

Interviewer: David Ashwell Jr.

Interviewee: Charles Harris

UF 272 AB

April 10, 1995

A: My name is David Ashwell Jr. It is 4: 00 p.m. on Monday April 10, 1995. We are in the Allen E. **Newharth** Library, commonly known as the Journalism Reading Room in Weimer Hall, in a study cubicle. Could you state your name and title here at the University of Florida?

H: My name is Charles Harris. I am director of the Minority Programs Office for the College of Journalism and Communications.

A: Tell me when and where you were born.

H: I was born in 1956 in Jacksonville, Florida, which is my hometown.

A: Did you grow up in Jacksonville?

H: I grew up in Jacksonville, attended elementary school and high school in Jacksonville. I left in 1974 when I graduated from Andrew Jackson High School. I started here at UF in the fall of 1974.

A: Who were your parents?

H: My parents are Charlie Harris Sr. and Alberta Harris.

A: What was their influence on you? Did they encourage you to move on in education the way you have?

H: Yes, they have. In fact, neither one of my parents was able to graduate from high school. They both come from families with nine and ten kids, both from rural backgrounds. Instead of going to school, they worked in fields and things like that. I do have a younger brother. One of the things that I think is important is some of my early memories as a child was getting books for Christmas. At the time when I got the books, I was as a child disappointed. I wanted toys, but my

parents gave me books and that helped with my reading ability and comprehension. Although they were unable to get to a point where they could graduate from high school, they really did support me and my brother with educational pursuits and always pushed education as a way of better life and doing better.

A: Is your brother the only sibling you have?

H: Yes, a younger brother who is still living at home now in Jacksonville. My parents are divorced. They got divorced when I was six years old. Even though they are divorced, I still talk with both of them. Again they have always been pro-education as a way of bettering oneself.

A: What is your brother's name?

H: My brother's name is Augie Dion Harris.

A: Has he made it as far as you have?

H: No. He went the military route. He was in the military for a while and is now back in Jacksonville working.

A: You said you went to high school in Jacksonville.

H: Andrew Jackson High School in Jacksonville, right.

A: And then you came to the University of Florida in 1974.

H: I came to the University of Florida in the fall of 1974.

A: What was your first impression of UF?

H: It is funny. When I was getting ready to graduate from high school, I applied to three schools. I applied to Florida, Florida State, and Stetson. I was accepted at all three, but I honestly did not know a lot about college, the college experience, requirements, and expectations until I actually got here. One of the reasons I selected UF was because back in Jacksonville where I grew up, the apartment we stayed in was in the shadow of the Gator Bowl. So I was familiar with Florida from the Florida/Georgia football game. I was a little bit more familiar with

Florida, plus I wanted to play football. That is why I decided to attend UF rather than the other schools.

When I first got to UF, I must admit I was overwhelmed. I had no idea that the University would be as large as it is and as it was in 1972, twenty some odd years ago. It was huge then. I had no knowledge of what college was all about, how it worked, how you accumulate credits toward a degree, or how you go about selecting a major. I just sort of came and did not have any extensive background, knowledge, or experience about what I was getting into.

When I got here, they were overbooked in housing. They had temporary triples, temporary housing. I was in a lounge area over in the Tolbert area. There were about twelve of us in the lounge. We stayed in there for the first two or three weeks, and then they eventually moved us out to rooms. For someone who did not know any better, I thought that was our permanent room at first. They said, "Oh no. You are just here temporarily." Again it was a growth and learning experience for me from the minute I stepped on campus. I had not even visited the campus before I came here, so I knew was orange and blue--the Florida/Georgia football game.

A: Were you recruited with any sort of scholarship or aid?

H: No, not at all. I came in as a full admit student, but [had] no special admissions or anything like that. No scholarships were offered. I just applied and came on my own. I was not familiar with scholarships or anything along those lines. The person who helped me was ironically not my high school counselor, but a counselor at another high school in Jacksonville who knew me through her husband, who was the faculty advisor for a club that I was in--Diversified Cooperative Training, DCT Program. He told her about me. She is the one that

sat down with me and got a University of Florida catalogue, the financial aid forms, and helped me fill out the paperwork and get everything sent off.

A: What was her name?

H: I cannot remember her name right now.

A: But there was someone there to help you along.

H: There was someone that saw something in my and decided to help out. That is how I got started.

A: Was there anyone here at UF that mentored you or helped you along?

H: Not really. Not in my first two years. My last two years (once I got into the college), I considered my mentors to be two people in the college who are currently still in the college. One is Joe Pisani [Joseph R. Pisani], who is the current chair of the advertising department, and also Frank Pierce [Frank N. Pierce, Professor of Journalism and Communications], who is retiring this semester. This is his last semester at UF. Those are the two people that I could go to. As a student, they gave me a feeling that they were genuinely concerned about me and about what was going on with me. [They] sat down and talked with me about careers and different things like that. In the first two years, I really just sort of looked at the catalogue, which said you take x,y, and z. That is how I did it, just looking through the catalogue.

A: Were there many African American students here when you first came?

H: I believe at the time there were about 900 at UF, which was a large number. I did not join a fraternity or sorority. Back then, although the students had a closeness, it was closer within the fraternities or sororities. Since I was not a member of a fraternity, it sort of left me out in that a lot of the activities that students had going on at the time were geared toward people that were in fraternities and sororities. Since I was not a member, I really did not get invited to a lot of the parties and things that went on. I did meet people that I was able to communicate with. I had

a lot of friends that were white students here at the University of Florida. I was very active on my floor with the people that I met on my floor. I was a security assistant in the dorms and worked in the dorms during the summers. So I met a lot of people through the dorms rather than through traditional social outlets, like fraternities, sororities, and things like that.

A: It sounds like you had a pretty good experience.

H: Yes, I did. It was an interesting experience. Looking back on it, I did not hold any positions of leadership, such as BSU or student government. Within the housing area, I became very well known. In fact, they did a little story about me. They had a little newsletter in the dorms at the time in the Broward/Rawlings area. They did a little story on me as a security assistant. Security guard is what we called ourselves. So I got somewhat active through the residence halls, but not really in any other ways. It was a good experience for me because in elementary school, I went to an all black elementary school. Then in the ninth grade is when all of the schools in the Jacksonville area were desegregated. In the tenth grade was when I went to Andrew Jackson, which at the time prior to integration, was an all white school. They closed down the black high school, and we got bused to Andrew Jackson. Before that time, I really did not have a lot of cultural experiences outside of my own. Going to high school, playing football, [being] president of a club (it was a National Honor Society), I met a lot of people that helped me. In fact, the lady that I told you that helped me was white. [She] was someone who took time out to help me out.

