



MORRIS WEISS

MORRIS WEISS was born on July 18th, 1933 at Jewish Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky. Morris says Medicine is in his DNA. His father was one of the region's first cardiologists and his great uncle, Leon Solomon, was among the group of prominent Louisville physicians who decided in 1903 to start a hospital of their own since Jewish doctors weren't allowed to practice at some of the other hospitals in town.



After finishing college at the University of Michigan, Morris went to medical school and then to Pennsylvania Hospital for his internship. He completed his internal medicine residency at Washington University and accepted an appointment in the public health service working with the Navajo. Not long afterwards, his father fell ill so on June 26th, 1962, Morris returned to Louisville to work with his father in his practice.

I rolled into town with a two-year-old, a pregnant wife, and I said, "I'm here." He said, "Good. You're on call tonight." (laughter) So, uh, here it is, fifty-five years later.

Civil rights were important to Morris' family. He recalls that his father arranged for Drs. Jesse Bell and Maurice Rabb, two Black physicians, to become members of Jewish Hospital staff and the Jefferson County Medical Society, which led to Jewish Hospital opening its doors to everyone, a revolutionary concept at the time. Morris has continued his father's civil rights work with the African American community in Louisville. He also published a history of African American medicine in Louisville focused on the history of The Red Cross Hospital and the Louisville National Medical College, which was the most prominent Black medical school in America from 1888 to 1910.

Morris says that while Jewish hospital was staffed by Jewish physicians for most of its existence, consultants and other non-Jewish physicians have practiced there. Currently, though, Morris believes that change is coming:

"There's only one way Jewish Hospital's name will stay on the building much longer, and that is if the hospital becomes part of the university, because... the need for these hospitals is gone...not the need but the... motivation to build them in the first place...no longer exists in our society."