

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH JAMES W. (JIM) COOPER

CONDUCTED, EDITED, AND INDEXED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

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Interview with James W. (Jim) Cooper  
Conducted, edited, and indexed by Thomas A. Scott  
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Location: Alumni House, Kennesaw campus, Kennesaw State University

TS: The interview today is with Jim Cooper who has had a long career at Southern Poly and is now part of the new university. Jim, why don't we begin with your background? The first thing I could find was when you became residence hall director at the University of Alabama at Huntsville in about 1989. I don't know anything about you before then. Why don't you talk about your background, where you went to school and how you got into higher education and some things like that?

JC: All right. I grew up in Huntsville, Alabama. I grew up with my grandmother and was the first person in my family to go to college and went to the University of Alabama in Huntsville. During my time there I became an R.A., which was mainly to help pay for having a place to live. I became a student ambassador and gave campus tours, so I got the bug of campus admissions. I ultimately finished there and became a hall director and later an admissions counselor in mostly out-of-state recruiting. I had never traveled before, and a guy named Ron [R.] Koger was chief enrollment officer there.

TS: Is that right?

JC: He sent me to every major city in the eastern part of the United States, so I started developing the traveling bug too.

TS: Okay, so when you were a residence hall director were you still a student at that time?

JC: Actually, I had just finished, and Ron hired me in the admissions role while I was also a residence hall director. I had been a student assistant and stuff like that, and we worked together at UAH until June of 1997. Ron Koger came to Southern Poly as the vice president for enrollment services at the time, and four months later on October 1, I started there as the director of student recruitment.

TS: Oh, October 1. I was wondering because that's a transition year in '97 at Southern Poly.

JC: Yes, when I started there [Dr. Stephen R.] Steve Cheshier had already retired, Dr. [Daniel S.] Papp was in place as the interim president, and the name had changed from the Southern College of Technology to Southern Polytechnic State University the previous year [1996]. So there was a lot of transition at that time.

TS: So let's see. I guess for years at the University of Alabama in Huntsville you were traveling all over the place as admissions counselor. Did you travel mainly all over the state of Alabama or throughout the southeast?

JC: We were under a mandate from the president to increase the out-of-state enrollment. At that time out-of-state costs in Alabama were less than in-state costs in some of other states. Our big sport was ice hockey. Believe it or not, we were NCAA Division I in ice hockey, the southernmost division I ice hockey team in the country. Huntsville was unlike the rest of the state in that it had a very non-native community. People were transplants who came with Boeing or the defense industry or Marshall Space Flight Center—the largest concentration of engineers in the country at one time.

TS: Well, you had a lot of Germans [at Marshall Space Flight Center after World War II].

JC: That's right. I studied German in high school and college. So we did college fairs in New Jersey, Connecticut, New York, Boston. You don't grow hockey players in Alabama territory, although there was a youth league in Huntsville. But almost all of the hockey players were Canadian or from Michigan and places like that.

TS: So you're up there recruiting.

JC: That's right.

TS: Fantastic.

JC: And then when I came here the focus was just increasing enrollment and the quality of students.

TS: So it was Ron Koger who recruits you to Southern Poly?

JC: Sure was, yes. He called me up after he had been here a few months. We were pretty close. I worked for him for nine years or so. He called me up and said, "I've got a director of recruitment job open. Are you interested?" So I applied, interviewed, and got it.

TS: Well, that makes sense because I know when you were up on the stage at the Strand [as master of ceremonies on Friday, March 13, 2015, for the film premiere of *The Five Eras of Southern Polytechnic State University*], you were talking about how long you had known Ron Koger, and I was trying to do my math and make it fit with how long you had been at Southern Poly.

JC: That's right. I had been with him a long time, and most people say that we act like an old married couple.

TS: So director of student recruitment at Southern Poly. How many students attended Alabama Huntsville compared to Southern Poly?

JC: At the time we left it was around 6,700 maybe, something like that?

TS: Okay, so Southern Poly when you got there was about half that, I guess.

JC: That's right, much smaller.

TS: But at least you were doing something similar with student recruitment.

JC: I was, for most of my time at Southern Poly, yes.

TS: I guess for the next six years, 1997 to 2003, that was your title, director of student recruitment, and then other things were added to it after that.

JC: Yes, as they happened.

TS: Were you still traveling all over creation?

JC: I wasn't traveling as much. We had a team that did that, and I moved into more of an administrative role. I did a short stint overseeing the institutional research and planning area just because someone retired and there was a spot. Then at one point the alumni director took a leave of absence for health reasons and then chose not to return. At the time Ron Koger was the acting executive director of advancement, also filling in for someone who had left. So he asked me to take on the alumni role. It's just one of those things that he trusted me to do it, so I did that for a number of years as well.

TS: So he came to Southern Poly in Advancement?

JC: No, no, no, he came as part of enrollment, but at one point the executive director of advancement left, and President [Lisa A.] Rossbacher asked him to be an interim while they did a search for a permanent person. So he did it for almost two years. When I got in, he asked me to take over the alumni role, which I ended up doing for four or five years in addition to student recruitment. Then at some point marketing was added to that role.

TS: Right. I've got the dates on it. From 2003 to 2006 your title was director of student recruitment and alumni relations. Then from 2006 to 2008 it was director of student recruitment, marketing, and alumni relations. Then it became executive director of strategic marketing and sustainability in 2008.

JC: In 2008, I remember this clearly, Ron Koger came into my office and said President Rossbacher wants to meet with you. So we went down to her office, and she said she wanted me to move into her office. She had just signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. She wanted someone to chair that committee and lead that effort, and she also wanted to put much more of a focus on the marketing area. There was a guy who had been working with me and with Ron for a long time named Gary Bush, who took over the student recruitment effort. So I moved into that role.

TS: Let's talk about when you got to Southern Poly in October 1997. Dan Papp had been there [as interim president] since July 1, and there was still a good deal of dissension on campus. Would that be a fair way to describe it, when you got there?

JC: Sure.

TS: Could you talk about that interim period when you got there when Dan Papp was the interim president?

JC: I can. I was somewhat removed from some of the strife that was going on, but I'd heard stories. Just not far before Ron Koger got there, there was something you probably heard about where five department chairs were removed from their positions. The way I discovered that that had happened was that Dr. Papp had started restoring some of those people to their position and in two cases, promoting those two to higher positions. They were pretty highly respected administrators and faculty members. I didn't report to Dr. Papp, so I really didn't get to see him much, but I met him within my first couple of weeks because I asked if I could have a meeting with the president to learn what his vision was. So he and Ron Koger and I went out for lunch.