When I came to UF, because I had integration in high school, it was not as much of a cultural shock to me as I guess it was for some other people, simply because I was the kind of person who got along with everyone anyway. I was never taught in the house that one group was better than any other group and everyone was

all equal. When I came here, it was nothing unusual as far as race relations go.

A: You majored in journalism and communications?

H: I majored in advertising. I started here at UF as a psychology major. I went from psychology, to economics, and a lot of others in between. Everything sounded nice. Every semester I was changing majors. When I first got into the College of Journalism, I came in as a public relations major. I took one PR course and it turned me off. I said, "This is not for me." I decided to go into advertising because I felt it would be an opportunity to be more creative and to fine tune my creative skills. That is how I ended up in advertising.

A: Had you heard, before coming to the campus, about the 1971 protest of black students here at the campus?

H: I did not hear about it before I got here. I am sad to say that while I was a student here, I was unaware of it. The entire time I was here at UF, I was unaware of the protest. I do not remember it. Maybe I was told about it, but I do not have any memories of it at all of being told about it.

A: So it was not something that loomed large in the conversations among students?

H: Not the students that I dealt with. Among my black friends, most of the students were people who went to either my high school or people from Jacksonville because that was sort of a common bond for us, a way of easily meeting people coming from the same hometown. It was never an issue. It was never discussed at length by me or any of the students that I dealt with.

A: How would you characterize race relations on campus at the time when you were here as an undergraduate?

H: I think that relations were somewhat different than they are now, keeping in mind that we were just coming out of the 1960s. These were the early 1970s. College students were still into the free love movement, the hippie movement, and all those things were still going on. The Plaza was the place to be. They really did

have a lot of speakers that came through and talked with students. The Peace Corps was real active on campus recruiting students at the time. A lot of people were joining the Peace Corps. In fact, I thought about joining it myself. Things were a little bit different. I think at the time because they were [better off] economically in the country, there were plenty of resources to go around to everyone. We did not have the competition for resources at the time. I do not think there was competitiveness towards scholarships, admissions, and those type of things. I did not see that. I would think race relations were better then simply because [of the] mind frame of many of the people that were on campus. Many of the white students, professors, and so forth were just coming out of the 1960s, and the turbulence of the 1960s. Everyone was more free love, hippies, make the world a better place, peace signs, and those type of things. Not everyone now, but I think overall that was the climate at the time.

A: Do you think students are less optimistic now?

H: Yes, I do. I used to use this when I was recruiting. I would say that when I was in school, people wanted to be psychology or sociology majors. Now everyone wants to be a business major, not everyone, but most students. When I talk with freshman, it is either engineering, business, or medicine. Back then [people said], "I want to be a sociologist." People were more into the people type of careers, helping others. Now it is more geared toward how much money can be made in the shortest period of time and get on with life. There is not much willingness to put back into the community as there was in the early 1970s.

A: You think there is more competition--I do not want to say mean-spiritedness.

H: I think when you have limited resources, and as a country resources become more limited, that brings out more competition among people. When there is \$1 million out there, and you only have ten people to give it to, everybody is happy. Everybody is going to get a fair share. When you have \$10 and 1 million people,

and you have got to decide who gets it and who does not, I think many times it brings out a level of competition among people that really is not necessary. I see some of this in my current position working with minority scholarships. People say you are giving a scholarship to a minority, where I think in the 1970s, questions like that would not have even been asked. People understood the reasons why. Programs were being set up and being created. I think now again because of limited resources **[[please finish thought]]**. For example, look at UF when the White Student Union was the most popular. It was at a time where the state did not give us a raise for three years. The state budget was in the toilet. People were scrambling around for limited resources. I think that brings out or highlights the differences among us when we are put in that situation.

A: When was the White Student Union at its peak?

H: The White Student Union was at their peak in 1989 to 1990, right around that time. It was right before the student murders. Quite ironically, the student murders brought people together as a campus. I saw some real bonding at that time. The guy who started the White Student Union (Mark Wright I think was his name), was an engineering student and from what I understand was looking for a scholarship. [He] was told that the only scholarships that they had in engineering at the time were minority scholarships. He felt that was not fair. That is how the White Student Union got started. Then it sort of died away on its own once the press went away and left it alone. It just sort of died a natural death. I think that even though he may have had a serious concern there, many of the students were not in touch with a lot of what the White Student Union was about. They saw we have got an 83 percent majority now. Why do we need a White Student Union? It is kind of ass backwards to do that when 83 percent of the students at UF (it may have been more at that time) were white. I just do not think a lot of students shared the same concerns that they had and they died a natural death.

A: You do not think we will see them any time soon?

H: It will not be the White Student Union. It may come back under a different name or group, but it will not be a group that is set up to antagonize or intentionally disrupt operations. It will be a group that might be willing to work within the system, just as a lot of minority groups are learning the key is to work within the system to try to make changes.

A: You mentioned before you wanted to play football when you came here. Did you play football here?

H: No, I tried though. I came here with the idea of playing football. I was a walk-on for the football team at the time. I forget the coach's name, but you had to have a meeting with the coach. We were in this auditorium. It was dark. He said, "Why do you want to be a Gator? What kind of experience do you have? Well let me think about it." He called me back, and said, "Okay. You have been assigned locker so and so." So I was a walk-on and thought I was doing really well. Back at that time, Florida Field was still Astroturf. We were doing some drills on the astroturf. My leg got caught up under me. I tore some ligaments in my knee. To continue playing football, I would have had to have some surgery. Because I was not a scholarship player, the athletic office was not going to pay for it, which I understood because they only paid for scholarship athletes. At the time, I did not have money at home to be used for what was considered elective surgery. It was not considered life threatening or anything like that. My dream died with the injury. After that, I did not go back out. I still have the damage too. I do not need surgery unless I am going to play football. Those days are all behind me.

A: You are not planning on that now?

H: No, no more football. I play basketball recreationally, but no more football.

A: But you are still a Gator fan I take it?

H: Oh yes, a big Gator fan. In fact, I have got a relatives in Tallahassee, which is why I

applied to Florida State. We have a pretty good time during Florida/Florida State football.

A: I have a similar situation, which I will not go into. Were there any other leadership activities you were involved in besides your dorm?

H: No. I was a member of a group called the African Youth Socialist Party at the time, which was a socialist group that was not looking to overthrow the government, but to establish more of a socialist government than what we have now. This was a group of black and white students. We all wore flip flops and jeans, and met in the Plaza. I was involved in the group. I used to go to meetings and things like that, but did not hold any office. We did not have any pickets, sit-ins, or anything along those lines. Outside of that, again, I was really involved with the dorms. I got into the college and really was not involved. I was going to play football. It is sad to say, but I was here to play football. I was really geared toward that. Most of my friends were athletes or other students. I did have a lot of friends who were athletes. There was a high school in Jacksonville, William Raines High School, which for a while, UF had a close relationship with. A lot of their players came here. I played against them. I knew a lot of the people and players on the team. Looking back on it, [there] were not any leadership roles or anything that I could put on a resume.

