

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

LINDA C. MEADE-TOLLIN

Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by

Jeannette E. Brown

at

Tucson, Arizona

on

1 October 2009

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION
Oral History Program
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LINDA C. MEADE-TOLLIN

1944 Born in London, West Virginia, on 16 August

Education

1964 B.S., Chemistry, West Virginia State College
1969 M.A., Biochemistry, Hunter College
1972 Ph.D., Biochemistry, City University of New York

Professional Experience

1972 Barnard College, New York, New York
Lecturer, Chemistry Section

1972-1975 College at Old Westbury, SUNY, Westbury, New York
Assistant Professor

1973-1974 The Rockefeller University, New York, New York
Visiting Assistant Professor

1977 University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
Research Associate, Biochemistry

1978-1982 Research Associate, Microbiology

1982-1985 Visiting Assistant Professor, Chemistry

1987-1992 Senior Lecturer, Biochemistry

1987-1989 Assistant Research Scientist, Anatomy

1989-1990 Research Assistant Professor, Anatomy

1990-1994 Research Assistant Professor, University of Arizona Cancer
Center

1994-1995 Research Assistant Professor, Surgery

1996-present Research Assistant Professor, Surgery

2000-2008 Member/Associate Member, University of Arizona Cancer Center

2008-present Research Assistant Professor Emerita, Surgery

1985-1986 Morehouse School of Medicine
Faculty Development Fellow

Honors

1991-1993	NIH/NCI Minority Investigator Supplement
1994-1996	NIH/NHLBI Minority Investigator Supplement
1996-2001	NIH/NHLBI K14 Mentored Faculty Career Development Award
1998	Henry Hill Award for outstanding research from the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers
2002	AACR Minority Scholar Travel Award
2006	Inducted into the African Scientific Institute
2008	Retired from the University of Arizona College of Medicine as a Research Assistant Professor Emerita

ABSTRACT

Linda C. Meade-Tollin was born and raised in London, West Virginia, one of two children. Her father was a dentist and a community activist, her mother a teacher of languages and a guidance counselor. Always enthusiastically encouraged by parents and teachers, Meade-Tollin did well in school, skipping two grades. When she was in ninth grade her high school was integrated, and the three top graduates in her year were black women. Although there were no science classes in her schools until high school, Meade-Tollin was always interested in science, and when she entered West Virginia State College she decided to major in chemistry. She worked at Harlem and Bellevue Hospitals before entering a chemistry PhD program at the City University of New York (CUNY) at the age of twenty one; a year later she transferred to a program in biochemistry. During her graduate career, Meade-Tollin spent time teaching and she traveled among the various CUNY campuses to do research with Burton Tropp—her doctoral thesis dealt with gene expression in *E. coli*.

Meade-Tollin's first faculty appointment was at the College at Old Westbury, and, for part of her time there, she was also a visiting assistant professor at Rockefeller University, working on sickle cell anemia in Anthony Cerami's lab. She met her future husband, Gordon Tollin, while he was on sabbatical from the University of Arizona at Bell Laboratories and Rockefeller University. She applied for and received a National Institutes of Health postdoctoral award at the University of Arizona; at the end of her award at Arizona, Meade-Tollin married and she also decided to stay at the University. She held several research, teaching, and administrative appointments there while also caring for elderly parents in her home. She was the only African-American woman to head a biomedical research laboratory at the University for many years; her areas of research focused on DNA damage, angiogenesis, and cancer invasion and metastasis. During this time she developed a reproducible and physiologically relevant bioassay for angiogenic inhibitors and enhancers suitable for drug discovery screening, and she spent a year as Faculty Development Fellow at Morehouse School of Medicine. Meade-Tollin has done many things in her career, but she considers her training and mentoring her greatest accomplishments.

She retired as a Research Assistant Professor Emerita in 2008. Now in retirement, Meade-Tollin is enjoying family, travel, health and fitness activities, and spiritual development. She is also Director of Anti-Metastasis Research for a biotech company, Cure Cancer Worldwide Corporation, and a consultant to Wish, a nutritional counseling company.

INTERVIEWER

Jeannette E. Brown has a research MS degree from the University of Minnesota and a BS degree in the Field of Chemistry from Hunter College. She started her industrial career at CIBA Pharmaceutical Co. as a junior chemist, working there for eleven years, and she held the position of Research Chemist at Merck & Co. Inc. for twenty-five years. Brown is a former Faculty Associate in the department of Pre-College Programs at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, holding the title of New Jersey Statewide Systemic Initiative (NJSSI) Regional Director. She was appointed to the National Science Foundation Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women Minorities and Persons with Disabilities (CEOSE) and served on that

committee for six years. She is the 2005 recipient of the American Chemical Society Dreyfus Award for mentoring minorities in science and she is currently working on a book about the history of African American women chemists.

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