

Guide to Archival Resources on African Americans in Physics, Astronomy and Related Disciplines

Introduction

This guide to archival records on African Americans in physics, astronomy, and related disciplines contains a selection of archival resources compiled through the International Catalog of Sources as well as ArchiveGrid. Resources are listed alphabetically by name of repository. For more resources, consult the AIP International Catalog of Sources.

Abdus Salam International Centre of Theoretical Physics

Strada Costiera, 11-34014
Trieste, Italy

Abdus Salam papers and correspondence of Abdus Salam, 1939-2000

Description: 350 boxes.

Online Finding Aid: N/A

Biography/History: Salam (1926-1996), founded the Department of Theoretical Physics at Imperial College London, professor from 1957-1993. Founded International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) at Trieste in 1964; directed Centre until 1994 when he became President. Died in 1996.

Scope of Material: Biographical material is extensive; covers Salam's career, honors and awards, including significant material his Nobel Prize candidacy and award, and candidacy for the Directorship of UNESCO in 1987. Also includes press cuttings, magazine articles, and material recording Salam's views on international scientific cooperation and the development of the Third World. Research material includes notebooks, research notes and scientific correspondence (1950-1992). The largest body of material relates to the International Centre for Theoretical Physics, documenting its inception, organization and scientific activity from 1960 to 1996. Includes Salam's papers as Director and then President of the Centre; history of the ICTP; official communications with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and UNESCO; administrative issues, funding, design of scientific programs; conferences and meetings. Large section of documentation on ICTP links with academic institutions and international centers of study worldwide. Publications and lectures includes manuscripts (early 1950s-1989); lectures (1961-1993); documentation (1975-1995) relating to major published works on both scientific and Third World development topics. Salam's association with various United Nations organizations is documented, including UNESCO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the United Nations University (UNU). Salam's involvement with a large number of international, national, regional and local organizations and societies is well documented, such as the European Physical Society; African Union of Physics; Arab Academy of Sciences; Centro Internacional de Fisica, Bogotá; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI); International Federation of Institutes of Advanced Studies; and a small amount of material related to the UK High Energy Particle Physics Review Group (1984-1985). Visits and conferences material (1956-1997)

includes invitations, correspondence, programs, and proceedings. Topics include both scientific meetings and also events relating to Third World and development issues. Organizations documented include the South Commission (1987-1996), the Third World Academy of Sciences, of which Salam was president (1983-1994), and the Fund for Physics which Salam established to provide financial assistance to young scientists in the Third World. Also documents science in the Arabic and Islamic world. Collection includes correspondence documenting Salam's work with Pakistan and some of its organizations.

AIP Niels Bohr Library & Archives

One Physics Ellipse
College Park, MD 20740

* For more information on and detailed descriptions of resources at the American Institute of Physics, see the Guide to AIP Resources on African Americans in Physics, Astronomy, and Related Disciplines

1. AIP Physics Resources Center Records of James Stith, 1987-2009 (<http://www.aip.org/history/ead/20100332.html>)
This collection documents the work of James Stith, during his tenure as Vice President of the American Institute of Physics (AIP) Physics Resource Center (PRC). The records mostly document Stith's involvement with various committees, workshops and other groups, on topics such as physics education, minorities in the sciences, as well as his involvement with assorted AIP and PRC committees and groups. The collection also contains a small amount of correspondence and a small subject file kept by Stith
2. Brief History of the Physics Department at Fisk University including its Infrared Spectroscopy and other Research Programs, 1997.
3. The genesis of the National Society of Black Physicists [undated]
4. Julius H. Taylor papers, 1939-2006.
5. Nelson Fuson autobiographical and biographical materials, 1997.
6. Oral History Interviews
 - a. Interview with Dr. James Stith, <http://www.aip.org/history/ohilist/33903.html>
 - b. Interview with Dr. George Carruthers, <http://www.aip.org/history/ohilist/32485.html>
 - c. Interview with Dr. Warren Washington, <http://www.aip.org/history/ohilist/33098.html>
 - d. Interview with Dr. Benjamin F. Peery, <http://www.aip.org/history/ohilist/33698.html>
7. Ronald E. Mickens Collection on African American Physicists at the Niels Bohr Library & Archives (<http://www.aip.org/history/ead/20120385.html>)
Biographical files on African-American physicists collected by Ron Mickens. Some files were solicited as part of an effort by the National Society of Black Physicists to create an exhibit highlighting African-American physicists, and others were collected by Mickens for the purpose of drafting obituary announcements for PHYSICS TODAY magazine.