A: This socialist party interests me. How long had that been on campus?

H: I am not quite sure how long they had been around. It appeared to be a fairly new organization. I was involved with them between my sophomore and junior years. My senior year I was out trying to find a job. It was pretty much my sophomore and junior year. They were a group out of St. Petersburg, which I think is there home. I do not think they are still around. I have not heard about them since I left UF. They felt that the government should be more socialist, that it should be helping out everyone, and that we should not have the class system that we do

have now which is based upon income. It was more about sharing the wealth with everybody. Again, it was one of the last groups coming out of the 1960s, with power to the people and things like that. We were against the Vietnam War -no, the Vietnam War had ended. It ended in 1973 and 1974. What did we protest? We did not protest much. We met and I used to get information from the office. I used to tell friends that I know I am on a FBI mailing list somewhere. At that time when I was with them, it was not a real active group that just met and talked about some things that we should be doing. Not all the members were students. Some of them were Santa Fe students and some were the generational students that came to Gainesville and never left. They had made Gainesville a home. It was group, but again we were not as radical as some groups. Again, being involved in their group, I had no idea about the sit-in in 1971. That was totally new. I do not have any memories of it as a student. I remember hearing about it when I left and stayed involved with UF, which I have done since I graduated. I have always followed the sports teams and any news about UF, I try to keep up on. We did not have much. We did not do much as a group. We were a social group because we had a lot of political thoughts, but we were not an action group.

A: You said it was called the African Youth Socialist Party. Was it focused on American issues or did it have more of a global focus?

H: It dealt more with issues in America. It reminds me of the group we have on campus (I believe they are still on campus), the Student Coalition Against Racism. It reminds me of a group like that. Whenever there was a reason or an emergency...there is a word I am thinking of.

A: Any sort of tension on the campus?

H: Tension or...

A: Issues?

H: Issues that came up that people felt needed to be discussed or something along those lines we would follow up on. It was more dealing with what is happening in America and opening up the government to all people, and things like that.

A: So when did you graduate from UF?

H: I graduated August 26, 1978. I came in 1974, and graduated in 1978.

A: That was with your bachelors degree?

H: Bachelors of science in advertising.

A: Did you do any graduate work?

H: I have done some graduate work at the University of North Florida. When I left UF, and went back home to Jacksonville, they started a graduate program in 1979 there--an MBA program. I started it and completed about thirty-three hours. It was a sixty hour program because I was coming in without a background in business. I had to take all the foundation and core classes. I started that and was going full time. In 1980, the state of Florida was desegregating higher education. They gave each of the state universities a grant to increase minority enrollment. The schools could use the grant to create new services or hire someone. UNF used the money to hire their first minority recruiter. I was a graduate assistant working in the registrar's office when the grant came through and was approved. In fact, I was the second person at UF to know that it was approved because I just happened to be standing in the registrar's office when he got the phone call that the grant was approved. So I was the first person to apply for that job. What happened was that school became part time and then no time because the job required traveling. I was trying to go to school and travel at the same time. Going out for weeks at a time, it just did not work. I stopped my pursuit of the MBA and started working full time.

A: And that was at the University of North Florida?

H: The University of North Florida, right. I do plan on starting a grad program at UF this

fall.

A: In business?

H: No, not in business. I have decided on education since I have spent sixteen years in education. That is going to be my career. I have decided to pursue a masters in education with specialization in student personnel through the guidance and counseling program here.

A: What brought you to UF?

H: Like I said, I have spent sixteen years in student recruitment, specifically, minority student recruitment and retention. I started at UNF in 1980 with a grant. When the grant ran out, the university did assume the position and I had permanent standing with them. I stayed with UNF until 1984. In 1984, I went to the University of South Florida. It was more of a promotional opportunity for me. I worked in their admissions office from 1984 to 1987. In 1987, I had a chance for another promotion. I came to UF as assistant director for minority admissions, working in our admissions office here, but working specifically in the area of community college recruitment. This was a new position that the University had established, which is ongoing now. I was the first person in that position at the University of Florida. I worked in admissions from 1987 to 1989. In 1989, I came over to the College of Journalism. When I was at UNF and USF recruiting, it was always interesting to me because I was a UF grad when I would go out to these college days and college career day programs. Low and behold, most of the students wanted to go to UF. I did not want to talk UF down because my experience here was one that I would tell students, "Yes. It is okay. You can go there and be successful." It was always ironic to me that I was recruiting for other schools, and in the back on my mind, [I thought], "Yes, that is okay." So when I had the opportunity to come to UF, I took advantage of it. because I always followed UF and kept up with the sports teams. It was a chance to come

back and be back home. I kind of wanted that anyway because I had a lot of fond memories of Gainesville and the University.

A: How long have you held your present position?

H: I have been in my present position since 1989. This is my sixth year. May will make six years in the College of Journalism.

A: What exactly do you do?

H: As director of the Minority Programs Office, it is really is a student support office for minority students in the college. It involved recruitment of minority students. I serve as an academic advisor and monitor academic progress. We assist students with jobs and internships. My office is located in the Scholarship and Placement Center for the college, which has been a very advantageous position for us. We have been able to help many of our students with scholarships and internships by being in the right office and getting that information as soon as it comes in. When we first started the program, it was a grant program again. It was funny how I started in 1980 with a grant, and found myself on a grant in 1989 when I came over to the college. With the grant, our first target audience was black students going into advertising and journalism. In 1992, we opened a program up to all majors and all minority students. Now instead of just working with black students and advertising and journalism, I work with all minority students interested in any major within the college.

A: What exactly do you do to bring minorities here to UF?

