

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Donald Frank St. Mary

PERSON

St. Mary, Donald Frank, 1940-

**Alternative Names:** Donald Frank St. Mary;

**Life Dates:** July 22, 1940-

**Place of Birth:** Lake Charles, Louisiana, USA

**Residence:** Amherst, Massachusetts

**Work:** Amherst, Massachusetts

**Occupations:** Mathematician;

## Biographical Note

Mathematician and academic administrator Donald Frank St. Mary was born on July 22, 1940 in Lake Charles Louisiana. He attended McNeese State College (Louisiana) as an undergraduate and completed his B.S. degree in mathematics in 1962. St. Mary went on to earn his M.A. degree in mathematics from the University of Kansas in 1964 and his Ph.D. degree from the University of Nebraska in 1968. As a graduate Ph.D. student he worked as an instructor at the University of Nebraska, and then at Iowa State University.

In 1968, St. Mary was hired by University of Massachusetts, Amherst (UMASS) as an assistant professor in the physics department. His early efforts to build the department and attract research funding to the university resulted in a promotion to associate professor in 1975 and subsequently to full professor in 1983. St. Mary also worked closely to advance the education of minority students. Between 1969 and 1974, he implemented an arithmetic skills course that helped build students' knowledge of computational analysis. During the summers between 1975 and 1981, he developed a two-week course, "What is Calculus About?" for sophomore and junior level high school students. When the university was in session he directed the Minority Engineering Program which assisted students in the academic support program with their calculus coursework. In 1992, he created and organized the Science Enrichment Program at the University of Massachusetts. The five-week residential program was designed to enrich minority high school student's' experiences with science curricula in a college environment.

In 1994, St. Mary was selected by faculty in the department of mathematics and

statistics at UMASS to be its principal academic leader with executive responsibility for all aspects of the department, and after receiving approval from Dean of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics he was appointed department head. During his career, St. Mary was awarded research grants totaling \$600,000 from the National Science Foundation and the Office of Naval Research. He was awarded institutional grants, all in some manner to support minority students, totaling \$7 million from the NSF and the National Cancer Institute. From 1968 to 2002, St. Mary served on the Board of Directors for the Committee for the Collegiate Education of Blacks and Other Minority Students, holding various offices including vice chairman and chairman.

St. Mary is internationally renowned for his research in Computational Ocean Acoustics. He has been invited to lecture in Accra, Ghana, Honolulu, Hawaii, and Dublin, Ireland. St. Mary has authored, co-authored, and edited scholarly works for distinguished publications such as Proceedings of the American Mathematical Society, Journal of Computational Physics, and Journal of the American Acoustical Society.

Donald Frank St. Mary was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on October 8, 2012.

## Related Entries

**University of Nebraska Omaha** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Ph.D.**

**University of Kansas** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**McNeese State College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.S.**

**Sacred Heart High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Diploma**

**Sacred Heart High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Passed 8th grade**

**Sacred Heart / Saint Katharine Drexel School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**University of Nebraska** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1966 to 1967]

**Instructor**

**Iowa State University** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1982 to 1985]

**Instructor**

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1980 to ?]

**Associate Professor**

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1968 to ?]

**Professor**

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1994 to 2002]

**Chair , Department of Mathematics and Statistics**

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1963 to ?]

**Professor Emeritus**

**American Mathematical Society** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1993 to ?]

**Mathematical Association of America (MAA)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2002 to ?]

**Associated Women in Mathematics** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**American Acoustical Society** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**National Association of Mathematicians (NAM)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]