

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Eva R. Legard

COLLECTION: 4700.0624

IDENTIFICATION: McKinley High School graduate; First African American member of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board

INTERVIEWERS: Carmen Posey and Shanta Jenkins

SERIES: McKinley High School Oral History Project – History of McKinley High

INTERVIEW DATE: June 8, 1995

FOCUS DATES: 1938 – 1942, 1980s, 1990s

ABSTRACT:

Tape 908, Side A

Legard born in Lafayette, Louisiana; moved to Baton Rouge in eighth grade; information about parents; her father, Elmo, died before she was born; McKinley only high school for African Americans anywhere around; attended McKinley from 1938-1942; high school students who caught ferry to school or “lived on premises” boarding with local families in exchange for household chores; importance of academics and discipline at McKinley; high expectations for athletes; few clubs and extracurricular activities at the time she attended; Legard got good grades; her role model was her grandmother who lived to be 102 years old; her grandmother, Mama [Teast?], fed all her neighbors during Depression, Legard describes how she cooked and served meals; favorite teachers at McKinley were Mrs. Wright, Dr. J.M Frazier; after attending school board meeting in 1980, was asked by attorney Walter Dumas to be first African American to run for position on school board; served on school board from 1980-1994; best memory of a friend who sang magnificently at their graduation; Legard got married, had twelve children, she almost finished college; her English teacher, Mrs. Wright, was her favorite; participation in church; eating at Chicken Shack; McKinley essential to history of African Americans in Baton Rouge and surrounding area; children need more discipline, like in the old days, and it has to start in the home; civil rights leaders from Baton Rouge like H. Rap Brown; her involvement in the Civil Rights Movement was limited; differences in schools now are lack of parental involvement, teachers less active in students’ lives; advice to current graduates to be attentive so you can be competitive; oral history project my help plans of Alumni Association to refurbish McKinley building; expectations of success for oral history project; suggestions for more people to interview like Dolores Spikes, Judge Freddie Pitcher; end of interview.

TAPES: 1 (T908)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 33 minutes

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 16 pages

OTHER MATERIALS: None

RESTRICTIONS: None