

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Brian Brady

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Education is Key – Civics Education Oral History project

Interview # ECE-A-L-2019-103

Brian Brady, president of the Mikva challenge program, which promotes civic involvement among youth in under-resourced neighborhoods, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key – Civics Education* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Dec 18, 2019 Location: Mikva Challenge Office, Chicago, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:18 / 1.3 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on March 3, 2020.

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

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Abstract

Brian Brady, *Education is Key – Civics*, ECE-A-L-2019-103

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Brian Brady was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1966. He attended Evanston public schools, graduating from Evanston High School in 1985. While in high school, Brian was active in sports, including football, basketball and baseball, as well as debate. He then attended Friends World College, Evergreen, Truman State, and National Louis University. Each provided unique civics engagement opportunities. In 1992, Brian earned a BA from National Louis University. He later earned a degree at DePaul University. Brian's work experiences include Lotus Development, Acorn, and the Mikva Challenge beginning in 1998. At the time of this interview he was president for Mikva Challenge, a non-profit organization which was begun by Judge Abner Mikva and his wife Zoe.

In this interview, Brady looks at how a non-profit civics organization which began in 1998 can now be found in twelve sites, including Washington D.C and southern California. Started by Judge Abner Mikva and his wife Zoe, the Mikva Challenge was formed on the concept of creating democratic opportunities for youth living in under-resourced neighborhoods. The Mikva Challenge cultivates students' interests through in-school services to middle and high schools, community action plans on local issues, city wide youth councils, action civics events, and through elections in action (a favorite for Judge Mikva). The organization was an active participant in the Illinois Coalition on Civics, the Civics Legislative Task Force, and the professional development for Civics Teachers. This interview highlights examples of student civics participation in each of the above areas. See also the extensive interview with Judge Mikva about his many years in state-level and national politics.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Mikva Challenge; Judge Abner Mikva; Zoe Mikva; Project Soapbox; service as election judges in Chicago; civics education in Illinois schools; civics curriculum; citywide youth councils

Notes 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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