

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH WESLEY K. WICKER

CONDUCTED, EDITED, AND INDEXED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT

for the

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KSU Oral History Series No. 102

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Conducted, edited, and indexed by Thomas A. Scott
Location: President's Board Room, Kennesaw Hall

Interview # 1: Tuesday, 13 September 2011

TS: Wes, why don't you begin by talking about your background? I know you grew up near Americus and all that, but why don't you talk a little bit about your background?

WW: My father's side of the family is from Americus, Georgia; my mother's side of the family is from Milledgeville. My dad went to Georgia Southwestern back in the days when it was a two year school, and he was class president in 1937 and his father, my grandfather, was actually in the first graduating class at Georgia Southwestern when it was called the Third District Agricultural and Mechanical College, a real attractive name! He was in the first graduating class; he was a farmer at the turn of the century; and my father grew up on the farm there. My dad fought in World War II, joined the army, was commissioned as an officer, fought in World War II as an artillery captain under George Patton, stayed in the army after the War, worked in the Pentagon from the end of World War II to Korea, was sent to Korea by the Pentagon, fought in Korea for a short time, and then came back to the Pentagon and was offered a position at Marshall Space Flight Center at Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Alabama. My siblings were all born in Americus, but I'm the black sheep of the family; I was actually born and raised in north Alabama. The family moved over there; my mom had been in Americus for a while; and they had lived in D.C. a while; so while I consider myself a Georgia boy, I actually was born and bred in Alabama, I guess with Georgia genes.

TS: I know we had an exhibit over at the history museum on campus where your father was featured a few years ago.

WW: When we first did that exhibit he was the first one they featured. They were trying to feature local people who had fought in World War II; it was a World War II exhibit. He had an interesting military career. He went into Europe at D-Day plus four as an artillery group under Patton. If you remember the movie where they disengage from a battle, march the 100 miles and reengage at the Bulge, my dad was in that group and fought at the Battle of the Bulge and then the invasion on Germany. He had learned German while he was a student at Emory University and picked up French—had a skill that I don't have—he picked up languages pretty easily, and so at the end of World War II when Patton's army finished the invasion, he stayed there for a good while after the Armistice and V-E Day and was a relocation officer for POW's and refugees. He stayed in Germany a pretty good while after the War doing that kind of work.

TS: POW's were released American prisoners or captured German prisoners?

WW: No, these were American and Allied prisoners and refugees from all over Europe. He used to love to tell the story that in a prison camp of 6,000 prisoners, they had one doctor who was Russian and they had a Frenchman who could speak Russian, and an Englishman who spoke French very well. So when they would make the rounds and call on the sick, they had to take four people everywhere they could go to get a translation on the Russian doctor's diagnosis!

TS: What was your father's name by the way?

WW: George Stanley Wicker. He lived until he was 89 years old and died in 2007. He had a 27 year career with Marshall Space Flight Center. He was ultimately the chief financial officer and budget officer for Marshall Space Flight Center, so I grew up in north Alabama and met all those German scientists. In fact, I didn't realize how significant it was at the time, but when I was sixteen years old, I went to Wernher von Braun's retirement party. The amusing part of that was that all those German scientists that we liberated or captured, however you want to look at it, by 1974 or '75, all had thirty years in the space program, so they all retired in the late 1970s with full pensions. A lot of their research development, R&D, up around the Huntsville area grew from those retired German scientists. Not just German scientists but American scientists who put thirty years of civil service in and then retired. A lot of that occurred in the late 1970s. So I went to Wernher von Braun's retirement, and at the time it was just some German guy that my father worked with, and I didn't realize how significant he was until many years later.

TS: I've had a couple of students that have done some research at the Southeast Region National Archives on Operation Paperclip, I think it was called, where these German scientists were first allowed into the country and then sent to Huntsville.

WW: Yes, it was interesting, I saw a program once that talked about the slave labor they used to build the missile industry in Germany, and the question was how much liability or culpability would those scientists have. I mean, we captured them, they came here, I guess, technically as prisoners of war, and then, for lack of a better term, we Americanized them, and a good bit of the intelligence and knowledge we had building the space program was from those German scientists. They were far ahead of American and Soviet scientists. I do remember one thing that Wernher von Braun told me. I was probably a junior in high school, and he had a very Germanic, formal way about him. He shook my hand one time, you know, a very strong grip, and he looked at me and had these cold, steely eyes, and said, "Young man, get a good education, and it will treat you well the rest of your life!" Or I think it was, "It will bode well for you the rest of your life!" I guess I'd like to think I did that.

TS: You obviously had a very cosmopolitan background. Not everybody growing up in northern Alabama or south Georgia you think of in that way.

WW: I remember them testing the booster rockets for the Saturn and Jupiter and Apollo programs, all the missile programs in the early 1960s and through the 1970s. Over around the Decatur/Huntsville area, they'd test the boosters, and our windows would shake. I mean, it was probably akin to what it feels like to being in an earthquake. Even though we lived about twenty miles from Marshall Space Flight Center, you could feel the vibrations when they'd test them, and then they'd ship the boosters down the Tombigbee Waterway, and these things were gigantic. Unless you've seen them in person, you can't grasp how big they were.

TS: So you went to University of Alabama for your undergraduate degree? What did you get it in?

WW: Right. I majored in history, minored in English. We didn't really have areas of concentrations in terms of the degree. I didn't focus on Civil War history or Eighteenth Century, Nineteenth Century.

TS: No, it's a general degree.

WW: It was sort of a general degree, and I did take all the courses. My area of interest was more in American history, and I got fascinated in the post-Civil War time, from 1865 to World War II era. I think that era is a fascinating part of American history. It's really when we became a prominent country with World War I and World War II, and the Reconstruction era—that's interesting to study. You think about American history, and very little do we talk about the Reconstruction era, and I think it had a huge influence on American regionalism. And World War I. In this day and age we talk a lot about World War II and the greatest generation as it were, but World War I was really sort of a coming out party for us. I enjoy that era of history.

TS: What were your career ambitions at that time?

W: I had a great college experience, and if you think about how everybody in the South is a big football fan, if you're a college football fan you couldn't have been at a better place in the 1970s than at University of Alabama.

TS: Bear Bryant.

WW: We won two national championships while I was in school, and as we like to say we won a third one on the field and lost it in the polls because in 1977 we beat Ohio State badly in the Sugar Bowl and thought we had won the national championship only to wake up the next morning and found out Notre Dame out-pollled us. It was an irritant for all of us who were going to Alabama, but it was a great time to be in school in the late 1970s. In some ways, as some of my classmates have reminisced, it was absolutely the best time to be in college. Vietnam had ended my senior year in high school. In fact, probably the class of

'75 in the United States was a unique class because Gerald Ford had discontinued the draft. Jimmy Carter got elected and reinstated it. A lot of people forget about this. Jimmy Carter reinstated the draft, so my class never registered for the draft and the class before us and the class after us registered but we never registered for the draft.

TS: Reinstating meaning that you had to register although nobody got drafted.

WW: Right, during Carter's era I don't think anybody got drafted, but you had to register. When I went to college, Vietnam was over, and we had gotten past Watergate.

TS: Of course, we had runaway inflation and high unemployment.

WW: As a college student you don't pay attention to that too much; it was just the price of beer, you know, that was all you were concerned about. The drinking age had been lowered. This sounds trite or trivial, but to a college student, it was a big thing. The drinking age had been lowered, and one of the things that we don't talk about much as college administrators, and I don't think goes noticed a great deal, is there was a period from about 1976 to 1986 when the drinking age got lowered to eighteen years old. It made a dramatic social difference on college campuses. Not that everybody went out and had a wild beer bust, but everybody was legal. You've got this unusual situation both before '76 and after '86 where three-fourths of the students on campus are still considered minors, and that has a huge legal impact on how you run a university and how you deal with students. You have, before '76, a mentality of "in loco parentis" that we are as a university responsible for the actions of the students—and the conduct of the students and punishment goes along with that. From '76 to '86 everybody's legal so everybody is treated like an adult. If you get in trouble, you're responsible for yourself. I know a little bit about this from my graduate studies. There were fewer incidents of alcohol-related accidents and alcohol-related deaths during the period of time the drinking age was lowered. I know from working with my national fraternity, we had fewer legal liabilities—alcohol related law suits—during that era than the era after the drinking age was raised. There was a sense that you were responsible for your own actions because you're an adult. The time I was in college was a great time in spite of inflation and national politics; it was a good time to be in college, a great time to be at the University of Alabama.

TS: What year did you graduate?

WW: In 1979.

TS: What did you do then?

WW: I had, in my opinion, one of the great all time jobs right out of college. I traveled for my national fraternity for about two and a half years.

TS: Which fraternity?

WW: Theta Chi. It was founded up in New England at Norwich University, which was the first private military school in the United States. It's also the first private engineering school in the United States.

TS: That goes hand in hand, military and engineering.

WW: It had quite a few original members who fought in the Civil War because the fraternity was founded in the 1850s. I traveled for Theta Chi for two and half years, traveled all over the country by car, essentially, living in fraternity houses and working with the local chapter, stayed everywhere for about a week at a time and visited, in that two and a half year time, about 150 college campuses. I had had such a good experience as an undergraduate—I was involved in inter-fraternity council, I was an officer, I was involved in student government, I was an officer of student government, I was president of my fraternity at Alabama—that I just thought, life on a college campus is exciting. And, I thought, I want to work at a college or university, so I went to work with my national fraternity really with an eye toward where I might like to go to graduate school and where I might like to work.

TS: You saw them all, I guess.

WW: I saw a lot of campuses. Actually, at the end of those two and a half years, I got a job with Georgia Southwestern completely by accident. I had no intention of going to my dad's hometown in south Georgia; I had no intention of going to work down there or going to school there. It was about as much by accident as you can imagine. My parents had retired the same year I graduated from college. I was the youngest out of the house and out of college, and they decided to move back to the family farm in Americus. I had never lived there. My siblings lived there when they were small kids, but I had actually never lived there. My grandparents are from there, my great-grandparents are from there.

TS: So you went back and visited a couple of times.

WW: Yes. So what happened—while I was on the field staff, I'd come home for Christmas or summer holidays, and they were now in Americus, Georgia, not in Decatur, Alabama. I happened to be there over Christmas in 1981 and went to a cocktail party in the community and met the college president. It turned out he had come to Georgia Southwestern from West Virginia Wesleyan, and I had just visited West Virginia Wesleyan, and oddly enough stayed with a family [where] the husband was the local alumnus advisor to the Theta Chi fraternity, and he was the best friend of the president of Georgia Southwestern. We got to talking; he asked me what I was doing; and I said, "Well, I'm starting to apply for some jobs and looking at some graduate schools." He said, "Well, we have some positions

available at Southwestern; why don't you come apply?" I really wasn't interested to tell you the truth, but he was pretty insistent upon it, and he called me the next week and said he wanted me to meet some people. I went up to Southwestern, and I had looked at becoming a fraternity advisor, a Greek advisor, and getting my master's degree. I liked working with students, so I was looking at two schools that had job openings for Greek advisors, the University of Arkansas and North Carolina State. He offered me a job, not as a Greek advisor because they already had one, but in admissions, and my mother said, "You know, if you lived in Americus you could have a free dinner anytime you want one"—I was single obviously—"and you can live in your grandparents' house, and regardless of what they pay you at Southwestern versus Arkansas or NC State, you'll save a lot of money."

TS: Well, if you don't have to pay for housing.

WW: Don't have to pay for housing, don't have to buy furniture, don't have to furnish an apartment, so I ended up going to work for Georgia Southwestern, as I said, completely by accident. I really had no intention of doing that, but at the time I think it saved me a lot of money. I got a job offer at \$12,500 in 1981, and I figured renting an apartment, utilities and buying furniture probably saved me about \$4800 a year, and if you tack that on to the \$12,500 I was making, that was the best job offer I had. I went to work for Georgia Southwestern on January 1, 1982.

TS: Let's get on the record, what's the president's name?

WW: Bill Capitan. He was there for about sixteen years.

TS: You've mentioned your mother a few times, let's put her name in here too.

WW: Margaret Keel Wicker. She was a graduate of Georgia College for Women.

TS: In Milledgeville. Okay, so you go to work January 1, and you're in the admissions, and what are you doing?

WW: I'm an admissions counselor; within about a year I was assistant director of admissions; but I was what we called a road runner. I was out recruiting high school students to Georgia Southwestern. I went from visiting colleges all over the United States to visiting high schools all over south Georgia.

TS: When you were visiting colleges for your fraternity, these were fraternities that already had chapters? What were you doing exactly?

WW: I'd go in, and we'd look at their books, their financial operations, make sure their membership records were up to the date with the national fraternity. All national fraternities have a membership fee and what was called a member's personal

record form; it was a membership form that had all your vital records information. Eighteen, nineteen year olds being who they are, a lot of chapters would fall behind on their fees and records and things, so part of my job was to make sure those were up to date. Then I'd usually go meet with the dean of students or the Greek advisor, get a gauge on how the chapter was doing, get their opinion on what they needed to work on, and I'd work with officers over a four or five day period trying to help them with their leadership skills and their administration of the chapter, and in some cases trying to keep them out of trouble!

TS: Right, because you weren't much older than they were.

WW: No, I wasn't. In fact, it was sort of funny; I started college at seventeen; so when I finished in 1979, I had just turned 21 years old. It was not unusual that the chapter president or a number of the members were 22, 23, 24 years old; so a lot of times I was younger than the people I was trying to advise; that was interesting.

TS: Okay, so you're doing that, which is good experience for what you're going to be doing later on, and now you're recruiting students, so you're not recruiting money yet, but you're recruiting people that are going to be paying money.

WW: I'm in a sales position, and Southwestern is one of those schools, unlike the University of Georgia or Georgia Tech, where we're really recruiting students. I used to joke that the Admissions staff at the University of Georgia were enrollment managers; they were just managing schools. We were really recruiting students, so probably by 1984 I had visited every high school south of Macon, Georgia. It was a lot of fun.

TS: So you go into schools and talk to students that are trying to decide where they want to go to college?

WW: Right. In those days before the internet, colleges would send out materials and post cards, and if students were interested, they'd send in postcards, and we'd create a database of them, so when I'd go into a high school, we worked through the guidance counselor, and we would let the guidance counselor know how many students had expressed an interest in Georgia Southwestern. The guidance counselor would do generally one of two things: they'd either make an announcement that a representative from Georgia Southwestern was here, and if anybody wants to see him, they can come out in this thirty minute period. Or if it was a small group of students, and let's say, I was over in Savannah or across the state, they might just pull out those two or three students who had expressed an interest.

TS: So you're recruiting students from all over south Georgia?

WW: Right, for Georgia Southwestern.

TS: Wow. We think of Kennesaw by '82 as being a non-traditional campus with non-traditional students and about a 27 year old average age. How was it at Georgia Southwestern?

WW: Southwestern was much more traditional and probably still is in the sense that Southwestern was founded as one of the A&M schools, became a normal college in the 1920s and then a junior college in 1932 when the University System of Georgia was formed; so it was one of the original members.

TS: Yes, I think it was '64 before they actually had bachelor's degrees.

WW: Right. By the time I get there in '82 they have bachelor's degrees and some master's level programs, so it was very traditional aged students.

TS: Dormitories?

WW: Yes, they had about 2,500 students when I was there, and about half of them, 50 percent, lived on campus. That was the old model in the University System to build enough rooms for everybody if everybody wants to live on campus, so we always had about 1,000 students who lived in the community. A lot of them lived at home, and about 1,000 or 1,200 lived on campus. It was a very traditional style of university.

TS: How long did you stay there?

WW: I was in admissions for two and a half years, and then I moved to alumni affairs in '84, and I stayed there till '88. I was the first director of alumni affairs for Georgia Southwestern.

TS: The first?

WW: They had a woman who was an English professor and had the title of alumni secretary. Her job was to keep the records of all the alumni, and she kept it on old library index cards since it wasn't computerized. As alumni changed their addresses, she'd go pull their card out and write up a new one; it was all hand written. I think later it was type written, but it wasn't computerized when I got there in that position in '84. One of the things I did was got it computerized. I remember in 1984 the desktop computer hit the college campus, and we actually had a discussion because we only had a budget to buy X number of those old IBM desktop, big old bulky boxes. We had a discussion on where we'd put them, and—this is the world of 1984—it was decided none of the professional administrators really needed one, that we would give them to our secretaries because the secretaries would be typing all the letters and keeping all the records and everything like that. I never had a computer of my own until I went to graduate school at the University of Georgia. I bought my first IBM, can't remember what the number was, IBM 500 or something like that, and it was huge

- too. I thought I was really technologically sophisticated when I got that computer! My secretary had one for the four years I was alumni director there, so it was a new experience being alumni director.
- TS: I guess so. So you had people from even back at the A&M days that were part of the alums?
- WW: Yes. One of the things about working at a smaller school like that is people do have a high level of affinity for you. A lot of the junior college graduates went on to another school, but in that era, 1920s and 1930s and 1940s, people felt like—and I know my dad felt this way—he was an Emory graduate, but he felt like Southwestern was where it started for him, and he credited Southwestern for his Emory degree. He was always more loyal toward Southwestern than he was to Emory because I think he felt like Southwestern was his ticket off the farm and out of poverty. My grandmother really instilled that in my dad and his brothers and sisters that getting a good education gives you options, and I think in that era where most of Americans were born on a farm, it was a way out of poverty.
- TS: It may have been more of a nurturing environment than Emory would have been.
- WW: I think so. The classes were very small. My dad, incidentally, was in class with Griffin Bell, and they were childhood friends, lifelong friends. Another member of that class was Thomas Marshall who became chief justice of Georgia. Now that I think about it, Robert Jordan who was another chief justice of the Georgia Supreme Court—they had two from Americus back to back.
- TS: Did they pronounce it Jordan down there?
- WW: Yes, J-o-r-d-a-n, but “Jerden” is how it was probably pronounced.
- TS: That’s the way I had heard it was pronounced. You did say “Jordan.” You’ve become a—you moved to other places.
- WW: So from ’84 I enrolled and got my master’s at Southwestern in history, and I was director of alumni affairs there for about four and half years, and I felt like being in alumni affairs I know a lot of people made a career out of it. I know some people like Joe [F.] Head; in fact, I knew Joe Head from my admissions work when Joe Head was at Georgia Southern. We were friends then, and twenty years later we’re both working at Kennesaw, but I knew a lot of people in admissions and alumni affairs who had made a career in that area, and I really didn’t see myself as making a career in admissions or see myself making a career in alumni affairs, and I just gravitated toward fundraising. When I was at Southwestern, we started an alumni campaign. In the early 1980s the Reagan administration, IRS, had ruled that public universities should separate privately raised dollars from state dollars, tax dollars, so there was this flurry of 501c3’s of state universities, state colleges establishing foundations. Even though Southwestern was seventy-

five years old, we just started a foundation in the early 1980s. I was on the ground level of that. I helped the president recruit the first trustees.

TS: Were they mainly alums?

WW: No. Some were, some weren't; it was a pretty good mix. He had an eye toward wealthy people in the community and very successful people, so some of the people he recruited were alumni and some weren't, but we started the first campaign, did a phon-a-thon, annual campaign. I was a youngster; I mean, in 1984 I was 27 years old. By the time I left, I was a really old guy. I was 30, so in the development world, that's like being an adolescent. But I got a good taste of fundraising, and I really enjoyed it, saw the opportunity there for career growth, and I realized that the only way I was going to move up was to move on. I felt like I was in a little bit of a rut as alumni director there and got my master's and about three years later I stepped down and went to the University of Georgia to get my doctorate. I enrolled in the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia as a somewhat autonomous institute that had a doctoral program, did not have an undergraduate program or a master's program, just a doctoral program about the governance and leadership of higher education in the United States. I was at Georgia for two years, studied with Cameron Fincher, who was my major professor.

TS: Yes, I met him once years ago.

WW: Yes, he was really an icon in the State of Georgia in terms of somebody who is truly an expert in higher education. I always thought Dr. Fincher should have gone to work for the Board of Regents or something.

TS: He did a work on the history of the University System.

WW: He wrote the history of the University System, and in later years he came back and wrote another edition of it. I also had Tom [Thomas G.] Dyer, who you probably know, who is an historian and taught the class, The History of Higher Education in the United States, which in my view was probably the best course I ever took at any level. Tom Dyer was a master professor. He was outstanding. A guy named [D.] Parker Young was a nationally recognized expert in legal issues in higher education. Then they had a professor named Bill Feltner, who was nationally recognized in governance and finance of higher education. It was a great experience for me to get this type of degree about how colleges and universities run and how they're organized and lead, so I did that for two years, and oddly enough, I got my degree in exactly 24 months to the day—I went full time while most graduate students are balancing a full-time job and taking courses.

TS: That's 1990?

WW: Yes, 1990. And then I left higher education!

TS: That doesn't make sense, does it?!

WW: I had a job offer to go back to Georgia Southwestern that I did not aspire to. I had taken a leave of absence, so they had to offer me something; they offered me something, but it wasn't what I wanted.

TS: Did they have a development officer?

WW: Yes. I had been it, but while I was gone, they hired one, so they had no need for another development officer because they had hired a successor. They offered me a job in sports information, and I really had no interest in that at all. I had obtained a scholarship from a foundation in Indianapolis for my graduate work, and one of the trustees approached me about coming to work for them when I graduated. I was the first employee of the foundation called Funds for Leadership and Education, Inc. It was loosely affiliated with my national fraternity. I had received a scholarship from them for my graduate studies, and the loose affiliation was that all the trustees were fraternity members. But it was not technically part of the national fraternity. I went up to Indianapolis. I was 31 years old, married, we had no children, and it was really the best job offer I had. I had interviewed around and looked at a couple of different things, but just really didn't find anything I liked, and this looked like an interesting opportunity to build my own shop, build my own office and create policies and procedures for this Foundation.

TS: So what did you do for them?

WW: I raised money. The Foundation had been funded by these five or six gentlemen who, by the time I got there, were all in their eighties and had given from their own wealth a couple million dollars, funded my position with the idea that I would raise more money. We raised money, and I set up the scholarship policies and procedures to give the money away. It had been sort of a mom and pop organization run by volunteers for fifty years. By the time I got there, it was fifty years old, but it had never had a full time staff member. I think the secretary of one of the trustees ran it as part of her job. I took it over and ran it. I think the first year we awarded fourteen or fifteen scholarships, and by the time I left we were awarding 75 or 85 scholarships a year. We raised a good bit of money. One of the trustees died and left six million dollars to the endowment, so it became a pretty healthy foundation. It eventually merged with my national fraternity foundation, and now they have a very nice endowment that they award scholarships all over their country. I was there for five years, until 1995, and one of the trustees was a lawyer who was on the United Way Board. He identified me as a candidate for a position at United Way. They were looking for a vice president of major gifts, and I interviewed and was offered a position in Indianapolis. I worked there a couple of years and got offered the same position with the United Way in Atlanta. Being a Georgian and all my siblings lived in

Georgia by that time—they were all living in metro Atlanta—it was a no-brainer to come back. The Atlanta United Way was considerably larger, higher ranked in the United Way world, than the Indianapolis United Way.

TS: This is '97?

WW: Yes, in '97 I moved back to Georgia. I worked with that United Way until 2002. I had several unique experiences in my development career. When I was at Southwestern I really was pioneering. We were starting the Alumni Association, starting the Foundation, and right at the end of my tenure there we had someone we had been cultivating, a trustee of the Foundation, passed away and left what was then about thirteen million dollars in the world of 1988-'89. The estate also included some business interests, and I think when the whole thing unwound, it ended up being about an eighteen million dollar gift. That was huge for a foundation just starting out. I got to the foundation in Indianapolis, similar type experience occurred where one of the trustees died, left six million dollars in a trust to benefit the foundation. So I quickly realized if you're going to get in the fundraising business, you need to learn about estates and planned giving. I did everything I did to learn about planned giving because that's where the big gifts are. Incidentally, that's also where the best salaries are in fundraising, so I became the United Way expert on planned giving and had the opportunity to travel around to a number of United Ways talking to those United Ways about planned giving because the curious thing in the United Way world is they're all about the annual campaign. They're very focused on that payroll deduction campaign. Well, the question you might guess is if you want ten dollars, twenty dollars, a hundred dollars a month from somebody or would you like to be left in their will for five million dollars. While the United Ways need the money now, the answer is, pretty obviously, you'd like to be in that will for five million dollars. I had an unusual experience in Indianapolis where we got a large grant from the Lilly Endowment for that United Way, and that gift was so large, it actually endowed the annual operations of that United Way. At the time it was the largest single gift ever to a local United Way.

TS: It must have been a huge one.