Central State University

Hallie Q. Brown Memorial Library
1400 Brush Row Road
Wilberforce, OH 45384

Herman R. Branson papers, 1952-1970

Description: circa 8 linear feet.

Online Finding Aid: N/A

Biography/History: President of Central State University (1968-1970) and Lincoln University (1970-1985); professor of physics and chemistry at Howard University (1941-1943); director of the ESMWT (Experimental Science and Mathematics W Technology) Program in Physics at Howard (1942-1944); and chairman of the Physics Department of Howard University from 1941 to 1968.

Scope of Material: Materials include Bannson's writings and lecture notes (1952-1970; vitae; photographs and news clipping pertaining to him (1969-1970); correspondence (1969-1970); programs and other materials pertaining to his engagement (1969-1970; and Administrative Council assignments, proposals, African Studies Program information, and other institutional related materials (1969-1970).

Fisk University Archives

Elmer S. Imes papers, 1902-1942

Description: 2 boxes.

Online Finding Aid: <http://www.fisk.edu/assets/files/c6/imes-elmers.collection1902-1942.pdf>

Biography/History: American physicist. Fisk University (1903). Second African-American to earn a Ph.D. (physics) in the United States, from the Univeristy of Michigan in 1918. Research in infrared spectroscopy.

Scope of Material: Contains biographical information, correspondence, course material, drawing notes, plans, photographs, professional affiliations, and writings.

National Society of Black Physicists collection, 1990-1996

Description: 1 linear foot, 2 boxes.

Online Finding Aid: <http://www.fisk.edu/assets/files/de/national-societyofblackphysicistscollection1990-1996.pdf>

Biography/History: N/A

Scope of Material: Materials include correspondence, reports, minutes, proceedings, programs, newsletters, announcements, and 1992 conference papers.

Augustus Shaw records, 1925-1926

Description: 0.5 linear feet

Online Finding Aid: N/A

Biography/History: Professor of physics and dean and chair of a Committee on Administration, Fisk University.

Scope of Material: The collections documents the activities of the Committee on Administration wich Shaw chaired. Materials consist of correspondence, mainly between Shaw and Fisk donors, as well as faculty and staff, school and college officials, and students, enrollees, and applicants.

Topics include administration fund drive, student aid, student discipline, student government, and music organizations.

Oral History interview with Donald Anderson Edwards

Description: 2 sound tapes (84 min.)
Collection: Included in the Black Oral History Collection, Fisk University.
Biography/History: Physicist. Instructor, physics and mathematics, Louisville Municipal College, 1936-1942; physics department, Virginia State College, 1943-1945; head, dept. of physics, Lincoln University, 1952-1953; head, department of physics, The Agricultural College of North Carolina, 1954-.
Scope of Material: Includes discussion of: family and early education; graduate studies at the University of Chicago and the University of Pittsburgh; financial assistance as a student; responses of students and staff when a teaching assistant at University of Pittsburgh; membership in professional organizations; history of teaching career and teaching as a rewarding career (outstanding students past and present); influential persons on career choice; difficulties of recruiting blacks into scientific fields; attitudes of black students towards mathematics and the sciences; science majors with deficiencies and the 4 year college program; black vis-a-vis white institutions for black students; attempts to merger North Carolina Agricultural and technical college with state institutions; difficulties of doing personal research at a black institution; overview of physics departments at black institutions; geographic distribution of black physicists; research at white institutions; activities in professional institutions including Beta Kappa Chi; reaction of white professional community to personal research work; outstanding black physicists and scientists; attitudes of students toward academics; and future plans and present research work.