H: We do several things through my office. One is we write to all of the newspaper advisors, and to the high schools and community colleges throughout the state of Florida. We write to them each fall updating them on our program, and ask them for names of students that they feel would be interested in our program. We talk about the scholarships that we have to offer and our graduation rate. Then we ask the advisors for the names of students that they feel will be interested. We

also publish a newsletter, which is called Colors, that we send out to high school and community college students. That goes to not only the newspaper advisors, but [also to] the general counselors that I have met through my years of working in higher education. I have just sort of kept that list of the different jobs that I have been in with me. There are certain people that I have met at the community colleges and high schools that I know work with students. I usually send them the newsletter. They send us the names of these students back. We then place them on a mailing list. We send them a newsletter and information from time to time. In the spring, we have a visitation program where we invite the students and their parents to come by and see what we have at UF, visit with us, and find out more about opportunities to meet administrators and our dean. We also go out and recruit. I visit community colleges and high schools throughout the state, talking with students about opportunities and careers in journalism. When I go out, although I am targeting minority students when I am out, I am representing the entire college. I talk to all students about opportunities and things like that--high schools as well. I will speak to high schools. For example, a lot of high schools have always had newspapers. A lot of them have broadcast centers now--studios and things like that. I go in and usually speak to the mass media class about opportunities at UF. I also attend two statewide conventions--the Florida Community College Press Association Convention and the Florida Scholastic Press Association Convention. I usually do presentations and workshops on diversity at these two programs. I also do workshops on general admissions to a state university, with specific information about UF and the College of Journalism while I am there. Those are some of the things that we do to recruit students. My visits, as well as getting names from counselors, keeping in touch with the students, and inviting them to come and visit with us.

A: Sounds like you recruit pretty heavily. Is it a pretty successful effort?

H: It has been pretty successful. This year was the first year since I have been in college where numbers dipped a little bit. Looking into it, what we found out happened was that this was the first year that the college at the University fully implemented the MAPP program, the Monitoring Academic Progress Policy. What happened was that there were students in the pipeline that were not admitted to the college that should have been admitted to the college. For example, there was a young lady that had been recruited since she was in the tenth grade. She came here to UF. She completed sixty hours and had a 3.52 GPA. She was denied through the MAPP Program because she was missing a Gordon Rule class. What happens with this type of student is they get a letter saying you need to find another major. It just so happened that I know this student, and she received a letter. She said, "Mr. Harris I got this letter saying I have been denied and I need to find another college. What is going on?" We looked back at the applicant pool was with the MAPP Program, even if a student was missing one course, they were automatically denied. We have had to go back and look at that program. We have made some changes. We do not anticipate that happening again. The problem is there were students in the pipeline. When I say the pipeline, I mean students who were sophomores going into their junior year that should have been admitted into the college, but were not admitted. We looked back and found the reason they were not admitted. The computer had denied them. They never even got a chance to petition the college or find out anything from the college or the program. The MAPP Program had itself eliminated many students from consideration. I saw the numbers in the fall, and I knew there was something wrong. We looked back on it and found out where the problem was. We have been able to correct that. Now what happens is we get a list of the students who are in the applicant pool, so our office can take a look at those and help those students that at least a 2.5 to get into the

college. We try to help those that are below that. Again a 2.5 is what we really try to look at for admission into the college. We have been able to take care of that. That has been the only year that our numbers have gone down. The College of Journalism has consistently had the highest minority enrollment of any of the colleges percentage-wise since we started our program. Number-wise, liberal arts and sciences is the largest because they have 17,000 students. They will beat everybody out number-wise, but percentage-wise, we have always been one of the leaders.

A: That is what I have heard. I have heard you do a good job. Do you see yourselves as leading the way in retention and keeping students here?

H: I mentioned to a student that I was talking with earlier who was a 2LS that is planning to come into our college. She just decided to change her major. One of the things I told her was when we looked back at 1992 or 1993, at that time we were still just working with black students. We looked back at those students who were admitted and how many graduated within a three year time period because it is three years rather than two, especially with our programs requiring internships and things like that. We found that 80 percent of the black students who came in graduated within the three year time period. As I go around and talk to people, I tell them that is one of the things that I am most proud of. Not only have we been able to attract students, but we have also been able to graduate students. Many of those students have found jobs in industry as well, especially those students with a journalism background. The advertising and PR majors have found jobs, but not necessarily directly related to their major. Plus we have had a lot of our students go on to law school, a lot of them here at UF. In fact, I know of at least ten students that have either been admitted to our College of Law or are currently enrolled in the College of Law. [There are] at least ten and maybe more. I thought that was a very high number coming out of

a program, for a program which is not considered a traditional route for law.

A: So you have a good pool of strong students that come through.

H: Yes, [I] am very proud. In fact, if you look at many of the minority students who are leaders on campus here at UF, you find that many of them are students from the College of Journalism. I say that looking at the Black Student Union or a lot of students who are outstanding graduating seniors who receive leadership awards or Who's Who. If you look back at those students, especially the black students since we have had our program, I would say most of those students are from the College of Journalism. I do not have any data in front of me to support that, but the students that I know that have been invited and invited me to Who's Who induction and Hall of Fame at UF, most of them have been College of Journalism students.

A: Do you think the rest of the University is following your lead in this respect?

H: I will tell you one of the reasons we have been successful is not only what I do, but a lot of it had to do with the leadership of Ralph Lowenstein [Ralph L. Lowenstein, Dean Emeritus and Professor of Journalism and Communications], who was our dean at the time. I have been in the business too long to think that one person can make a difference. The commitment has to come from the top. When Dean Lowenstein made it a priority for the college, I must admit it made my job a whole lot easier because he led the charge. I did not have to get up and talk about the need for diversity and things like that in meetings. He was the one that would do that. In fact, one of the things that I was real proud of was each of our departments have an advisory council made up of professionals, some UF grads and some not, that come each year and take a look at our program to let us know where we are. One year we had a joint program with all four advisory councils at the same time. Dean Lowenstein's message to them was about diversity. That was his opening, not his closing statement. Many times in many programs, that

is the last thing spoken--oh by the way we are trying to increase minority numbers. He always led off most of his discussions talking about it. Again that helped me in my position because the commitment came from the top, so everyone knew that the college was serious about it and wanted to make a change not only for the college, but for the industry as well. That made my job a whole lot easier in working with the departments and other offices. They knew that it was a priority set by the dean.

A: You have stolen my thunder. I was going to ask you about a quote. I heard someone say that UF heavily recruits minorities but does not do as well as it might want to in graduating. But you are doing that.

H: Our college is somewhat unique in doing that. One of the things I think is important to know too is that I have been recently appointed to a task force on minorities, Minority Recruitment and Retention, headed up by Rod McDavis, dean of the college of education. I have been on other task forces that have tried to look at the same thing. One of the things that all of us initially agreed on when we met was that the problem at UF is not necessarily new services because just about in every college there is someone that does what I do in a support office. What we have found is that we need to coordinate our services better. We have got services in every college, but somehow or another, we are losing the coordination. When students come into the University, they are not getting to the people they need to be getting to in a timely fashion. This is not just minority students. It affects all students. What happens is we look at the minority students because the numbers are much smaller. You see more of an immediate impact. The things that I am talking about are things that affect all students. What happens when students come in, they are not really given the opportunity to work with their college. They are advised through liberal arts and sciences the first two years. One thing we found is students need to get in touch

with someone in their college or connect with the college as soon as they can. When you know about where you are going and what college you are going to be going into, when you have had a chance to meet with some of the people, when you have had a chance to find out who is who, and when you get ready to go into that college, it is not as much of a traumatic experience for you. You know who is who. The dean is not someone you are seeing for the first time, but [someone] you have seen at programs, activities, and things like that. You meet a department chair that may have told you, "When you get ready to come into the college, let me know that you are applying." We have found that what we need to do at UF is coordinate the services that we do have. We do a better job of coordinating recruitment and retention. Some of that is going on now. There may have been a little headway. It is happening but it is being done informally. It is not a formal process and it needs to be more formalized. We are doing it simply because of the people that are in place. If those people were not in place, then the coordination would not be going on. We are going to look at better ways of organizing what we have here, and how to get students from point A to point B a whole lot quicker, rather than having them come to us when they have fallen in trouble. When they are getting ready to get kicked out, then they go look for someone to help them out. We want to try to get to them before that time.