WW: It was fifty million dollars. That created an earthquake in the United Way world and got the Atlanta United Way's attention. The vice president of the Atlanta United Way called me and wanted to know how we did it, how did we land the gift. During the conversation, he said to me, "You don't sound like you're from Indiana, and you sound like you've got a southern accent." I said, "Funny you mention that; you don't sound like you're from Georgia." He was from New York, and I was from Georgia, so we laughed, and he said, "If we created a position down here would you be interested in coming to Georgia." I said, "Maybe, let's talk." So we talked, and it worked out, and that's how I wound up at the United Way at Atlanta. I had a great United Way career; I was with United Way a total of seven and a half years, two in Indianapolis and five in Atlanta.

The way I wound up at Kennesaw was, as you might guess, because of Betty Siegel.

TS: She was on the board for the United Way.

WW: She was on the board of the local United Way, and Betty and I had met each other a number of times over the years. She spoke at GACRAO, the Georgia Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers conference down on Jekyll Island in the early 1980s. I guess that was right at the beginning of her presidency. She and I struck up a conversation, and as Betty was wont to do, she tried to recruit me up here for admissions.

TS: In the early 1980s?

WW: In the early 1980s. Then in the late 1980s, she was a speaker at what's called GEAC which is the Georgia Education Advancement Council, and that's all the fundraising officers, alumni officers and university relationships people; it's a professional association of those folks; and she, as typical of Betty, she said, "I need an alumni director." This was before Phil Barco was here. She said, "I need an alumni director; why don't you move up to Kennesaw and be my alumni director?" I said, "Betty, I've just gotten married, I'm remodeling my grandparents' house, and I'm not going to leave Americus for the same job I have at Georgia Southwestern." Well, fast forward to 1990, there was another run-in with Betty when I was in graduate school. The University of Georgia, a professor, Bill Feltner, did this day trip thing where we'd go out and visit presidents in the University System. We came over to Kennesaw, and I remember walking in the room, and she looked at me and said, "What are you doing here?" I said, "Well, I'm in graduate school at the University of Georgia." She remembered me from the two other connections, and she said, "Well, before you take your next job, I want to talk to you." I quite frankly forgot about it and went on to the private foundation and United Way, and I became vice president of the United Way in Atlanta, and the first day on the job we have a board meeting, and there's Betty Siegel. I thought, I'm going to run into this woman the rest of my life. Every job I have I run into her.

TS: Okay, so you run into Betty Siegel and you're thinking that everywhere you're going to go you're going to run into her.

WW: Yes. So I had a very good experience at the United Way of metropolitan Atlanta. I was over the Alexis de Tocqueville Society, which is people who give \$10,000 a year to their local United Way. It's the one United Way program that's nationally coordinated in that if you're a member in Atlanta, you are recognized on a national level for giving \$10,000 a year. So I ran the Tocqueville Society, the Leadership Giving Society, which was \$1,000 and above, and then the Planned Giving and Foundation Relations area, so I was one of about two dozen vice presidents of major gifts at major metropolitan United Ways. Over the course of

the next three years, the Atlanta United Way became the number one Tocqueville Society in that we had more members than any other United Way, and more donors in the Leadership Giving Society. Then we had started several initiatives that were also national initiatives in terms of giving. One was a women's initiative, women who gave at the \$1,000 and \$10,000 level, an African-American initiative, same thing, African-Americans who gave at the \$1,000 or \$10,000 level, and we became the leader in each one of those categories, the Atlanta United Way did. I've always been proud of that accomplishment. As a "middle-aged white guy," I launched the most successful Women's Initiative and the most successful African American Initiative in the country. I had a lot of help! We had a great staff and great volunteers. United Way has the ability to recruit outstanding volunteers. We also had a Foundation Relations Initiative, and that was to encourage local family foundations to give to United Way, and we became the number one Foundations Initiative in the United Way world.

By 2001-2002 I had arguably the number one major gifts program in the United States for United Way. I got contacted by a headhunter for a hospital foundation. I really wasn't in the job market; they came after me. I called Betty who was one of my board members, and I said, "Betty, I'm being courted by this organization, and I'm not really looking for a job, but I'm going to hear what they have to say. I've got two small kids, you know. I probably need to make more money to send my kids to college—that kind of thing—so I'm listening. Betty's response was, "Why don't you come back home? Why don't you come back to higher education? You've got a degree from the Institute of Higher Education, you're a doctor, you've got fundraising experience, you're a commodity, you'd be a commodity in higher education." Not a lot of people in my field, in development, we call it advancement, which is alumni affairs and university development, foundation work, not too many of them have doctoral degrees. So she said, "Before you get an offer from this other organization, I want you to come talk to me." We did and only as Betty Siegel could do, she convinced me that this university was in the process of becoming the preeminent university in Georgia and the South.

They used to joke, "Harvard at the Pines," but I used to say she was the P.T. Barnum of higher education. She was trumpeting Kennesaw for what it was going to be, not for what it was, and she was brilliant at it, she really was brilliant at it. We talked for a while, and I did get a job offer from that other organization. I told Betty what I'd been offered, and she said, "I'll match it." I came up here on September 2, 2002, right after Labor Day—it landed on the 1st that year—came up here on the 2nd as Interim Vice President for Advancement. Unbeknownst to me, Kennesaw had had a national search for a vice president. The search ended up deadlocked because the search committee could not agree on which candidate they wanted to hire.

TS: These were internal candidates.

WW: Two of them were internal candidates, and I think there was at least one external candidate, but there was this big disagreement. It was also a good bit of internal conflict. Two of the candidates were associate vice presidents. One was Gordon [A.] Harrison, who was Associate Vice President of [External Affairs and] University Relations, which at the time was two departments, marketing and public relations. I merged those to one department that is now called University Relations. The other candidate was [E.] Kathleen Neitzel, who had been here [since 1997]; she was Associate Vice President for Development. I think there was an external candidate; there might have been more than one external candidate; anyway it was a deadlocked search. Betty appointed me, as she had a right to do as president, in an interim position. At the time, the Foundation was sort of separate and autonomous from the university under Jim [James A.] Fleming's direction. His title was President of the Foundation. So you had the Foundation operating under one person, Development operating under a second, and University Relations operating under a third, and there was no coordinating vice president over any of that. Just three separate organizations.

TS: No provost at that time?

WW: No provost at the time, no vice president.

TS: Or somebody who's in charge of all of that.

WW: Those three people all reported to the President.

TS: These are all associate vice presidents, so none of them are actually vice presidents.

WW: Now, Jim had been vice president at one time and sometime back in the 1990s he stepped down from that and became president of the Foundation.

TS: Was he Vice President of University Advancement?

WW: He had been, but he stepped down and became president of the KSU Foundation.

TS: This would have been when Kathleen Neitzel came in after he moved to the Foundation?

WW: Yes. He was already at the Foundation when she came in. There was a great deal of internal conflict, not just in advancement and all that but . . .

TS: Let me just ask you a question about that because if Betty Siegel is so aggressive as to go out and recruit you to come here, why didn't she just say, "The committee's deadlocked; I'm going to choose who the vice president is going to be?"

WW: She could have, but I had not applied for the position.

TS: So she didn't want any of them, is that what you're saying?

WW: Right. I think so. I don't really know. Quite honestly, I never asked Betty if she had a preferred candidate. All I know was she recruited me in an interim position and said, if this works out, we'll hire you.

TS: That makes sense.

WW: So a year later . . .

TS: So she's happy with them in the jobs that they had. She just doesn't want them to move up.

WW: Well, I'm not even sure of that. I wouldn't speak for Betty on that. All I know is that the three of them were not getting along.

TS: And she had a problem. So it makes sense to bring in an outside person, at least outside as far as being part of the Kennesaw community.

WW: Right. In the fall of 2002 I come up here with the charge of raising more money.

TS: Do all three of them reports to you now?

WW: No, that was the odd thing. I thought they were, at least Kathleen and Gordon because Jim was really operating an autonomous organization, but as an interim, she really didn't appoint those AVP's to me, so everybody reported to Betty for one year, and that was the year I was interim VP. In 2003 she then conducted a search for a full-time vice president. They interviewed three candidates. I applied, and I was one of the three candidates, and I was selected for the position. It was an open search.

TS: Who chaired the search committee?

WW: I don't remember to tell you the truth. They had a committee, but I can't remember who chaired the search committee.

TS: Ed Rugg?

WW: No, Lynn [Lendley C.] Black [Vice President for Academic Affairs] was here by then. Lynn and I came about the same time.

TS: That's right.

WW: Lynn and I showed up on campus; he preceded me a couple of weeks.

- TS: Who could have possibly have chaired the committee?
- WW: It might have been Joe Meeks. I remember when I met with the committee, it was with a group of people, and they had an open forum where anybody could ask me anything they wanted to. There were about two dozen people in the room, and I don't remember them identifying who the chairman was. I had been here a year, and over that year we had landed a couple of nice gifts, so I figured that I had a good inside shot at the job.
- TS: What's the difference in that year between what you did and what Kathleen Neitzel did?
- WW: Well, she had a small staff of folks over in the old Admin building and they were running the . . .
- TS: That's right she was still over there, I remember that.
- WW: Right, and I was housed up here [in Kennesaw Hall]. I worked directly with Betty. It was really more sort of a special assistant to the president than a vice president in the sense that I really had no direct reports. I didn't have a couple of departments under me, and I was an interim, so [Neitzel] ran the annual campaign, the direct mail campaign, and they had a phon-a-thon they ran. I just worked on a couple of initiatives that Betty had wanted me to raise money specifically, so my role was more topic driven.
- TS: Do you remember what the specific things were?
- WW: Yes, the first one was she wanted to launch the Center for Leadership, Ethics and Character, and we targeted the RTM group. The CEO at RTM, the restaurant group that owned 700 Arby's restaurants, was very interested in leadership studies; in fact he had a remarkable library in his corporate headquarters of books on leadership.
- TS: I remember him speaking on campus it seems like once.
- WW: Yes, Russ Umphenour. Dennis Cooper was the chair and Dennis was one of our trustees. We targeted them, asked them for a million dollars which they agreed to. Half a million was for a chair in Leadership, Ethics and Character, and half was for an operating endowment. The idea was that we would invest the money, and earnings off that endowment would fund the operations of the center. The center later became an institute. Then Betty Siegel retired to the chair of that position of that institute. Over the course of the next three years they also contributed funds just for the day to day operations of the institute. So all told the RTM group gave \$1.2 million to launch what is now the Siegel Institute.

- TS: I remember being impressed at the time of getting all that money from them and wondered how that came about.
- WW: Well, that was probably how I made my splash on campus. Betty was a great friend raiser, so I really capitalized off a number of relationships she had cultivated. At the same time Bobbie Bailey contributed about a million dollars for the Bailey Field House. These were not my relationships, but in a sense Betty had the vision of what she wanted, like the field house or the institute, and she had done a great job over twenty years cultivating those relationships, so I was just sort of the deal closer. I was the closer in Betty's later years.
- TS: So she was not real good at closing the deals, asking people for big bucks; she wanted somebody else to go out and ask?
- WW: Betty was very externally focused. She was absolutely the best cultivator, friend raiser, I've ever been around, and she was a bit of an icon. Everybody in Atlanta recognized Betty Siegel because of the glasses and the hair, I guess. But, yes, she had a hard time asking for the dollar, for the gift, and I'd say the one thing I brought to Betty as an asset was I'd been in a lot of fundraising solicitations. If I could get my foot in the door, I could make the ask. For a development officer it's harder getting your foot in the door than making the ask. If you're experienced at fund raising, making the ask is not the hardest part.
- TS: Oh, so she got your foot in the door and then you asked.
- WW: She had the foot in the door, and she could break the ice; she could start the conversation, and I'd close it. We developed a very good relationship, a strong synergy between us. I could almost read her mind on where she was going in a conversation and could prepare myself to close the deal when she got to a certain point. We read each other's body language too; she'd turn the conversation over to me at a certain point, and in many ways I think Betty and I thought alike. I wouldn't pretend to be as smart as Betty, but I think our visions were similar in possibilities whether it was the Center for Leadership or the Center for Election Systems or whatever the issue. I think she and I thought a lot alike on what Kennesaw could become.
- TS: So you could pretty well ignore what all these other folks were doing on campus and just concentrate on these projects.
- WW: Yes, for the time being. That worked for a couple of years, and then in year two, after the search, I was named permanent vice president. By that time Gordon Harrison had left. He went down to the Board of Regents, and she reassigned University Relations and Development to me and really what was more of a traditional Advancement office where you'd have Development, University Relations, Alumni Affairs, and Special Events, what we now call University

Events under Leslie Clark-Malzhan originally. When I got here, Leslie was reporting to Nancy Sullivan.

TS: Who was the assistant to the president?

WW: Well, actually when I got here she was the HR [Human Resources] Director.

TS: Oh, that's right. She went to that.

WW: That was sort of an odd organizational assignment.

TS: University Events was under HR?

WW: Yes. That was a little odd to me. The reality was Leslie worked with Dr. Siegel, but she technically reported to Nancy Sullivan, and so within my second year Betty reassigned Leslie and University Events, which was then called Special Events, to me, Development to me, University Relations to me.

TS: And Alumni?

WW: No, she didn't transfer alumni. There were some personality conflicts apparently before I came to campus between Kathleen Neitzel and Phil Barco, Kathleen over Development and Phil over Alumni Affairs.

TS: They didn't get along?

WW: They didn't get along, so Alumni Affairs, before I came to campus, was moved and reported to Nancy King in Student Success, which in a traditional university model is a very unusual assignment, but it was what it was, I guess. Nancy and Phil got along well, and so they kept that reporting situation the way it was. When Dr. Papp came two years later [2006], he transferred Alumni Affairs to University Advancement, so I was given another department. He transferred University Relations to Arlethia Perry-Johnson, so essentially I lost University Relations and gained Alumni Affairs when we had a change of presidents.

TS: What about Special Events or University Events?

WW: I kept that until a year ago, 2010. Leslie Clark-Malzhan had worked here [since 2000], and in 2007 she developed brain cancer and subsequently died. Then we appointed Joan [T.] Duncan to the position.

TS: Who came out of Development?

WW: Who came out of Development. Joan had run the annual fund for a number of years.

TS: Joan worked for Kathleen?

WW: Right.

TS: Was that where Kathleen couldn't accept having to report to you?

WW: Yes. She viewed it as a bit of a demotion because she had been reporting directly to the president, and now she was to report to me.

TS: And that's when she became dissatisfied and left?

WW: Yes. Things just didn't work out. I did terminate her. She sued for wrongful termination. It was settled out of court and a summary judgment in our favor, and that's probably all I should say about that. It was an unfortunate parting of ways, but I think it's safe to say she couldn't abide by feeling like she had been demoted. There were some personality conflicts within Development which is a very challenging time. The first two assignments I had, Development had a lot of turmoil from what I perceived the staff had a difficult time working with Kathleen. On the University Relations side, there were two departments, Marketing and Public Relations. They weren't getting along, and all three of these departments were sort of crammed into the old Admin building. They were, in my opinion, three very dysfunctional departments—and I think across the campus.

TS: I remember Leslie being in the Pilcher Building.

WW: Well, she was in the Pilcher Building, but the three departments I'm referring to are Marketing, Public Relations, and Development. They were all in the Admin building.

TS: Oh, okay, sorry, she's doing Special Events.

WW: Yes, Leslie had Special Events, so I got all four of these departments after I'd been here about a year or year and a half.

TS: So University Relations is Frances Weyand?

WW: Frances Weyand at the time and Marketing was Deedie Dowdle. I don't know if you remember Deedie. So the Marketing and University Relations—there was a lot of tension there; there was a lot of tension within Development in and of itself.

TS: Deedie . . . ?

WW: Dowdle. She had a real bubbly personality.

TS: I do remember her.

WW: They were two very small departments, Public Relations and Development. They each had four staff members. Bob [Robert C.] Varga who was Executive Assistant to the President, took an inventory and looked at a number of other universities and made the recommendation for the president that they be transferred under me—this was in 2003—and that we merge the departments with only one director, which meant that either Deedie or Frances would lose out. He made a recommendation, and I followed it, that Frances [Weyand] Harrison be given the assignment based on experience and what we were trying to achieve out of the division. So Deedie left and fortunately landed on her feet and became Executive Director of [the Office of Communications and] Marketing at Auburn University, where she still is. I really liked Deedie; she was one of those people you had to like; she just had too much energy and a great personality; but we felt like Frances was the right person for the position. Frances really did, in my opinion, an outstanding job of taking two bickering groups of people and melding them into one department that worked well together. We relaunched the *Kennesaw State University Magazine*. I think Kennesaw had had a magazine in the 1980s and 1990s, but nothing in eight or ten years. In 2004, I believe, we came out, I may be off a year or so, but we relaunched the *KSU Magazine*, immediately won several awards for the launch of the magazine and public relations, and Frances did a very good job bringing what I considered a dysfunctional conflict, really two departments that were in direct conflict with each other, who got them working well together. On the Development side, when Kathleen departed, I began rebuilding the Development staff. One of the four people who left had an opportunity to go to graduate school, and so I had two vacancies, and Dr. Siegel had gotten me some more money, so we started rebuilding the Development office, and I reorganized that. University Relations was merged, Public Relations and Marketing were merged to form University Relations, and so we started growing those departments to what they are now.

TS: How much have they grown?

WW: Well, at the time, Development had four staff members. We now have thirty-four, so from 2002 to 2011, nine years, they've grown from four to thirty-four staff members. University Relations had four people in each department. When we merged them, we merged it down to six, and now I think they have twenty-four staff members. That seems like a lot, but if you compared our staff size to Georgia State or the University of Georgia or Georgia Tech, you'd find we're still pretty small for the size. We're catching up, but we're still pretty small in all those areas for the size university we are.

TS: You were telling me earlier that the growth in Development staff relates to the tax reforms of the 1980s and Reagan.

WW: Really, the growth of the KSU Foundation, not Development.

TS: Because of the need to separate the state appropriation to the university from external funding? Okay, so it doesn't have anything to do with this growth. What do you attribute the growth to? I mean, this is a pretty significant increase in staff. I saw an article in the *Wall Street Journal* last week where somebody was reviewing a book about higher education that basically argued that the growth of administration is nationwide; faculty to student ratios haven't changed much over the years, but administrator to student ratios have—there are a lot more administrators than there used to be. Of course, they were doing it from a negative point of view, this is a bad thing, but how to you explain this growth, and how does it fit in with national trends?

WW: Well, this was not the first Development staff I built. I did this at two United Ways and at Georgia Southwestern, so this was really the fourth organization where I came in sort of at the ground floor and built staff up. You really do it by justifying your existence. On the Development side, it's pretty easy to measure.

TS: How much money you raise?

WW: If you raise more money you justify more positions.

TS: But I mean, if thirty-four is even lower than we should be, how on earth did we get along just ten years ago with four?

WW: We weren't raising any money.

TS: I guess not.

WW: We were raising less than \$2 million a year, and now with this campaign we just finished raising \$75 million.

TS: That's one of the things I was wondering about, how much money were we raising ten years ago?

WW: We've got a graph showing how much private money we raised, year by year, going all the way back to 1969. It's a very interesting story. The first ten years, '69 to '79, we raised less than \$1 million in ten years. From '79 to '89 we raised about \$2 million. From '89 to '99 we raised about \$2 million.

TS: The next ten years we didn't improve?

WW: No. We actually went down a little bit. If you remember because of the Newt Gingrich controversy we lost our tax free status, tax deductible status. I think it was technically tax exempt status, and fund raising went through the floor for a year and a half, two years, about '95, '96, so that next decade . . .

- TS: Nobody was going to give a big gift because they couldn't write it off their income taxes.
- WW: If you think about the impact of this, the school started the Foundation in '69. From '69 to '99 we only raised about \$5 million total. People look back now and say, how can you name your business school with a \$1million gift? Well, when Michael Coles gave that gift in '95 or '96, it was by far and away the biggest gift this university had ever had. With a gift like that, it sets a benchmark, and in the fundraising business that's what you always want is a milestone or a benchmark where somebody makes a gift that you never before received that raises the standard. Michael Coles' gift, which resulted in the naming of Coles College, raised the standards that this thriving, growing institution that was about to become a state university—that we were somebody. We got a million dollar donor. Incidentally, United Ways of America celebrated their 100th anniversary in 1988, and that was the same year they got their first ever million dollar gift. When you look at the history of fund raising, a million dollar gift to Kennesaw was very significant, and I don't know how many one million dollar gifts the University of Georgia received, but I would bet if you traced it before the 1960s you might not find any. You might find a few in the 1960s and 1970s; you might find a few, but those levels of gifts really didn't start coming till the 1980s and 1990s, and you start reading about people making million dollars gifts, it was a big deal. By the time I got here in 2002, we had had a couple of years where we had raised \$2 million a year. That was a big deal.
- TS: By the time you got here?
- WW: Yes, by the time I got here we were raising about \$2 million a year.
- TS: Before you got here they were doing that.
- WW: For a couple of years. 2000, 2001, 2002.
- TS: So who is responsible for that? Is this the Foundation driven thing?
- WW: Some of it was Foundation driven; some of it was Kathleen Nitesell and the staff that was here. Joan Duncan was running the annual campaign. These weren't two million dollar gifts; this was the cumulative amount.
- TS: Somewhere in there, I guess it was right before you got here, Shaw gave that million dollars to the history department.
- WW: Yes, I got here right when that gift occurred. That happened in 2002, and shortly thereafter Fowler gave a million dollar gift. Shelley Strickland was responsible for those. She was a talented grant writer in the Development department. She was the one who I mentioned that left to go to graduate school.

- TS: So those two gifts were a pretty good part of that two million.
- WW: Yes. And they were multi-year pledges so we counted them a quarter of a million at a time.
- TS: Let me ask my question another way. How on earth did somebody as dynamic as Betty Siegel allow us to have so few Development officers for so long?
- WW: I don't know. I really can't answer that question because by the time I came here she had been president for 20 years. I came here right after her 20th anniversary.
- TS: I can understand the faculty wouldn't pay attention to this, but I would have thought that she would have done something about this before twenty years.
- WW: I can speculate. If you looked around the system, I always take Georgia and Georgia Tech out of the equation because they are the flagship institutions, and they're older, more sophisticated, a lot more alumni, generations of alumni. We took those two out; you probably didn't have anybody in the system who had more than four or five employees over in Development. When I left Southwestern in '88, it was a two person shop. I would bet you Valdosta had a two person shop. Nobody had many employees. Most of the foundations like at Southwestern and different school were started in the 1970s or 1980s, so everybody was new at this thing. If you were an Emory University or a church related university, you had been raising money for decades or centuries. In the public sector, once you got past the flagship institutions, not too many people were raising much money. I just heard a presentation from the vice president of Auburn University; they didn't hold their first capital campaign until the 1980s. This is a 100 year old, well-known university, nationally known university. They just finished two years ago what was their third campaign. They're pretty new at this. It was the evolution of the field; all this was pretty new.
- TS: The evolution of the field?
- WW: The development profession. All of this was pretty new in the 1980s and 1990s and early 2000s. It was not unusual in Betty's day in the 1980s and 1990s that Development probably just had two or three or four staff members.
- TS: What do you see as the big impetus for the change? Professionalization of the field?
- WW: It's a little bit of everything, professionalization of the field . . .
- TS: Who are the visionary folks?
- WW: The successful organizations, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Emory University—people are looking at what they are doing and saying, "Gee, that's where we need to go."

Specialization in the field: Joan Duncan, I don't know that she started the annual campaign, but in the field of fundraising, you've got annual campaigns which are generally direct mail, and that's a certain expertise of knowing how to mail, when to mail, what the mailings need to look like, targeting audiences; phon-a-thons are certainly a specialization. Then you've got more sophisticated things like major gifts, capital gifts, asking money for a building. You don't do that through the mail; you've really got to target an audience for that. Targeting people for specific gifts like the Shaws, the Fowlers, the Goizuetas, all those chairs—that's a very specialized field of knowing who to ask, when to ask for large amounts of money. Then people develop specialties, specializing in things like Foundation solicitations; there's a certain way you do that. You've got to network; you've got to know who gives money for what. Then you've got things like estate planning, planned giving, which is a different type of fundraising work, so the field became very specialized, just like an academic field where you become specialized like you are in certain types of history.

TS: So if somebody wanted to go into this today, would they still go to the Institute of Higher Education at UGA or what do you major in?

WW: No, not really because that my degree at the institute had nothing to do with fundraising. That institute is really geared toward the governance of higher education, not fundraising.

TS: Would you go to a business school? Who teaches this?