Oral history interview with Halson Vashon Eagleson

Description: 2 sound tapes (76 min.)
Collection: Included in the Black Oral History Collection, Fisk University.
Biography/History: Physicist (experimental). Professor of mathematics and physics, Morehouse College, 1927-1935, head, dept. of physics, 1935-1947; professor of physics, Howard University, 1947-, chairman, dept. of physics and astronomy, 1961-1971; University of Maryland visiting professor, 1967-1973.
Scope of Material: Includes discussion of: birthplace and family; education, including post graduate studies at University of Chicago; membership in professional organizations (biographical listings and awards); history of employment at Morehouse College, Clark College, and Howard University; consultant in court cases as a physicist; influences on career decisions and teaching as a rewarding career; description of outstanding students; need for more blacks in physics and related fields; description of project with Environmental Protection Agency, Wash. D.C.; difficulties encountered by black students in physics; personal research (lack of funds); reaction of the white scientific community to blacks in the sciences; professional organizations for blacks in sciences; overview and geographic distribution of black scientists; and physics programs in black institutions.

Oral history interview with John McNeile Hunter

Description: 2 sound tapes (77 min.)
Collection: Included in the Black Oral History Collection, Fisk University.
Biography/History: Physicist; chemist. Professor and head, physics department, Virginia State College, 1925-1967.
Scope of Material: Includes discussion of: family and birthplace; education, including graduate studies in physics at Cornell University; position as mathematics and physics instructor at Virginia State College; deferment from military service; membership in professional organizations and societies; necessity for separate professional organizations for blacks; rewards of teaching career; physics departments at black institutions; research work and support for research; decision to remain at Virginia State College; geographic distribution of black physicists; future plans; physics as a prerequisite to technical fields; and necessity for development of independent study programs.

Oral history interview with Ronald E. Mickens

Description: 1 sound tape (45 min.)
Collection: Included in the Black Oral History Collection, Fisk University.
Biography/History: Physicist (theoretical). Assistant to professor, physics department, Fisk University, 1970-1981; chairperson and professor, Atlanta University.
Scope of Material: Includes discussion of: tenure at Fisk University (college education and graduate studies; influences on career (description of grandfather); description of professors as a student at Fisk University and Vanderbilt University; black physicists in the U.S., past and present; publications on black scientists in the U.S.; Percy Julian as a chemist; graduate study pursuits by blacks in science; recruitment of minority groups by the American Physical Society; aptitudes and academic achievement in science of black students (and science educators); status of secondary and higher education in the sciences among blacks; approach to teaching as a scientist; definition of physics; african physicists in the U.S.; blacks as recipients of Nobel Prizes in science; contributions by blacks to the field of physics; description of family.

Oral history interview with Warren E. Henry

Description: 2 sound tapes (90 min.)
Collection: Included in the Black Oral History Collection, Fisk University.
Biography/History: Physicist and chemist (physical chemistry). Instructor, chemistry, physics, and radio, Tuskegee Institute, 1941-1943; staff member, Radiation Laboratory, MIT, 1943-1946; research associate, Institute for the Study of Metals, Chicago, 1946-1947; acting head, dept. of physics, Morehouse College and Clark College, 1947-1948; physicist, Naval Research Laboratory, Washington, DC, 1948-.
Scope of Material: Includes discussion of: family and birthplace; education and employment including Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Naval Research Laboratory, Lockheed Missiles and Space Company; influences on career choices (introduction as a youth to George Washington Carver by father); description of experiences as an educator; research activities in thermodynamics, solid state physics, low temperature physics, energy conversion, magnetism, oceanographic instrumentation, etc; description

of published articles; society's responsibility for scientists; necessity to encourage minorities to pursue physics; the contribution of physics to mankind.

Kentucky State University

Blazer Library Special Collections and Archives
400 East Main Street
Frankfort, KY 40601

Kentucky State University departmental records, 1951-1995

Description: 213 linear feet.