A: How soon do you think you will have some sort of plan put together or some sort of task force?

H: We have only had one meeting. We are supposed to be meeting next week at our second meeting. One of the things that the provost, who gave us our charge, said was he wanted something done fairly soon. This is not going to be a year or two year type study. He wants to come up with some specific strategies. I do not think he gave us a definite time line, but I think he wants something done this calendar year. **[[end of this tape]].**

A: Are you involved in the recruitment of graduate students here?

H: No. Graduate student recruitment is held directly through our Graduate Studies Division; however, this year was my first year in helping out with the grad visitation program. I give the welcome as part of Dr. Michael Phillip's [Associate Dean, Graduate School and Minority Programs, Scholar, Oral Diagnostic Services] minority graduate visitation program to the students that come in. Those students are coming to the college. In the past, we have just had one person to show them around and talk with them. This year, for this last visitation program, the college had a more formalized procedure for the students where they got a chance to meet with different people, and talk with graduate students. They had a session with me just to talk about my office and what we do on the undergrad level. We try to formalize the process. It was something that we tried. My official responsibilities do not include graduate student recruitment.

A: Do you have any involvement with the voice media or t.v. media activities around here like WRUF?

H: Somewhat, but very little. Really the station is a commercial and professional station. Even though we are in the same building, our relationship is not as close as most people think it is. The department that has the closest relationship with our station is of course our telecommunications academic department. We do some joint activities from time to time, but there is nothing formalized as far as working with the stations go.

A: You mentioned that you do extensive recruiting around Florida.

H: Yes.

A: Do you go outside of Florida at all, or do you have recruitment efforts that extend outside of Florida?

H: We really do not recruit outside of Florida, being a state university. Again, 90 percent of our students are required by law to be residents of the state of Florida. I do

not think our citizens would like us spending our tax dollars outside. We do not actually recruit outside of the state; however, the admissions office does recruit out of state. [They attend] visit programs, conventions, and career fairs out of state. What they will do is if they meet a student that is interested in journalism, then they will forward their name to me. We do have students from out of state that we keep on our mailing list that we send information about visitation programs and things like that. We send our newsletter too, but we do not actually go out of state to recruit the students. They somehow find out about us through the media or just from contacting the University Admissions Office. Again, we just follow up with them, but do not actively recruit those students.

A: As far as you know, assuming you track this sort of thing, how are your students doing as they move out into the journalistic world?

H: We have not done a very thorough job of tracking our graduates. In fact, when you were in the office, the young man who was calling was one of our graduates who is working at The Saint Augustine Record, a print major. He wanted to know if I was going to be attending the regional conference of the National Association of Black Journalists that he is planning on attending. We have not taken a careful look to track our students as to how many of them are in the profession and how many are not. However, one of the things I would like to do in my new role as scholarship and placement director here in the college is to try to go back and take a look. There are plenty of students that I keep in touch with. I have a file of what I call alumni names of our students. Those are the ones that usually call back and let us know what they are doing. We have not put it in any more structured format. That is one of the things that I hope to do this summer.

A: You maintain a pretty good rapport after graduation with students?

H: Oh yes. I have a lot of students that still come back. When they are in town, they will stop by or call. In fact, one of our students who was very active in the college

as well as with our office, comes back with his wife and little girl now to visit us. He was last here, I think, in the spring last year. He comes back, and it is nice. I remember him when he was an undergrad, and now he has gone off and got a family. There are a few that really stay in close contact, and there are some that will call when they need us. Others will list me as a reference without telling me, and I find out where they are working because I get information back. There are many of our students that do stay in contact. I think part of the reason for that is because our program is so new. We began the program in the 1988/1989 academic year. There were students in the program that were here before we started the program. Those same students were here once the program started. Those are the ones that pretty much stay in the closest contact with us because those are the ones that remember before we had the program, and saw how much the program was able to help them and give them support. Those are the ones that generally stayed in closest contact.

A: What kind or cross section of journalism students come through your office? Are they mostly print specialist? What do you see?

H: Our services are open to all students, all majors. Most of our scholarships are for advertising and journalism majors. However, as far as which ones come to see me, it is pretty much even across the board between advertising, public relations, journalism, and telecommunications. Right now telecommunications is the most popular program we have in the college. Everybody wants to be on t.v. I would just say simply because there are more students in that program, that is the one where I get most of my student visitors from. However, again as far as working with them, it is pretty much even across all four majors.

A: You were talking about students staying in contact, do you see your office as a sort of focal point of the black community on the campus? One focal point?

H: Yes, you could say that in that a lot of people see us a resource. One of the things

that I have tried to do and the University is trying to do a better job of (President Lombardi has talked about it many times) is that the University needs to have a larger presence in the Gainesville community. A couple of weeks ago, I hosted a session of the Focus on Leadership Program, which is sponsored by The Gainesville Sun. It is a thirteen week program that brings in black leaders or people that have the potential to be leaders to introduce them to Gainesville in different sessions. I helped host a session on the University of Florida. I had some people from the University come out and talk with them about the community and what the University is doing. I also talked about some of the things we are doing in the college. For example, we have a show called the B-Side, which is a black public affairs show, which is aimed toward the Gainesville community, not students on campus. All the issues and topics have to do with things that affects the Gainesville community, such as street paving, garbage pickup, and different stories like that, which are covered by the mainstream media, but they try to spend a little bit more time and focus on the impact within the black community. That is one of the things that we are doing here in the college. The group that is putting together that show is a group of students from the Association of Black Communicators. This is an all volunteer show. This is something where we were approached by the general manager of WRUF AM about putting together the show. The students took it upon themselves to work on it. They have shaped it and molded it. Now they have the show going. It has been on the air since November.

A: Where can one see that?

H: The show is a radio news magazine. It is on WRUF AM and FM. It is on WRUF AM on Sundays at 9: 30. It is also broadcast on WRUF FM, Rock 105 at 8: 30 on Sundays.

