

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Leroy Jordan

Interview #: SAA-A-D-2004-023

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

Coming to Springfield, Illinois in 1965, Leroy Jordan was the first black elementary classroom teacher in School District 186. He later spent twenty years as an administrator at Sangamon State University, and was the second black to be elected to the Springfield school board, where he was involved with the 1970s desegregation lawsuit.

Interview date(s):	February 20, 2004
Interview Location:	Springfield, Illinois
Interview Format:	audio cassette
Interviewer:	Willie Mitchell
Transcription by:	The Tape Transcription Center
Edited by:	Marian Goza, Christy Barcus, Cheryl Pence
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Interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Abstract

Leroy Jordan Springfield African-American History Foundation Project

Biographical Information and Synopsis: Leroy Jordan was not born in Springfield, Illinois, but he had family who lived here, which sparked his interest. He obtained his bachelor's degree from Southern Illinois University – Carbondale in science and education. He discussed how he moved to Springfield his second year out of college, to teach at Iles Elementary School. He was the first black elementary classroom educator in Springfield, working at Iles from 1965 to 1969. In 1969, he took a job with the State Board of Vocational Education in their research and developmental unit. He stayed there until 1972, when he became the Assistant Director of the Applied Studies program at Sangamon State University. Leroy spent twenty years at the University before he returned to Springfield School District 186 as the Assistant Superintendent for Research and Assessment. He served as a member of the Springfield School Board of Education from 1976 to 1982. He was the second African-American to win a spot on the board citywide. He also discussed his involvement in the 1970s school district desegregation suit. Leroy believed that racism is still as strong as in the past – “the only difference is it's more subtle”. He believed that desegregation brought African-Americans and Caucasians together but did not make them equal. Leroy Jordan retired in 1998.

Topics Covered: Springfield, Illinois, 1960s – present; Dr. Edward Lee; Georgia Rountree; SEA (Springfield Education Association); Iles Elementary School; Sangamon State University; Illinois State Board of Vocational Education; Springfield School District 186; desegregation

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