

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Theresa Faith Cummings

Interview #: SAA-A-D-2007-041

Conducted by the Springfield African-American History Foundation
For the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Theresa Faith Cummings is a sixth-generation resident of Springfield, Illinois. She was the first director of the Community Action Agency's Neighborhood Center, and discusses the services that the Neighborhood Center provided. She also discusses her family's history in Springfield; the businesses that family members owned; her own education and career; and personal experiences with housing discrimination in Springfield.

Interview date(s):	November 7, 2007
Interview Location:	Springfield, Illinois
Interview Format:	audio cassette
Interviewer:	Barbara Dickerman
Transcription by:	The Tape Transcription Center
Edited by:	Marian Smith, Debra Weiner, Cheryl Pence
Total Pages:	14
Total Time:	43 minutes, 9 seconds / 0.72 hrs

Interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Abstract

Theresa Faith Cummings Springfield African-American History Foundation Project

Biographical Information and Synopsis: Theresa Faith Cummings is the sixth generation in her family to live in Springfield. She had five brothers and one sister and attended Hay-Edwards and Springfield High School. Theresa attended college at the University of Illinois and graduated from Winston-Salem State Teachers College (now Winston-Salem State University). She received her graduate degree from Southern Illinois University and began law school at Washington University in St. Louis, but dropped out. Theresa taught in St. Louis for approximately eight years before she returned to Springfield. After returning to Springfield, Theresa established the Neighborhood Center for the Community Action Agency. She discusses how she worked to get breakfast programs to schools, made sure food prices were fair for the poor, and many other projects. After resigning from Community Action, Theresa took three to four years off before becoming assistant director of the Abandoned Mines Reclamation Council. After retirement, she began a baking business and helped to raise young family members.

Topics Covered: Springfield, Illinois, 1900s – present; Peabody Mine; urban renewal; Community Action; Abandoned Mines Reclamation Council; Underground Railroad; Springfield Race Riot of 1908; housing discrimination; Community Action Agency; Springfield public schools

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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