Online Finding Aid: N/A

Biography/History: Kentucky State University was chartered in May 1886 as the State Normal School for Colored Persons; opened on Oct. 11, 1887 with three teachers, 55 students, and John H. Jackson as president; in 1890 the institution became a land-grant college; first senior college class graduated in 1929; name changes include State Normal School for Colored Persons (1886), Kentucky Normal & Industrial Institute (1902), Kentucky State Industrial College for Colored Persons (1926), Kentucky State College for Negroes (1938), Kentucky State College (1952), and Kentucky State University (1972).

Scope of Material: Records include materials pertaining to Arts and Science (1985-1988, 7 linear ft.) and Math and Physics (1966-1971, 1 linear ft.) and home visit files of the Cooperative Extension Services (1974-1978, 8 linear ft.). Athletic Department materials (1978-1991, 3 linear ft.) include films and videos. Topics include volleyball, first aid, and football. Community Research Service records (1975-1983, 16.5 linear ft.) include reports, surveys, forms, notes, resources, and correspondence; home visit reports and family records for the Family Development and Management Program; and health and disease files. Topics of Department of Education records (1968-1988, 43 linear ft.) include student teaching, orientation, student files, workshops, graduates, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Kentucky Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and inactive students. Library records (1951-1995, 132 linear ft.) include files of directors, D.W. Lyons, Karen McDaniel, Cathy Sealey, and James O'Rourke; correspondence; invoices, purchase orders, and other financial records; library catalogs; proposals; work statistics; and user surveys. Topics include: Baker and Taylor, Cooperative College Library Center Inc., Curriculum Committee, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, acquisitions, grants, Exxon grants, interlibrary loans, personnel, requisitions, and training. Music library files (1981-1987, linear ft.) include statistics, orders, forms, and inventory papers.

Lincoln University

Special Collections and Archives
1570 Baltimore Pike
Lincoln University, PA 19352

Lincoln University Office of the President records of Herman R. Branson, 1970-1986

Description: 6.5 linear feet.
Online Finding Aid: N/A
Biography/History: President of Lincoln University (1970-1985) and Central State University (1968-1970); professor of physics and chemistry at Howard University (1941-1943); director of the ESMWT (Experimental Science and Mathematics W Technology) Program in Physics at Howard (1942-1944); and chairman of the Physics Department of Howard University from 1941 to 1968.
Scope of Material: Collection consists of addresses and programs relating to Branson's inauguration as president of Lincoln University; programs, letters of congratulations, and photographs relating to his retirement; correspondence, proposals, and reports relating to the Pennsylvania desegregation plan for higher education. Also includes correspondence and other materials relating to Lincoln University's efforts to be awarded land-grant status; faculty retrenchment; appropriations requests; commencement; Branson's addresses to various groups.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Institute Archives and Special Collections
M.I.T. Libraries, Rm. 14N-118
Cambridge, MA 02139

Shirley Ann Jackson speech [sound recording], 1985 August 9

Description: 0.1 cubic foot.
Biography/History: N/A
Scope of Material: Cassette copy of speech given by Shirley Jackson, who in 1973 became the first black woman to receive a doctoral degree from M.I.T. She delivered her keynote speech at a dinner commemorating the sixteenth summer of Project Interphase, a program to help minority students develop mathematical and verbal skills.

**National Center for Atmospheric Research/University Corporation for
Atmospheric Research**

Archives
P.O. Box 3000
Boulder, CO 80307-3000

Warren Washington papers, circa 1963-1980

Description: 17 linear feet.
Online Finding Aid: <https://nldr.library.ucar.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=4>
Biography/History: Meteorologist and research scientist in climatology. Research scientist at National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR).
Scope of Material: The papers of Warren M. Washington document his professional activities as well as his contributions to diversity issues, particularly the

enhancement of opportunities for people of color in science. The collection includes correspondence, reports, lectures, drafts, calculations, clippings, publications, and photographs.