TS: What was his vision?

JC: His vision was to grow the enrollment and make Southern Poly less of the best kept secret. I remember talking about it being the best kept secret. One of our challenges was everyone still knew it as Southern Tech, and most people thought it was a two-year school or a technical college. Georgia Tech could get away with a name like that because of their reputation, but Southern Tech [could not]. The only other schools that ended in "tech" besides Georgia Tech were Chattahoochee Tech and North Metro Tech. So we had a lot of students walking into the administration building asking about a cosmetology program, and we said we didn't have one. So we needed to change the image so everybody knew it as a four-year school.

TS: That's really interesting because you can go all the way back to '48 and maybe [Hans A.] Al Troemel was telling me about people who would drive up and wanting to know where they could bring their lawn mowers to be repaired. But you would think that from the 1950s to the 1990s there would have been a lot of progress on those kinds of things. I found a speech that Dr. Rossbacher made to the Board of Regents when they met on your campus in 2005, and she basically was saying the same thing then—that you're still a secret, despite all the programs that were going on there. So I guess it was a challenge to get the word out, wasn't it?

JC: It was a challenge, and I think the challenge was maybe not insurmountable, but the deal was that we didn't become separate from Georgia Tech until 1980. So many of our alumni, even though they'd attended Southern Tech, had diplomas that said Georgia Tech on it. They had an allegiance [to Georgia Tech]. They'd go to Tech football games, and that was their identity. So they're not out talking in great numbers about Southern Tech.

TS: That was always the case up to 1980 that the alumni . . . ?

JC: I think it was up until 1980, correct.

TS: Wow.

JC: Once we became a separate institution that changed, but then [in the minds of] many people, [we] had the reputation that if you couldn't cut it at Tech you'd transfer to Southern Tech. It was [regarded as] the fall back. One of the things that I learned when I started doing marketing—I did a focus group with a bunch of engineering and engineering technology students, and every single one of them came to Southern Poly at the time with plans to transfer to Tech. Every one! Now, they all stayed. The reason

they planned to transfer is because when they came here, they didn't know that we had housing and athletics and a social life.

TS: There's a similar story here on the Kennesaw campus, exactly the same thing. We had a lot of students even after we were a four-year school that would plan to transfer somewhere along the line, but a lot of students didn't once they found out it was a pretty good school here.

JC: I forget who made this comparison for me. It's not an original idea. But if you think of the University of Georgia, you clearly think it's a residential campus. The public thinks of the new combined Kennesaw State University, and does not think it's a residential campus. But percentage wise it is not that different. We have a lot more beds for resident students than people realize [5,200 on the two campuses for an anticipated fall 2015 enrollment of approximately 33,000].

TS: Particularly if you count those living in private apartments right off campus.

JC: True.

TS: I remember Betty Siegel, years ago, visiting the University of Michigan, I think, when her son was enrolled there, and noting that they had something like five thousand students living on campus out of how many thousands they had there. The percentage wasn't that high. So, yes, it's amazing. It took forever for Kennesaw to live down its junior college label as well.

JC: Right. I think you start to see that change. The thing we started focusing on at Southern Poly was for years we had the third or fourth highest average SAT [in the University System of Georgia] for incoming freshmen. Part of that was just a self-selection process because of the kind of programs we had. We were bringing in high quality students. So we started using that [in promoting the university]. We also tried to use Dr. Rossbacher's credentials, having been a Princeton graduate and a NASA finalist and things like that, to help elevate things.

TS: Right. I got you off track of what we were talking about with Dan Papp being interim president.

JC: Well, the vision he expressed was just one of a growing place. We had been sort of status quo or stagnant. He put together a cabinet and started trying to get the foundation board to be a little more active and held the place together, essentially. Typically, an interim president's role is just don't do any harm, but he actually put in a CIO [chief information officer], brought in some new cabinet members, and laid a good foundation. He was really well liked on campus. He would go play basketball in our rec center during the lunch hour with a number of staff members, and he was just one of the guys, which really appealed to them. They did the search and got President Rossbacher in '98. She came in and was also well liked. That really turned the tide for that campus, I think.

TS: Right. You used the passive voice on the fact that some of the administrators were fired and then were brought back. I assume that they had strong faculty support. In fact, I think they had to go through national searches to get their positions back.

JC: I think that's correct. One of them was [Michael G.] Mike Murphy.

TS: I knew Mike Murphy really well.

JC: Okay, yes, Mike became the chief information officer under Dan Papp.

TS: I didn't know that. I guess I was thinking dean of Computing and Software Engineering.

JC: He served that role as well. He served as the chief information officer for a while. The guy who was the chief business officer at the time was John Hosey. I don't know if you've heard that name.

TS: No.

JC: The two of them did not get along.

TS: Mike and John?

JC: Mike and John. Dr. Papp had to basically get between the two of them a couple of times.

TS: Mike went to the same church that I went to, so I heard some of his war stories.

JC: Yes, I knew Mike pretty well.

TS: But he was one of those who survived it all.

JC: He was. And there were other guys who had been fired and returned. One of them was Britt [K.] Pearce. I think Britt is still in the local community. Britt became the chair of the Mechanical Engineering Technology [department]. He was a reserved, low-key guy, very nice. I had a lot of respect for him and for all of those guys, really. [William S.] Sandy Pfeiffer who was one of those five, if I recall, ultimately became the vice president for academic affairs under Dr. Rossbacher and left Southern Poly to go to Ramapo [College of New Jersey, as vice president for academic affairs and then acting president in 2004-2005] and then was president of Warren Wilson [College in North Carolina, 2006-2012]. He retired from Warren Wilson as president, so no harm, no foul there.

TS: Right.

JC: He did fine.

TS: Well, the problem was probably with the vice president of academic affairs wasn't it? It wasn't so much with President Cheshier was it?

JC: I can't remember exactly how it happened. Actually, I think they tried to do a vote of no confidence on the president, and Harris Travis, the VPAA (vice president for academic affairs), fired them.

TS: I think that sounds right.

JC: We had a very colorful chief of police who was kind of like the small town sheriff, Gary Chastain. Gary was called to Harris Travis's office one time. As Gary told me this story,

Harris said, "I'm about to call in five department chairs and fire them. I just want you to be around in case something happens." So he did, he called them in one by one and fired them.

