



JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39217

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF HISTORY
LIFE AND CULTURE OF BLACK PEOPLE

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEW AGREEMENT

You have been asked for information to be used in connection with the Oral History Program at Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi. The purpose of this program is to gather and preserve information for historical and scholarly use.

A tape recording of your interview will be made by the interviewer and a transcript of the tape will be made and submitted to you for editing. The final retyped and edited transcript, together with the tape of the interview will then be placed in the Oral History Collection at Jackson State University. Other institutions or persons may obtain a copy. These materials may be used for purposes of research, for instructional use, for publication, or for other related purposes.

I, Lavaree Jones, have read the above, and in view of the historical and scholarly value of this information, and in return for a final typed copy of the transcript, I knowingly and voluntarily permit Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi, the full use of this information. I hereby grant and assign all my rights of every kind whatever pertaining to this information, whether or not such rights are now known, recognized, or contemplated, to Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi.

Lavaree Jones
Interviewee's Signature

9-3-22
Interviewee's Date of Birth

12-11-89
Date Agreement Signed

Oral History Number Assigned

JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY

Jackson, Mississippi

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEW AGREEMENT

You have been asked for information to be used in connection with the Oral History Program at Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi. The purpose of this program is to gather and preserve information for historical and scholarly use.

A tape recording of your interview will be made by the interviewer and a typescript of the tape will be made and submitted to you for editing. The final retyped and edited transcript, together with the tape of the interview will then be placed in the oral history collection at Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi. Other institutions or persons may obtain a copy. These materials may be used for purposes of research, for instructional use, for publication, or for other related purposes.

I, Lavaree Jones have read the above, and in view of the historical and scholarly value of this information, and in return for a final typed copy of the transcript, I knowingly and voluntarily permit Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi, the full use of this information. I hereby grant and assign all my rights of every kind whatever pertaining to this information, whether or not such rights are now known, recognized, or contemplated, to Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi.

Lavaree Jones
Interviewee's Signature

9-3-22
Interviewee's Date of Birth

12-12-88
Date Agreement Signed

Oral History Number Assigned

INTERVIEWER: MAJOR O'NEAL
INTERVIEWEE: MRS. L. JONES
SUBJECT: HEAD START
DATE: SEPTEMBER 12, 1988

INTRODUCTION: HARRISON: This is September 12, 1988, and we are at the Jackson State University Center with an Oral History Class and I have two students and they are going to be interviewing each other and I think that Mr. Major O'neal is going to begin the interview process with Mrs. Jones.

O'Neal: Mrs. Jones, I have a question here about Head Start. When did Head Start begin in your own way? When do you think it began?

Jones: Head Start, per se, began in 1964; it began with the Freedom Democratic Party getting people registered to vote. There were no Head Start classes, per se, but there were classes called Freedom Classes, and people were coming from the North from various colleges and institutions helping people in rural cities and communities prepare themselves for the struggle of change in integration. In my area, which was Hollandale, Mississippi, in Washington county, I was working as a voter registration campaign person, taking people to the county seat to get them registered when the news came in 1965 about Head Start. The news came to me this way from one of the college students from Antioch College in Wooster, Ohio. He came and said, "You all have been working for the last year getting people registered to vote and we understand the struggle; we understand how hard it is to maintain yourselves." Because we were being pushed out of jobs and pushed into suffering conditions by the managers of the city because we were talking about intergrating restauants and other places that were segregated to us at that time. So he said, "If you all could find a building and go out and find some children, the government has appropriated some money and you can begin teaching your own children ages 3 through 5. And that's when I became involved. I was already

involved in the voters' registration movement for the purpose of intergrating schools and intergrating other public facilities.

O'Neal: I have a another question here. In your own words, what do you think was the primary reason for Head Start coming to an existence?

Jones: The primary reason, I think, for Head Start coming to existence was like giving a dog a bone. There was a lot of changes being made and the merchants, the managers, and the owners of black people in the rural communities were having a lot of difficulties keeping people obedient and keeping people working for nothing. They were having difficulties with that. Black people were beginning to speak out; and during this movement, the situation became serious in that black people were asking for their rights and the government was having problems with the all ready establishment saying that, "You've got to do something with these people because they can no longer be controlled." So it was like, I think, a control situation. Once you give - feed - people and give them something to pacify them, then some things tend to become comfortable and they become satisfied. So that was one of the purposes; the real purpose wasn't to give black people an equal opportunity to become free, it was like a pacification to pacify, to divert their purpose. So that was one of the main reasons. But the people made it different. The people made the offer to put money in local communities, in the hands of the poor people; people made that a reality. They made it become very beneficial because they were able then to understand where they stood in terms of their own leadership, their own school management, whereas so many wrongs were not attempted to be made right. And by the poor getting some understanding from outside of what their rights were and what they could do for their own children, it gave them the opportunity to take this money and say "We're not going to stand for that kind of treatment anymore." I don't want to get too far away from your question.

O'Neal: I have one more question. What kind of role does Head Start play in the black community?

Jones: Head Start plays a major role in the black community in that there are job opportunities equal to those of professionals or educators. Head Start plays a major role in the community in that it has enabled people with little and no education to raise their families and go back to school as parents and get certified at what they would consider qualified to occupy any job on any level. Head Start has played a major role in the communities in that people have been able to purchase homes and facilitate the homes equal to professionals who had money. Head Start has paid comfortable amounts of money to these people. Head Start in the communities has been a major source of education in terms of understanding the government, understanding the rights of an individual, helping people understand what the law is all about; and to me, Head Start gave me the feeling of being a whole person. I was anxious to learn, and I had my own ideas in terms of goals set. Without Head Start, I wouldn't have been able to reach those goals. I have learned to do things that was not afforded to the people who had already reached the plateau of success. I was able to be channeled into those avenues as a result of travelling over the United States and getting first-hand information and bringing that information back and sharing it with other people enabled us to say how much we want in the future, how much we are going to work to get for ourselves and our children. Head Start has played a major role in the communities economically and financially because it set many communities in motion as far as becoming identified as a community, because on the voting end, they weren't even on the map. So that's some of the major effects in the community.

O'Neal: Thank you for answering those questions and that ends this session.