WW: There are several professional associations out there. There's one called the Association of Fundraising Professionals, which a lot of people in social services and health and human services fields participate in. It's a professional association; you can get a certification as a certified fundraising executive. In this state there is an organization called GEAC, which is Georgia Education Advancement Council; those are people involved in fundraising, alumni affairs, and university relations. Then nationally there's an organization called CASE, which is the Council for the Advancement of Supportive Education. CASE has a certification. Then there are a couple of other specialty organizations; there's a national council on planned giving. A lot of people in planned giving and major gifts work might get their CFP, their certified financial planner because there are certain things you need to know about financial planning, if you're going to talk to people about including your charity in their estate.

TS: Okay. So what you're really saying though is that it's the professional organizations that are providing the training and not the colleges and universities.

WW: Right. Dartmouth University has a summer institute on planned giving that's nationally known. There are some schools out there. Georgia State has a master's degree in public administration with a concentration on non-profit management, which is about fundraising, but it's also about the management of

non-profits. Indiana University is probably the best known in the United States because they have a School of Philanthropy there. It's called the Fund Raising School, and they have a center, just like the Institute of Higher Education in Georgia, that concentrates on studying the governance of higher education. The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University studies fundraising. Every year they publish a report on how much everybody raised, not just in higher education but in all fields. They come out with a national ranking based on how much money you raised, and they publish a great deal on fundraising practices, policies, procedures, all that; so Indiana University would be a leader in this field. There are a number of schools out there that have fundraising concentrations and a public administration degree. But Indiana University would probably be the best one.

TS: Okay. So we go from four to thirty-four and it becomes more specialized as we grow, so why don't you talk a little bit about reorganizations and so on and how you built the staff?

WW: Sure. The first thing that happened, both Kathleen and Shelley Strickland left. I split their salaries in half, so I essentially hired four people in their place, using two salaries. In a sense, I begged, borrowed, and stole everywhere I could go. A couple of deans gave me a little bit of budget money that I combined with a little bit of budget money I had to create one position, and we hired a Director of Development for each of the colleges. The original model was to put a development officer in each college. That had mixed results. Some did very well; some did okay; some didn't do well. It was to give the deans someone to raise money for that college. Ideally, the dean would also be involved in fundraising. In reality, the success or failure of the development officers had a bit to do with the development officer we hired, and it also had a bit to do with...I'd say there were three ingredients to success or failure: one was the person we hired, one was the dean's interest in fundraising, and one was the panache, for lack of a better word, of the college. I'll give you some examples. The College of the Arts is . . .

TS: Kind of the model.

WW: Yes, and they entertain a lot. It's a very visual college, so it's easy to see their product.

TS: Art and music and theatrical performances.

WW: Yes. They entertain people. To his credit, Joe Meeks is a very externally focused dean; he's extremely fundraising focused. We hired a young woman who really had no experience in fundraising, and I think it was a combination of working for an externally focused dean and a very visible college that Stacie Barrow became very successful as a development officer, and as a witness to that she was hired

- away from us by Young Harris [College]. We had a lot of success in the College of the Arts.
- TS: Yes, still are.
- WW: Still are. We had our fundraising luncheon today, and they raised a little over \$80,000. Conversely, you could look at Humanities & Social Sciences, which would be our home college. It's not as visible from a donor's perspective; and this is not an academic slight or insult; people don't get real excited about giving money to history programs or English programs or sociology; it's just not as tangible to a donor that, "Gee, I'm going to get excited about funding the Department of Psychology." It says nothing about the quality of the department; it's just pretty easy to see the symphony or a jazz combo or an art exhibit; it's less tangible to put your finger on what is the product coming out of social sciences.
- TS: Hopefully there are a few things like the Center for the Study of the Civil War Era that might be able to appeal to them.
- WW: Right, something like that is very, you know, what Len [Leonard] Witt [Robert D. Fowler Distinguished Chair of Communication and Executive Director, Center for Sustainable Journalism] is doing, highly visible. Len has been able to raise a lot of money, and he's got a product that people buy into. That's a very good example of Humanities & Social Sciences where we have success.
- TS: So the visibility of the department or of the program within the department.
- WW: Right, and then if it hits a niche.
- TS: Then the development officer and quite frankly some deans like Joe Meeks—you'd love to have him go out in public with you; and other deans, I don't want to mention any names, but some that have been here might be more of a liability than a help.
- WW: Right. While we're on that vein of Humanities & Social Sciences, I not only went through two different development officers, the college went through three deans in three years. Well, people want to give money to the leader; people want to identify with the leader. When the leader is constantly changing, sort of a revolving door, so to speak, it's hard for a development officer to get a grasp, get a handle on the leadership, where the college is going, who my leader is, when it's changing. And we had some other changes [in deans] too; it wasn't just in Humanities and Social Sciences.
- TS: Well, we had several Education deans, or at least a couple of them.
- WW: We had an interim there, and that always presents a challenge for development because you're in the middle of trying to raise money, and leadership is changing.

At the college level, the dean is the face of the college for better or for worse. That's just reality, just like the president the face of the university. If that is going through a cycle of change with an interim, and someone retiring as we had in the College of Education, it makes it a very difficult environment to raise money. It's hard for a development officer to be successful if that kind of change is occurring. In the academic world we tend to move through those changes very slowly, and when a retirement or a change is announced, there's an interim, there's a search, and the whole thing can take a couple of years to occur. That's wading through molasses in the development world because you lose a lot of momentum. When we had the Dean [Yiping] Wan incident, for example, I was having conversation with Goizueta Foundation, which early in my tenure here had given us a million dollars for early childhood education. We're in discussions about another gift and the Goizueta Foundation's tendency was to start out at a million and give a subsequently larger gift. Well, right in the middle of the discussions when I'm preparing the white paper for a second and larger grant request, it hits the newspapers that we have an investigation going on concerning Dean Wan, and there was considerable unrest in the College of Education. Well, the first thing that happened was the Goizueta Foundation was upset with me because I had not told them.

TS: For not telling them before they read it in the paper?

WW: Well, I couldn't tell them. It was a personnel issue, and as a cabinet member, an administrator here, I couldn't talk to people about it. They were upset with me personally, and one thing about fund raising—it's all about the relationship. The Goizuetas as well as RTM, Dennis Cooper, Michael Coles—none of these people gave money, quote, unquote, to Kennesaw State; they gave it to somebody here. It's a very personal relationship, and it takes a long time to cultivate a relationship, and it's built on trust. We now have eighteen \$1 million donors, and not one of them would have given us a dime had they not trusted individuals at the university. Trust is breached, you've lost credibility, and the Bagwell College controversy with Dean Wan and the conflict there, I really lost credibility with the Goizueta Foundation as an example, and there were some other donors as well who were upset with us, although I had nothing, obviously, to do with the controversy. But these relationships were built on trust, and we had an unfortunate incident, had a good bit of acrimony in that college, so it was almost impossible to raise money for a subject matter when that subject matter is in turmoil.

We had a big initiative to raise money for an Early Childhood Center. Well, there was a great deal of turmoil in Bagwell College about what the curriculum in that early childhood center would be. The folks who love Montessori and the folks who love Emilio Reggio agree that their flavor of ice cream is the best, and they're not willing to compromise. Those who love Montessori only like Montessori, and those who love Emilio Reggio only love Emilio Reggio, and then there are other people in between who have their own ideas of what the

curriculum should be. For a development officer that makes an impossible fundraising environment because you want to present a united front; you want to present to a perspective donor that you've got this momentum, you've got this excitement, and everybody's together cheering the home team on. When you find people bickering and disagreeing, you just can't raise money, so sometimes folks on the outside that aren't in the fundraising world don't comprehend that there are a lot of obstacles out there that can prevent a development officer from being successful. A controversy about the leadership, turmoil, disagreement, all that, can have a huge effect on it.

By 2004 I've now been here about two or two and a half years. The University of Georgia was in the middle of their mess over the role of the Foundation and Michael Adams' presidency and Vince Dooley's role as Athletic Director. As a result of that controversy in Athens, all of the University System foundations were told to sign an MOU that had been drafted out of the Board of Regents.

TS: Memorandum of Understanding.

WW: Memorandum of Understanding. The document itself was pretty unfriendly toward the foundations. Essentially, all the presidents were told to sign these things and have the board sign them, and that was it. I felt like we were just picking up some momentum on fundraising in the world of 2004 when this controversy occurred. There was a lot of scrutiny about university foundations and how much presidents were getting paid by the university foundations in stipends and benefits and that type of thing.

TS: I had forgotten the details. Were they thinking about cutting Adams' salary?

WW: There were members of the foundation at Georgia who were upset because Michael Adams didn't renew Vince Dooley's contract as Athletic Director. Some folks felt like Coach Dooley had worked through his contract, and it was time for him to retire. I wouldn't make a decision or a judgment on who was right.

TS: The merits of the case.

WW: The merits of the case, but the reality was, what came out of it was a lot of public scrutiny over what Michael Adams personally benefited out of the foundation. He was given a stipend, deferred income, compensation, pretty lucrative amount of benefits.

TS: Who is raising these controversies? The people that don't like Adams, obviously, and the people on the foundation who didn't like Adams are basically going public with, "This guy gets all this money from the foundation, and it's disgraceful."

WW: Right. There was a book written about it called *Behind the Hedges: [Big Money and Power Politics at the University of Georgia* (NewSouth Books, 2009)] which you can read; it was written by an *Atlanta Journal Constitution* author [Richard Whitt]; but, anyway, this whole controversy boils up and spills over across the University System about control of university foundations, governance structure, benefits paid, et cetera. Tommy Holder, who was the chair of our board at the time, refused to sign the MOU.

TS: Thomas Meredith is the chancellor?

WW: Meredith's the chancellor.

TS: So he sends this MOU to the presidents.

WW: And all the foundations.

TS: And the foundations, and says, "You sign it or else." And basically what it's going to do is to make foundations rubber stamps of what presidents want to do?

WW: Right.

TS: Tommy Holder says, "No way." Is this related at all the IRS controversies over Newt Gingrich in the 1990s?

WW: It really has nothing to do with it. A couple of the trustees saw it as a conflict because the IRS—and this is really sort of a misinterpretation of the two events.

TS: Okay, because I've got it in several oral histories.

WW: One had nothing to do with the other.

TS: So those foundation members are saying, "We told the IRS we wouldn't be a rubber stamp; Meredith is saying we have to be a rubber stamp."

WW: Right, so they see it as a conflict.

TS: But you're saying that isn't what it's all about.

WW: It's really two separate issues. In the 1990s the issue was a political organization contributed to the KSU Foundation to fund a course that Newt Gingrich taught. Of course, Newt Gingrich and Bill Clinton had their famous impasse over the federal budget.

TS: Closing down the government.

- WW: Closing down the government. Coincidentally, the IRS decides to investigate Newt's course taught here on campus and how it's funded.
- TS: There's an ethics investigation in Congress.
- WW: Right. The real issue with the KSU Foundation was it had accepted a contribution from a political action committee to fund a course taught by an elected official and was viewed as, "We received a political contribution."
- TS: It was about \$200,000.
- WW: Right, and was [allegedly] used to promote a political agenda.
- TS: [Allegedly] build a cadre of activists to promote conservative causes.
- WW: Exactly. My argument would be if you analyze Newt Gingrich's course here, I think it was a hard argument to make. Most people who saw the course, video tapes of the course, would say it was a very evenly balanced teaching of American government.
- TS: At least as balanced as any of our Political Science courses.
- WW: Exactly. But the fact remained that the KSU Foundation had received a contribution from a political entity, and that's what the IRS ruled against. The issue was the course was taught out of Coles College, interestingly enough, if you remember, and [Dean] Tim [Timothy S.] Mescon and Betty Siegel had approved the course, so the IRS ruling concerning the Foundation was, "You guys just did what the president of the university told you to do; there was no scrutiny of this." The real issue was not the president saying I want this course funded through the foundation; the real issue was where the money came from; and I think that's what a lot of people miss. The money came from a political action committee; it was not a charitable contribution; that's one issue. The chancellor's issue with the MOU was that foundations were a supporting organization of institutions, and in an odd manner the controversy at the University of Georgia forced the Board of Regents to make a decision whether they would retain Michael Adams or not. Because a lot of members on the UGA Foundation wanted to fire Michael Adams, the issue was not whether we like Michael Adams or not; the issue should have been who has the right to hire and fire presidents of a public university. If all the foundations say we want this guy fired, the real decision rests with the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents is the governing body for the University System, not the local foundations.
- TS: Sure.
- WW: So the foundations forced the Board of Regents into a corner to say, "You're not going to tell us who we're going to hire and fire. You are in fact a supporting

organization of the university.” In other words, if a university closed, this foundation would have no reason to exist. Conversely, if the foundation closed its doors, you’d still have a university, so the true definition of a university foundation is it is here for no other reason but to support the university. In the public setting they are not the governing body. In a private setting they typically are. That’s the fine difference. So the two issues, while you could look at them and say they’re in conflict; they’re really two different issues, separated by about eight years. At this point we have this MOU stand off. Tommy Holder, who, I think, was personally correct in saying, “I’m not going to sign this; this is not a friendly document.” Dr. Siegel was essentially being told by her boss, get this thing signed.

TS: She’s caught in the middle.

WW: She’s caught in the middle. I was Vice President of Advancement at the time, and had no official role with the KSU Foundation. Jim Fleming was retiring at the end of 2004. Jim and I discussed the situation, and it was really a no-win situation. Betty was under mandate to get it signed; Tommy was looking at it and saying, “No I’m not going to sign it; this is not how friends operate.” Pretty much everybody in the University System signed it except us and Georgia Tech. Tommy Holder was a Tech alumnus, so he wanted to see how the minds at Tech were going to deal with the situation. They came out with an edited version of it that was much friendly.

TS: So it was the language, basically?

WW: Yes. They changed the language to make it a little bit more friendly and cooperative.

TS: So it’s not really a substantive change; it’s still going to say that you’re a support group to carry out the mission of the university.

WW: Right. So we took Tech’s language and applied it to Kennesaw. There was an odd coincidence—and it was purely an accident—I don’t credit myself with what I stumbled across. But in the files up in Kennesaw Hall I actually found an MOU that had been signed in 1990.

TS: In the files here in Kennesaw Hall?

WW: Yes, in the files of Kennesaw Hall. I was still familiarizing myself with the relationship between the Foundation and the university, and I happened to come across this file that was signed in 1990 by the board chair and Dr. Siegel, which she had forgotten about, and it was a much more friendly document about a relationship between a foundation and a university. Well, I circulated that to Tommy and Norman Radow, who was vice chair at the time, and Dr. Siegel, and we took it to the Board of Regents and said, “We’re comfortable with this

arrangement, which, oh, by the way, predates this new MOU and anything else.” So we tweaked the language from the Georgia Tech edited version, and Tommy and Dr. Siegel signed the new MOU in January of 2005. Jim Fleming retires, Betty . . .

TS: Before you go on to Jim Fleming, you sent this down to the Regents then, and they were happy with it—the chancellor was happy with it?

WW: Yes, pretty much the whole debate, the whole thing, had died out by 2005.

TS: Okay, so he didn’t care at that point.

WW: Once the Regents decided Michael Adams was going to remain as president and the UGA Foundation, as you remember, separated itself from the university, divorced itself from the university.

TS: How is that working out?

WW: Well, they’ve remerged with essentially the University of Georgia starting a new foundation, the Arch Foundation. They ran two separate organizations for five or six years, and now they’ve merged back. I don’t know how it’s working.

TS: The way it ought to be it sounds like.

WW: The way it ought to be.

TS: So you’re saying Jim Fleming was going to retire anyway.

WW: Yes, Jim I think was 69 and decided to retire, amongst this controversy. It was very unpleasant for everybody involved. Betty, in January of 2005 appointed me interim executive director of the Foundation. To my knowledge, although it was never spoken in front of me, there was a little consternation among the trustees about Betty’s right to appoint an executive director, but the truth of the matter was, Jim was a university-paid employee, not a Foundation-paid employee. Jim was the only executive director or president the Foundation ever had, and he had always been a university employee. Betty appointed Jim. She appointed me. I was a university employee, and she had the right to appoint staff, so she had the governing right to do that. I think there was a little aggravation that they had not been consulted about my appointment, and I was already Vice President of Advancement, but Betty wanted to bring the two organizations together.

TS: That makes sense.

WW: There was a chasm. There were a lot of people on campus, as you probably know, who had a very sarcastic, derisive, negative opinion of the Foundation; it was just sort of this thing out there.

TS: Even in 2005?

WW: Yes. There was a lot of angst on campus about the Foundation. One of the things I would say I'm proud of myself on was being able to get along with a lot of different types of people, and I had a good relationship with Tommy Holder. I had known Tommy from my previous job with United Way, and I would think Tommy would say the same, that we could talk; we may not agree on everything, but we could talk and get along, so they took a wait and see how this is going to work out kind of attitude. Then something occurred that really, I think, solved a lot of issues. The university, as it's always been, was out of space; we're looking around; the housing had been a huge success; the parking garages were a huge success. In the spring of 2005, I had been executive director just a couple of months. We were approached by Duke Realty about buying the Town Point office building.

TS: I wanted to ask about that. That was 2005?

WW: Spring of 2005. We bought it in August of 2005. We saw it as a huge opportunity to alleviate some space. What I proposed was to take all of my departments, University Relations, Development, and the KSU Foundation, and move to Town Point. We would buy the building, and the university would give us a master lease agreement.

TS: We being the Foundation would buy the building?

WW: Yes, the Foundation would buy the building, and the university would agree that any available space in the building would be occupied by the university and leased by the university, so the only way the Foundation could buy the building at this point was if we had 100 percent occupancy. At the time 75 percent of the building, three out of the four floors, were occupied by private tenants, so we had leases. The model that the foundation has been able to operate under to successfully finance buildings is based on 95 to 100 percent occupancy. The way they break even is to get as close to 100 percent occupancy as possible.

TS: Keep rents low enough that you've got to have 100 percent occupancy?

WW: Yes, or you've got such a demand. The Board of Regents demanded that as space became available in that building, the university would automatically lease it, automatically assume responsibility for filling it. We had this master lease with the Foundation, so as private tenants moved out, the university would move in. That transition has occurred now. We now occupy 100 percent of that building.

TS: Did they do that, like the decks and everything else, where the Foundation sold bonds?

WW: Yes.

TS: So they sold bonds, so thirty years down the road when the bonds are paid off, it will belong to the university, but in the meantime the university is paying a lot of rent to the Foundation to make all this work.

WW: Right. So we moved Development, University Relations, and the KSU Foundation to the fourth floor of that building.

TS: The Foundation was in the KSU Center before that.

WW: Right. The Development office and University Relations were in the old Admin building. The mentality was we are alleviating space crunch on campus by moving these people over to Town Point, so as space became available, we moved more and more people.

TS: Now we've got Admissions over there.

WW: The mindset was there are a number of administrative operations on campus like Business Services, for example, that really has no day to day interaction with the students. Admissions has day to day interaction from prospective students, but if you're a prospective student, getting to the old Admissions office was a logistical nightmare; first you had to figure out where it was; and then finding parking was an issue. Over there, prospective students come and park and then get toured around the university, and when they leave, getting out of Town Point is much easier than getting off campus. As offices became available, the university moved administrative operations over there, so it worked out very well for the university and the Foundation. The perhaps unintended consequence was it brought the Foundation, the University Development, and University Relations together in one setting, so we were physically together. I think that had a very important role, and as being minimally together, and we're all working for the same cause as opposed to us versus them. As I look back on my ten-year career here, I think the one thing I would say I would really take a lot of pride in and achieved was bringing that sense of a team together, the Foundation, Development, University Relations, we're all in this together. Part of it was a physical coming together by buying that building. That brings us to 2005, and we were by 2005 knocking on the door of 18,000 or 19,000 students. When I got here in 2002 we were at 15,000. There was also a great deal of discussion; we had just finished the second phase of housing which was University Village; and so there was discussion about the next phase of housing and the next parking garage, which turned out to be Central parking deck. We developed a master plan for housing going north, what became freshman suites and the redevelopment of the apartments up there, and the decision to place a very large parking deck where it is. All of that, the stage was set in 2005 and in 2006. We started on all those projects as well as the idea that now we're a residential campus, we need a dining hall. We probably need to wrap it up here for today. We'll start it with the next phase with Betty's

announcement of her retirement and the planning of the capital campaign; how about that?

TS: That sounds great.

Conducted, edited, and indexed by Thomas A. Scott
Location: Dr. Wicker's Town Point office

Interview # 2: Thursday, 29 September 2011

TS: We had said in the last interview, Wes, that we were going to start in with Betty Siegel's retirement after twenty-five years in 2006. So why don't you talk about how that affected you and about your role in that?

WW: Betty, really in the spring of 2005 had made the decision that she would retire at twenty-five years, which would actually be in 2006. I believe she came in the 1981-82 school year, so 2006, sometime during that year, would mark twenty-five years. She actually announced her retirement at commencement in May of 2005 and then was going to remain in office for another six months while the search occurred. There was really no immediate need for her to vacate the office or leave, so rather than bring in an interim, she was going to stay until 2006. We wanted to have a grand gala for her, recognizing her twenty-five years, but we also wanted it to be a fundraising event. I wanted to capitalize on the fact that she was so well known and well connected, and we could raise funds for scholarships. So [we scheduled the gala for] the first weekend in January 2006.

Our strategy was there are a lot of galas and black tie events and holiday parties from Thanksgiving to New Year's, and then there always seems to be another spate of them in late January and early February. The Cobb Chamber of Commerce; the Heart Ball; WellStar has an event; so we positioned it right after the beginning of the New Year. We really didn't know when Betty was going to step down because the search committee had just begun work in summer of 2005. We thought it may take the entire '05-'06 school year. We started planning the event for January of 2006. We had a number of nice gifts, and I believe the total revenue for the event went over \$100,000. Of course, we had a sit-down formal dinner, cocktail reception we had to pay for, but we funded a scholarship. About half the proceeds went into a scholarship fund in Betty and Joel's name and remains today; it's an endowed scholarship with more than \$50,000 in it. So from a fundraising point, the gala itself was a profitable event. It was really a fun event to work on. Betty's two sons, who are both Ph.D.'s in higher education, agreed to serve as the MC's, Betty had a love of movies and so I got her to name her five favorite movies.

TS: *Gone with the Wind* is on the top of the list, I'm sure.

WW: *Gone with the Wind*; we had *Tootsie* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.

TS: Oh, she likes *Tootsie*?

WW: Yes! *Gigi*, and I'm trying to think what else we had her in. We filmed her on blue screen and then inserted her into five of her favorite movies. *Casablanca*

was another one, so it was really a pretty humorous part in the show. One of the sons said, "You know, if Mom hadn't gone into higher education, I'm not sure what she would have done!" The other son, "I think she would have gone to Hollywood!" The other said, "Yes, probably so; she's always loved movies, and if she had gone to Hollywood, this is what it would look like." We had inserted her in some pretty comical points in her favorite movies. The event was really a landmark event for Kennesaw. We had a lot of metropolitan Atlanta and Cobb County dignitaries there. Rhubarb Jones came in, and at the time was probably the best known Atlanta disc jock radio personality, and he introduced Patty Loveless.

TS: Was he working for us at that time?

WW: No, he was not; he was on the radio at WYAY "Eagle 106.7." He was the longest running Atlanta radio personality at the time, over twenty-five years on the radio.

TS: So he got Patty Loveless in?

WW: Yes, he got Patty Loveless and Emory Gordy, Jr. to come in. It was an interesting connection in both those cases. Emory Gordy is sort of a musician's musician. He played bass for Elvis, traveled with Emmylou Harris for years and years, and produced a number of very well known artists like Billy Joel, The Atlanta Rhythm Section, Dennis Yost, and the Classics Four. This guy has his fingerprint on a lot of music over the last thirty years.

TS: I remember right after Dan Papp came here Dede Yow and I started doing oral history interviews with him, and right in the middle of one of those interviews, in comes Rhubarb with Patty Loveless and Emory Gordy. So we had to break for about fifteen or twenty minutes while they were looking from the balcony on the fifth floor of Kennesaw Hall out on the Campus Green.

WW: Emory was a well known musician in his own right. Patty became female vocalist of the year and won a number of Grammy Awards and Country Music Awards. Emory's daughter went to school at Kennesaw; she's a Kennesaw alumna. The other unusual connection was that Patty Loveless and Betty Siegel grew up in the same home town in Kentucky. Both of their fathers were coal miners. Probably the high point of the evening or maybe the most emotionally charged point of the evening [was when] Patty Loveless sang a hit song called "You'll Never Get out of Harlan County Alive." It was a song really dedicated to coal miners. Her father had died of black lung disease, and I think Betty's grandfather was in a coal mining accident, so it was a very touching song. The remarkable thing was both Betty and Patty Loveless migrated from a coal mining region of Kentucky to North Carolina to Georgia. Patty sang that song, and then she sang "Georgia," and it was a really touching moment in the event.