New York Public Library, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

515 E. Malcolm X Ave.

New York, NY 10037

Exceptional Black Scientists collection, 1971-1986 (bulk 1980-1984)

Description: 4 linear feet.

Online Finding Aid: N/A

Biography/History: CIBA-GEIGY Corporation is a large, diversified chemical and pharmaceutical manufacturer with headquarters in Ardsley, New York. In 1980, CIBA-GEIGY initiated the Exceptional Black Scientist Poster Program to acquaint the general public with the achievements of some black scientists and to encourage minorities to pursue careers in science, medicine, and mathematics.

CIBA-GEIGY Corporation selected black individuals each year who made significant contributions to their respective fields of science and commissioned Ernest Crichlow, noted black artist and illustrator, to paint their portraits. Posters were made from the portraits and distributed free of charge to individuals, academic institutions and organizations. The fifteen scientists honored were David Blackwell, Jewel Plummer Cobb, W. Montague Cobb, Charles Drew, Lloyd N. Ferguson, Shirley Ann Jackson, Percy L. Julian, Ernest Everett Just, Reatha Clark King, Samuel L. Koutz, LaSalle D. Leffall, Jr., Walter E. Massey, Jennie R. Patrick, Augustus A. White II and Jane Write, from the fields of medicine, chemistry, physics, mathematics and engineering.

Scope of Material: The CIBA-GEIGY Corporation Exceptional Black Scientists Collection is divided into two series: I, Information on Scientists; and II, Distribution of posters and video. There is biographical information on each of the fifteen scientists honored by CIBA-GEIGY as well as scientists who were considered but not selected for the poster award, including William T. Wright, surgeon and civil rights leader. Material about Ernest Crichlow, the portrait artist, is also included. Correspondence with individuals and organizations requesting copies of the posters and videotape produced by CIBA-GEIGY, shipping orders and a statistical analysis of those making requests comprise the remainder of the collection.

H. Mack Thaxton papers, 1961-1963

Description: 25 items (1 folder).

Online Finding Aid: N/A

Biography/History: Physicist and pioneer in theoretical physics. Thaxton earned a mathematical and theoretical physics Ph.D. from Wisconsin University in 1939. His doctoral thesis concerning the splitting of protons with protons was a largely unexplored phenomenon at the time. Thaxton was a professor of physics and Head of the Physics Department, North Carolina

A & T College; Lecturer, Project Engineer at the College of the City of New York (CUNY). During his career, Dr. Thaxton worked with five Nobel Prize winners and published over 200 articles.

Scope of Material: Collection of documents relating to Dr. H. Mack Thaxton's attempts to obtain employment in private industry. Included are resumes, job advertisements, letters of rejection and a form letter from Dr. Thaxton charging racial bias.

Oral history interview with Jasper Brown Jeffries [videorecording]/interviewed by Kathleen J. Prestwidge

Description: 1 videocassette (VHS) (95 min.)

Online Finding Aid: N/A

Biography/History: Mr. Jeffries is the former chairman of the mathematics dept. at Westchester Community College and worked on the Manhattan Project as a physicist.

Scope of Material: Mr. Jeffries discusses his life and his career in academia and private business as well as some of his views on nuclear weapons and Ronald Reagan. (1) introduction; education; African Americans in colleges and universities; family; early school; black faculty at W. Virginia State; teaching at high school; graduate school; signal corps, marriage; work on Manhattan Project and other minority scientists involved; employment as physics dept. chairman at N.C. State U.; industry position in Brooklyn; involvement in civic activities; children; how he became dept. of Chairman at Westchester Community College and difficulty integrating faculty; anecdotes about "liberal" officemate; retirement activities; views on nuclear weapons, Reagan; (2) Atomic Scientists of Chicago; investigation by government because of Mahattan Project and friendship with left-wing individuals; parents; advice to young people; concern about poorly prepared and motivated students.

Ronald McNair portrait collection [graphic]/Mel Assagai

Description: 5 photographs.

Online Finding Aid: N/A

Biography/History: N/A

Scope of Material: Half length portraits of astronaut and physicist Ronald McNair in a laboratory.