TS: Well, Dr. Travis is just about to retire [as senior pastor of] Zion Baptist [Church in Marietta]; he's like 82 years old now.

JC: He can still tell a great story.

TS: Yes. I'm trying to get an interview with him.

JC: That would be great. I don't know for sure but I think that he and Dr. Cheshier came together from Purdue.

TS: They did. They used to travel together when they were working on their doctorates while they were on the faculty at Purdue. They were travelling over the University of Illinois, an hour and a half or whatever it took to get there two nights a week, so they got to know each other very well.

JC: Yes. You can imagine how close they were. If some guys were trying to do a vote of no confidence in Steve Cheshier, he wasn't just being loyal to his boss, but to his good friend.

TS: Well, I had a good interview with Dr. Cheshier. He's got his own take on the controversies of that period.

JC: He spoke at our [SPSU's spring 2015] commencement.

TS: I saw that. How was he received?

JC: Very well. It wasn't your [typical] commencement speech. It was a very important speech for many of us because it talked a lot about the transitions in the history of the institution, of the campus, and how each time that that transition felt a little bit uncomfortable or controversial, but ultimately ended very positively. You know, to sort of lead up to consolidation being one of those types of transitions.

TS: That's interesting. Dr. Cheshier is a very nice person, I think, and Dr. Travis is too.

JC: I agree.

TS: Sometimes these things happen.

JC: That's right.

TS: Okay, so the campus got through that year, and then Dr. Rossbacher came in. Apparently, the chancellor didn't want to take any chance on anybody locally being involved in the decision-making from what I understand from her.

JC: I think I've heard that as well. That was [Chancellor] Stephen [R.] Portch. I wasn't involved in that search at all, but the campus was uneasy because they had just gone through this interesting period. Dan Papp was very well liked, so everyone was really

concerned about who the president would be. When she was named president, well before her inauguration, she came and gave a speech on campus in the student center ballroom. Everyone, I think, got a sense then that she was the right person. She ended her speech with “the future is so bright I’ve got to wear shades,” and she put on sunglasses. Everyone was like, okay, we’re going to be all right.

TS: It sounds like something Betty Siegel would do. That’s great. So basically you worked under Dr. Rossbacher for most of your career at Southern Poly.

JC: For a good bit of it certainly. I got to know her very well.

TS: Let’s get back to the student recruitment and how difficult it was to get the message out to students in those years?

JC: Well, as I said, we had the name issue. We tried to be very careful in our messaging and to be somewhat clever. We took a different approach to marketing because the name didn’t just roll off the tongue. It wasn’t the kind of name that you could just slap on billboards because it wasn’t that recognizable. We tried to be sneaky about it and get people talking about the place. We did some billboards that had song lyrics on them that confused people. This is around the time that we added mechatronics engineering, which Dr. Rossbacher called robotics on steroids. We borrowed from an old Styx song, “Domo Arigoto, Mr. Roboto”, which might be a horrible song, but people would see that, and they were confused. So they started asking questions. It wasn’t about Southern Poly directly, but we became part of the conversation.

The most unique thing we did was we created a narrative about a robot named Poly that had been created and programmed by students. Because they did such a good job, and this robot was so inquisitive, just as they were, it left campus and started exploring the metro area. So we had billboards and t-shirts and all kinds of things that said, “Have you seen my robot?” And you could go to [missingrobot.com](http://missingrobot.com) and post if you saw it. There’s a robot costume that’s in the archives now, and that took off. It wasn’t overtly about Southern Poly. It was just that was sort of the setting for this narrative. Around that same time we started hosting Georgia Best Robotics competitions for high school students to compete in robotics. We were the hub for the Georgia competition. It was a national competition that was started by Texas Instruments.

TS: Good way to sell the program in the schools.

JC: Well, it did. It seemed to work. So things like that, I think, were some of the things that we tried to do to get around the limitations of the name. I think in the South they didn’t get “polytechnic.” Auburn was originally Alabama Polytechnic, but nobody really knows that except you and me.

TS: That’s right. And the same thing with Tennessee Polytechnic Institute.

JC: Right. And no one thinks of Virginia Tech as Virginia Polytechnic.

TS: So it was the Poly part that they didn’t understand?

- JC: Right, they didn't really get it. There was a sign on the interstate that said Southern Poly. At one point somebody asked me if that was a plastics company or polymers or something. So it was challenging.
- TS: Yes. I know Dr. Rossbacher didn't like "poly." She liked to use "polytechnic"—Southern Polytechnic.
- JC: She surely did. When the name changed, there were still a lot of people when I got there that were unhappy about where the name landed [from Southern Technical Institute to Southern College of Technology in 1987 to Southern Polytechnic State University in 1996]. The big joke was that everyone wanted to call it Marietta Institute of Technology, MIT.
- TS: Okay [chuckle]! I've heard the story that Georgia Tech didn't like Southern Institute of Technology, because it sounded larger than Georgia Institute of Technology, so it became Southern College of Technology before coming Southern Polytechnic.
- JC: Right. You mentioned that story in the film, and I hadn't heard that before, so I like hearing that. But we started turning the corner. One of the big things for us was getting engineering, true engineering degrees, in addition to engineering technology.
- TS: When you got to Marietta were there any engineering degrees?
- JC: No.
- TS: You came in '97, and, I guess, the first engineering degree was the MS in software engineering and then maybe mechatronics?
- JC: Software engineering is first [approved by the Board of Regents on July 9, 1997] and then came three: [BS programs in] construction engineering [June 7, 2006], mechatronics engineering [October 11, 2006], and systems engineering [March 21, 2007].
- TS: I have a date on August 12, 2009 when the Board of Regents approved bachelor's degrees in civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering.
- JC: There were a couple things happening with the enrollment. Right before I got there they had made the decision to go to the semester system from quarters. Also the Board of Regents had very rigid admission requirements for whatever type of institution you were. You had to have these sets of credentials. They decided that most schools would offer learning support and development studies or something similar for students who didn't have all the high school requirements.
- TS: You didn't have much of that at Southern Poly.
- JC: As soon as those admission requirements were changed by the system, the Southern Tech faculty voted to eliminate developmental studies. That took out a number of students. During that time, engineering enrollments had been going down nationwide, so the campus had been struggling to grow. Shortly after we got there, the one thing that helped us was computer science was growing as a major nationally. That was certainly the case there. Then the architecture program started to grow. So architecture and construction

management, partly coinciding with the boom in industry, kept us afloat until the engineering piece started turning around.