The search continued and Betty did not stand down in January as she had originally planned, but stayed on through the spring semester as the search committee did their work.

They named Dan Papp president I believe in March or early April 2006. Dan was Vice Chancellor for Academics and Fiscal Affairs at the University System. In that transition there were a couple of conferences. Betty was attending a conference in Africa, I believe, and had to be the sitting president in order to attend, so somewhere the two of them worked out a deal where Betty would just stay in office until June 30. Dan came up in April. He had already resigned his position, and since I had the unusual situation of operating out of two offices, I gave Dan one of my offices. We shared my assistant in Kennesaw Hall, and Dan set up his laptop on my table. We have a table and chair in my office, and I worked out of Town Point more often than not and helped him in his transition. When he became president in July, he had already met with faculty and staff and had already gotten a pretty good lay of the land working out of my office in Kennesaw Hall for a couple of months.

That transition, at least from my perspective, went very well. Dan had an incredible amount of experience at Georgia Tech and was an interim president at Southern Poly, number two guy at the Board of Regents, and probably in a pretty unusual situation; he was concurrently a candidate for Chancellor and President of Kennesaw. The Chancellor search got down to two people, Dan and Erroll [B.] Davis, who was an outsider—not only an outsider to Georgia, but an outsider to higher education in that he had never actually been a staff member or worked in higher education. He was a trustee for Northwestern University, but he came out of Alliant Energy, where he had been an executive; so it was in a sense an unusual hire.

TS: Well, wasn't he [Governor] Sonny Perdue's choice?

WW: Yes, it gets down to it. The University System of Georgia is a state agency, and the governor of the state takes recommendations from the search committee, but it's the governor's prerogative to name his department chairs and directors, and so he selected Erroll Davis. My impression at the time was he wanted an outsider to come in and shake up the system a little bit, not be wedded to old alliances or staff or anything else, but to truly come in from the outside and make some changes. The controversy over at University of Georgia between Vince Dooley and Michael Adams had boiled over really into an unpleasant exercise that I covered earlier with the MOUs being forced on everyone. So I think the governor wanted somebody to come in with a completely new perspective. Five years later—and I'm just giving you an opinion of one person—I think Erroll Davis did a very good job. He probably rubbed some people the wrong way, but I think he made some changes that needed to be made. He came in with a completely fresh, new perspective on the system and made some hard decisions. So in retrospect we got

Dan Papp and, in my opinion, we got a prize; and the System got somebody new and fresh from the outside; so it all worked out very well for all of us.

TS: Was Erroll Davis in place in time to at least give final approval to Dan Papp as president here.

WW: That's right, so he actually signed off and approved that hire. It was probably his first hire is my guess.

TS: Just this last year he was being considered as a chancellor candidate again, and he seems like he's very good at getting along with whoever becomes Chancellor, and they're good at getting along with him, so there's no rivalry there apparently.

WW: Right. Dan is very adept at relationships, and I think he and [Chancellor] Hank [M.] Huckaby have a good relationship, as far as I know.

TS: And had one before I guess.

WW: And had one before, yes. That's probably jumping ahead a little bit to where we were in 2006.

TS: We really were lucky to get him, somebody with his kind of experience. He lived here in Cobb County all these years as well.

WW: That's right. He didn't have to sell his house and relocate to become president here. One of the things that occurred—and I'll backtrack a little bit to 2005—as Betty made her announcement, we had begun to plan for a major campaign. The campus had never had a comprehensive campaign. What I mean by comprehensive is you often hear of big campaigns referred to as capital campaigns, but capital in fundraising vernacular generally refers to bricks and mortar. You have a capital project or a program funded project.

TS: You want to build a building.

WW: Right. So the term comprehensive is in reference to, yes, there are some capital projects in a campaign, and there are programmatic projects such as raising scholarship funds or endowing a chair or funding an academic program or academic initiative. We began to think about and talk internally about launching a new campaign. Dr. Siegel wanted to launch it in her last year and announce football at the time. We had had a football feasibility study done back around 2003.

TS: We did? I didn't know that.

WW: We did. It was not a thorough study, and it was not particularly positive, but Dr. Siegel felt it would give us a competitive edge if we did launch football.

TS: Was this an internal study? We didn't have a Vince Dooley come in at the time.

WW: No, we had Homer Rice from Georgia Tech come in and work with us a little bit.

TS: Oh really? I do remember that.

WW: Several times with athletic staff and several with us [Development]. There was also considerable discussion about launching a Division I hockey program. The logic there was that—and quite honestly I thought it was pretty good logic—to be competitive in the world of NCAA football would take us decades, maybe a half century or more, if you looked at the trajectory of major football programs.

TS: A lot of money at any rate.

WW: A lot of money; you need a lot of infrastructure.

TS: South Florida has come up pretty quickly in football.

WW: Yes, South Florida is sort of the exception to the rule. There was somebody who went after it, did it well, and quite frankly we've read the case studies of other schools, and at South Florida the dynamic there was one person. They had a dynamic coach who really was driven in a unique way in a unique setting. Kennesaw and South Florida are similar in some respects in that they're both suburban schools that grew dramatically, probably grew beyond anybody's expectations, so there are some very good similarities between us and South Florida. But they had a dynamic coach, Jim Leavitt I believe, who really drove that program to success.

Anyway, Betty wanted to announce football, and she felt like it would give us a competitive edge over Georgia State, and at the same time she wanted to launch a campaign. I will admit I procrastinated a bit because generally you want to launch a campaign when a new president walks in the door because you've got the momentum of a new president. The other issue was that I didn't want to handcuff a new president with initiatives from a retiring president. As well as Betty and I had worked together for four years, it just didn't seem logical to me that we would launch a multi-year campaign in her last year.

TS: Betty was supposedly difficult to take a no, or was not inclined to take a no.

WW: The funny thing about Betty, we used to joke if you ever said to Betty, "You cannot do something", Betty heard, "You can do something." She never heard the "not"; she never heard the negative; and quite frankly I think that was the secret to her success. She floated above a lot of the negativity by just simply not acknowledging it. In any college or university there are nay-sayers and people who criticize you.

TS: So Betty Siegel was very good at ignoring her critics or not letting them stop her from doing what she wanted at any rate.

WW: Yes, she was very persistent, and she was absolutely, probably, the most positive person I've ever worked with. The world was full of possibilities and opportunities for her, and she didn't get dragged down in the minutia of college administration or negative comments or criticism. She really rose above it or floated above it, and I think that was a lot of her success. Probably, the secret to her longevity was she was always looking over the next horizon. She didn't get stuck in the mud in some administrative issue; she was always looking for the next big thing.

TS: And then delegated the last big thing to somebody else.

WW: That's right! She told me once she had a thousand ideas, and she'd throw them against the wall, and a couple would stick. So she would delegate those to some people to see them through, and some of them came out to be really significant things, and others may not have been as successful, but she kept throwing great ideas against the wall, and some stuck. I think, quite frankly, she was the right person for Kennesaw at the right time. We had big dreams and aspirations, and Betty was a visionary. What she saw Kennesaw could become was far beyond what most anybody else could conceive or perceive.

TS: How would you rate her—we raised almost nothing before she arrived here, and I know she started out probably even criticized at first for spending so much time friend making that she wasn't fundraising. What was her term?

WW: Friend raising.

TS: Instead of fundraising, but by the end how would you rate her?

WW: Exceptional, and here's why. She's been retired now for five years. If you look at this comprehensive campaign, most of the really significant gifts that we've received, you could draw a line back to Betty. Those relationships paid off years after she left office. We have a major donor board—recognition boards up in Kennesaw Hall as you come in on the second floor from the parking lot. If you read through those boards of people who have given one hundred thousand, a quarter million, half a million, a million dollars—both corporations and foundations—you can draw a line back to Betty on just about every one of them. Some of them, I would say they were my relationships, but Betty had something to do with all of those. So in retrospect her legacy is that she gathered around her a group of friends for the university that ended up being very profitable for us. I have the utmost respect for her because she saw what the university could become and drove us there and didn't get side tracked in administrative minutia.

TS: But you go in in 2005, and you say it's not the time to do a capital campaign. What did she say then?

WW: Well, what I explained to her was, when you run a capital campaign, you usually go through at least a year silent phase where you're planning the campaign; you're doing a feasibility study, not only to determine what you want to raise the money for, but the feasibility study also helps you identify those people that are most likely to give you the money and to gauge how much money you can raise. We literally went through, oh, I don't know, five or six exercises with staff and some volunteers putting names on a wall and making estimates, both conservative and expansive estimates, on what we thought people or foundations or corporation would give us, and tried to filter through all of our prospects, all of our current donors, and come up with a number that made sense and a map on how we were going to get there.

This process started in 2005. We literally went through Dr. Papp's first year as president mapping out this campaign that we actually launched in October of 2007. During the 2005 year, I began meeting with some consultants planning the campaign. I also had University Relations under my umbrella at the time, and one of the things we realized, as Betty stepped down, is Kennesaw and Betty Siegel were synonymous. If you talked to people in the metro Atlanta area and said Kennesaw State University to them, Betty Siegel's picture popped up in a little cloud above their heads. One thing people knew about Kennesaw, they couldn't tell you anything about the arts or business or humanities and social sciences, but they knew Betty Siegel. I was meeting with a fundraising consultant one day, and he said, "You know, as Betty's announced her retirement, you've got a major image problem. You need a new face for Kennesaw." That sort of hit me; the light bulb came on; and I said, "That's it; the new face of Kennesaw." In 2005 we launched . . .

TS: Who was it by the way?

WW: Well, it wasn't one face.

TS: I mean, who said that to you?

WW: A guy named John O'Kane who is with Coxe Curry [& Associates], a fundraising consultant. John has been a longtime friend of mine; he actually helped us conduct the feasibility study for the campaign. I thought that's it, that's the image campaign we need to run. So we immediately started running ads in *Georgia Trend*—we picked them because of their circulation—and *The Atlanta Business Chronicle*, because we were trying to touch base with the Atlanta business community to let them know, we're here and we're competitive, and we'll stack up our students and faculty against anybody. We started featuring one person at a time. If you remember those early *Georgia Trend* and *Atlanta Business Chronicle* articles, the billboards, there was only one face at a time. I had a bit of a

marketing background before I came to Kennesaw and had been the editor of a couple of different magazines, the Georgia Southwestern Alumni magazine and my national fraternity's magazine, and one of the things I understood was that the tendency of administrative types is to cram as much information as you can into a promotional piece. The preferred taste of the public, the consumers, is a simple message, one or two words, a simple sentence at most and a clear image, a simple image. People remember one thing.

So we started this image campaign with one person, one message. The message was just a sentence, and the whole idea was this was the new face of Kennesaw. We had to start featuring people other than Betty. Betty's early strategy is promoting Kennesaw by promoting herself, and she was an iconic person. Well, she was leaving, so we had to come up with a new face. We came up with new faces, and we had some interesting debates in University Relations. Frances Weyand at the time was director of University Relations, and you've got a graphic artist who wanted to lay out something cool, and the PR people who want to explain everything, and we got in some interesting debates about what this whole image campaign would be. I really wanted to lay the groundwork. The image campaign wasn't a campaign unto itself. It was going to morph into our Comprehensive Campaign. So the whole idea was this "New Faces of Kennesaw" was not just going to be a marketing campaign for a new president and Kennesaw after Betty Siegel. It was going to be really the foundation for our comprehensive campaign—the idea that we are more than one college, we are more than one iconic personality, and we are a multi-faceted university.

That campaign in 2005, early 2006, before Dan became president, won all sorts of awards. We really struck a chord with people. I knew we were successful when I would go downtown to meetings, Chamber of Commerce or Kiwanis or social events, and one of the tag lines we had on all of those ads was Georgia's Third Largest and Fastest Growing University. We really put that in there. Most schools have a statement—we're a member of the University System of Georgia, or we're a comprehensive university—the general public doesn't know what a comprehensive university is. They know what a community college is, and they know what a university is to some degree, but the term comprehensive university really doesn't mean anything to the general public—so we just put a tag line on there, Georgia Third Largest and Fastest Growing University. It was almost like the Avis and Hertz thing—you know, we're not the biggest, but we try harder.

That was not our intent; that was not the branding on that image campaign. The branding was the New Faces of Kennesaw, the multiple new faces of Kennesaw. Well, I would go downtown to different events, and people would say, "Hey, I saw your advertisement in *Georgia Trend*," or "I saw your billboards," or "I saw your ad in the *Business Chronicle*; wow, that's great, Georgia's third largest and fastest growing university." So people were repeating this back to me, and it struck me that we hit a chord sort of like the Coke logo—you got it right; don't change it. It was sort of amusing to me that everybody picked up on this. I

remember getting some criticism from some deans saying that we shouldn't be branding ourselves based on our size, and I said, "We're not."

It's one of those odd things that happens that people pick up on something that we really had no intention of them picking up on, but there's nothing bad about it. In fact, in a way, it's a positive result of the campaign that people did pick up on it. Most people out in the general public didn't know we're the third largest university and probably would have defaulted by saying Georgia and Georgia Tech were bigger than we were. The truth of the matter is Georgia State, not Georgia Tech is larger. But the reality and the simplicity of the message—an American public equates size with quality. If you're big there's a reason; you're big because you're good. Academicians would argue all day long the most elite schools are not the biggest schools, but in American culture you hear things like the biggest and the best.

TS: Well, people don't have to come here.

WW: That's right; they can go elsewhere; but that whole idea that we're the third largest university I think shocked some people. It was one of those, oh, wow, aha things of "Gee, I had no idea that Kennesaw was so big." A similar reaction whenever I would bring a guest trying to cultivate a new friend of the university to campus—people from Atlanta or Buckhead come up to the campus for the first time, and their general reaction is, "Oh, I had no idea. I had no idea this university was so big." You would think crossing the Chattahoochee and coming over Kennesaw Mountain was like crossing the Rubicon or something. People just think of Kennesaw as being way out there, as if we're in Chattanooga or something, and the reality is we're just twelve miles north of the perimeter.

TS: Well, in terms of buildings, compared to where we are now and when you came here, we have a very different face to our campus now with the parking decks and the residence halls, particularly.

WW: John [A.] Anderson [Assistant Vice President for Facilities Services] told me the other day that between 2002 and 2010, 62 percent of the square footage of the campus has been built.

TS: Since 2002?

WW: Since the day I came here. Not that I was responsible for all that, but it is remarkable.

TS: Well, the Foundation played a huge roll in all of this though.

WW: It did. We opened Village Suites in 2004. I was not with the Foundation at that time, but I got involved in 2005 because it was a problematic construction project. The developer and the construction company made some errors in construction.

- We had some challenges in the building, some quality challenges; it was immediately leaking around the windows in the buildings. We discovered that they had not put a waterproofing material, a sealant, between the brick structure and the walls of the building.
- TS: These are for university . . . ?
- WW: Village.
- TS: Village north of campus?
- WW: North of campus. We ended up having to sue the construction company and the developer. They settled with us out of court, multi-million dollar settlement because we literally had to take the bricks off the buildings in 2007 and '08 and put the sealant on and then re-brick the building.
- TS: Makes you wonder how they could have messed up on something that basic.
- WW: Well, yes, and the amazing thing was they actually had the material on the work site and chose not to put it on as a cost savings, I guess. I don't know, it was one of those bizarre things of there's a certain way to build a building, and the material was right there in front of them, and they didn't use it. We had leakage in the building. The other thing that happened that, for an historian, not having much experience in construction, just astounded me—while the construction was going on, they had had a delay in getting certain materials because there was so much of an economic boom going on in China. China was buying sheetrock and steel like crazy, so it was hard to find it in the United States. It's a little hard to think, since 2008 we've been in such a recession, that the economy [before 2008] was in such a boom that you couldn't buy sheetrock, but that was a problem.
- TS: It's nice to know we were exporting something to China.
- WW: Yes, exactly. They were buying up everything. One of the odd things that happened was the construction company, for whatever reason, got the sheetrock in and floor finishing, and decided to go ahead and put those in before the building was roofed in. Well, that spring of 2004 we had torrential downpours. It was probably the wettest spring we've had in years. I remember driving over by University Village and actually seeing water cascading out of the windows at the bottom floors. So before they ever got the building finished, we had damage in the building that they had to repair, and the whole construction project was a mess.
- TS: This is probably about the time the English building opened up too, wasn't it and flooded its first floor.

WW: That's right. Immediately in 2005 when I became executive director of the Foundation, we had a number of problems going on with that phase of housing. We had also built the North Parking Deck, and that opened in 2004, and [we] began planning, really, a multi-phase expansion of housing after the Villages opened up. The idea was to build freshmen suites, which is now attached to the University Village, and you really can't tell them apart because architecturally it all looks like one complex, but it's really two complexes up there. The corner complex where you have the floored six-story glass façade . . .

TS: That you see from the road.

WW: That you see from the road—is very attractive and has different colored lights. That's actually freshman suites that were not built originally with University Village. It's a separate facility, and you can walk between the two facilities there. They are not built together; they are two separate facilities; but from the road it all looks like one facility. Freshmen suites were built, and Tommy Holder was the chair [of the KSU Foundation] during this time. Norman Radow was vice chair, and Norman was the guy over all real estate projects. Norman did a great job in the design. Well, that was intended to be the first phase of a multi-phase project heading north. The Foundation, back around 2000 or 2001, not sure of the date, had purchased some old apartments up on the north side of campus, refurbished them. It was actually two different apartment complexes. If you go up there and look, you can tell a little bit different facades, a little bit different design.

TS: I drove up there the other day. I was surprised they were still there.

WW: Yes, they're still there, they're actually all full and students living there. It's a different style than the residence halls. We have a little bit lower prices, so there's a price break there, so some students like the lower priced housing. But the plan was to take one of those units down and build a higher density multi-level residence hall in the next phase, and when that was done then take the last one down and build more university village type housing up there with a small recreation facility or health facility and a small dining hall up there. All this was going on in 2006-'07, and we had some issues with the bonds in terms of trying to expand because the current financing tied all of our projects up. We had done something akin to refinancing. We had a bond issue which was financed at the time at a higher interest rate, and we were able with declining interest rates to go in and effectively refinance. We also had several bond issues, several different projects, so we rolled them all in together and effectively swapped the bonds out, which saved . . .

TS: So we're only paying back one bill or one debt.

WW: Right, as opposed to multiple projects.

TS: So we put all the parking decks and the residence halls together?

WW: Right. And Chastain Point was wrapped into that. In the summer of 2005, as we were concurrently going through this transition—Betty had already announced she was going to step down—the Foundation decided to purchase Town Point. We had been approached by a real estate company, Duke Realty, who had bought out a number of projects from Ray Weeks, who was the developer who built the whole Town Point complex. This one building was privately leased by a number of different companies. The largest tenant, Heidelberg, had built their own building just south of us. They had vacated the fourth floor of the building, so virtually 25 percent of the building was empty. We bought the building in August, 2005 and immediately moved Development and the Foundation and University Relations into the fourth floor.

We also moved a couple of professors from Early Childhood Education and Educational Leadership, the idea being that we would move people and departments over who did not have day to day interaction with students. So some graduate faculty, some researchers, and administrative staff, departments like Development, University Relations, really don't have to be on campus. It turned out to be a really good move on behalf of the Foundation. The university agreed to take available space as leases expired, so over the last five years, as leases expired, we chose not to renew those leases and moved university departments over. Business Services moved over. As you know, we set up an office suite for Dr. Siegel as President Emeritus. Educational Leadership moved over, Admissions, Global Initiatives, Graduate Admissions, Registrar's office have all moved over. It's been very beneficial because the university was completely out of space. As those departments moved over, it was tantamount to getting new buildings, administrative buildings, because we vacated space on the main campus. It alleviates a good bit of the crunch.

TS: It makes perfect sense to have Admissions here, I guess, because that's for students before they become students, and they don't have to fight parking to get to the office.

WW: One of the problems in the older days, ten years ago I guess, [was that] a prospective student came on the campus, and it probably wasn't too difficult to find a parking space to go to the Admissions office at Kennesaw Hall. As the campus grew, a prospective student or visitor coming to campus, first of all, wouldn't know where Admissions was, but finding a parking space and getting there became difficult. So having Admissions over here where prospective students have an ease of parking—we have a lot of parking over here—and then when they go on a campus tour, they get led through campus by somebody who knows their way around—probably, eased a little bit of the traffic on campus from having visitors lost all over the place. At the time we began discussions in the Foundation to buy additional buildings, I was a big proponent of [Town Point] because as you look at the campus and the opportunity to expand, we're boxed in a little bit. We've got I-75 running on our east and north side as it curves around

on the north side of campus. On the west side of us there's Pinetree [Country Club].

A lot of people have speculated for years and years—in fact, one of the first pieces of gossip I heard when I came to campus was that Kennesaw was going to buy Pinetree Country Club and the neighborhood and everything. The first community meeting I went to—led by John Anderson with folks from Pinetree—they wanted to know when we were going to start buying their houses. The Foundation had purchased, right at the turn of the century, the twelve houses on what is now Campus Loop Road, which used to be called Frey Lake Road. So there was a sense out there that we're going to keep buying houses into Pinetree and Wetherbyrne [Woods Subdivision], which is a small neighborhood over there. On analysis, buying a one acre lot for a quarter million dollars where you have a thirty-year-old home is really not a good financial move unless money is not an issue and the land is. Well, the land is an issue here, but money is also a big issue. So, if you bought twenty houses over there at a quarter million dollars a piece, you're out five million dollars, and what you got is twenty houses on one acre lots, and you've got to tear them down to build anything, plus you've got the added problem of all the neighbors over there whose houses you didn't buy who would protest you building anything over there.

TS: Would I be correct to say that we bought the houses on Frey Lake Road to pacify homeowners who didn't like University Place across the street from them?

WW: Well, that, yes, and it was really a buffer. Now, we had our hands tied when we bought that. The Wetherbyrne and Pinetree home owners insisted when we went in and bought those houses that we never put student housing on that side of the road [and that] no one can live over there. So the covenants of that agreement when we bought all those houses, I think we bought ten in one fell swoop and then later bought two more, but the covenants really tied the university's hands. We can't build a multi-story building, nothing higher than two stories over there. No one can live over there. So that was the type of challenge we were going to have from buying into Pinetree or Wetherbyrne, and then just the cost analysis of it for five million dollars we can go buy something over here. Plus I really felt like Town Point offered a unique opportunity to expand the campus dramatically where you could have a north and south campus with a cross walk at Chastain Road.

So we explored buying additional buildings here. The Weeks Company owns five other buildings in this development. The problem is they are bound up in a family trust, so to buy a building we have to extract the asset from the trust, which is very complicated. In years to come it may be an opportunity as the valuation of properties decreased. It is a very complex matter, but essentially Mr. Weeks decided he wasn't going to sell any more of the buildings. So in a sense we're landlocked. We could probably use one of those buildings right now and fill it up with administrative operations, which again would alleviate space on campus, but

that became a secondary priority of the Foundation when it was decided we could look at other properties. We found some undeveloped property between I-575 and I-75 that has now become a sports park. The Foundation built Village Suites in 2007; I think we opened it in 2008. A little bit different style on housing than what we had before in that they don't have full kitchens; the suites are a bit smaller with the idea that with the advent of the dining hall, students wouldn't be cooking in their rooms. We had a great debate on the Foundation, the Real Estate committee, whether the students were cooking in their rooms anyway because as we turn over rooms every year we found that the stoves hadn't even been turned on. In some cases the wrapping of the grills inside the ovens hadn't been used.

TS: So give them a microwave, and they've got all they need.

WW: Give them a microwave and a sink and a refrigerator, and that's all they need. So the suites were designed a little differently with the idea of forcing students into common areas and encouraging them to use the Commons rather than eating in their rooms. The suites have been extremely popular, and housing in all of its phases has been extremely successful as a testament by its occupancy. We've been at virtually 100 percent occupied ever since 2002, so as we've added each phase, University Village in 2004, the Suites in 2009, the Commons in 2009—every phase of housing has not only been successful, but virtually 100 percent occupied.

TS: The Suites, you said 2008 earlier but it's 2009.

WW: Yes, it's 2009.

TS: And the Commons also in 2009.