A: In that connection, I have heard it said that this campus has relatively few outlets for

building and maintaining the black community. As a former student now in your administrative post, how do you view that?

H: Let me answer by saying this. I think that part of the problem in the Gainesville community (currently) is there is no central voice or central communications network to let them know what is happening. Specifically I am talking about a black newspaper. There are not things like that going on. There are things that happen in the community, but there is no way for people to know about what is going on. There is no way to publicize events, or to share ideas and information. One of my goals is within the next two years to start one. That is one of the things that I am looking forward to doing. Again, I do it because I see that without a central voice or a form to express oneself or ideas, then without that outlet, there are many things that go on that people are unaware of. It is very hard for people to come together as a group or community. For example, if you want to get involved, how do you get involved? How do you get information on getting involved? How do you know what the issues are that are affecting people in the community? With things going on on campus, it is the same exact thing. How do you know about these things unless you have some way of tying it all together, getting that information, and disseminating it in a timely fashion? That is one of the things that I am looking at.

One of the reasons why I have thought about this idea is when I first came to Gainesville, there were two black newspapers, which really was not a good idea because in a town this size, advertisers are not going to support two black newspapers in this area here. They sort of competed with each other, and both went bankrupt or just stopped publishing.

A: What were those two called?

H: One was The Gainesville Journal and I think the other was The Gainesville Voice.

They were not papers that were put together by people with a very thorough background in journalism. That might be the reason why the papers failed. They did not have the availability of resources like someone in my position does-- knowing the students, knowing that students need to write stories for clips and things like that. They are looking for ways of getting these clips. I found that our college can be a great resource for writers and things like that. That is one of the reasons why I decided to do this.

A: Also you have resources as far as managerial types as well, to keep the paper going.

H: Right. I guess you can have the writers, but you need the management skills to keep things going. Those management skills are the same skills that you would use in almost any business. In fact, I was just mentioning to a student that newspapers hire not only for the editorial side, but also for the business side. Those same skills that he used with newspapers, are the same skills used working for banks, a computer company, or whatever.

A: You do not see that there is a dearth of organizations. It is that you lack the cohesiveness that communication helps bring.

H: Right. There are a lot of organizations. The graduate chapters of the fraternities and sororities have chapters in the Gainesville area. There are a lot of service organizations, such as **DeLinks** which is a national organization made up mostly of black women. [There are] different organizations like that, so there are organizations around that are national that have chapters in Gainesville, but again the problem has been getting that information out about their activities and programs. Plus the black church in Gainesville is one of the strongest community institutions that we have right now.

A: How do you personally feel about the role of the black church in the community?

You say it is strong and important here. I know historically that black churches have been very important in the community. What is your position on that?

H: I need to go more. I think they provide an important role. As you mentioned earlier, historically black churches at one time held the role of teacher, role model, and everything else for a lot of black youths. I can remember when I was in the sixth or seventh grade that there was a teacher's boycott. The teachers were on strike for pay raises. One of the things that was organized in my neighborhood that at the local churches, retired teachers had volunteered to keep us abreast of classes, and came in and actually taught classes. All the churches got together, and had little classes where they tried to maintain the educational level of students and kept students in that frame of mind. They have played an important role.

I think through time, just as what has happened with mainstream churches in the 1980s, there were a lot of people questioning their faith and spirituality. We got into more of the me decade, a little bit more of a self indulgent type thing. People kind of shied away from the church. That happened in the mainstream churches as well as with black churches. In the 1990s, I think people are again trying to become more spiritual and think about more than just making the almighty dollar. [They] want a quality of life that reflects a strong, spiritual base, and a strong outlook. I think there are more people returning to the church now because they still see it as a strong base for everything that we do in life. The lessons that one learns in church can be applied to just about everything in life.

A: What are the important predominantly black denominations in Gainesville? Is it the African Methodist Episcopal Church, or more of a traditional Baptist or Methodist church?

H: That is hard to say and narrow down. I would say the three that are strongest in Gainesville are AME, the Missionary Baptist, and Baptist, which is Southern Baptist. In fact, I think the three largest churches in Gainesville (again since I do

not go I do not know for sure) are Mount Carmel Baptist Church, Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, and Greater Bethel AME Church.

A: This is a personal question. Do you belong to any of those?

H: I joined a church when I was twelve. I have not joined any here in Gainesville, although for about three or four years, I did attend Greater Bethel AME Church.

A: I am going to shift gears a little bit now. I am sure you remember in 1991 the BAM (Black Awareness Movement).

H: Yes. I had several students who were involved in that.

A: Could you tell me about that?

H: Several of the students who were involved were in the College of Journalism and I had a chance to talk with them on a regular basis. BAM was sort of created from the sit-in [where] some black students had [protested] Student Government, which was based on what they felt at the time was an unfair way that Student Government was handling budgets. They felt that black students were not getting their fair share of the budget. So these students did sit-in and protest it. Afterwards, BAM was developed. BAM was sort of an outgrowth of the sit-in. However, once the controversy surrounding the budget was taken care of, then BAM lasted for maybe an additional year. After that, it sort of diffused. Many of the students were members of the Black Student Union, so they just went back to the Black Student Union. One of my students, who is currently in law school, was a member of that. Again, it was at a time when we getting out of the 1980s when people were into this self indulgence type of thing. The White Student Union was on its last legs. I think it was almost a reaction to the White Student Union to be honest with you, and [also] the budget matters at that time. It was more of a reaction to the White Student Union. It eventually did just sort of dissolve. It was around for about a year or two. I spoke with a lot of students about it. A lot of students were angry. In my opinion, they were not necessarily

angry with the University, but society at the time. There were a lot of proposed cutbacks, just as we are seeing now, sixteen years later. There were a lot of cutbacks and a lot of students felt it was time to renew the civil rights battle.

One of the things that also happened at the time was Tony Brown, who was here visiting, was one of our visitors. I do not remember if it was Black History Month or some other event. One of the things that he told the students was that the fight for civil rights was over. That battle was won in the 1960s with the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Act. He felt the biggest challenge for students now was to take advantage of the opportunity to be in school, and then to go into their communities and try to make a change there by being leaders, getting involved with city councils, PTAs, and doing that. He felt that right now, instead of protesting, the main initiative should be concentrating on getting a degree, learning as much as they can, and going out into their communities and making a difference. Not that all the students heard him, but I think that sort of set the theme for a lot of students. Okay, we were banging our head against the wall here, but if we just go ahead, get our degree, and then try to make a difference in the community, then perhaps we will have much more success. I think a lot of students heard what he said. His visit was around the same time that BAM was going on. I think some students heard him. It got students to think differently about what they were doing. I sort of agree with the philosophy that now is the time, in a situation like this with the resources that the University of Florida has to offer students who are willing to take advantage of them, this is an excellent opportunity to learn as much as you can, find out how to develop leadership skills, fine tune those leadership skills, and then go back to the community. That is really where you are able to make a difference, not fighting over budgets and things like that at this level. Do not lose focus of the big picture. The big picture

is trying to make a difference in your community.