TS: Why do you think fewer people were going into engineering?

JC: I don't know if it coincided with a lack of focus nationally with NASA winding down. I don't know if there was a push nationally to promote engineering. Certainly, that [emphasis] changed in the next ten years or so. You may have heard me say before that we needed engineers in the state and in the nation. I talked a lot about how I think the graduates from Southern Poly and Southern Tech really helped make this state and the world better. But engineering technology was a difficult thing to promote. If you talk to some faculty and some deans in that area, it was one of the most rigorous engineering technology programs in the country because it was so closely related to Georgia Tech. They [the SPSU faculty] had a chip on their shoulder about it. They wanted to be the toughest, and that produced really good graduates. But when people would come up to your table at a college fair, they would ask, "Do you have engineering?" The answer couldn't be yes. It had to be, "Well, sort of, or kind of, or yes, but . . ."

TS: And then they say, "Well, what is engineering technology"?

JC: If the prospective student is confused at the very beginning it's a very difficult thing to get them to consider enrolling.

TS: I suspect that the average students coming out of high school didn't really have a good grasp on how abstract engineering was becoming at places like Georgia Tech by this time.

JC: That's true. Many of them were going to be an engineer because their parents told them they were going to be an engineer or they knew Georgia Tech was well known and had a football team. So, yes, they didn't have all the facts. But once we got the engineering programs that changed the game a little bit.

TS: That's when the enrollment really takes off, isn't it?

JC: It certainly did help. It was trending up already, but it took a huge leap with engineering.

TS: Looking at the university enrollment figures, what is it, about two engineering students for every one engineering technology student now or close to it?

JC: Yes, one of the challenges was that once we got mechanical, electrical, and civil, the traditional [engineering majors], those enrollments started going up, but the equivalent engineering technology programs started going down. There was a good bit of clash on the campus between the engineering and engineering technology folks.

TS: I'd heard that. I don't know anything about that. Could you talk about that?

JC: When we first got approved to offer engineering, I was one of the folks who felt like we needed to have a strategy for how to deal with the change in culture that would create. I believed that they should put mechanical engineering technology and mechanical engineering in the same department, so that they weren't competing and would work together. Dr. [Zvi] Szafran, the vice president for academic affairs, felt they should stay

separate. So we had a school of engineering technology and a school of engineering. The engineering technology folks started getting really worried when enrollment started dropping.

The engineering program needed to be competing with Georgia Southern. We weren't ever really competing with Georgia Tech, [but our goal should have been] keeping students from going out of state to study engineering and definitely not going down to Georgia Southern. But the school of engineering technology was competing against the school of engineering on our own campus. You know how students are, Tom. If I did everything the right way and convinced a student he wanted to study mechanical engineering technology, and then he gets the application, and he's going down alphabetically, and right above mechanical engineering technology is mechanical engineering, that's a no brainer. Why wouldn't he check that? So one of the other ideas that hadn't happened by the time of the consolidation was to maybe change those engineering technology programs so that they weren't, name-wise, the equivalent of the engineering programs. So maybe mechanical engineering technology would become manufacturing engineering technology and electrical could become electronics. There were places in the country that taught those things, so that made some sense.

The other controversial issue was, if you've got engineering technology, which is changing to become a much smaller enrollment, and you've got engineering, which is growing, if you want to offer a new program in, let's say, environmental engineering, do you make it environmental engineering or environmental engineering technology? There is both a practical answer and a political answer. I think our campus chose the political answer, which was to appease the engineering technology faculty by showing they were vesting in them, right, and not do the thing that really had the potential to grow. Do you know what I'm saying?

TS: Oh, I see, absolutely.

JC: So there were conflicts.

TS: So you think that it was a good decision with the consolidation to combine them together again?

JC: Absolutely. I do. The dean of the engineering technology school is a really great guy, [Jeffrey L.] Jeff Ray. I really liked him. He was very active in the engineering technology world. He was on ABET's board. ABET [Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology] had adopted some sort of catch phrase for engineering technology, which was something like, "The degree is engineering technology, but the field is engineering." Or, [maybe], "The career is engineering." [The School of Engineering Technology & Management] wanted to use that tagline on all their promotional materials. I said "no" because that didn't meet the university's goals, and it was just their specific ones. I had that authority at the time. But they put it on a bulletin board in their office. Well, they were in the Engineering Technology Center. On one side of the building was engineering, and on the other side was engineering technology. So the engineers put on their bulletin board, "The degree is engineering and the field is engineering." So it was a fairly unhealthy competition.

- TS: Right, I understand. Now you say you weren't competing with Georgia Tech. Is that because they were getting students with a higher SAT score by a hundred points or so, or was it because SPSU attracted non-traditional students as opposed to Georgia Tech's traditional students or because what was being taught was different in some way?
- JC: If students were accepted to both institutions, usually Tech would win. Now there were a few exceptions to that. There was occasionally a student whose parents didn't want them inside the perimeter or they were intimidated by the big city, or there were students who chose Southern Poly because they wanted to get their hands on things—they wanted to build a car or whatever.
- TS: So engineering was still more applied at Southern Poly than at Georgia Tech.
- JC: Yes. And that's an interesting thing to say because, back to the engineering/engineering technology fight, engineering technology, through its existence, had defined itself as applied engineering. When we got engineering, Dean [Thomas R.] Currin said, "Georgia Tech has theoretical engineering, and we are applied engineering." And engineering technology's folks are saying, "No, we're applied engineering." I'm literally in a meeting when we're talking about promoting engineering and engineering technology in a marketing campaign, and I can't use the word "applied" because they're about to fight each other over the word.
- TS: So engineering technology is even more applied. So Tom Currin, the dean of the engineering school, said that? And he is still the dean with the consolidation [of the new KSU's Southern Polytechnic College of Engineering and Engineering Technology].
- JC: Right. He's a good person for that. He was the dean for the school of engineering [at SPSU]. Obviously, his focus was on engineering, but he spent most of his career as a faculty member in engineering technology in the civil engineering technology area.
- TS: Do you think eventually engineering technology is going to go away, and the degrees are all going to be engineering?
- JC: I don't know that that's the case. There are real challenges with engineering technology in terms of graduates being licensed as professional engineers. Not all engineers have to be licensed, of course, but certainly civil does.
- TS: It takes them longer to get a license.
- JC: It takes them longer, and in some neighboring states they don't even have an option. So graduates couldn't go to Alabama or Florida or Tennessee if they didn't have reciprocal arrangements. That made it a real challenge. Now prospective students don't even think about that, but there certainly is an issue.
- TS: Yes, I understand. You were saying earlier on alumni relations that it was a big challenge when people who graduated before 1980 identified with Georgia Tech. So you really didn't have that large a pool of alumni that were committed to Southern Poly before 1980.

