

## **SC-262: Leo Lucas Oral History Interview**

**Collection Number:** SC-262

**Title:** Leo Lucas Oral History Interview

**Dates:** 1975

**Creator:** Benbow, Mark

**Abstract/Summary:** The collection consists of an oral history interview audio recording with Leo Lucas, a member of the Dayton City School Board during the battle over busing students for desegregation. The interview was conducted in the summer of 1975 by high school student Mark Benbow.

**Quantity/Physical Description:** .1 linear feet (1 audiocassette), 1 digital file (23.8 Megabytes)

**Language(s):** English

**Repository:**

Special Collections and Archives, Paul Laurence Dunbar Library, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092.

**Restrictions on Access:** There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection, however due to preservation concerns, the original audiocassette cannot be played in the reading room. Patrons may have access to an MP3 digital copy of the interview.

**Restrictions on Use:**

Copyright restrictions may apply. Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

**Preferred Citation:**

[Description of item, Date], SC-262, Leo Lucas Oral History Interview, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio.

**Acquisition:** Mark Benbow of Falls Church, Virginia donated the oral history interview recording to Special Collections and Archives, Wright State University on May 20, 2009.

**Existence and Location of Copies:** The audiocassette was digitized for access as an MP3 file located in the E-archives (sc262\_e0001).

**Other Finding Aid:**

The finding aid is available on the Special Collections & Archives, Wright State University Libraries web site at <https://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collectionguides/files/sc262.pdf>.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:** The recording is not high quality, with background noise throughout, however the content is audible. A computer is required to listen to the MP3 recording.

**Related Material:**

MS-299 Kent Organ Dayton School Desegregation Papers

(<https://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collectionguides/files/ms299.pdf>)

MS-458 Dayton Daily News Archive, Special Collections and Archives, Wright State University: Desegregation series files, Personality files on Leo Lucas.

Leo Lucas was also interviewed in 2004 as part of the National Visionary Leadership Project interviews and conference collection, 1997-2009 / collected by the National Visionary Leadership Project. <http://lcn.loc.gov/2010655275>

**Processed by:** Processed according to DACS standards by Toni Vanden Bos, April 2019.

**Arrangement:** Single Item.

**Biographical/Historical Note:**

Leo Alexander Lucas was born in Georgia in 1912. He attended Florida A&M University, and became a teacher and a CPA. He served as a member of the Dayton City school board from the late 1960s to early 1980s, also serving as the Dayton school board president. Mr. Lucas was on the school board during desegregation plans in Dayton's public schools. He founded the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) Black Caucus and has a scholarship named in his honor. Leo Lucas passed away in 2008.

**Scope and Content Note:**

The collection consists of a 26 minute interview of Dayton City school board member Leo Lucas, conducted by West Carrollton High School Student Mark Benbow in the summer of 1975 for a government class assignment. The assignment involved selecting an issue and interviewing a person in local government. Mark chose the controversy over busing to desegregate Dayton Public Schools. During the interview, Mr. Lucas explains the history of busing for integrating schools in Dayton. He also explains the magnet programs in segments of Dayton schools aimed at equalizing educational opportunities for students regardless of race. Mr. Lucas explained his position of making the magnet programs involuntary in order to insure students' interests were served. Lucas also explained his belief that the courts should not be in charge of integrating the schools because they would do it based on color alone. Rather, Mr. Lucas believed that integration should be done on the basis of academic offerings, emphasizing that students should choose the courses they want to pursue and be bused to the schools offering those programs if beyond the two mile distance. At the time, Dayton schools had 69 building and an estimated 40,000 students, according to Mr. Lucas.

## Subject Terms:

### Persons/Families

Lucas, Leo, 1912-2008 – Interviews  
Benbow, Mark

### Places

Dayton (Ohio) – History – 20<sup>th</sup> century

### Subjects (General)

Busing for school integration – Ohio – Dayton  
Magnet schools – Ohio -- Dayton  
School integration – Ohio – Dayton  
School boards – African American membership – Ohio – Dayton

### Material Types

Audiocassette  
MP3  
Interviews  
Oral histories

## Collection Inventory

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	Audiocassette of Leo Lucas Oral History Interview (26 minutes) <i>(Available as a MP3 file in E-archives sc262_e0001)</i>	1975 Summer