WW: And the Commons in 2009. The Commons was very interesting; it was a Foundation financed project. Unlike other projects, the university operates it, and it simply pays the Foundation for the debt service. The profit or net proceeds go to Auxiliary Services rather than the Foundation; that's the one difference. With parking and housing, that revenue comes to the Foundation, which has allowed the Foundation to not only fund new projects, but to fund things like the faculty awards. It's also allowed the Foundation to hire its own staff, so it's not dependent on the university any longer for funding of staff. That's something that's not talked about much, but I think is very significant.

During my tenure between 2005 and 2010, when I got here there were four or five staff members. They were all technically university employees including myself. I've always been a university employee, not a Foundation employee. I had the title of executive director of the Foundation. Jim Fleming was a university employee. We added staff as we added projects because obviously the accounting responsibilities increased. As we increased fundraising we had to add staff for gift reporting, gift receipts, and database work. All those people were university

employees. We made the transition as the revenues increased to all those Foundation employees being employed by the net proceeds from housing and parking. So in a sense the Foundation is completely self-sufficient. [It has] moved to a position of being completely self sufficient in terms that the university does not have to pay for salaries and operations of the KSU Foundation. It became a completely self-sufficient operation.

TS: So everybody over there, Karen Paonessa and [W. R. (Bob)] Heflin and all those are paid by basically parking and residence halls revenues.

WW: Right. After I'd been executive director for a year, in 2006 when Dr. Papp came in, I transitioned Karen Paonessa from Director of Foundation Programs to Assistant Vice President for Development. She and I were the two people who straddled the fence so to speak in that we had a role with the Foundation and a role with University Development. The link was important because not only had she worked with the Foundation for about ten years, so she knew all the trustees, but she prepared the meeting agendas, the minutes, and any activities like committee activities with the Foundation. We hired Kyle Darden to assume her duties with the Foundation. He did that, and she was charged with managing the Development staff, so University Development as a university-funded department, University Foundation as financed by the Foundation. Development is the fundraising staff. The Foundation predominately is a group of accountants; they're accounts payable, accounts receivable, accountants—financial staff. So Karen and I were the two people who had a foot squarely on both sides of the fence there.

In 2006 Dr. Papp comes in, and he made a couple of administrative changes in my area that affected me. One was he immediately transferred Alumni Affairs to University Advancement, so I now had University Relations, Development, the KSU Foundation, Special Events, which we renamed University Events, and Alumni Affairs. If you look at most universities, you'll see those departments under one umbrella. The one differential you may see at many large universities is that University Relations is often in a division called External Affairs. That would be people who deal with the legislature, might have federal government-elected official relationship responsibilities—you know, go to Washington and visit your congressman type folks, lobbying legislature work and dealing with local officials on issues. So he brought Arlethia Perry-Johnson to campus in October of 2006 and transferred University Relations from Advancement to External Affairs. She originally was the Special Assistant to the President for External Affairs. University Relations began to report to her.

TS: So you lost one.

WW: I gained one and lost one.

TS: Gained alumni and lost . .

WW: University Relations. Having Alumni Affairs was important because we had a growing constituency of young alumni who will hopefully become contributors. The synergy between Development and Alumni Affairs should be very strong. Prior to that transfer, Phil Barco, who was a longtime director of Alumni Affairs, left, and the longtime secretary there . . .

TS: Myra Morgan.

WW: Myra Morgan, she retired and then came back to work part-time in another department, I think one of the academic departments. So I inherited an office with no staff. We named Rocky Barnes as the interim director. Rocky was a KSU alumnus who had worked in University Events as one of our event coordinators; he was the AV specialist. Rocky came in as interim director, and we conducted a search for a new director. I had two of the directors of Development apply for the position. Lisa [A.] Duke was the successful candidate. She had been the Director of Development for Coles College. So Lisa came in in September of '07 as the Director of Alumni Affairs. She was able to hire a couple of staff to get this started. Since then, we've been able to move some money over from Development, University Advancement, to beef up her staff. Since September of '07 that department has grown to seven people. They have been given one of the houses on Frey Lake Road, now Campus Loop Road, and that's where they're officed.

The challenge in Alumni Affairs [was that it] had been a little bit of a clubbish community college mentality that getting elected to the board meant you were a member of a small club of about twenty people, and there were benefits to being a club member. I don't think it had the vision of a board who represented what was then probably 30,000 alumni, and I don't think they had the vision or understanding as a board that their mission was to encourage and cultivate alumni activity to support the university. It operated more like a club whose mission was to have fun and to have social events around that group of people; it was very insular. Lisa has done a magnificent job in restructuring the board. The board has evolved into some very strong community leaders who have a broader perspective on what the board should be and what Alumni Affairs should be.

One of the things she did was immediately build a database of e-mail addresses. So when we had an event, she could blast e-mail five, six, seven thousand people instantaneously with an invitation. We started a network reception program where the last Monday of the month we have a networking reception for alumni at no cost; you show up and give you the opportunity to network. We were tapping into the mentality, and a lot of our alumni are young, and even if they have jobs, they're always looking to move up and move on, so with an alumni body that's not only growing dramatically, but extremely young, we realized that offering a networking reception was valuable to alumni. We have these once a month. We

typically have over a hundred alumni show up at them. We've had as many as 150 show up.

TS: I had no idea they were that successful.

WW: Yes, it's been huge for us. Lisa started a fall homecoming that's now in its third year and has been extremely successful. I think when we launch a football program, the nice thing is we've already got homecoming created. She's got students and faculty and staff and alumni involved in it. So she set up a number of programs that have been extremely successful. Alumni-giving has been going up each year as well, and I like to see that progression. It's very low right now and will probably continue to be low in terms of percentage of alumni contributing because we're adding five thousand alumni to our database every year. So to get a percentage point of those people is challenging. Fifty donors would be 1 percent of the five thousand, so to get several hundred new donors out of every set of new graduates is challenging. Twenty-one, twenty-two years old, people aren't ready to give back to their university, and if they are, it's just a token of support. We're often cited and criticized for low level alumni giving, but when you look at the demographics you understand that we now have fifty-seven thousand alumni.

Over half that alumni base graduated since the year 2000; about thirty thousand have graduated in the last ten years. These are people in their twenties, early thirties. They're not ready to start giving back, and if they do, we'd love them all to give the minimum of \$35.00 a year, but keeping up with their addresses is one challenge because they're going to change address four or five times. Then getting them to the mentality that even if you're in your first job out of college, you could give back \$35.00 a year, I mean, that's just a couple of pizzas. But a challenge at any university is getting those young alumni to give back.

As that alumni population grows, it's going to be even more challenging to get those young people to give. I think we're a generation away, maybe another fifty years, before you see large numbers of alumni contributing. When this group of people that have graduated in the last ten years gets up in their fifties and sixties and seventies, then you're going to see them giving something back. In the very short range of that you're talking about thirty years from now. So that's a challenge she knows she's got, the alumni board know they have, but the alumni board has evolved into what I like to call the sleeping tiger. We went from an alumni board made up of quite honestly some faculty and staff who worked on campus who also happened to be alumni, and it was generally a pretty cloistered group, to what we have now.

TS: Why don't you talk about that a little more?

WW: We've got the head comptroller and the head auditor, two of our board members, from WellStar; one of them is head comptroller and the treasurer of the alumni

board as the auditor at WellStar. Then the president-elect who is now in the vice chair role or vice president's role who is the CEO of Northside Hospital-Cherokee, one of the largest hospitals in the metropolitan area now. So we've started recruiting that type of person. Consultants, we have a vice president from Hewlett-Packard on the board, some independent consultants who have been very active members, a couple of lawyers, so it's been very rewarding to see that board evolve into a group of community leaders who are interested in giving back. The board has reorganized itself, changed the bylaws a little bit more, to what I consider a more progressive board and have focused on some real big projects. They're looking at building an alumni walk that would run on the west side of the Convocation Center coming out of the East Deck, what was really originally, if you remember, Frey Road. It still looks like a road over there.

TS: I did a campus tour for the preservation students the other day and realized that the sign is no longer there, the directional sign that says Frey Road. Somebody took it down.

WW: Well, it still looks like a road over there, so they're looking at putting bricks down for an alumni walk because as people graduate their families come out of that parking deck and walk on the west side of the Convocation Center. The graduates themselves, as they go in their procession, come out of the old gym into the Convocation Center and walk along that walk. So they're undertaking that project.

TS: So we're going to sell the bricks along the walk?

WW: We're going to sell the bricks along the walk. You too can have your name on a brick there! The alumni board has evolved in a very strong way. One of the things I'll take with me as I leave from Kennesaw is I think the feeling that that was a very successful endeavor, a very successful reorganization, and the development of that staff has been very positive. We had a couple of things happen as we were planning the campaign that were interesting. One was a bit of a fiasco that turned into some really good publicity for us. By the time Dr. Siegel was retiring, one of our deans, Larry [Laurence I.] Peterson, approached the cabinet with an opportunity to receive a gift from a sculptor. This is Spaceship Earth which now sits outside of your building [Social Sciences]. What had happened was this rather renowned sculptor [Eino] had been commissioned to build a globe, a very large globe, two hundred tons of Brazilian quartzite, a bluish-grayish quartzite.

He had been commissioned by the founders of PowerBar, the healthy candy bar, energy bar. They had made a lot of money, sold out to Nestlé's, and were sitting on a bunch of money. They were going to contribute it back to their alma mater. Both the husband and wife [Brian and Jennifer Maxwell] were environmentalists and they were big fans of a man named David Brower, who was not one of the original Sierra Club board members, but probably one of the better known ones,

because he was a bit of a vigilante environmentalist. He had been in the mountain ranger unit in the invasion of Normandy, David Brower had, served in World War II and worked all his life to preserve lands in the west, particularly the Grand Canyon and projects of the Sierra Club.

David Brower was a prominent name among environmentalists. They wanted to do something, and Brower was a Cal-Berkeley graduate as well as the donors. They wanted to do something to recognize David Brower and a symbol that we all lived on one globe or, as Brower said, one spaceship called Earth. Berkeley got into a debate—all this preceded us—Berkeley got into a debate where they were going to put this thing and came up with a spot which rather ironically was at the intersection of two interstates outside of campus. It was sort of the median of the interstate, and that infuriated the donors. The debate evolved to the point that Berkeley couldn't please the donors with where this piece of sculpture was going to go. The sculptor happened to have a mountain home up in Jasper and lived next door to Larry Peterson in Jasper.

TS: So that's the connection.

WW: That's the connection.

TS: And this is Eino?

WW: It's a Finnish sculptor, trained in Italy I believe. Anyway, Larry proposed that we accept this gift, this environmental sculpture. Eino had also already given several pieces of sculpture that are in that atrium of the Clendenin and Science and Math building, that open area that links the two buildings; he had given some sculpture there already. The president and the cabinet looked at it, had a discussion on where it should be, and it seemed most logical to put it on the old Campus Green [Quadrangle] next to the new Social Sciences building because of environmental studies, and it would obviously be part of Social Sciences. There was a concern at the time that the old Campus Green was looking run-down, the Quadrangle, and had become a forgotten part of the campus quite frankly, because the center campus had moved where Kennesaw Hall and the new Campus Green are. We voted, and the cabinet agreed to accept the gift. It was constructed in 2006; we dedicated it that fall.

TS: Dan Papp had just gotten here when we dedicated it.

WW: He had just become president, yes. [We] had great fanfare. The PowerBar family came from the San Francisco area, and I think about ten or fifteen members of the family came. The humorous part of what occurred was the publicity. When we accepted the gift, Eino had already constructed the pieces and was having it shipped from Brazil. He had already cut all the quartzite. I remember it was two hundred thousand pounds, so it was a huge amount of rock. They were loading it on a ship when the whole debate occurred in Berkeley. We accepted the gift, and

the family members were in agreement that it could come to Kennesaw, when they saw that we were going to put it out on a nice green area of campus, where there were some other sculptures and trees and flowers. They were very pleased. So we literally re-routed the ship. Instead of heading from Brazil to San Francisco, it was re-routed to come to the port of Savannah.

The first controversy that began to bubble up was the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the Berkeley area newspapers ran stories on this little school in metro Atlanta and how did we steal their piece of sculpture? There was this whole thing about that Spaceship Earth had flown from Berkeley to Kennesaw, Georgia, and it was rather humorous to get these articles over the news wire, over the internet, about how astounded the people at Cal-Berkeley were that somehow we had absconded with their sculpture. There was that typical article of “Kennesaw who” out in California, so we took great delight in feeling like we had scored one on Cal-Berkeley. We dedicated the piece in the fall of '06. Dr. Papp was the brand new president. We dedicated, I believe, that same fall, the new building.

TS: That would be about right. We hadn't moved into it yet.

WW: Right, you hadn't moved into it, but I do remember Dr. Papp on the day of the dedication of the new building, Spaceship Earth, was already up, and Dr. Papp got called down to the Board of Regents, so I had to get Dr. Siegel to come over for the dedication. At the dedication we had Ray Anderson, who was the founder and CEO of Interface Carpets, one of the largest carpet manufacturers in the world. Ray, in his later years, became a huge environmentalist, and he was very pleased to come to campus and see that we had a piece of sculpture dedicated to one of his heroes, David Brower. So there was a little coincidence and symmetry in the fact that the dedicatory speaker for that building was a newborn environmentalist, who was a great admirer of the person the sculpture was dedicated to. The Social Sciences building was opened. Ray Anderson had served as dedication speaker. Dr. Siegel as president emeritus was actually there as the official administrator dedicating that building even though she had retired.

Come December when the campus had closed, I got a call one night at about eleven o'clock—a little odd you know, in December getting a call from somebody at the university. It was Randy [C.] Hinds, who had just replaced [B.] Earle Holley as the chief business officer, chief financial officer for the university [Vice President for Business and Finance], and Randy's first comment was “Spaceship Earth crashed.” I said, “What?” He said, “Spaceship Earth fell.” My immediate visual image was that it had rolled off its axis and into the Social Sciences building because it was right at a point on the hill where—if it fell, the most logical place it would roll would be right into the glass entrance of the Social Science building. I had this horror, this thought that we had this huge piece of sculpture—it actually sort of imploded or exploded on its own accord. We ended up conducting an investigation of it, had a structural engineer come out and investigate what had happened.

There were all sorts of crazy theories. Eino himself believed that drug addicts had driven up in a truck, lassoed the brass sculpture of David Brower, and tried to pull him off the globe, and that caused the granite to come apart, and the whole thing fell apart. There was no evidence of that whatsoever. We heard everything from aliens had zapped it with a laser to the drug addict theory to a number of things, but what it really boiled down to was the sculptor did not construct it according to his own plans, which included a rebar system where opposing pieces of granite were connected across the globe by a steel rod, so there would be equal pressure pulling away and keeping it together. He used an epoxy to connect the pieces that was new on the market. It apparently heated and expanded, and then contracted, heated in the Georgia heat of the fall, and we had a cold snap in that December. So the epoxy contracted and cracked. Water then got in it, because we had a couple of rain storms, and froze. He had filled the inside of Spaceship Earth with cement which is porous, so the water got in there. It was absorbed in the inner core, the cement core, and when we had a freeze, the whole thing expanded because ice expands from water, so it expanded. So the thing literally popped apart and fell in its place.

We have pretty good evidence that the police were on the scene, because the police station had been moved to the old Administration building and was literally next door. So a police officer on duty ran outside. He thought it was an earthquake because two hundred tons of Brazilian quartzite hitting the ground at approximately the same time probably would feel like an earthquake. He called it in, and there was no trace of vandalism, nor did he witness any vandalism. Fortunately, nobody was on campus. It happened at night; nobody was hurt. The resulting media storm was rather amusing because we had struggled to get any type of publicity on the piece when it was dedicated. I couldn't get *MDJ* to send a report out here much less the *AJC* or anybody else and . . .

TS: Now they're interested.

WW: The piece had been commissioned and cost about \$1.1 million dollars. The actual cost was probably more because the sculptor had donated some of his time in assembling it after he was paid for sculpting it in Brazil and overseeing it. He lived on campus for a few months in Alumni Affairs.

TS: I've heard stories about that too.

WW: Yes, that was rather interesting. But he lived on campus for a while, and when it fell, we had worldwide, and I'm not exaggerating, worldwide publicity on this piece of sculpture falling. There were headlines of newspapers as far away as New Delhi, India. We were getting called by media literally all over the world. I think somebody told me over one hundred fifty articles were written in as many newspapers in something like seventy-five to one hundred different countries on this piece of sculpture falling. While the university staff and Arlethia were in

crisis mode, I was rather enjoying the fact that it fell under the guise of—no news is bad news when you're trying to get publicity, because we got more publicity on that thing falling down than probably anything that's ever happened at this university.

TS: And you're not responsible for University Relations anymore at this point.

WW: That's right. I was glad of that, because I wasn't having to deal with the media crisis, but actually it was sort of humorous after the fact that nobody got hurt and nothing else was damaged other than a piece of sculpture. It was rather humorous all the publicity and attention we got. I remember one of the article headlines was "The world is flat"—you know Tom [Thomas L.] Friedman's great book, anyway, "The world is flat at Kennesaw State University," because the pieces were literally flat on the ground. The other headline I saw was Spaceship Earth, which was the name of the sculpture, "Spaceship Crashes on Campus." One day I was walking across campus, and one of the students who led tours around campus was walking around with a group of about twenty high school students and walked over to the Social Science building. I was behind them as she was leading the tour, and she said, "And this is the crash site." She said, "This was Spaceship Earth, and this was the crash site." The students began referring to it as a crash site. We negotiated with Eino to reconstruct under supervision of John Anderson over in University Facilities and build it the way he had originally intended it to be built and not take any short cuts and rebuild it as he had designed it.

The interesting thing there was it was such a novelty on campus among the students. They had a debate in the *Sentinel* on whether or not it should be reconstructed. Some students felt like we ought to just leave it the way it was; that in itself was a message that the earth was falling apart. So there was a great deal of metaphor about Spaceship Earth collapsing. There were several articles in the *Sentinel* that were sort of humorous to read about students' views on the crash of Spaceship Earth and then the ensuing theories on why it happened. We negotiated with Eino and the family to reconstruct Spaceship Earth. The first problem we faced was that a number of faculty members had taken small chunks. Most of the pieces had broken off solid. The epoxy had just come undone, and it fell in one piece, but some of the pieces fell on other pieces, so they chipped. Several faculty members had taken pieces of the quartzite as souvenirs. They had them in their offices. So we had to have a recall asking people to voluntarily return any pieces of Spaceship Earth. If you see it today, there are some places where you can see it's noticeably chipped, and it's been glued back together like you might glue back a favorite mug or a porcelain plate or something where it's been glued back together. But it's standing now.

The irony is when we rededicated it or reopened it, we couldn't get any publicity. When we dedicated it the first time and we rededicated it, we couldn't get anybody to cover it, but when it fell down we got covered literally around the world. My view on the thing is that, if you look at the old, great universities in

the United States, every campus has some quirky things about it, some urban legend, some traditions that make the campus what it is. You can go back to Harvard—the statue of John Harvard at Harvard—they call it the Sculpture of Three Lies on the campus. The students rub John Harvard’s foot for good luck. It’s a brass sculpture of John Harvard sitting down, and, as typical of brass, it tarnishes, so the whole statue is brown, except his foot, which is a shiny brass where students rub their hands on the foot for good luck. The truth of the matter though is they call it the Statue of Three Lies because they didn’t have a picture of John Harvard, so nobody knew what he looked like. In the 1800s when Harvard was two hundred years old, they had a contest . . .

TS: Probably in the 1830s; it was founded in 1636.

WW: That’s right, it was two hundred years old. On its 200th anniversary, they built a statue of John Harvard. Well, they didn’t know what he looked like, so they had a bunch of male students line up, and the sculptor picked one. So the statue of John Harvard is actually a likeness of a student two hundred years later. The other thing about the statue is they mentioned on the marble base that John Harvard was the founder of Harvard, and he wasn’t. Then it has the year on the base, which is engraved, and it’s wrong. The year Harvard was founded was 1636. They have 1638 on the base. So they call it the Statue of Three Lies. It’s one of those quirky things at a college or university that you find. I think Spaceship Earth, fifty years from now, we’ll probably have an urban legend about how it got here, and people refer to it in a novel manner. So I think in retrospect there are probably some people on campus that don’t like it or think that it’s ugly. I think it’s one of those interesting things. The one thing we can definitely say is no other campus in the country has one. Cal-Berkeley could have had one, but they don’t!

The other thing I am probably more proud of, though, of a more serious nature over in that part of campus was the piece of the Berlin Wall. Chuck Clay, a local attorney, is the grandson of Lucius Clay, who was a general of the Berlin airlift. When the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, people of Germany had a large section, as big as a door, given to the Clay family in honor of the Berlin airlift. Chuck had it, and he didn’t know what to do with it. Obviously, what do you do with a slab of cement that has graffiti all over it? Chuck had it, I think, at Cobb Gas Company in a storage area there trying to decide what to do with it. He originally was going to give it to the aeronautical museum over at Lockheed, but they’ve had some problems in raising money and building that museum. In 2005 or 2006 we opened the Anne Frank exhibit. We convinced Chuck to let us borrow the piece of Berlin Wall, and it was installed right at the east entrance of KSU Center where that exhibit was built. That was a neat little thing to see when you came up to the Anne Frank exhibit and the Holocaust exhibit, and you see that piece of the Berlin Wall. Subsequently, we built the Social Sciences building. We actually had to have the wall moved with a forklift and a flatbed trailer back to Cobb Energy because they were refurbishing the overhang on KSU Center. I talked to Chuck about letting us at our expense move that piece to campus. It seemed most

appropriate to put it outside the Social Sciences building where students were studying history of the Cold War, and they could actually see a piece of the Wall and not have to go to Berlin to see it. Again, I think one of the unique aspects of a university is to have a piece of living history there for display.

Chuck agreed, we convinced Cobb Energy to move it one more time. They sort of jokingly said, this is the last time we're moving this wall. We had some—as typical of universities—bureaucratic issues. Moving it to KSU Center wasn't a problem because the KSU Foundation owns KSU Center, but moving it to a piece of state property was a different issue. Of course, now we were hyper-sensitive about things falling down. So they required that we build a base for the wall, so some vandal—or student that might think that it was a funny thing to knock the wall down—couldn't knock it down. So we had to put a post in and secure it on a base. Then we literally had to go through, not only all of our own procedural policies on receiving artwork—what was considered a piece of artwork. But a piece of tangible property actually had to be approved by the Board of Regents, and the State of Georgia had to approve us putting this slab of cement on campus. It was the most bureaucratic piece of cement you could ever put on a campus because it literally had to go all the way to the Attorney General's office to get the approval on it.

I made the remark that the Russians built the damn thing faster than we could get it moved from Cobb Energy to Kennesaw, and that was the truth. I think it took us about two hours to make the decision to move it to KSU Center. It was a logistical issue to get it moved back to Cobb Energy. Then it took us about a year to get it moved to campus. There is a nice plaque over there, so when I look back on my career here, that's one of the things I'm really proud I was involved in. It was a bit of tenacity to keep the ball rolling to get the thing moved back over here. But I think that it was one of the landmarks of the campus. I'd like to think it's one of the significant things on our campus. I was particularly touched one day this fall, when I was walking past the Social Science Building. Someone had placed a bouquet of flowers at the base of the wall on the anniversary of its fall. There was a note attached to the bouquet, honoring all the people who suffered and died because of that wall. It was written by one of our faculty members, who is of German origin...having a piece of the wall on our campus obviously meant something to her.

TS: It's in a good location where lots of people see it when they're walking in and out of the Social Sciences building.

WW: Exactly. Another unique thing I was involved in, and this was during the '05-'06 time period—we were raising money for the new concert hall, what became the Bailey Center. We did not have her gift at the time. I was engaged in raising money from individuals and local foundations to help us build the center. We had some cost savings off a couple of different projects [where] the state allowed us to roll some funds into the performance hall. Then I had raised probably a little over

a million dollars. It ended up being about a nine million dollar project, and this was all before Bobbie Bailey stepped in with the lead gift.

We had an alumnus write [with] an offer to give a couple of paintings. I had never heard of the artist, so I took the letter to Roberta Griffin and asked, “What do you think about these paintings, and who is this guy Menaboni?” I had never heard of him; at least, I didn’t think I’d ever heard of him. Roberta explained to me that he was somewhat collectible. He was an Italian-born, Georgian artist, who was somewhat collectible in Buckhead because he painted some murals in some of the Philip Schutze houses around West Paces Ferry and Tuxedo Road. But she told me his paintings weren’t particularly valuable, and it was a style of art that we at Kennesaw really didn’t collect.

