

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Gloria Spear

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

*Tumultuous 2020* Oral History project

Interview # T20-A-L-2022-34

Gloria Spear, Coles County Health Department Administrator, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Tumultuous 2020* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: April 22, 2022

Location: Phone interview conducted at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's Recording studio

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue. ALPLM volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview being  
processed.

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 1:17 / 1.28 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on August 8, 2022.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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# Abstract

Gloria Spear, *Tumultuous 2020*, T20-A-L-2022-34

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Gloria Spear was born in Mattoon, Illinois in 1970. She was raised in Mattoon and attended Mattoon High School. During high school, Gloria was active in student council, Key club, cheerleading, and the foreign exchange club, graduating in 1988. Spear began college at Eastern Illinois University but found it too close to her hometown. She studied at Lake Land Community College before transferring to University of Illinois. Eager to join the workforce, she left college during her final semester. She worked for a law firm in Champaign, Illinois, before moving back to Mattoon to work for Coca-Cola. She was eventually hired at the Coles County Health Department where she worked as a sanitary inspector and as the Director of Environment Health. During this time, she completed a Bachelor of General Studies and Masters in Health Promotion and Leadership from Eastern Illinois University in 2014 and 2017, respectively. In March of 2022, she was promoted to Coles County administrator.

Spear discusses the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic brought to Coles County. Located directly on the eastern border of the state and neighboring Indiana, the Coles County Health Department faced unique challenges. Spear describes these challenges, detailing the services the health department typically provides, how they evolved with the pandemic, and the new services they offered. They had to create infrastructure for contact tracing, provide vaccination sites, and operate in four health regions. Spear concludes the interview by sharing her personal experiences with the pandemic.

**Headings/Key Words:** Tumultuous 2020, Tumultuous 2020 oral history; Gloria Spear; Coles County Health Department; public health; COVID-19 pandemic; COVID-19; contact tracing; vaccines; vaccine hesitancy

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