A: It sounds like you are describing yourself.

H: I guess that is sort of my philosophy. It has been two or three years since I actually participated in the Martin Luther King march which they have on Martin Luther King Day here. It has become an annual event here in Gainesville. One of the reasons why I stopped is that some of the people that were marching were marching because it was a social event, and not necessarily because it was a memorial to the march on Washington. I also realize that not everyone has to be the drum major to make a difference in life. That is one thing I try to preach to students. You do not have to necessarily be the leader. In your own little way, if you just take the time to volunteer for the Big Brothers and Big Sisters Program or work with an after school program one Saturday a month, then with little things like that, you can make a change. I think a lot of times we get caught up in wanting to be the leader and wanting to be in charge, thinking that is how we make things happen. Really the little things that you do sometimes have much more of a positive impact than getting up and speaking a lot of rhetoric about this or that. Trying to go back and be a positive role model in your community I think is more important.

A: Do you see a lot of that in students, not just black students, but students in general on this campus? Do you see them going out into the community and doing work?

H: I see more students who are willing to do it, and more students who are interested in doing it. Again, Lombardi talks about the University publicizing what we do a lot more. I have found that there are various student organizations that have volunteer programs that are doing a lot of things in the community--taking time to return something back to the community. I do not think we do a very good job of publicizing that. I would say that if you look at the student organizations on

campus, more than half do have some type of volunteer program or service program where they try to make a difference. Those things are not being publicized. I think more students are willing to do this than they were in the 1980s. I really see the 1980s as more of a me decade. The main thing was making the dollar.

I do not see that as much now, although students are still interested in making the dollar, I think many more students are willing to help out. For example, I know that Dr. Bill Simmons [William J. Simmons, Assistant Dean for Student Services, Director, Leadership Development] over in the Office of Student Services had a program where he was getting some students together to go out to Williston Elementary School to work with students. He was able to get students on a moments notice. Half the reason I know about it is because two of the students happen to be students from the College of Journalism that came back and told me about it. They were real interested in doing it. The last time I talked to them about it, even though the students are no longer doing it through Student Services as a program, some are still going out and doing it on their own. They did meet some young kids that they enjoyed talking to, so they are still going out on their own just to keep in touch with the kids. I think that means a lot. I think that is where we are heading as a society. We are going to see more and more of that.

Earlier I talked about competition for resources. I think eventually, we are going to have to realize that everyone is going to have to work together. If we are going to continue to grow as a country, everyone is going to have to work together regardless of the number of resources. The main thing is I guess going back to socialism. Everybody has got to pitch in and help out.

A: Make the most of what we have.

H: Make the most of what we have, exactly.

A: Do you think that the relationship between the community and the University population, from both ends, could be organized better?

H: I know the black community is not as strong as it could be. I attribute that to the fact that if you look at integration of the University of Florida, we are talking less than twenty years ago (less than a generation). There still are many people who remember when they were not allowed into the University community. The Gainesville community at large, I think supports the University and understands the importance of the University to Gainesville, the amount of dollars the University brings in, and the amount of money that students spend. I think there still are a lot of people in the general community **[[please finish thought]]**. It is not that they do not like the students and student activities. Unfortunately, outside of volunteer programs, a lot of times when the community hears about students is when they are having a party and things get out of hand. Sometimes the reasons these students are having these parties is in the academic setting here, there is a lot of stress that comes with being a student at the University of Florida. There are a lot of demands on you. UF is unlike any other school in the state, as far as what they demand of students. Because of that, when our students want to relax, they really want to relax. They work hard all semester, just finish that twenty page paper, and have had three tests in the same day, so when they want to relax, they really do want to relax. Unfortunately, what the general community sees is when students go out and perhaps have too much to drink, and act irresponsible. Those are the things that are highlighted. I know with the Greek system, the Greeks do a lot of community service. It is only when something negative happens that you get a lot of press on it. I think sometimes the community thinks that all students do is just party, but they do not really see

[efforts]. If the community had a chance to go with the student during a typical day and see what is required of them in their various classes, organizations meeting at all hours of the night, and different things like that, [there] would be much more appreciation. I do not know if there ever will be a time when the community completely understands the role of students. It is hard for anyone to understand the role of students. Let us say people in Jacksonville are [not] familiar with the educational setting and how things work probably do not understand the life of a student and what students go through. The things you hear about are spring break or when students are out doing crazy things. You do not hear about the good things that happen. More of that needs to be publicized. Again, President Lombardi is making a concerted effort to get more information about what is going on campus out to the community to let them know that we are doing some positive things.

A: Is the administration making a concerted effort in an organized way to move out into the community and do community service?

H: To answer your question, yes in my opinion. One of the things that passed by my desk about a month ago, was a request for information about public service. It was sent to all faculty members, and it asked what are you doing on the service sector. Faculty members are normally responsible for teaching research and service. The president wanted to know what type of service. In fact, this is an annual survey that is done which asks what type of things were you doing that were outside of your job description that you have done to benefit the community. I mention things from time to time I will speak on various programs in the community, career workshop, where I am talking to kids in maybe the seventh or eighth grade. It is not like I am actually recruiting them for journalism, but [encouraging] them to stay in school and the importance of a college education. Some things are being done. I know the last listing that we got, information was

sent directly to the Information and Publication Services Division of the University. So I believe they do have that information.

One of the other things they do is ask us each year if you have a certain level of expertise in an area, to provide that information to them so that if people call and want to speak with someone that is considered a spokesperson in a particular area, they will have that information available so they can readily share with the media. We are doing it bug again, there is a lot more that needs to be done.

A: Talking of the public and public debate, as you well know, there is a lot of tumult about Affirmative Action. Given your vantage point and your position, how do you feel about the way that discussion is going in society?