- JC: Right. I think there were challenges like you had at Kennesaw, which had very few residential students for much of that time. The interesting thing is that Southern Tech has always been residential from the very beginning, but grew more with commuter students over the 1970s and 1980s, I suppose. So you had alumni who had been affiliated with Tech for most of that time, and then you had a stretch where, unless you had felt an affinity to the campus because of the job you got—which is what a lot of our alumni felt strongly—the loyalty [to the institution] wasn't because of all the social life. Now that started changing in the 1990s, I think, but again, that's a pretty young alumni base.
- TS: Right. So you probably didn't raise a whole lot of money for the institution in those early days, which is the same parallel story here.
- JC: That's right.
- TS: I know our foundation goes back to 1969 on the Kennesaw campus. Up until very recently there were not a whole lot of alumni on the foundation board. Was it the same story at Southern Poly?
- JC: It was absolutely the story at Southern Poly until maybe ten years ago or so. We had young alumni who hadn't had a chance to make their wealth yet, and they hadn't had that strong affiliation with the campus. That did start to change though. I think now there's almost an equal mix of alumni and non-alumni on the foundation.
- TS: Oh really? Equal amounts? That's way ahead of the Kennesaw State University Foundation, isn't it?
- JC: Well, again, that's just been a relatively recent phenomenon, but, in fact, the chair of the foundation is an alumnus, and his daughter is now an alumna as well.
- TS: I guess I have two different stories on the problems with Georgia Tech while Southern Poly was trying to get straight engineering degrees. Dan Papp has promised to tell me the true story whenever I get a chance to do another interview with him about the consolidation.
- JC: I've heard a story about him as the executive vice chancellor for academic affairs and how UGA wanted engineering. He kept telling [UGA President Michael F.] Mike Adams "no," which wasn't an easy thing to do. I'll let him tell you the details of that story.
- TS: All right. It makes sense that Georgia Tech would rather have Southern Poly have engineering than UGA.
- JC: You know, to Dr. Szafran's credit, he used that as a bargaining tool with Georgia Tech saying, "If we don't get it, Georgia will." It turned out both did.
- TS: Yes, [Dr. Szafran] didn't want to talk about that in the interview. He gave us another story.
- JC: Well to be fair, we also partnered with Tech and did a market research study to see if there was demand for engineering. We already knew there was. We had already looked

at how many Georgia students went to Auburn or Clemson and other out-of-state places, and we knew there was a demand beyond Georgia Tech. Once they saw that too, they weren't threatened.

TS: I guess it was largely the metropolitan area where the greatest demand was.

JC: That's right.

TS: And non-traditional students and all that. Okay, would you talk about achievements when Alumni Relations was part of your title?

JC: We started really reaching out to some of the older alumni, having reunions and bringing folks together. We built and maintained a really good relationship with the first ever student at the institution, Floyd "Snuffy" Smith, and we rebuilt the alumni board.

TS: Floyd "Snuffy" Smith?

JC: Yes. He went by Snuffy. He was the first student. He was a long time alumni board member, and he recently passed away in December.

TS: How did they figure he was the first student of the 116 in the first class?

JC: I don't know how he verified it; he said he was. He's told the story many times about how he was a veteran, and he was thinking he would go to school, and he heard an ad that Georgia Tech was starting a two-year school.

TS: Oh, so he got his application in first?

JC: He just called up to see who he needed to see, and he went, and sure enough he claims they said he was the first student. He loved the place. He stayed involved with it for years, and we voted to rename our alumni scholarship in his name.

TS: That's great. I was able to do an interview over the phone with [Charles T.] Hap Holladay, the first civil engineering technology professor.

JC: Oh wow, yes. Have you heard of or talked to Orren Williams? He goes by O.W. He was a very colorful guy. He was a mechanical engineering technology professor, and he founded and led the race car team for years. He's been retired for years, but he does some advising or teaching at Wheeler High School. They called the administration building a couple of names. It was once the goat shed, and then sometimes they called it the head shed. Whenever I would see him down in the old mechanical engineering technology building, he'd say, "Cooper, how are things up in the head shed?"

TS: It was 2006 that you become director of student recruitment, marketing, and alumni relations. I guess in 2008 you become executive director of strategic marketing and sustainability, and it sounds like you were doing everything from recruitment to brand management to communications and marketing and consulting and web management and what-have-you.

JC: Yes, there was a lot of stuff going on. I mentioned Ron Koger was the interim executive director for advancement, and that's how I got started with alumni. They did a search and hired Ron [D.] Dempsey, who came from Shorter College. Ron asked me, "Hey, would you consider continuing overseeing the alumni area while doing your other stuff?" Because frankly he wanted to use that salary line to hire a development officer or some other person. I had been doing that for no additional compensation. I enjoyed it, so that happened. I had been chairing the marketing committee and leading marketing efforts for some time. So that just got formalized. One of the things that I felt strongly about was developing a new website. Websites were at the time becoming the most important marketing tool for the institution. So we started a website committee with some faculty expertise. If you can imagine on a campus like Southern Poly, there were a lot of folks who would consider themselves experts. I needed to have their input. I thought, better on the front end than on the back end. What we ended up deciding was to create a web master position and hire someone to come in and do this in-house. We did, and that helped fill out my marketing team. We redesigned the website to put in a content management system. I was really pleased with how that landed. Right before that we also changed the logo of the university, which was possibly the most controversial thing I did. For a long time they had a logo that was a flame. It's a little bit of a cliché. Many campuses use a flame, such as Georgia State.

TS: The enlightening of the world.

JC: That's right. So we ended up bringing in a firm to do a study, and we changed the logo to that hexagon logo, which initially met with a lot of resistance, but ultimately became pretty well loved, I think. It was, I thought, a strong symbol. It's also a symbol used in chemistry, and the hexagon is one of the strongest occurring structures of nature. That's why if you cut open a hornet's nest, there's a hexagon cell structure in there. That's important as a back story for the logo because we [SPSU] are the Hornets. So it just made a lot of sense. I got involved in the sustainability thing, as I mentioned.

TS: What does that mean exactly, sustainability?