We have a large collection of late 1800, early 1900 era landscape artists. If you look around campus you’ll see a lot of work that Fred Bentley, [Sr.], has given us that is along the same theme. We have the [Reginald] Marsh collection of modern art which is now on display in the Bailey Center, but we really didn’t collect art of birds and flowers, and Menaboni painted birds and flowers indigenous to Georgia. She said he was a prolific painter; there are a lot of Menaboni’s floating around; so the value was not too great. My radar went up when she mentioned Philip Schutze because he’s a very prominent Atlanta architect who built some of the great homes in Atlanta. Before we responded to the donor, Russ [D. Russell] Clayton, I looked up Menaboni because I thought, well, if people in Buckhead collect this guy, and there are some murals in Buckhead, maybe this is a little diamond in the rough.

It turned out, in his letter, he said he had thirty-seven of them. He was offering us a couple of them because he graduated from Kennesaw. He stated in the letter he was also offering paintings to [the University of] Georgia and Emory. That irritated me because I didn’t want Georgia to have something we might want or Emory to have something we might want. I did a little research on Menaboni and found out he was Robert [W.] Woodruff’s favorite artist. Woodruff commissioned him to essentially paint a painting once a year that he would use for prints for his Christmas card, and there were supposedly this collection of forty-four Christmas cards of Menaboni paintings that Woodruff had used for one of a kind Christmas cards. I called the prospective donor, the alumnus, and said, “You’ve offered a couple to Georgia, a couple to Emory, a couple to us. What are you going to do with the rest of them?” He said, “Well, I’ve got them in my home.” We went back and discussed it with Joe Meeks and arranged to go see all the artwork in this guy’s home.

He’s, interestingly enough, not someone of money; he’s not a wealthy art collector as you would generally think of somebody who collects art. He was a school teacher. He just had a passion for Athos Menaboni. In the early days while Menaboni was still alive, you could pick up Menaboni paintings very inexpensively. Well, Russ Clayton had not only collected thirty-seven

Menaboni's, but had a near complete collection of Woodruff Christmas cards, and that's when I realized we really had something. As we were building this performance hall, we had the idea of attaching to it an art museum. The radar, the bells and whistles, went off that this was a perfect entrée to the Woodruff Foundation—Mr. Woodruff's personal artist [and] Kennesaw State University was going to have the largest known collection of Menaboni paintings. We went over to see the collection that Russ Clayton had, and I've never seen anything like this. It's one of those days you remember of your working career. We went into what I would call a modest three-bedroom, ranch-style house, and he literally had Menaboni paintings from floor to ceiling in every room in the house. Even the bathroom had a Menaboni painting in it. Literally, every wall space was covered with a Menaboni painting. It was unbelievable.

TS: I guess so.

WW: Every bedroom, every room in the house, had a Menaboni painting in it. Russ and I laugh about this now, but I shocked him. I said, "Russ, we've decided we don't want just one or two paintings; we want the whole collection." He was stunned, and it took him a little bit to recover. He said, "Well, Emory said they might be interested in two of these, but I want them displayed, and they will not guarantee me that they will display them. Will you guarantee me they will be up for display all the time? You're not going to store them in some storage room." I said, "I'll have to get the dean's agreement to that, but we're going to build a new art gallery, and we can have one gallery dedicated to Menaboni." The idea that we would become the receptacle for Menaboni paintings and aggressively try to accumulate a Menaboni collection appealed to me. You want to be known for something. We're not going to be known for Picasso. We're not going to be known for probably any other great artist like Wyeth, but we could be known for Menaboni.

TS: And there's a local connection.

WW: There's a local connection. I worked for United Way prior to coming to Kennesaw, and had a relationship with [Charles H.] Pete McTier, the president of the [Robert W.] Woodruff Foundation, so I set up an appointment and went down to see Pete McTier and told him we had been gifted thirty-seven Menaboni's. Russ also had some papers of Mr. Menaboni. He had known him personally, had gotten to know him, and when Mr. Menaboni died, he had not only given Russ a very nice painting, but given him easels, paint brushes, and some personal papers. In any art collection, you want documents and artifacts, not just the paintings. Russ had all that, and so I was telling him . . .

TS: Did we get any of his correspondence with Woodruff?

WW: That I'm not sure of. They've got it catalogued, and we can find out. The Callaway family over at Callaway Gardens has a number of Menaboni's but

nobody has thirty-seven. I was telling Pete about this, and you have to appreciate the fact that Pete McTier is a very dignified, senatorial-looking guy. If you looked up the picture of what a U.S. Senator should look like, it looks like Pete McTier. He's just got the face and the look of somebody very dignified, like a judge or something. I'm explaining what we've got to Pete and how we're going to build this art gallery, and I said, "Oh, by the way, Pete, we've got a complete collection of Christmas cards." In all my meetings with Pete McTier, I've never seen him look disturbed or ruffled or agitated until I made that statement. He had a look of shock on his face. The only other known collection was owned by the Woodruff Foundation, and they're missing a couple. We had the whole collection. He was stunned, and his first statement to me was, "That can't be possible." I said, "Well, it is possible, Pete." He said, "Well, excuse me a second, I need to go get [J.] Lee Tribble." Lee is the CFO of the Woodruff Foundation, and he manages Mr. Woodruff's plantation home called Ichauway down in South Georgia.

TS: Where they used to go quail hunting, not far from where you used to live.

WW: Where they used to go quail hunting, that's right. The collection of Christmas cards is mounted and framed down at Ichauway. So Lee came in the room, and Pete said, "Wesley, would you repeat for Lee what you just told me." I said, "Sure." I explained to him what we had, and Lee looked visibly shaken by the news too, so they wanted to come out and see it. They came out about six months later and toured. This was right at the end of Dr. Siegel's presidency. [They] gave us a grant for a million dollars to build the Russ Clayton Gallery for Menaboni. So that's how it all came about. That funding enabled us to build the atrium where the [Ruth] Zuckerman art is displayed and the first gallery. The plan was always to have a multi-galleried facility there attached to the performance hall, so that was really phase one. With the Zuckerman challenge match, we'll build phase two. We got several other grants because getting the Woodruff grant was like getting the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. So several other foundations came on board when they found out we had a Woodruff grant, and we were able to build the facility out.

The interesting thing that occurred—people today probably think this happened by accident, but it was very premeditated—we had the dedication of the performance hall and then separately had a dedication of the art gallery. Russ Clayton had studied and collected information and found out who all the major Menaboni collectors are, and Russ gave us several more paintings that he acquired after the original thirty-seven paintings, but he knew the other Menaboni collectors, so we invited all of them to the dedication of the art gallery and were very open about soliciting other people to give their Menaboni's. Over the five years since that gallery was dedicated, we now have over one hundred twenty Menaboni paintings. We're the largest collector, largest home to Athos Menaboni paintings known anywhere. We have a number of people who have told us they're going to bequeath their Menaboni's to us, so this collection is going to

continue to grow. Now what's the significance of it? Again, if you're going to be known for collecting something, you want to be known for something, and depending on who you talk to, Athos Menaboni or Lamar Dodd are probably two of the most prominent Georgia artists, so the fact that Kennesaw State has something that neither Emory nor the University of Georgia museum has to me is a real point of pride for the university. That was one of the things I was involved in that was extremely rewarding.

TS: What do you think one hundred twenty Menaboni's are worth nowadays?

WW: The total collection is worth probably somewhere in the neighborhood of between a quarter of a million and a half million, and it's only going to go up. The more we capture obviously the fewer there are available—now that Mr. Menaboni is deceased—he died in 1990. There were a limited number of them out there, even though he was a prolific artist. There is a Menaboni bar in the Capital City Club that has six paintings. There was a mural in the home on Cumberland Island Mr. Menaboni painted in the mansion there. Several homes on West Paces have Menaboni murals, but the number of paintings out there is a limited number.

Mr. Menaboni painted a mural in what was the old C & S Bank building on Mitchell Street in Atlanta, which was gifted to us, so that mural will be debuted on campus in January of 2012. So the collection is probably worth somewhere in the neighborhood of between a quarter of a million and a half million, but the value is only going to go up because there are no more Menaboni's, and as we are gifted additional Menaboni's, they're going to be harder to find. I think this collection, ten years, twenty years down the road, will be well worth over a million dollars, and it will continue to grow. So we've got something uniquely Georgian that we can say no one else has, and I think that's significant.

TS: Right, and not controversial either.

WW: Not controversial, as far as we know right now. There's always that opportunity! The other thing that occurred because of the Menaboni was we received the first ever Woodruff grant; we received the first grant we've ever received from the Tull Foundation, which is probably the third or fourth largest foundation, Woodruff is the largest.

TS: Tull?

WW: J.M. Tull. It opened the door for several other foundations like the Rich Foundation made a grant [and] the Price Gilbert Foundation, so a number of local and regional foundations gave Kennesaw grants for the first time ever as a result of the building of that art gallery. Foundations are very similar to people. You have to develop a relationship with them in order to ask them for a gift. It's a very rare case indeed if you walk in and meet somebody, and on first meeting you're going to ask them for money. It's even rarer if you do that, and they

actually give you money! I equate fundraising to dating and courtship; you don't meet a woman on the street and ask her how many babies she wants to have. You usually ask her for a date and then date a while before you start talking about getting married and having babies. Well, fundraising is very similar. You have to build a relationship first before you ask for the gift, and you have to develop a level of trust. Nobody's going to give you money if they don't trust you.

Bobbie Bailey had been involved with the university and became friends with Betty Siegel, one of Betty's friends. She got involved with the university first in athletics. It's interesting to me; two of the most prominent donors in the College of the Arts were people who came through the front door of athletics to the university, and Bobbie Bailey was one of those. Bobbie had funded a woman's softball team that played in the old Ponce de Leon park where the Atlanta Crackers played, and Bobbie was a big supporter of women in sports and women in business. She came up to Kennesaw as a friend of Betty's and was really enthralled with our women's softball team. She had funded a semi-pro or pro softball team herself and met Scott Whitlock, developed a friendship with our softball coach, along about the time we won two national championships, back to back national championships in women's softball. So she really liked what was going on at Kennesaw.

We had no facilities. We had a field of cinder block benches and cinder block dugouts, temporary stands, old aluminum steel framed stands. We wanted to build a field house that would be strategically located between baseball and softball that would house the offices and locker rooms for both teams and build permanent seating. The opportunity to build it in what is just outside the left field of the baseball stadium and right along the first base line of the softball stadium—Bobbie funded. It was a three million dollar project. I think Bobbie gave about a million and a half, and we named it the Bailey field house in her honor. It is a great facility.

That was built right when I came to campus in 2002, and Bobbie proceeded to get interested in our music program. She is the founder of the Georgia Music Hall of Fame. Her mother played piano growing up. Bobbie is not a musician; she never played a musical instrument, but loves music. So Bobbie began to attend our music events and was very impressed with our level of quality of our music students. About the time, again, Dr. Siegel was retiring, we put a proposal together, a nice brochure, showing what we wanted to build. I think it was the first time the university has ever done this—one of my Development staff, Stacie Barrow, and Cheryl [A.] Brown and I developed a little magazine style booklet. It was probably the first time we had ever done this in this manner. Well, we literally had a naming opportunity page in the book that if you wanted a gallery named after you, the atrium, the performance hall, a hallway, you know, this was the price, and the price for the naming opportunity was a million and half dollars. We already had a million from Woodruff. We'd raised another million from some other foundations and individuals. We had some money from other projects

that we cobbled together. We were still about a million short. We put that proposal together, and Dr. Siegel presented it to Bobbie. She agreed to make the gift.

That was 2007, actually before we launched the campaign publicly. We were in Dr. Papp's first year; we were in the silent phase of the campaign, trying to collect pledges and gifts and determine the size that the campaign would be. That million and a half dollar gift was one of the original gifts in the campaign. We put the campaign in front of the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2007 and launched it in October, 2007. The board approved the plan at its annual meeting. It was the same annual meeting that Tommy Holder stepped down and Norman Radow became the chair. So the board approved the campaign, and we were able to announce that we had \$28 million dollars in gifts and pledges in hand by the time we launched. In the world of fund raising, when you go through a silent phase of campaign, the book so to speak, the typical way you want to launch a campaign is you want to have about half your campaign pledged or given by the time you announce.

TS: We were a long way from there—not that far from there though.

WW: Yes, \$37.5 million would have been half way, so most people would say, you'd need to get \$37.5 million or \$40 million in hand to launch a \$75 million campaign. We're at \$28 million. I felt like there were several gifts in the pipeline that we knew were coming that would get us there, and I also felt like that at that time it was time for us to do something dramatic—to make a statement. We were boldly going forward. By that time, I had been there five years, and we had been raising—it had been increased from about two million dollars a year to about five and a half. We had doubled private giving in the five years I had been here, a little bit more than doubled actually, nearly tripled private giving. I've got a little graph that'll show you year by year what we had raised. We had been working on this campaign for a year and a half, quietly, and it was time to jump off the diving board, so to speak. We launched the campaign in October of '07 and announced Bobbie's gift. The building was already under construction, by the way. We were building it as we were raising money for it, which caused a lot of sleepless nights for me.

That was a microcosm of what was to come, because next was Health Sciences. We started that as we were raising money. I had a lot of sleepless nights over that, *and I mean that literally*, but the Bailey Center was immediately a huge hit. I think it's one of the landmark places on our campus. The Menaboni collection in the art gallery has been great for the campus, and I truly believe it's a world class facility. The acoustics in that center are dramatic. The dedication of the Bailey Center in 2008, spring—Joe Meeks wanted to do a very unique concert as the dedication. So he developed an agenda for a concert that was a collage of all the different kinds of music that were taught or performed at Kennesaw. You had everything from African drum solo to large classical choral group, symphony,

jazz artists, classical guitarists, opera, every type of music you could name rolled up into one concert. It sounds a little crazy, but they arranged it in such a way that one number was a segue into another with no breaks and no applause. They did two sets, forty-five minutes each, of just continuous music, but the music changed every three minutes, completely different genre of music. It was probably the most electric experience I've ever had at a concert.

You're conditioned as an audience member to applaud at the end of a number. Well, Joe had come out on stage and instructed everybody that they couldn't applaud; they had to wait until intermission. There was so much pent up energy by the end of the first set, the crowd just exploded into a standing ovation, and it was a roaring ovation. I told Joe at intermission, "I think you're on to something here. You ought to do this every year." He said, "That's crazy; I can't do this every year; it's too much work." But Peter [T.] Witte started an annual concert after that dedication called "Collage." In my opinion it's probably one of the best things we do on this campus because it showcases students and faculty in a very visual, audio manner of what we're doing at Kennesaw in the School of Music. It's just an outstanding event every year that they've held it since that dedication. It's become a little bit of a tradition here. The one they're doing in January will be the fifth annual Collage concert. The students have to audition. The faculty have to submit what they want to perform. There's a selection committee who decides who gets to perform at Collage, so it's an honor of those faculty and students to get to perform there. It's a fabulous event.

While we launched the campaign, we were also building Freshmen Suites. I mentioned we had already purchased Town Point. We also purchased a corner piece of property right at Chastain Road and the corner of the Town Point entrance which is the Big Shanty extension, the strip mall over there where the Mellow Mushroom and the [General] bookstore are. There was a little sliver property there. It's about one acre that the Foundation bought. We also bought what used to be sarcastically known as the CIA building. It was a small business building at the corner of Frey Lake Road [Campus Loop Road] and Big Shanty on the north side of Chastain Road which is now the Athletic Counseling Center. It was a business, but you never saw a car out there. You never saw any people out there, so somebody dubbed it as the CIA building because whatever went on there, you never saw any activity, and there were no signs out front either. Occasionally, you might see a car in the parking lot, but you never saw any activity, so it was called the CIA building. We transitioned it into the Athletic Counseling Center.

The North Parking Deck was built with University Village in 2004 with University Suites in 2008 and opening in the fall of 2009, and we also built the Central Parking Deck. Of all things to be bantered about, debated, studied, Central Parking Deck might be the most. I don't know if it was controversial, but maybe the most debated parking garage you could ever image in. First of all, the sheer size of it was controversial—did you really want a deck that size, so visible

in the middle of the campus? Well, parking obviously is an issue with a growing university, so we needed a deck. The question was where you build it. With the configuration of housing such as it was, and the construction of the suites, we may not have wanted a deck so visible in what is now about the center of campus. It was a flat lot, so it was the most convenient location where we didn't have to tear something down, and we could have multiple construction sites using the same construction company. They essentially had one launching site for their construction equipment because they were building the Freshman Suites and the garage at the same time.

TS: It looks very impressive when you're going down the interstate at night and you see all those lights in there; it looks like a village over there.

WW: It does, and for a parking garage, I have to say it turned out to be a pretty attractive parking garage. They really made it look nice. All that was finished and opened for business in fall of '09. The Commons obviously changed the culture of the campus. The Suites added another nine hundred beds, so we're up to 3,200 beds on campus. Central Parking, we're told, is the second largest single parking garage in metropolitan Atlanta, second only to the parking garage at the Atlanta airport, Jackson Hartsfield airport.

During the '08-'09 time period, in fact, I remember the first discussion on this occurred at an executive committee meeting in March of '08. Dr. Papp had asked Bob Heflin, the Director of Real Estate and Management, to put our feelers out and see if we could find some land for intramural and athletic fields. We had one 1.5 acre plot of land next to the old gym for intramurals for, at the time, twenty-one or twenty-two thousand students, so we started looking at land. Heidelberg owned about five acres of land. We talked to them about leasing some land for athletic fields, but they were concerned about security and the liability; they weren't too sure they wanted to lease us some land. We looked at a variety of different things. Through a real estate agent, Bob found about a forty-five acre plot that we were stunned to find between I-75 and I-575, north of Big Shanty Road and east of Busbee that was undeveloped. It was a farm that had been passed down through a couple of generations. Next to it were a couple of smaller plots of land that all added together equaled eighty-eight acres of land.

There was only one building on those eighty-eight acres, and that was Gold's Gym who were looking to downsize the gym and move to a different location, so it was about to go on the market. There were eight different parcels of land, eight different owners, and working through a group of real estate agents, Bob placed offers on each of those pieces simultaneously, so no one of the owners knew that adjacent piece of properties were being bought and sold. The largest piece, which was called the Nelson-Cobb Farm, was owned by the descendants of Mr. Cobb. I don't know if there's any relationship between the name of Cobb County and this man, but he's been deceased a number of years.

TS: Probably not. The county is named for Thomas W. Cobb, a former United States Senator, from Greensboro.

WW: There were three heirs of that property, and those three heirs had children, I think a total of thirteen children, who each had some share of ownership or stock of ownership in that property as part of an estate. Bob asked me if I recognized any of the names of the three heirs of the Nelson-Cobb property because that was the anchor piece. The other parcels didn't mean anything if we couldn't get that piece. The other parcels were literally sprinkled around the periphery of the Nelson-Cobb property, so if we didn't get that first, nothing else matter. The other issue was we wanted to buy them all at the same time, so the owners wouldn't jack the prices up on us.

One of the names jumped off the page at me, and that was Kappy Ackerman. She is the wife of [F.] Duane Ackerman, the CEO of BellSouth, what was BellSouth at the time. We already had a relationship with the Clendenin family, and Mr. Ackerman had succeeded John Clendenin as CEO at Bell South largely due to John Clendenin's recommendation of who his successor would be. I had a relationship with Duane Ackerman going back to my United Way days, so I called him. We had a conversation about this piece of property being on the market, and he said, "Well, you'll need to talk to my wife because it's really her family's piece of property, not mine."

TS: So she was a Cobb?

WW: Yes, Cobb was her grandfather. Kappy Ackerman is probably in her sixties or early seventies now, so five years ago she might have been in her early sixties. I don't know [for sure] what her age is.

TS: I remember years ago driving up Big Shanty on the way to campus, and there used to be an old farmhouse up there.

WW: Yes, and in fact there was an abandoned farmhouse that we tore down. There's a ten-acre lake on the property, and they actually had it on the market, although there were no for sale signs out there. A developer had offered \$15.5 million for the piece of property. As you know, the market crashed in March of '08, and a lot of people were trying to get rid of undeveloped property at the time, so the timing for us couldn't have been better. A developer had offered \$15.5 million on the property, but couldn't close because he'd made the offer when the market was good, roughly \$333,000 an acre for undeveloped property at a prime location between I-75 and I-575. The problem was, now, with the bank failures and real estate projects all over metro Atlanta going under, he couldn't get the financing. So there was a \$15 million offer on the table.

I talked to Mrs. Ackerman to get more definition of who owned the property, what the value of it was, why they were selling it. It was an inherited piece of

property. Nobody particularly wanted to develop it or own it, so the three heirs had decided to sell it. Their intent was to walk away from the table with as much money as possible, as anybody would by selling property. The problem was, because they inherited it, they had a zero cost basis in it. It didn't cost them anything, so they were going to get hit with capital gains taxes. We showed them a way that by selling it to us at a lower price—because they already had an established offer on the table, establishing the value at actually a little bit over \$15 million—we showed them that if they actually sold it to us at a lower price and claimed the balance, about \$2.5 million, as a charitable contribution, then the deduction of that charitable contribution offset capital gains such that they walked away with more money than had they sold it for \$15 million. We ended up buying it for \$13 million. They got a \$2.5 million charitable deduction, and it reduced their capital gains.

We bought that, bought the other parcels, and got the Board of Regents to sign off on a lease based on an increase of student fees. Dr. Papp went to the Student Government [Association] and the Senate and got a fee increase approved that students would finance the construction of this park. That included the purchase of Gold's Gym, so we have a fitness center there where there are fitness classes and activities in Gold's Gym. The first phase was the remodeling of Gold's Gym for that fitness center and the two fields on each side of Gold's Gym. Then we built the soccer stadium, practice field, and lacrosse field. The stadium was a partnership between us and the Atlanta Beat. A guy named Fitz Johnson purchased the Atlanta franchise for women's professional soccer. There was an interesting set of conversations that occurred between Arthur Blank, owner of the Falcons, and his group because they were interested in buying a men's soccer franchise at the same time. So we were looking at a partnership originally between Arthur Blank, owner of the Falcons, Fitz Johnson, owner of the Beat, and KSU.

There was a good bit of disagreement on the size of the stadium. For our purposes, we only needed seating for 2,500 people; that's about the capacity attendance of our soccer games. Fitz Johnson wanted about 8,500 seats to make his financial model work. The Blank group wanted 25,000 with the idea of hosting a number of events in the stadium over and beyond just men's soccer. They were looking at a profit model with concerts and other activities in the stadium. A debate incurred on what the scale of the stadium should be and the cost and who would bear the cost. The Blank group approached Cobb County on a SPLOST issue for funding through the Cobb County Parks and Recreation through a county bond. That created a whole new series of meetings because that falls under an economic development plan with Cobb County. Then we got into a discussion on who would own the stadium because if Cobb County was going to finance it, the upside was they could finance it at a much lower interest rate than KSU could. The downside was we'd have to deed the property over to them because they can't finance a development on a piece of property they don't own.

So we would literally have to gift the land to them, which created a problem for both the university and the Foundation.

The other issue that was debated was who actually owned the stadium at that point. It was on land Kennesaw owned, and we may have to deed a section to the city, and we would effectively lose control of that property. Cobb also had some interest in leasing the soccer fields we were planning to develop because we were building not just the four fields that are currently there, but we're looking at building another four or five fields on the east side of the lake. We got mired. We were building phase one, the Owl's Nest and the two original fields, and already clearing the land for phase two, which was the stadium, the lacrosse field and the soccer practice fields, which are on the north side of the stadium.

We got mired in some really complex negotiations about how we were going to build this stadium and how it was going to be financed. The Blank group ended up bailing out because when the economy crashed in 2008, men's professional soccer—the price tag for buying a franchise—had increased over a two or three year period from about a fifteen million dollar investment to a thirty million dollar investment. Mr. Blank and his financial staff, I think correctly, figured that this was not a profitable business to get into. First of all, soccer at best is only going to be the second most popular sport behind college football, probably behind NFL football, probably behind baseball in the metro area. Selling soccer in the southeast is tough, and with that price tag, I think, he decided it was just not going to be a profitable investment. They backed out; they decided not to do it. We had Fitz Johnson who wanted to do it, but build a bigger stadium than what we wanted to build.

TS: Bigger than twenty-five hundred?

WW: Right. So we negotiated with Fitz. He made a contribution to the KSU Foundation to enhance the size of the stadium. The fortunate thing that occurred with the building of the recreation park and the soccer stadium was the same thing that happened with the Health Sciences building. When the real estate market crashed and nobody could get financing, unless you had guaranteed revenues, you couldn't get a loan.

TS: Which we did.