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Manuscripts, and Photographs

National Athropological Archives

Smithsonian Museum Support Center
Suitland, Maryland

1. Ruth Landes Papers, Photographs of Elmer S. Imes, 1935-1941
 - a. [Elmer S. Imes at his desk in his laboratory at Fisk University], 1938 or 1939 (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!287303~!0#focus>)

- b. [Elmer S. Imes smoking pipe in his office at Fisk University], 1938 or 1939 (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!287304~!0#focus>)
- c. [Profile view of Elmer S. Imes at his desk in his office at Fisk University], 1938 or 1939 (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!287305~!0#focus>)
- d. [Elmer S. Imes in his laboratory at Fisk University], 1938 or 1939 (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!287306~!0#focus>)
- e. [Elmer S. Imes on his lawn at Fisk University], 1937 (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!287307~!0#focus>)
- f. [Elmer S. Imes at Catkill Mountains], 1940 September (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!287302~!0#focus>)
- g. [Elmer S. Imes with his aunt Mabel Lewis Imes], 1935 May (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!287300~!0#focus>)
- h. Herbert Friedman (1916-2000) and George Robert Carruthers (b. 1939) (<http://siris-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?&profile=all&source=~!siarchives&uri=full=3100001~!290857~!0#focus>)

Smithsonian Institution Archives

Washington, D.C.

Project Records, 1992-1998

Description: 1 cu. ft. (1 record storage box)
 Online Finding Aid: http://siarchives.si.edu/collections/siris_arc_246951
 Scope of Material: This accession consists of materials created and maintained by David H. DeVorkin, Senior Curator, documenting the video "Pathways to the Skies" produced by the National Air and Space Museum for Project SMART. Project SMART was led by George R. Carruthers, Physicist, to encourage minority youths to become interested in science, math, and technology. Carruthers believed that doing experiments and watching demonstrations was the best way to learn about science. "Pathways to the Skies" was produced by the National Air and Space Museum and distributed by Project SMART to encourage interest in the minority experience in aviation and spaceflight. Materials include correspondence, memoranda, scripts, notes, images, and background materials. Also included is a cassette tape copy of an oral history interview of Carruthers.

Stanford University Department of Special Collections and University Archives

Stanford, CA 94305

A.B.C. Walker Papers, circa 1983-1990

Description: 18 linear feet

Online Finding Aid: <http://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt8199s4ds/>
Biography/History: Arthur B. C. Walker, African-American physicist (1936-2001). Ph.D., physics (University of Illinois, 1962). Professor of applied physics, Stanford University (1974-2001); staff, Space Physics Laboratory, Aerospace Corporation. Research in solar radiation physics.
Scope of Material: Collection pertains to A. B. C. walker's research and teaching and includes grant files, photographs of stellar phenomena, drawings, graphs, charts and files from his years at Stanford University.

University of California, Berkeley

The Bancroft Library
Berkeley, CA 94720-6000

Oral history interview with Robert H. Bragg, 2002 June-August

Description: Transcript: 415 pages. 14 sessions.
Online Transcript: <http://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/roho/ucb/text/BraggBook.pdf>
Biography/History: Robert H. "Pete" Bragg, African-American physicist (1919-). Professor of material science and mineral engineering, University of California, Berkeley; Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory; Department of Energy; Lockheed Missile and Space Company. Research in x-ray physics and applications to research on materials, electronic properties of carbon materials, and the mechanism of graphitization.
Scope of Material: Professor Robert H. Bragg was interviewed as part of the African American Faculty and Senior Staff Oral History Project series that explores the experiences of African American faculty and senior staff at the University of California, Berkeley. This interview follows Bragg's trajectory from his early life in Tennessee and Chicago, through military service, graduate school and early professional experiences in the private sector, and finally, on to Berkeley. At Berkeley he served as Faculty Assistant for Affirmative Action, an experience which this interview explores to shed light on the mechanisms and processes that were developed to combat informal discrimination in the academy.