JC: It technically means preserving your natural resources for future generations while meeting the needs of the current generation. There are a lot of definitions for it, but for me, it meant trying to reduce our carbon footprint and to be more environmentally friendly. It's very much not a glamour job. We conducted a trash audit. We went through the trash to see what percentage of what we were throwing away was actually recyclable or compostable. It was a lot it turns out. So we tried to campaign to get people to reduce, reuse, recycle, things like that. We started observing Earth Hour and Earth Days, using less energy, all those kinds of things. I enjoyed that work tremendously. We had a really great faculty person who was a champion of that named Julie [R.] Newell.

TS: I've done an interview with her.

JC: Julie's a great person.

TS: That would be right down her alley.

JC: Absolutely. She was probably the greatest champion. It also meant that I got calls most days from Bob Harbort [professor of computer science] telling me that somebody left a light on overnight.

TS: I can understand that. I've done an interview with Bob also.

JC: Bob cares a lot; he's a good guy.

TS: But it sounds like on sustainability that you had support from the top?

JC: Oh, absolutely. President Rossbacher—she moved me into her office, gave me the responsibility for sustainability, and added the marketing piece. Really, she told me she wanted to use me in an advisory role, have me help write speeches and things like that. I was real excited about it. A few weeks into that she was asked to be the interim executive vice chancellor for academic affairs at the system office.

TS: That's right; she did do that.

JC: She followed Behurez [N.] Sethna from [the University of] West Georgia. He had been the [interim senior vice chancellor, 1999-2000] and interim academic executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer [2006-2007], and he had also been president at West Georgia.

TS: Oh, yes.

JC: She was asked to do that [in 2007]. So she left the office and was downtown for six months or so until they did a search. So I moved into that office and moved into that role and juggled those things as best I could. Luckily, around that same time we told Ron Dempsey I couldn't do the alumni piece anymore. It was being handled primarily by Pierrette Maillet anyway. So he formalized that and put her in charge of the alumni operation, and she did a great job.

TS: She's here [as director of the office of Alumni Relations].

JC: She's here and going to be responsible for both sets of alumni, Southern Poly and Kennesaw State. We're working on trying to merge the two alumni boards, which is no easy task.

TS: Oh. No, I guess not.

JC: But we have a good group of folks working on that. So, what else?

TS: Well, then in 2013 your title becomes assistant vice president for university communication. Did that mean that you were over PR and all of that?

JC: One thing I didn't have was public relations. That stayed in the advancement area for a long time. I know President Rossbacher talked about making that change at some point. Finally, she had a talk with Dr. Dempsey, who didn't mind making that move. So she did, and I inherited two folks there in the PR area. That kind of changed my life. I had never

really had to worry about media. I'd always had an interest, but not responsibility, for emergency communications, but those became an important part of my job.

TS: So you got there just in time for the announcement about consolidation. Why don't you tell as much of the story as you feel comfortable telling about how you found out about the consolidation and maybe how the campus found out about it?

JC: I can tell that story, I think. About a week before it was announced, I had access to President Rossbacher's calendar because of my role in assisting her. I noticed that she had a meeting scheduled with the chancellor. In one of our meetings I said, "What's going on with you and the chancellor?" She told me that she didn't know. I thought on that for a while, and I thought that's kind of strange that he would just call her down there for a meeting and she didn't know. So afterwards I asked her to tell me how it went, and she did. She looked stressed when she came back from the meeting. I asked her what it was about. She told me it was about members on a task force that she was supposed to co-chair, I think, related to distance learning or something. I didn't buy it. I thought that was something he would have called her or send an e-mail. It didn't sound like a face-to-face meeting to me. My nature is to probe a little bit, and so I did. I said, "Is that really what it was about?" She didn't say anything. I asked, "Was it about consolidation?" Because I had heard the rumors for years, ever since the first [consolidation]. She shed a tear, and I knew then what that was about.

TS: So for the record . . .

JC: She didn't tell me but . . .

TS: But you figured it out.

JC: I didn't tell a soul, not my closest friend, Ron Koger, not even my wife. Part of me hoped that maybe I was wrong, but I wasn't.

TS: So this is about ten days ahead of time?

JC: Something like that, right.

TS: Because she was going on a trip out of state, I believe.

JC: I think that's right. Then, I did know a little bit before it was announced because I had to be involved in the press release distribution to the campus and stuff like that.

TS: The announcement was on November 1<sup>st</sup> at noon, if I remember correctly. When did you find out officially?

JC: The plan was for the president to call a meeting for the senior cabinet and deans for an emergency budget meeting at 10:00 a.m.

TS: On the 1<sup>st</sup>?

JC: On the 1<sup>st</sup>.

TS: But you knew about it; she had told you . . .

JC: I knew that plan starting on that Thursday, the 31<sup>st</sup>.

TS: So she told you on the 31<sup>st</sup>?

JC: Right.

TS: And she told you to start working on a press release?

JC: Well, mainly to expect the press release from John Millsaps [vice chancellor for media and publications] at the system office. And I had to coordinate with Arlethia Perry-Johnson [vice president for communications and marketing] at the Kennesaw campus. The communication came straight from the system office. They issued the press release, and Arlethia and I needed to make sure that the distribution was simultaneous.

TS: On the two campuses?

JC: You didn't want one campus to get the information before the other. So at 10:00 we met. Everyone was sort of upbeat, wondering what's going on with the budget. Then President Rossbacher told everyone that consolidation was happening. There was silence; stunned silence was what it was. She was cool, calm, and collected. She had had a little time, obviously, to get her head around this. So she told everyone that the memo was coming out. I can't remember if it came out at 11:00.

TS: I thought it was noon.

JC: You're right; it was noon. After that she said she would be on the steps of the student center to [hold], basically, an impromptu town forum to answer any questions that she could. That ended, and I went straight to my team and had them meet and told them in person. Then I was walking back, and I ran into the athletic director, [Matthew] Matt Griffin. Matt was a baseball player, a coach, and an athletic director at Southern Poly, long time career there [SPSU assistant baseball coach, 1999-2004; head baseball coach, 2004-2012; assistant athletic director, 2006-2012, director of athletics, 2012-2014; and KSU's assistant athletics director for internal operations, 2014-present]. He also was smart enough to know if we were being consolidated that that was the end of athletics [at SPSU]. You know, [NCAA] Division I [at KSU] versus NAIA [at SPSU]. He was rather emotional. He was pretty stunned. Then we had a lot of people gather around the steps, and President Rossbacher stood up there and graciously answered everything as best she could. I said this in the film; I can say it now. That evening a handful of colleagues came to my house, and we sat outside and drank a beer and cried and told stories. Shortly thereafter they put together a consolidation implementation committee. The work of consolidation started.