WW: Well, we had the State of Georgia behind us . . . which we did; we had guaranteed financing. Unless the U.S. government and the State of Georgia went bankrupt, which would have created a whole different set of problems, you know, much bigger problems, we had guaranteed financing. So the interest rates literally just dropped through the floor. I mean, the lowest interest rates have been, probably, in one hundred years, certainly since the Depression. So we were able to build more than we normally would have had the market just kept ticking along like it was. We were able to finance the park at historic low levels. Fitz Johnson gave a

gift, and we're able to build the suites in the stadium and build it to his scale with the idea that if we started football that would be the ideal stadium to start football. At the same time Georgia State [University] had announced they were going to start football and play in the Georgia Dome. Well, starting a football program in a stadium that seats eighty-five hundred people is . . .

TS: I saw a [Georgia State] game on television this year, and there were so many empty seats in the Georgia Dome that it looked like there wasn't anybody there.

WW: Yes, you put ten thousand in our stadium, and it's standing room only. You put ten thousand in the Georgia Dome, and it looks empty. In fact, their consultant, Dan Reeves, former Atlanta coach, recommended to them that they not play in the Georgia Dome because even if they drew twenty thousand to a game, which they've only done one time, twenty thousand people in a triple deck, eighty-five thousand seat stadium, it looks empty. We decided to go a different route and build a stadium with eighty-five hundred. Standing room only and temporarily seating, you can get ten thousand in and start football in a much smaller environment.

TS: We can get eighty-five hundred in the soccer stadium?

WW: Oh, yes. And if you put temporary seating in the end zone and some temporary seating around the pavilion, that upper level patio area, you can get ten thousand. We'd much rather have a place looking like a sell-out than cavernous. We built the stadium with the idea that it would be the home of our women's soccer team and home of the Atlanta Beat with an eye toward starting football sometime in the future. I think it's safe to say that the sports park has been a big hit with the students. I think it will continue to be a big hit once they build the additional fields. The plan is to put a walking/jogging trail around the lake, so faculty members and students can come out there and walk, picnic, go out and read a book if you want to, exercise, jog, whatever you want to do.

TS: I'm looking forward to that and the track that's going in.

WW: Yes. While we were building it, the Athletic Department presented a need for track and field. We have a championship track program, but they have to run at a local high school, so we have built an NCAA competitive track around the soccer practice field, and we'll be able to have our track and field competitions there rather than going to a local high school. All of this has developed well into our vision. The campaign was perking along pretty well in 2008, 2009. We had a couple of setbacks that were personnel setbacks. In spite of the economy crashing, we're still raising money. The setbacks were at least to me, personally, dramatic.

One was that Leslie Clark-Malzhan, who was our Director of University Events was diagnosed with brain cancer. She died within six to eight months of her

diagnosis. Leslie had been with the university about ten years. She reported directly to me and was really my right hand person, somebody I depended on heavily to get things done. I knew whenever I delegated something to Leslie, I didn't have to look twice again at it. She was just one of those people who poured her heart and her time into the university, and it was a huge loss, not only to the university, but to me personally. We had to reorganize University Events. One staff member retired, and one left to pursue another job; she had been working on her master's in teaching and ended up going to teach school. So I literally had to start the department all over again. That was a huge setback for me. I went from having a very highly organized, highly energized, staff, who took care of things. I mean, I could tell Leslie I wanted to do something, and I didn't have to give her any details. She just went out and did it. That was a huge setback for me.

TS: I know from several history conferences that I put on how competent she was at getting everything done.

WW: She really was. And it was a personal loss. I felt like she was not only a direct report, she was a good friend of mine, so any time you have to rehire and reorganize, it knocks you back a couple of steps. That was the first. The other two things that happened were dramatic in the negative effect it had on the campaign. One was that Ron King, a longtime trustee and bank president, developed stomach cancer and died within a year of his diagnosis. Ron was not a large contributor to the university, but he was what I call a "connector." In any campaign you want a volunteer who can get your foot in the door, somebody who's credible, and somebody who knows people of wealth, somebody who can identify opportunities for you and connect you to them. Ron was what I call a connector. He was a very well connected guy. He as a former chair of the Foundation had not been involved for a number of years [since] the late 1990s and early 2000s, but got re-interested in the Foundation and got reactivated in the Foundation and had agreed to play a part in the campaign. Well, he was diagnosed with stomach cancer, had to take a leave of absence, had radical treatment, and as stomach cancer usually is, it's fatal, so we lost Ron.

The other accident that occurred was when Rob [Dr. Robert A.] Lipson was killed. WellStar has had a history of being our number one corporate contributor. After a major gift we had had in 2003 that I think I discussed in our earlier conversation, we had put a proposal in front of WellStar to be the major contributor to the Health Sciences building, which accounted for 10 percent of the campaign. Of the ten major objectives of the campaign, this was the biggest one; this was the biggest nut I had to crack in the campaign. We had put a proposal in front of Rob, and Rob was our guy. He had gotten his master's at Kennesaw. It was a perfect situation. He was on board when they gave us the \$3.1 million for the naming of the School of Nursing, so we were in a perfect position, and he got killed in an automobile-motorcycle accident.

So a new CEO comes in. There was a great deal of turmoil and change at WellStar, and, literally, our proposal just sat there for two years until Greg [Dr. Gregory] Seimone got it approved through his board with the help of Tom Phillips and Bob [M.] Prillaman. That was a major blow to the campaign because we were trying to concentrate on that particular [project] mainly because the building was getting built. I had to raise originally thirteen million and that got revised to eight million dollars because again we had significant cost savings on the building. So I had an eight million dollar nut to crack. That was about 11 percent of the campaign right there that we had to raise, and here the leadership of my number one corporate contributor had changed.

TS: This was actually for what was a sixty million dollar building to begin with, but the state put up forty-seven, and you had to raise the other thirteen, but it goes down to eight?

WW: Right. The university put some institutional funds in for grading and site prep, so about a million came from the university, about forty-seven from the state, and then eight from KSU. This building is significant in a number of ways: it's not only the largest classroom building at Kennesaw. I think it's the largest classroom building in the state, so I've been told. It is also one of the most technologically advanced buildings in the state, I've been told. I have no fact behind this, but I've been told it is second only to the Nanotech [Marcus Nanotechnology] building at Georgia Tech in terms of the technology in the building. The other significant aspect of it is that I think in terms of a development of the history of the university, it was the first time KSU Foundation had to sign a promissory note saying that we would either raise or appropriate an amount of money to guarantee the construction of a building. That had never been done before.

The only other example or something approximately close where the KSU Foundation had taken an active part in a capital project on campus was the Bailey Field House where essentially the Foundation received money, but had not guaranteed a note. The Bailey Center was a little different kind of deal where we cobbled together some state funds and institutional funds, and I raised some money, and we were building the facility, and Bobbie Bailey's gift actually allowed us to enhance it and build a little bit nicer facility than what was already being constructed. It was a design built program, and it was literally being designed as it was being built. This was the first time that before the building came out of the ground KSU Foundation had to commit to a note saying we're good for eight million dollars. I was Executive Director of the Foundation and Vice President of Advancement, so I had dual responsibility there. So the dual load of bricks on my back, no pun intended, but the Foundation was very nervous about this, and the nervousness was: Could Bob Prillaman and I raise this money? We did. There was a lot of internal debate and criticism over the fundraising at the time among the trustees in that they were very nervous about the commitment we had made—had to guarantee the Georgia State Financing

Commission that we were going to have this money available—because they had never signed off on anything like this before.

At the same time, the Foundation had never engaged in fundraising before. A number of trustees who have financial experience, a number of trustees who have real estate experience, but other than Bob Prillaman, we didn't have one trustee who had fundraising experience. So we were launching the university's first ever comprehensive campaign with a group of trustees who had no experience in fundraising. That caused a bit of concern and strife. By 2009 my staff had grown from four or five people in Development to about thirty. The Foundation staff had grown from four or five people to seventeen. Then when you added all the employees of the real estate LLCs—every real estate project the Foundation financed had an LLC, and in that LLC there were a couple of employees—so, literally, all the people who worked maintenance and grounds around the residence halls, the people who booked the rooms, who did the marketing for housing, all of those [were] technically employed by KSU Housing LLC, which is a subsidiary of the KSU Foundation.

The Foundation grew from one accountant and four or five bookkeepers and some administrative staff to a group of about fifty people when you added in all the LLC employees. It became evident to the trustees and to me that this thing had grown beyond one person's control, and I needed help. I had a large Development operation going on with Karen Paonessa as Assistant Vice President of Development. She had never managed that many people before. She had never hired staff or run a major campaign. The Foundation had grown from one accountant and three or four bookkeepers to a whole team of accountants and a chief financial officer. We had never had a chief financial officer before. We hired a comptroller from Mauldin and Jenkins, a CPA from Mauldin and Jenkins, and a financial analyst also coincidentally from Mauldin and Jenkins. Mauldin and Jenkins did our audit, so, in fact, we hired a couple of people who did our audit to work on a financial team. So we went from one CFO who had an accounting degree to four CPAs almost overnight. This thing got very complicated, and it became obvious we needed somebody who had finance background rather than history background to run it, but the biggest thing was this thing had grown, not just the Foundation and the Development, everything had grown to such scope that we needed more senior leadership.

We conducted a search for a COO. Right before that, this is probably the world of 2008 when we're building all this stuff, Paula [Jane] Campbell retired. She was hired as comptroller, became the first Chief Financial Officer of the Foundation. She was at the end of another career; she had worked for us for five years. She retired, so we had a search for a CFO first, hired Micki Begitschke, and then held a search for Chief Operating Officer. In the middle of that search Richard Corhen [III] made the decision to be a candidate. What had happened in 2008 with the crash of the real estate market [was] our chairman, Norman Radow, who had been chair for a year, got consumed in his own business because he's a

real estate developer. Richard had had to step in and spend more time—he was a volunteer at the time—he had to step in and spend more time working with the Foundation because Norman was essentially out of it with his involvement. Richard did that for about six to eight months where he was as knowledgeable about the day to day operations of the Foundation as any staff member was, out of necessity. He decided to become a candidate for the Chief Operating Officer's position. So we interviewed three people, and at the point in time that Richard became a candidate, he was the inside favorite because there was no learning curve there; he already knew everything. Richard became Chief Operating Officer, I think, at the end of August, 2009, and at that point I really turned over the day to day operations of the Foundation to Richard.

KSU Oral History Series No. 102
Interview with Wesley K. Wicker
Conducted, edited, and indexed by Thomas A. Scott
Location: Dr. Wicker's Town Point office

Interview # 3: Tuesday, 4 October 2011

TS: Wes, we were up to about the last two years when we ended last time, and we ended with Richard Corhen taking over the day to day operations of the Foundation. Talk about how he began reporting directly to the board after the trustees changed their bylaws. I think we meant to talk today about why they did it that way with Richard reporting directly to the board instead of to you.

WW: We had a governance committee of the Foundation, and there was a sense that the board needed to be autonomous from the university to give the president an arm's length distance from any activities of the Foundation. Part of the mentality for that thinking stems back to Newt Gingrich's GOPAC lawsuit in the 1990s, when the Foundation had its non-profit status suspended. The IRS had looked at how that hiring came about and ruled that the Foundation should not be under the direct supervision of the university president or the university itself. Their ruling was based on the hiring of Newt Gingrich by the dean of the College of Business, approved by the president, and the president approved the funding mechanism, which as we all know came through GOPAC.

TS: The president approved the funding, so the trustees didn't actually vote on it?

WW: That I don't know because it all preceded me. You'd probably have to look back at some history there.

TS: But there were times when Betty Siegel would spend money and then ask for approval later.

WW: Right. That was always a sensitive issue with the trustees that Betty on occasion would spend some money without prior approval or exceed her budget, and then the trustees felt like they had to pick up the difference or the excess spending above and beyond the president's annual budget appropriation. There was sensitivity there. In this issue it was felt that the Foundation could be more effective with lead staff members reporting directly to the executive committee of the board, so Richard Corhen came on board September, maybe late August of '09. We had just hired a new CFO also; that search had occurred in '08.

TS: CFO stands for chief financial officer?

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WW: Chief financial officer. So Micki Begitschke came on board as the second chief financial officer because the first chief financial officer, Paula Campbell, retired, and so Micki came on board. We had a search in '08, and I was executive

director doing that search. We hired Micki Begitschke, and then during the '08 year there was a governance committee that studied how the Foundation was staffed. I had four departments at the time: University Events, Alumni Affairs, Development, which had grown into a large organization, and the Foundation. So they decided I needed a senior officer over the Foundation. I had a senior officer over the other three departments. Karen Paonessa was Assistant Vice President for Development; Leslie Clark-Malzhan, and then later Joan Duncan was the Director of University Events; Lisa Duke became the Director of Alumni Affairs, and that department grew. But I didn't have a senior officer with the Foundation. We established the position. It was going to be funded by the Foundation. That was another reason for the separation. Jim Fleming and myself were the only two executives that the Foundation ever had and were paid by the university and technically university employees. Everybody we added over my five years as executive director was a Foundation employee; they were paid by the Foundation; the funding came from the Foundation. When we added Richard Corhen's position, he was being funded by the Foundation. So he technically was a Foundation employee, and the board felt like he should report to the board as a Foundation employee.

TS: It's probably only been in the last few years that the Foundation could have paid for these salaries themselves, isn't it?

WW: That's true. The advent of housing and parking generated revenues, and our other real estate projects generated revenues enough, and a lot of people look at it and say, "Well, the Foundation wouldn't have that money if it weren't for the university." That's true, but conversely the university wouldn't have all this real estate—new buildings and residence halls—had it not been for the Foundation. It's a good relationship, compatible relationship. The other things folks on the north side of Chastain should remember is that every salary that the Foundation covers is a salary that the university doesn't have to cover. In a sense, by 2008 every staff member the Foundation added to the point that today in 2011 every staff member in the Foundation is paid for from Foundation funds, not university funds. That's a hidden benefit that the Foundation provides the university because in a lot of universities, the staff of the foundation is paid for by the university.

TS: Sure. You mentioned the governance committee earlier. Who was the governance committee? Was that Foundation or was it Development?

WW: That was Foundation. That was a governance committee for the Foundation, not the Development department.

TS: Who would have been on the committee?

WW: J. Larry Stevens was chair, and Ronald H. Francis and Jo Ann Chitty. She was second to chair that committee that proposed the bylaw changes the next year.

TS: So it was a three person committee.

WW: Three person committee. Ron and Larry were key cogs there really performing an audit of how we did business. The Foundation had grown dramatically. Paula Campbell came on board as a comptroller and grew into a more important role as we added staff. We hired one of our auditors, Valerie Patrick, to be the comptroller and promoted Paula to CFO. We hired a couple of mid-level accountants to manage all the financial operations of all of our projects. We hired Stephen Bridges as a financial analyst; he came from Mauldin & Jenkins. Then Richard Corhen who came in as Chief Operating Officer. We really elevated not only the number, but also the senior level of accounting expertise within the Foundation during that time. In May of 2010—Richard came on board in late August of 2009—the governance committee suggested some bylaw changes.

TS: What did you think about their proposal?

WW: I disagreed with that decision. I disagreed not from a personal perspective, but from a governance perspective. I have my doctoral degree in higher education administration. People joke and say nobody studies to become a vice president of a university. Well, I actually did, so I could claim to know a little bit about university governance and auxiliary organizations. I've always believed that any supporting organization should have a governance linked to the university because they are truly a supporting organization of the university. The acid test in my opinion is, if the university didn't exist, would the KSU Foundation exist? No, it wouldn't. If the university didn't exist, would the Burruss Institute exist? Probably not. It might exist at another university, but probably not. If the university didn't exist, would the athletic association exist? No. Conversely, the university could and has operated without any of those organizations. So they are here as a supporting arm of the university.

This is a very academic debate. I try to keep my personal situation out of it and express my opinion that if you took Wesley Wicker out of the picture and were asking someone with some expertise in higher education how the governance structure should be established, I think anybody who has studied higher education would say there needs to be a governance link there. They made a decision to do otherwise, and at that point I was going to live with it or not live with it. I decided to live with it. We were in the middle of the third year of our comprehensive campaign, and in some regards it was a load off my shoulders. It was one less thing to do or be involved in.

TS: Richard reports to the Board, so who reports to President Papp? The board?

WW: No, I report to President Papp as Vice President of Advancement.

TS: But Richard doesn't report to you.

WW: No.

TS: I think I see what you're talking about in terms of governance link. It seems to me that there's something missing there. How does the president know what the Foundation is doing?

WW: Both the president and I are ex-officio members of the Board of Trustees, and both the president and I are ex-officio members of the executive committee.

TS: So you get all the minutes.

WW: Yes, we attend all the meetings, and so there is that link. In my opinion, you establish governance for the worst of all circumstances, not the best of all circumstances. If things are going well, governance really doesn't matter. If people are working well together, governance really doesn't matter. Look at the University of Georgia situation several years earlier, and you can see governance played an integral part in the conflict there, and there are numerous other examples where governance played an integral part in a conflict because something happened.

TS: Right. So if the Foundation suddenly decided, we don't like President Papp, and we're not going to cooperate with him, we'd have a huge problem.

WW: We have no recourse. If in the worst of all worlds, say Richard's successor came in, and ten years from now Dr. Papp has a successor, and Richard's successor and Dr. Papp's successor don't get along, hypothetical example, the Foundation is governed completely autonomously from the university, and then you've got a major conflict.

TS: I guess probably a realistic scenario would be—what's Richard's title, COO?

WW: Yes.

TS: To have a COO that the Foundation liked, but the president didn't, and the president couldn't remove the COO.

WW: Right.

TS: That would be a huge problem.

WW: It would be a huge problem. So that decision was made. Dr. Papp approved it, and at the end of the day, whether I like it or not, he's the president. One of the things I've learned, not just being vice president here, but vice president of a very large non-profit, is as a vice president you have the right and responsibility to

express your opinion. You have a right to disagree. But at the end of the day the president is in charge of the university.

When I was with United Way, the president was in charge of United Way. So even if you disagree, even if in your heart of hearts you believe you're right, they're the president. So in a military sense you better get in line or you might get shot, you might lose your head. There are times I disagreed with Dr. Siegel; there are times I disagree with Dr. Papp about a variety of issues; but I realize I can disagree with them behind closed doors; but when you walk outside the room, you work for the president of the university. One of the things faculty don't like to hear in the reality of the world of higher education is that it's not a democracy. The president is appointed by the Board of Regents and has the right to hire and fire people, and we are in a "work at will state," so at any given time if the president chooses to replace an administrator, he has that right. So you either understand you're working with the president or you need to leave, and I've always understood that.

TS: I learned all that from George Beggs years and years ago. If he had told you in private that he was going to support your position, he would support it right down the line until that decision was made, and then when it was made, whatever the decision was, he supported that.

WW: That's right, and I've always understood that in each of my employment situations. So if you have a problem with it, you're the one that needs to leave.

TS: Maybe I should ask at this point then, you are leaving this year and going on to another opportunity. Did this have anything to do with your decision to leave?

WW: No, it really didn't. I've learned to live with things that I disagree with.... everybody does. My decision on leaving was really predicated on two things. One was the campaign, and we completed it. I had promised Dr. Papp that I would stay through the campaign.

TS: Okay, so you had already talked to him that you might be leaving at some point?

WW: Yes.

TS: Ten years is long enough?

WW: I'm coming up on my tenth year anniversary, and I'm pretty philosophical about this—I have never been one to sit and replicate whatever I was doing. I get a little bored with that, so at the point in time when we achieved the campaign goal, I looked at the world and said, "Okay, what's next?" The next thing is going to be another campaign, so do I really want to run another multi-year, comprehensive campaign like the one I just ran?

TS: Is the next one going to be athletics or are you talking about an entirely different one?

WW: Like a fiftieth anniversary campaign.

TS: Oh, I see.

WW: There will be a football campaign separate from anything else.

TS: Whoever takes your place is going to have to run a fiftieth-year campaign?

WW: Right, with the idea that between now and 2013 they're going to go into the silent phase of the campaign like we did back in '06 and '07, probably launch it in 2013, and it will probably be very similar. It may be a \$100 million campaign; I don't know what the number will be. Most colleges don't go backwards, so I know it's going to be at least \$75 million. I looked at the thing, and I said, "Do I really want to do this again?"

TS: And you didn't.

WW: I really don't. I believe in staying fresh, doing things different. I think when you do something for the first time, you work harder. When you do it for the second time, you tend to slack off a little bit, and I don't care what it is.

TS: Those folks that have already given us a million bucks in this campaign probably aren't going to give us a million in the next one.

WW: Maybe not, so maybe I burned all my contacts!

TS: Need a new face out there!

WW: A new face and maybe some new contacts and building some new friends. In a sense, it's like starting all over again. There's a reason why very few sports teams win two championships back to back. They work exceptionally hard for that first championship, and the next year you're starting at a different level, and you have certain expectations of performance, and typically you falter along the way. I think the same thing is true about fundraising. When we launched this campaign, it was something we had never done before. It was fraught with pitfalls and some challenges, but we shouldered our way through and worked through it. The next campaign will be a different campaign, but I just really didn't want to do that.

The other philosophy I have is a bit of the big tent theory, like in politics. You may start with a crowd under the tent, but every time you make a decision, even if it's a popular decision, you lose a couple of people. So over a period of years—and then presidents particularly go through this, but I think development people go through it—over a period of years . . .

TS: You upset everybody at least once!

WW: Yes, I either didn't raise enough money for somebody, or I upset this dean or raised money for one college and not another college, so over a period of years you develop some critics. In launching a new campaign, you really need somebody with 100 percent support of the university. I don't doubt I have a variety of critics out there at the university. A mentor of mine, Henry King Stanford, was president of Georgia Southwestern and University of Miami . . .

TS: He's spoken on campus here before.

WW: Yes. He's from my hometown, was president of Georgia Southwestern early in his career, and he and my father went to Emory together. So I have a long history with Dr. Stanford. I also wrote his biography for my dissertation. [Wesley Keel Wicker, "Of Time and Place: The Presidential Odyssey of Dr. Henry King Stanford" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1990). He had a great saying one time when he left Birmingham Southern. It was right in the middle of the civil rights movement, and he had taken some pretty liberal positions on civil rights at that time. He could because he was a private school president, not a public university president, so he had caused some controversy in Birmingham.

TS: I guess so. Was this around '63?

WW: Yes. He was the president there from '57 to '63, I believe. He was a wildly popular guy; he was very charismatic. I used to joke with Betty Siegel that she was the female version of Henry King Stanford. He had a great saying one time—I've never forgotten this—he said, "I would rather leave when most people want me to stay than to stay past the point that most people want me to leave." I've tried to live by that. I realize after ten years I might not win a popularity contest on campus.

TS: I find that hard to believe.

WW: Well, I've tried to work very well with people, and I'm a pretty calm, even-keeled guy, but everybody has their opinions and druthers, and there are probably some deans and department chairs who think I should have spent more time in their college.

TS: I think we've discussed one of them before!

WW: Yes! So I'm pretty philosophical about it and try not to be emotional about it. I have no doubt that I have some critics. Somebody new coming in will come in with a lot more stock, opportunity to build some new bridges, and certainly walk into a lot larger Development operation than what I walked into ten years ago. They're going to be walking in at a fundraising level much higher than what I

inherited. Everybody that comes along, decade by decade, really gets to walk across the foundation that somebody else set. I think it'll be good for somebody new to come in and have a different perspective. Dr. Stanford also had another quote that I loved, and that was, "Universities and university administrators tend to fall in love with their mistakes." I have no doubt I made some mistakes along the way, and it's very hard to change what you're doing, so I think somebody new coming in will bring a fresh perspective.

I did want to go back, and I'm assuming you're going to edit this and put it in a chronological order . . .

TS: No, no, we're just going to let it roll the way it is.

WW: When I look back at some of the great things that occurred—and I really don't claim credit for this, but I'll say I was present when it occurred—the faculty awards program that the Foundation started—it actually started before I became executive director of the Foundation.

TS: In '82 for the Distinguished Teaching Award.

WW: I think it's really significant in what they've grown into is a real feather, not only in the Foundation's hat, but just a great aspect of this university that our Foundation places that priority on awarding our outstanding faculty members. I know, you're one of the recipients of those awards. Actually you've won a couple, haven't you?

TS: Well, I was going to say, when I got the first one—the Distinguished Teaching Award in 1994—I got a thousand dollars. When I got the second one—the Distinguished Professor Award in 2008—I got seventeen thousand dollars (half for research projects, and half for personal use), and that's a pretty good indication of just how much more the Foundation was doing after Tommy Holder and others got involved.

