and Middle Township High School, which were both integrated. He recalls a tough math teacher, but appreciates her for preparing him for the rigorous studies of college. All five black students in Taylor's class [Class of 1932] go to college. With fifty dollars from the drug-store owner, Taylor began his studies at Lincoln University.

School integration--New Jersey--Cape May.

African American families--New Jersey.

African Americans--Education (Secondary)--New Jersey.

Video Oral History Interview with Julius Taylor, Section A2010_066_001_002, TRT: 0:28:53 ?

Julius Taylor recalls his love of the trumpet and his plans to join a band. He reminisces about his youth, recalling some of the pranks he played as well as his interest in tinkering. Taylor recalls feeling the effects of segregation during a class trip to Washington, D.C. during his senior year of high school when the black students in the class were separated from the remainder of the class. While at Lincoln University, Taylor became a skilled athlete and the first black to compete in pole vaulting at the Penn Relays. Although he was involved in a fight his first day on campus, Taylor became friends with Carter Williams, "Thurgood Marshall's right-hand man." He recalls meeting the family of his wife, Patricia Spaulding, and how he was impressed by their accomplishments. Taylor and Spaulding married and had two children, Trina Taylor Brown and Dwight Taylor.

Lincoln University (Pa.)--Sports.

Washington (D.C.).

African American music.

Video Oral History Interview with Julius Taylor, Section A2010_066_001_003, TRT: 0:24:45 ?

Julius Taylor talks about his education at the University of Pennsylvania during World War II, mentioning his relationship with Dr. Gaylord Harnwell, a mentor throughout his graduate studies. Taylor conducted his research in solid state physics and crystal compressions. Taylor then discusses his arrival at Morgan State College in 1949, where he started the physics program. There had previously only been one physics course taught at the school, and it was for pre-med students. Taylor coordinated his efforts with Dr. Dekee (ph.) of Johns Hopkins University to arrange for student support and used laboratory equipment. Taylor speaks about Carl Clark, one of the first students to graduate through the physics undergraduate program at Morgan State College, as well as

Conrad Williams. Taylor closes this interview tape acknowledging the role of Warren Henry in mentoring black graduate students in physics at Howard University, and discussing the balance between research and teaching.

African American physicists.

Solid state physics--Research.

Morgan State University--Physics.

Video Oral History Interview with Julius Taylor, Section A2010_066_001_004, TRT: 0:28:55 ?

Julius Taylor recalls his career at West Virginia State University. He then discusses his role in starting the championship-winning golf team at Morgan State University in the 1950s. Returning to the discussion of his graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania, Taylor discusses the support he received, and he compares his experience to a fellow white classmate who eventually dropped out of the studies. He describes his graduate thesis on studies using a high-pressure bomb, and his experiences in working with government agencies. Taylor remembers being an active member in the American Physical Society and the Chesapeake Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers. He discusses how he received his Ph.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania but was denied a faculty position. Taylor ends this part of the interview describing his disappointment with his former mentor, but also the enjoyment he receives serving as a mentor for students.

West Virginia State College (Institute, W. Va.)--Faculty.

American Physical Society.

American Association of Physics Teachers.

Mentoring in the professions.

Physics--Study and teaching.

Video Oral History Interview with Julius Taylor, Section A2010_066_001_005, TRT: 0:28:36 ?

Julius Taylor reflects on how rapidly changing technology influences his research in physics. Remembering some of the awards he has received, he discusses serving on the Chesapeake Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers. Taylor describes his perspective on the branching field of physics and how the student body has adapted to use new technology. He discusses a few of his mentees, including Conrad Williams and Frederick Oliver, who succeeded Taylor as chair of the physics department at Morgan State College. Although he notes that he considered his communication with the school's administration to be risky, there is an auditorium on campus that is named in his honor. Taylor describes writing the book, "The Negro in Science," with the assistance of Dr. Herman Branson in 1955. He closes this section of the interview talking about how education in the African American community of Baltimore, Maryland has changed.

Physics--Research.

American Association of Physics Teachers.

African American physicists.

Branson, Herman R. (Herman Russell), 1914-1995.

Science--Research--20th century.

Video Oral History Interview with Julius Taylor, Section A2010_066_001_006, TRT: 0:37:35 ?

Julius Taylor discusses his involvement with the Chesapeake Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers and then talks about the role of politics on his role as an educator and researcher. In discussing his transition from active faculty member to emeritus faculty, Taylor talks about the success

of Dr. Conrad Williams. He also emphasizes the importance of leadership to have good communication skills, citing Martin Jenkins, president of Morgan State College from 1948 to 1970, to be a good model of this. He advises small schools to focus their energies on doing a few things well rather than trying to do everything. Taylor quickly recaps his time at Aberdeen Proving Ground and then closes the interview by discussing the future of physics, how he would like to be remembered and his proudest accomplishment.

American Association of Physics Teachers.

Educational leadership.

Science--History--21st century.

Science--Social aspects--Forecasting.

Aberdeen Proving Ground (Md.).

Video Oral History Interview with Julius Taylor, Section A2010_066_002_007, TRT: 0:20:00 ?

Julius Taylor describes his photographs.