TS: A lot of effort went into consolidation.

JC: It certainly did.

TS: And you were on the consolidation implementation committee.

JC: I was, yes.

- TS: How do you think that went?
- JC: It was very challenging work. We had 81 operational working groups. The interesting piece of it was you had equal numbers of Kennesaw State people and Southern Poly people.
- TS: But we had a much bigger faculty, so that means a lot more work for the Southern Poly people.
- JC: Well, maybe that's true. Many people were on multiple operational working groups because there just weren't as many people [at SPSU]. But the other thing is that Southern Poly people started looking for jobs immediately. So many of our numbers diminished, and we weren't able to replace them. That was probably the biggest challenge of that year because there was a lot of work involved in consolidation, and then [with] people leaving, everyone just had to pick up stuff and try to get it done. It was a very trying time.
- TS: I gather that just because of the uncertainty, a lot of people began to apply elsewhere. That was my impression at any rate. Even though they were probably going to be taken care of in the long run, they didn't want to stick around and find out.
- JC: That's right. It was a tough time. Because we were small—we were a very close group—many of those folks [that left] were good friends of mine; so seeing that broken up was difficult.
- TS: I know I was over there late last summer, and they were just beginning to interview folks for the positions in the department of English, Technical Communication & Media Arts, because they lost a number of faculty.
- JC: Right. The mindset I tried to take was to preserve the things that made both campuses special and to take the best of both into this new university.
- TS: How well do you think we've done on that?
- JC: My assessment right now is that the Marietta campus is struggling a little bit in terms of morale because many people have been relocated here [to the Kennesaw campus] or they have left. So there aren't as many familiar faces these days down there, and they feel like a satellite campus. Now, one of the things that I've been saying a lot is that we've got to treat both campuses equally even though we know they're not equal in many ways. If I'm a prospective student looking at engineering or architecture, for instance, and I'm looking at Auburn and Georgia Southern and Clemson and a few big schools, and I come here, and I do a campus tour on the Marietta campus, and it feels like a satellite campus, I think we've lost them at that point. One thing we've talked about in naming the campuses, early on the discussion [was about naming them] North campus and South campus. I don't know if you heard my joke about that.
- TS: No.
- JC: The danger there, I told Dr. Papp, was that people would call that the consolidation of northern aggression. So we ended up going to Kennesaw campus and Marietta campus.

TS: Why didn't we go to Kennesaw campus and Southern Poly campus?

JC: You know, a lot of people pushed for that. I don't know for sure. I think the Board of Regents weren't open to that option, but they did name the college of engineering and engineering technology the Southern Polytechnic College, which really did help with a lot of our alumni. So that's good. Dr. Papp also made sure that the name of the college can be on your diploma, so that students that graduate in those fields will have Southern Polytechnic as part of the name.

TS: Why didn't they do that with the architecture college as well?

JC: Well, the word I hear is they wanted to leave naming opportunities to donors. You know that engineering technology was really the historical background of the institution, so I think that's why that area got the name.

TS: I see. Sure. But morale, you're on [the Kennesaw] campus, but you see it down there. Ron Koger, I guess, is in the Kennesaw Hall, isn't he?

JC: No, he's on the Marietta campus.

TS: Is he?

JC: He's in the administration building. He's in my old office, actually. It looks a lot better. He's not nearly as messy. Other than the four months while I was still at UAH and he was here, this is the first time we've been on separate campuses in 26 years. But we talk on the phone quite a bit, and I go down there and take him to lunch.

TS: So the morale problem is going to continue for a while it sounds like.

JC: Well, I think so. One of the things that's going to help, hopefully, is I understand that the new vice president for economic development and community engagement [Charles Ross] is going to be housed on the Marietta campus in the administration building, and his team will be there. That will bring a new energy, I hope, and a sense of importance that I think is lacking right now. So I think that's a good plan.

TS: Yes, I do too. I was happy to see that Jon [A.] Preston [professor of software engineering and game development] is the new faculty executive assistant to the president.

JC: I think that was great too. I know that Dr. Papp's plan is to get some early wins for the Marietta campus. I can't say this with absolute certainty because we're going to do a feasibility study to see if it's doable, but the hope is that when we start a comprehensive capital campaign in Advancement that one of the things we'll focus on is a new construction management building, privately funded, largely.

TS: Oh, how about that!

JC: So that would be on the Marietta campus, and that would be a huge win as well. I know the president is also looking at new academic programs like a doctorate in engineering and some other stuff. That's all going to help.

TS: I know one of the concerns was it was 1980 before Southern Tech got free from Georgia Tech, and there was that sense that the Marietta campus didn't get enough money because the budget went to Georgia Tech. They kept the money in Atlanta. So I imagine there are some things that we're going to have to overcome.

JC: I don't think it'll get to that extent because you don't have any duplicate programs, and you have some premier programs on the Marietta campus. I have a question for you. How old is the institution?

TS: Kennesaw? How old is this one?

JC: Well, we're one institution now, so how old are we?

TS: I've been asking myself that question.

JC: We're either zero as in we're just born or we're fifty-two [from the chartering of KSU in 1963] or we're sixty-seven [since the opening of Southern Tech in 1948].

TS: Well, I asked [Edwin A.] Ed Rugg, who used to be vice president and is now working with SACS. He said it was going to be 1963. That was his take. Now, I don't know. That's a good question for me to ask Dan Papp when I get a chance to interview him about the consolidation.

JC: It struck me this morning that Dr. Papp talked about our fifty-two, fifty-three year history, and I thought, that kind of ignores a certain number of years. I don't know how you do that. Also he was introduced as the third president, and that eliminates at least two, Steve Cheshier and Lisa Rossbacher. So it's a tough thing to reconcile.

TS: It is.

JC: I think we're now sixty-seven years old, so we can celebrate the seventy-fifth in eight years.

TS: Well, I've been talking about the need to have a consolidated history for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Marietta campus and the sixtieth of the Kennesaw campus in another eight years.

JC: That would be fine. I have envisioned this time line graphically that has a green line at the beginning of the history of Southern Tech, and then, starting in '63, a yellow line that is Kennesaw. Those are concurrent, and there are some crossovers like Dr. Papp and Kennesaw holding classes [in the fall of 1966] on the Marietta campus, and then starting in 2015 it just becomes a black and gold line.