WW: Right, so people like Tommy and Norman pushed those things up the priority list and really built them into what they are now, and I think that's a real landmark event. The other thing I'm really proud of is the Clendenin Fellows. This was an idea that germinated among three people: Dr. Papp had been at Georgia Tech and they have a program there called the Brittain Fellows, which I think is very similar.

TS: [Marion L.] Brittain—from the former president [1922-1944]?

WW: Yes. Ever since he gave the lead gift for the [Computer Science] building, John Clendenin and I formed a good relationship, and he had told me that in a few years he would be in a position to make another major contribution. It wasn't wedded to bricks and mortar. He really wanted to do something different that

would have an impact at Kennesaw, and he wanted me to throw some ideas his way about what that would be. I did, talked to Dr. Papp, and we threw out several ideas to him. He really latched onto the graduate fellows program, I think, for very personal reasons, both personal and logical reasons. One, we didn't have anything like it, and I think any great university would have a program to help grow faculty—and not necessarily faculty just for Kennesaw, but grow faculty for the world of academia.

We talked and discussed the program. His son Tom [Thomas E.] has been a trustee, and Tom came into the discussions and helped us formulate what the program would be. Three years ago we launched the Clendenin Fellows with a million dollar gift from the family. The family has been very involved in how that program has been shaped, and they sit on the selection committee. I should point out that they do not select the scholars; that wouldn't be proper; but they do sit on the committee; and it's a large committee. Two family members [sit] on the committee, and I think there are a dozen or more people making the selection. So they get a vote. I've sat on the committee each of the three years, and it's a very rewarding experience to see what some of these aspiring faculty members are doing, and what they want to do and finish their terminal degrees to build their careers.

TS: The Clendenin is for graduate students at Kennesaw, right?

WW: Not necessarily.

TS: Not necessarily. Okay, graduate students anywhere.

WW: Anywhere. Although we can't require them to do it, we encourage them to commit to teaching at Kennesaw. There is normally a link. They either taught here or went to school here; a lot of them have instructor status or adjunct faculty status.

TS: Oh, like our adjuncts, if they're at school at Georgia State on a Ph.D. program could apply for one of these.

WW: Right. We've got a young woman who is an instructor in science and math, and she's getting her Ph.D. at Chapel Hill. In all likelihood, [she will] be offered a faculty position here. No guarantee, and there's no guarantee that she'll come back here, but the idea was that there was a Kennesaw link, and we're helping her become a faculty member somewhere.

TS: When I was getting my Ph.D., there were still a lot of people on our campus that didn't have Ph.D.s, and the Foundation was actually paying, if I remember correctly, the cost of typing our dissertations. So I got money from them to type the dissertation.

WW: Now they're paying the tuition.

TS: But some faculty that came in after they got their Ph.D. started complaining about it, so they stopped it.

WW: Now they're giving some pretty good sized grants, up to \$15,000.00.

TS: Wow. Didn't Tommy Holder and his wife make a million dollar gift?

WW: They did, and theirs is to help young up-and-coming members of the faculty who are already here. The idea here is an assistant professor who is young in his career, maybe a newly minted Ph.D., who's been hired to teach—to award those people who appear to be up and coming professors, give them a hand up because as you probably remember, that's a difficult time in a young professor's life. You're hired in at a low salary normally, and you're trying to do your teaching, your research, get published, all those things. So the idea of the Holder awards was not the direct opposite of the Foundation faculty awards, but the other end of the spectrum. The faculty awards recognize the stars on campus, of which you are one; the Holder awards recognize those up and coming fellows.

TS: Where did the funding come from for the faculty awards because I thought Tommy Holder put a lot of money in that too.

WW: No. He directed the money from the Foundation's unrestricted budget to the faculty awards, but his contribution really went to the Holder awards and up and coming faculty.

TS: I think it's neat when they do the awards ceremony. This year Tom Clendenin and Tommy Holder were there on the stage and Norman Radow also to help give out those awards, and I think Mrs. Holder, Beth, was there a couple of years ago as well.

WW: Yes. As a benefactor, as philanthropists, I'm sure that's very rewarding to them. In a similar vein, when we had the scholarship luncheon, the benefactors, the contributors of the scholarships, get to meet the scholarship recipients. It's one thing to give the money and get a nice thank you note from the Development officer and the president, but it's something else when you get to meet the person that benefited, and you see the genuine way it touched somebody. I'm sure that was rewarding for both the Holders and the Clendenins. We have a little ceremony; the Clendenin's decided to do something a little different; they have a reception every year for the Clendenin Fellows; and that's a fun event. I'd say of all the things I've been involved in at Kennesaw, those two events are probably the most rewarding because you get to see the result of your work.

TS: Absolutely. Well, did you want to say more about the reorganization of Development? Let me just ask, how was it before there was a Development officer for each college, and why did you make the change?

WW: In 2002 when I came in, there really was just a three-member Development staff. One was an administrative assistant; one was an assistant vice president who had the difficult challenge of trying to cover the campus; and one was a grant writer. We really didn't have much of a staff. As I could appropriate funds and garner funds—and in some cases some deans helped me appropriate funds—it became apparent to me as the college was rapidly growing, it wasn't enough to have a centralized Development office that was trying to raise money just for whoever set the priorities. In this case it was Dr. Siegel. All the deans had priorities. Different administrative directors had priorities like the athletic director. There was a need across campus to try to address some of the priorities. So as I grew Development, and I had to beg, borrow, and steal staffing opportunities, we tended to hire people at very low salaries and graduate them up from sometimes an administrative assistant to a program coordinator to an assistant director to a director.

Probably the best example was I hired Stacie Barrow for the College of the Arts in 2003. Stacie actually came to work for us at less than \$25,000.00 a year as a student; she was a part-time employee in the Development office. We made her job a full-time job, but she was an administrative assistant. She showed a flair for cultivating donors, so we made her a program coordinator, which is a step above an administrative assistant in the HR food chain. Then she really showed a knack for doing developmental work, so we promoted her to an assistant director. All this took several years to get to the point that she became the director about five years later. About seven years later she became a senior director of Development. Having said that—we grew that person from an administrative position to a senior director. That was probably the best example of it working.

We went through several missteps though, and that's going to happen any time you hire development staff, probably any time you hire staff period, you're going to have some that do very well, some that don't do well. The biggest issue that I saw when I came to Kennesaw was not only do we have an understaffed Development operation, but it was a matter of getting warm bodies in there. We didn't have much, just three or four people, and a couple of them were administrative assistants, so I didn't have much. It wasn't so much reorganization as it was a building project. Dr. Siegel had her priorities. There was a sense in 2002 that she would stay a couple more years. She ended up staying until 2006. She had her fundraising priorities, but all the deans had their needs and wants as well. As I added staff, I made the decision to add staff and assign them to each of the colleges. They remained in the Development budget, and they reported to me, but they worked as a particular fundraising assignment for each of the colleges.

With six colleges at the time back in the world of 2002-2003, it was impossible for me to work with every dean and the president. As a Vice President of Advancement, I was really at the beck and call of the president. I mean, regardless of whether the president was Betty Siegel or Dan Papp or anybody else, you're a vice president, so you're at the beck and call of the president. A lot of times you're out in the community with the president or you're out in the community yourself. There were a lot of instances in the early days where Betty couldn't be there, and I was the speaker from Kennesaw, so I was out and about in the community and there was just no humanly possible way that I could work with and serve all the deans in all the colleges. So we began a process in 2003 of hiring people for each of the colleges. In some cases they were simply transitioning existing administrative staff or bumping up staff. We had mixed results. Some did very well. Lisa Duke became a director for Coles College, had a couple of years there, and decided she wanted to go to Alumni Affairs. She's, in my opinion, been a marvelous director of Alumni Affairs. I'd brag on Lisa. I think she's probably one of the best Alumni Affairs directors in the state, maybe in the southeast. As I mentioned, Stacie Barrow had a great run here about eight years, did a great job for Kennesaw, and so we had some successes.

We had some folks that we hired, and we thought they could grow into the job, do a good job, and they realized quickly that it just wasn't for them. A lot of people in the corporate world, marketing/sales people, think that, gee, if they can do this in the corporate world, they can certainly do this in the non-profit world. They get into the non-profit world and realize that, gee, the world of academia and the world of non-profit, the world of fundraising is a lot harder than they think it is. We had some missteps; we hired some folks that just didn't work out. I mean, your college [Humanities & Social Sciences] was an example of that where we went through several development officers and just did not succeed there, so it was a mixed result. Some did very well, some did okay, and some didn't do well. Another variable in the formula is the college itself. This may sound offensive to faculty members, but there are some colleges that are just more sexy for fundraising than other colleges. The College of the Arts is a good example. You can come hear the symphony; you can see the art.

TS: It's what they have to offer the community.

WW: It's very tangible, and it's really a more externally focused college than say, Science and Math or Humanities & Social Sciences, so part of it is just the nature of the college. If you look around at other universities, the business college usually tends to be the best in fundraising; the College of the Arts is usually very good in fund raising; Social Sciences not so much. I'm a guy who grew up in the world of social sciences, but that's just the reality of the situation. Another variable is the dean himself.

TS: I was going to ask you, do the development officers interview with the dean before you make a decision that you're going to send somebody to a particular college?

WW: Yes, so if you ever hear that the dean doesn't like his development officer, he's partly to blame! We generally narrowed down the group to three to five candidates and would run those by the dean and weigh the deans. In a couple of cases, when I was really busy with the Foundation and other things, Karen Paonessa may have narrowed down the group, working with a couple of other staff members, to three to five candidates, ran them by the deans, made a hiring decision, and I wasn't directly involved in that hiring decision. In a couple of cases I disagreed with who the dean liked. I tended to go with that decision because for it to be successful, the deans had to like the person who worked with them, so if it came down to two people that I could live with, and the dean said I like person A rather than person B, I would tend to go with person A because the dean needed to have confidence in that individual.

I would say the results of that were mixed. If you looked around at other colleges and universities, they have a similar model. We've tried a couple of different variables, and we accidentally fell into this because of office space issues. When we first started this decentralized model, I didn't have any office space. We were in the old Admin building, so we had to put a couple of the Development staff, actually embed them in the colleges. The downside is the Development staff feel like they're more responsible to reporting to the dean than Development, and they are physically separated from the day to day operations of the Development office. The upside of it is the college feels like it's their person, it's their guy or their gal.

TS: And in the final analysis, I guess how much they raise determines how good a job they're doing.

WW: That's right. But the other variable I mentioned is the personality of the dean. Some deans are very attuned to fund raising.

TS: Joe Meeks.

WW: Joe Meeks is an excellent example. Joe Meeks I would put up against any dean in the State of Georgia in terms of his fundraising capabilities. He's outstanding. You get a dean like Joe Meeks who is willing to spend the time, and it's a time issue, do you spend your time working on academic affairs, building your college, do you spend your time in the internal structure of the programs of your college, or do you spend your time fundraising? You can't do everything. So Joe has been an outstanding dean in that regard. I'm not saying the others aren't. I'm just saying he's just really dedicated to that.

- TS: I was thinking that when we're searching for a dean, the last thing faculty members have on their mind is how this candidate is going to relate to the external community.
- WW: That's right.
- TS: And provosts too. Now that we're doing another provost search, it sounds like to me if we're going to decentralize, it's very important that all these administrators be able to relate to the community.
- WW: As the university continues to grow, and there's some pretty good research and articles out about this, the dean of the twenty-first century, like the president of the twenty-first century, really needs to be an external officer of the university, not an internal officer of the university. If the new dean of Coles College is really going to promote the university and the college, the dean really need to be spending time off the campus rather than on the campus.
- TS: And Betty Siegel might be a good model for that because she was a dean before she came here, and I know she spent half her time in Washington or other places off campus when she was dean over at Western Carolina.
- WW: That's right. So there's a model shift that's going ever so slowly in higher education, and you're beginning to hear about some development people becoming college presidents, college and university presidents. It's less unusual than it used to be. There's still that pulling . . .
- TS: The faculty are not going to like that.
- WW: Yes, the faculty still want one of their own who worked up through the ranks of department chair, associate or assistant dean and dean.
- TS: You better write a book or two about your experience as Vice President for University Advancement.
- WW: Yes! So there is that movement—as state budgets shrink in the public sector of higher education—that demand is only going to grow—that a dean, an endowed chair, or a president really needs to be adept at fundraising. There's one thing the faculty aren't going to like, if there's no money there. Bottom line: is there money there? Most faculty, I'm guessing, really don't care where the money came from as long as it's there to pay them and support their program. I think the demand in both public and private higher education is only going to increase as state budgets continue to shrink and as our economy continues to slumber, so that a school like Kennesaw is hit by a perfect storm. You have a shrinking state budget; so any way you cut it, we're going to have fewer dollars coming from the state. We have an increased student enrollment, a sustained increased student enrollment, so if you didn't get funding one year, if you didn't get it five years in

a row, you didn't get it ten years, you're not just short an increment "N" times ten; the hole gets bigger and bigger. That amount you're being underfunded multiplies exponentially.

At a school like Kennesaw, you've got an increased demand that's sustained and a dramatically decreased budget. So the demand for private fundraising is only going to grow in our scenario. It's going to grow in every scenario, but it's only going to grow in our scenario; the demand is way in excess of the supply. The thing that I would say—I wish my successor well—is as that supply decreases and the demand increases, people have to be patient with a new vice president. They have to be patient with the development process because donors—whether it's an individual donor, a corporation, or a foundation, it's a people business, it's a relationship business. No one is going to give serious money to a complete stranger. Very few people give money to a casual acquaintance. You have to develop a relationship, and you have to develop trust, and it takes time. You can trace every one of our million dollar gifts, every one of our half million dollar gifts, or you can take it all the way down to someone who endowed a scholarship at \$20,000. All those didn't happen overnight. They took in some cases years to cultivate.

One of our trustees, a very prominent individual, just gave a half million dollars in scholarship contributions. That person has been around this university for over twenty years. They just got to a point where both financially and psychologically, they were ready to make this gift. I can't snap my fingers and make them do it five years ago, which was, in this case, the first time I asked the person for a half million dollars. It took repeated calls. It took a long cultivation process, even though I knew the person could afford it five years ago. It took them five years to get here psychologically, and so you have to build that trust. You have to build that relationship, and the cultivation process and steward process is never ending. We didn't get a second and third gift out of Bobbie Bailey because we got the first gift. We got the second and third gift from Bobbie Bailey because we continued to cultivate and steward her, so that she felt really good about giving those second and third gifts to Kennesaw, which is a long process.

I think I mentioned on an earlier tape, but always use the metaphor, if you're a guy, you don't meet a girl on the street and walk up to her and ask her how many kids do you want to have together. You've got to introduce yourself first, hopefully get a cup of coffee or a date, and then begin a dating process before you pop the question about getting married, and then you have kids. The same thing is true in the development world. It's a long process, and it's got to be very methodical and well thought out to get to that point. Well, Kennesaw is a young university; we have a finite number of people who are involved with us and a very young alumni base. It's going to take us another generation before we're at the level of a Georgia or Georgia Tech.

- TS: We've talked a lot about the comprehensive capital campaign, but you want to talk about the end of the campaign? We reach the goal a year ahead of time.
- WW: We did. We had some good breaks. We had some unusual gifts. We actually hit the goal in three years and nine months on what was to be a five-year campaign.
- TS: We basically counted all the grants that came in as part of the seventy-five million?
- WW: Not all. We were very selective about them. If a grant came from a competitive government agency like the National Science Foundation where lots of people are trying to vie for that money, and it was for one of our targets, for instance National Science Foundation funded scholarships and teaching assistantships for students going into science and math—well, one of our targets was to increase the level of scholarship money at the university, so that fit into a target. In my perspective, I don't care where the money came from. When it's going toward one of our targets, we count it. We did not count any contracts or sponsorships, so a contract for service in our opinion is not a charitable gift. It's a state agency or government agency saying, we're going to give you some money, and this is what we want back from it. A good example there is some of the work the Burruss Institute does for state and local agencies.
- TS: So none of that counted.
- WW: None of that counted. We counted a couple of Noyce Foundation grants that again were for science and math education. Well, that was in our target zone. We were very selective and, in fact, pretty conservative about what we counted in the campaign. It had to be for a target. It had to be in one of our areas where we were trying to raise private dollars, and it had to be a competitive grant, not a contract or a sponsorship. That's not unusual. If you look at campaigns at Georgia Tech or Emory, they do the same thing, so we were in my mind pretty conservative in our accounting process. In the same token, if somebody gave us a sponsorship for putting their name on the scoreboard in the Convocation Center, no we did not count that. If there was an agreement that for "X" amount of dollars, you get your name on a sporting event or something, no we didn't count that.
- TS: How early did we get through; was it a year ahead of time?
- WW: A year and three months.
- TS: How did we get through so quickly in a down economy?
- WW: I think in retrospect we had a good plan. When the economy fell, I know a lot of my counterparts froze their campaigns or suspended campaigns; we never stopped. Probably the best thing we did was appoint Bob Prillaman and Chet

Austin as chairs. Bob is a bull dog, and he never stopped. We had some good early gifts come in. We had a very visible, tangible target in the new Health Sciences building, which that part of the campaign represented about 11 or 12 percent of the overall campaign. So when we were chasing money for the Health Sciences building, it was something people could see literally coming out of the ground.

TS: We raised thirteen million, was that it?

WW: Eight million. Originally the target was thirteen million, but with the cost savings on the building, it got reduced to eight.

TS: Eight million of the seventy-five million.

WW: Was for that one building. Everybody can buy into the fact that we need more nurses. The Nursing school has a great reputation in the community and the region, so that was in many ways the perfect campaign, the right cause at the right time. There's a shortage of nurses; everybody can buy into that. We did very well with raising money for scholarships, and again that's something everybody understands. If I give money to help somebody else along the way, somebody will make it who may not have been able to go to college. Or maybe they don't have to work thirty hours; maybe they only have to work fifteen hours, if I give them the scholarship. So we did very well in terms of raising money for scholarships.

One of the reasons the campaign ended early was we had a few gifts, quite frankly, that came in that we didn't target. They just occurred. You look at the world of 2006, and there were some things we never thought about that seemed commonplace here. For instance, probably the best example in the campaign was the Osher Lifelong Learning Center gifts. We didn't know who Bernie [Bernard] Osher was in 2006, didn't know him. Found out this guy's foundation funded senior citizen continuing education, and he was funding about forty-five or forty-seven colleges and universities around the country. Come to find out we had a bigger program than any of them. We had the largest senior citizen program in the United States, but he wasn't funding us. We brought it to his attention, and through Dick Harp's good work—Dick [Richard J. Harp] runs the program; he was a retired banker, and he wanted something to do, and he took this project on, and he found out about Bernie Osher and made contact with him. They developed a good relationship because Dick's a retired guy, and they're about the same age. We ended up receiving over the course of the campaign \$3.4 million dollars from somebody we didn't know and for a program that was a really good program, but it wasn't one of the big targets on our campaign. Here's one of the benefits to the university, you can say. Well, that wasn't just for the continuing education program.

One of the things Osher was interested in is encouraging people to go back and finish their degrees, and at Kennesaw, as you know, we've always had a large cohort of non-traditional students, a lot of housewives who raise kids, quit school after a year or two, raise their kids and come back to school in their mid-forties to finish a degree they started twenty years ago. We have a lot of people who drop out of school, because of demands of work and family, and maybe they were two or three years into it and just needed a little financial help to finish. One of the endowments, two million dollars that Osher has given us—and there will probably be more to come—is not continuing education, but it's what we call the re-entry scholarship. Anybody over twenty-five years of age who has college work—and I think there's a minimum number of hours that they have to have completed—that have dropped out of college that want to come back, even if it's not Kennesaw, it could be from anywhere, they want to come back to college, they're eligible for this re-entry scholarship. Every year there are forty to fifty students on a re-entry scholarship, and as you might imagine this is huge to these people. I'm sure it's extremely rewarding to be able to come back and finish after having stopped five or ten or twenty years ago. That's a good example we didn't have on our radar screen, however, it really was a huge need. We've never had a shortage of applicants in the three years we've had the program.

We also had, as you know, the gift of In the Valley, the farm up in Bartow County. The way we count that is we had a fair market appraisal on the property and the contents in the buildings, and whatever that fair market appraisal came in at, that's what we counted as a gift. We don't value the property; we had market experts value the property; and that came in over a million dollars. Well, obviously when the campaign started, that wasn't on our target list. It wasn't a priority, and we didn't even know Jodie [Leon] Hill. You probably did, but none of us in Development knew Jodie Hill. Again, while it wasn't one of our top ten targets that I had been engaged in discussions of, was this a good gift for the university, was it a valuable gift?

TS: We were all involved in the discussions of whether Kennesaw should accept that gift.

WW: Yes, and there was a particularly ugly aspect to it, but, again, as a student of higher education—and I've studied the history of higher education in my doctoral program—one of the things, in my opinion, that all great universities have is some unusual aspect of the university. A working farm, for example, a historic site you're closely affiliated with. I would daresay Gettysburg College would not have the luster that it has had not it been located next to a famous battlefield. There are other examples. ABAC [Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College] in Tifton is a school that is a hundred years old, and they do experimental farming and agribusiness.

TS: Oh yes, Agrirama [Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village].

WW: Right. You can look at anybody from Emory University or the University of Georgia. You can go to countless institutions and see where they own land, they own property, they own buildings that are not part of the central campus, but they add an intellectual aspect or a practical aspect to the university. I think In the Valley is a good example of that. It's a historic site [where] our students can go and learn and touch history. In fact, there was an article up in the Cartersville paper just last week about our students going up and cataloguing all the contents in the buildings. One of the students really made my day, so to speak. I really felt good about this gift when students say, "It's one thing to sit in the classroom and hear about history, but it's something else when you actually go see it and touch it." She said she would go up to In the Valley any day it was available to her. Then we started the garden there to support the Commons.

TS: The garden is still going?

WW: The garden is still going, and we have an apiary there where we're making our own honey—a novelty item, but every visitor that comes in the Commons and hears that we grow our own vegetables remembers that. Every guest we have on campus that we give a jar of honey to and say this is honey we made on our own property—they're going to remember that. They may not remember me and you, but they're going to remember that unusual aspect of Kennesaw State. I think the same thing is true about the piece of the Berlin Wall and Spaceship Earth—it's a unique aspect of the campus that gives us character.

If I left a legacy, hopefully, through some of those gifts, the campus developed some character beyond the yellow brick and mortar. The campaign is the first of its kind. You can look at schools like Georgia and Auburn and Georgia Tech, and they ran their first comprehensive campaigns, surprisingly enough, just twenty and thirty years ago. We are much younger than they, but we're not that far behind them now in the scope of our campaign. I imagine in thirty years, maybe when I'm an octogenarian, somebody's going to launch a campaign at Kennesaw for \$500 million or a billion dollars and say, "Do you remember back when?"

TS: We only raise seventy-five million?!

WW: Oh, yes, it was just thirty years ago we ran our first campaign! It wasn't that long ago, and they only raised seventy-five million dollars. Well, the time value of money changes, and you've got to start somewhere. It's just like Michael Coles' first gift of a million dollars. It set the bar. So we established a level of giving that no one ever thought about before, and since Michael Coles' gift—it's been fifteen years—and we've had eighteen \$1million gifts.

TS: Eighteen gifts of one million or more?

WW: Yes.

TS: That's pretty good.

WW: And a couple of those gifts have been multiple millions or multiple gifts; Bobbie Bailey is an example. Just like with Michael Coles' first ever gift to Kennesaw of a million dollars, this campaign set the bar for us. I think, hopefully, that's a good legacy to leave.

TS: That might be a good way to end the interview then, unless you can think of anything else.

WW: No, that's good.

TS: It's nice to have a legacy. Maybe we should just say for the tape, you're going to be a consultant now for a company in east Cobb County.

WW: Right, and I'll be doing a little bit of work with Kennesaw over the next six months.

TS: And you're writing a history of the growth of the development program here.

WW: So I'll be calling on you for advice.

TS: And you're going to have that history done by the end of December?

WW: I hope so.

TS: Well, maybe these tapes when we get them transcribed can help with that too.

WW: That will be good.

TS: And, of course, that's going to be very helpful to me for our history of Kennesaw State in general.

WW: Sure. Hopefully what I write over the next two months and a lot of the statistics give a numerical history as well as an oral history that you can use for your fiftieth.

TS: Absolutely. I really think that for the last ten years what Development has done, what the Foundation has done, is going to be a huge part of the story in transforming the culture of the campus with residence halls, parking decks, the Commons, athletic complexes, and the whole bit, and In the Valley.

WW: I hope so.

TS: Thank you very much for a great interview.

WW: Thank you. You might have gotten more than what you wanted!

TS: No, you never get more than you want!

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