TS: I think that's great.

JC: I don't know that everyone would buy that.

TS: In terms of prestige, why not claim the earliest possible date for the institution?

JC: I agree.

TS: I like 1948.

JC: Interestingly, if they had changed the name to something new, like Georgia Northwestern University or whatever, we wouldn't be having a history conversation. It would be '48 for our founding, I believe.

TS: Or 2015 would be the other option.

JC: True. That's right; a new born baby.

TS: Well, that's going to be interesting. I'll be sure to ask Dr. Papp when I get a chance to interview him, if he ever slows down to have an hour that I can interview him.

JC: Good luck with that.

TS: I know, he seems to have more and more challenges all the time. But you talked about morale still being a problem, and I know from just interviewing some of the old timers on the Marietta campus that the loss of the name is almost more than they could take. I understand the tears that were shed over that loss of identity. If it had been the other way around, and we'd lost Kennesaw State, I know how I would have felt about it. I think probably we are very lucky to have somebody who has been president of both institutions to conduct the consolidation, particularly one that was popular down there.

JC: Definitely. That did help. I was talking to an alumnus this morning at the announcement of the Leven gift [when Michael Leven delivered the commencement address at KSU's 2015 spring graduation exercises]. Rodney Bowers is on our foundation board now. He was very upset about the consolidation, as were many, but he was there today, and I thought that was a really good sign. We talked a little bit. My message to alumni is going to be whether you're onboard with this or whether you're upset or whether you're just waiting to see, if we are going to preserve the experience that they had as students, which I think everyone wants to do, then we need them to be engaged and to continue to help us to make sure that experience is the right one. If they're angry, and they become disengaged, then it's less likely that we preserve the things that they loved about the institution originally, right? So that's going to be the attempt, and Rodney certainly was onboard with that, and he is already turning the corner.

TS: Good. I understand that *The Sting* is going to continue to exist?

JC: It is. I think it's going to be the student magazine.

TS: Oh, not a regular newspaper?

JC: They switched over their format a couple of years ago. So they're going to exist. There are a number of great things. One of the things that's a really good sign; our student competition teams are a big part of the culture here on campus. The race car team is really, really high profile. Their color is black and gold, and they're calling themselves KSU Motor Sports Team. They're out there. They are going to Brazil for a competition and Michigan now. So they're popular pieces of the campus culture and show that you

can still exist with a new name. It sends the right message and helps bring everyone else along.

TS: Well, maybe it's very timely that we're starting a new football program in the fall because it'll be new for both campuses.

JC: That's true. In fact, I don't know if you've heard this, but a group of engineering students built a drone to fly over the stadium. Actually, [KSU athletics director] Vaughn Williams sought them out. I think originally he wanted a robotic owl. It scares me a little that it's not the right way to get in the newspaper, but they just built this drone. I think it's going to be a hornet. I'm not sure, but I can send you a link if you want to see it.

TS: Yes, I want to. Well, I asked at a reception the other night whether the owl was ever going to fly in like Auburn's War Eagle, and I guess that the trainer said that they were working on it.

JC: Well, what they're talking about is a robotic one. I don't know if they really want Sturgis flying in.

TS: Probably not. Well, it sounds like your title is similar to what it was before. How has your job description changed with consolidation?

JC: Well, I'm now assistant vice president for alumni relations and advancement communications.

TS: Oh, I guess I didn't know that then. I thought it was still university communications.

JC: No, university communications is Arlethia Perry-Johnson's area. I'm in a different division. I'm in Advancement. I work for [Michael] Mike Harders [vice president for university advancement and development]. My role, as I see it, is to keep both sets of alumni engaged, to increase their participation rate, and to communicate persuasively to friends, donors, and alumni, telling the Kennesaw State University and Southern Polytechnic story such that they feel compelled to provide ongoing support to the mission of the university.

TS: My wife [Kathleen Sherlock Scott] was alumni president back in the 1980s and was SGA president back in 1973 and 1974.

JC: Awesome. Here at Kennesaw State?

TS: Here at Kennesaw. She was unhappy with the consolidation. She did not approve at all of the consolidation, but at any rate maybe she can be of some help.

JC: I hope so, and I look forward to meeting her. No one asked for consolidation, but here we are.

TS: Right. It's an interesting story. I didn't have a clue [about the consolidation], of course. I might have been the last one to know anything anyway. But I had just written a history of KSU that came out in time for our fiftieth anniversary celebration just a few weeks before the announcement, and I didn't have a clue. In fact, I was in St. Louis at a history

conference, and a professor from the University of Georgia [John Inscoe] that was at the conference said, “Hey, I heard that you consolidated.” I didn’t have any idea that it was coming.

JC: Well, the wounds of it will heal, but what you’re doing is really valuable. I think the film we created helped some folks.

TS: I didn’t ask about the film [*The Five Eras of Southern Polytechnic State University*], but you did a great job on that.

JC: I appreciate your saying that. We didn’t tell all the story. It’s tough in a documentary, and I had limited time to get that done while I had the resources available to do it, but we also had a Hall of Fame induction for Athletics, which was a really healing moment.

TS: And they recognized them at the spring football game.

JC: They sure did. It was a really classy thing to do. Vaughn Williams said within the KSU Hall of Fame they would have a wing for the SPSU Hall of Fame, and that was nice.

TS: That’s great. Well, anything that we should add to this interview that you would like to have in it about what kept you at Southern Poly all those years and what you really want people to remember forever about that period when Southern Poly was a separate institution?

JC: Is it possible that I can reflect on that and have another conversation at some point? I’ve got a ton of stories. Mostly, I stayed because of the loyalty to people. And it was a good place. I felt at home there. But I’d like to think a little bit about that and share some stories later.

TS: Well, why don’t you reflect on that? Once we get the transcript back to you and you have a chance to read it over, you can either write in what you would like to add or I can come back over here with the microphone, and we can record it.

JC: Okay. Or I can come see you, if you want. I need to start getting familiar with the campus.

TS: I’m on the second floor of the library, and we’ll have to contend with all the construction right now, but that would be fine. I certainly would enjoy coming back to the alumni house too.

JC: Well, thank you. Maybe my office will be neater the next time if I can get everything put away!

TS: Well, if it’s like mine, the longer you stay the less neat it’s going to be. Well, thank you very much.

JC: Thank you, I appreciate it.

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