H: It is interesting. I think right now it is being used as a political football, which I do not think is fair because this is a very serious matter. I think it is a very important matter for our country, not just the University. One of the things I want to be clear on is that I am a believer in Affirmative Action programs, but I am not a believer in quotas or a quota system. When I say I believe in Affirmative Action programs, I am a believer in programs that help to create diversity. Those programs do not necessarily have to be mandated programs like 10 percent of your student body or work force is going to be this or that. That can also work against minorities. If a company is already at 10 percent and the federal mandate is 10 percent, you may not get hired because they can easily say, "We have our 10 percent." Numbers can work for or against you. Again I do believe that it is important to practice diversity. I think as the United States becomes more of a multi-racial country, in that there are people of many different racial backgrounds. We are all not black, white, green, and purple anymore. There is a lot of mixing that is going on in the US. I think it is going to be more important in the future that people learn to get along with each other. In fact, in my

diversity workshops, what I talk about is the importance. Once again, as minority numbers (population numbers) grow and grow, if the country is going to be a productivity country and a world leader, as these minorities grow, they are going to have to be assimilated into the population at a level where they are going to be able to be productive, which means training, being involved with management programs, getting an opportunity to make decisions, and make important decisions in corporations. I think that is going to be very important. Again, we as a society and country are growing. The minority populations are the fastest growing populations. I just think that it makes not only moral sense but good business sense for us to try to look at programs that are going to help create diversity. Again, that does not necessarily mean that you are going to say 10 percent of your work force is going to be made up of minorities and women, which is the way a lot of diversity and Affirmative Action programs are set up now.

I think one of the other things that is really important too is that the early Affirmative Action Program was geared toward the work place. In fact, I was watching a show not too long ago, when the original architect of Affirmative Action plans was being interviewed. It was done during the Nixon administration. It was done basically on a trade and union type of format. One of the things that I think really went wrong with Affirmative Action was is that when many companies were told you need to diversify your work place or work force, you need to make sure in your applicant pool that you have qualified minorities. I think what happened with a lot of companies is that they felt it was a mandate. If there was an opening, they had to hire a minority whether that minority was qualified or not. That was not the intent of the rule. The rule was just to make sure that all qualified applicants were considered in the pool. If you had an opening of ten applicants,

some of those applicants would be either minorities or women. I think when companies first started looking at Affirmative Action Programs and quotas, they said, "This means we have got to hire this person whether they are qualified or not." What happened is some people were hired that did not have the qualifications for the job. Because they did not have the qualifications, they did not perform at a level that was expected of them. People went back and said, "That was an Affirmative Action hire, and we should not try that anymore because that person was not qualified." Again, I do not think the rule meant that you were going to hire that person, it just meant within that pool, you were going to have qualified applicants. If that is the case--within the pool you have qualified applicants, then chances are and statistics tell us that one of those hires might be a minority or a woman. It was just getting people in a pool, but it was not just hire someone simply because they are a minority whether they are qualified or not. I think that is where everything went wrong. I think that is when there was a backlash on programs. I also think the public really does not have a clear understanding of Affirmative Action programs and reverse discrimination. In fact, quite incidentally in The Gainesville Sun yesterday, in the editorial section, they had a story about Affirmative Action. One of the things they mention in there is that when people talk about reverse discrimination and how it is impacting [things], when you go and look at court records and look at the number of cases that have been brought about because of reverse discrimination and how many were found to be indeed cases of reverse discrimination, the numbers are minuscule to the amount of publicity that one case [gets]. One case will get enough publicity and people will think it is the program and it is happening all over. Again, taking a thorough look at it, you will find that there are very few instances of documented reverse discrimination. I think a lot of it has to do with how people implement the program. It is not the program itself, but how it is

implemented. If the program is implemented in a way that it discriminates against others, then I think that is wrong. I think most people and a lot of blacks will say that is wrong too. People do want to be judged on their merit and abilities. The main thing is getting into the pool. That is where Affirmative Action, in my opinion, just gave people an opportunity to be in that applicant pool whereby before they would have never even be considered because they would have never gotten the chance to be in the pool. Instead of having one minority out of the tentative pool, you may have three or four now that are qualified. I think that is what people really wanted Affirmative Action programs to do, not to say we are going to have 5 or 10 percent

A: So the idea is to give people a fair shake.

H: Exactly. Not getting into the history of it, but because in the past people were not given those opportunities, it was just giving the opportunity but not giving a job to someone who is unqualified. No one wants a pilot that is unqualified to be flying a plane or an unqualified bus driver to be driving the bus, especially if you are a passenger on there. You want the person who is the most qualified, whether they look like you or not. You want the most qualified. That is what the where everything got mixed up. I do not know if the federal government started mandating you will have 5 or 10 percent, and companies said okay if you say that, that is what we are going to do. I am not quite sure where it went wrong, but something did go wrong with that. I think that is why people are not very knowledgeable about what the program is, why it was started, and where it is headed.

A: How do you feel about the argument that Affirmative Action should be tied more to class?

H: I think there is a lot of truth to that. In fact, one of the things we did in our office with our scholarships is that we made the majority of our scholarships need based,

which means that we take financial need into [consideration] for all of our students whether we have a minority or not. Because the donors have given [scholarships] to us to increase minority representation in media, we do have minority scholarships. These minority scholarships are still need based, which means that if a black student (or white student) comes from a family making \$75,000 or more, then in this college, very rarely will they get a scholarship from us. Most of ours are need based. What we did try to do was set up some merit based scholarships. I think only about 10 percent are merit based, but the rest are need based. We have sort of taken that step with all of our scholarships in that we do take into consideration financial need. I do agree with that and I base that on some readings that I have done of three columnists that I read quite a bit. One is Bill Maxwell because of his insight in the local area; William **Raspberry**, who I respect tremendously; and this fellow Ken Hamblin, who is a very radical, black conservative with the Denver Post. [He] is a very radical, black conservative. From time to time, I do read his articles because I do find a lot of truth in what he says. Pretty much all three, if you look, will agree that financial need needs to be more of a consideration than race for a lot of things. For example, with what we are doing here in the college, we found that did not really impact those students that we were rewarding to begin with because regardless of race, we were still looking at income and still helping the same students. Let us say a black student who comes from a family making \$75,000, whose mother and father have gone to college--should that student get a scholarship over any other applicant? I would say no. I think that student should be judged on the same merit as applicants with the same background, as far as income and parental education. That usually is indication of the family income--the amount of education the parents have. I think that black applicant should be looked at just as everyone else is.

A: Where do you think this current discussion and debate about Affirmative Action is heading?

H: I do not know. My concern comes from the fact that not all the facts are out, so people are making decisions upon emotional issues rather than looking at the facts. I am disturbed that Phil Gramm (I believe) opened it up as part of his platform for his presidential bid. I do not like to see it used in that text because I think it is too important to be a political football to be passed around and considered a topic for someone to run against. I think Mr. Gramm has come out and said that he is against it. A blanket statement like that is very dangerous. I do feel one thing. I think that if for any reasons that we as a society do not encourage diversity, we are going to find ourselves a country of the haves and have nots at a greater degree than we are now. The haves are going to have to live with guarded door and be afraid to go out in the streets because the have nots are going to want it. We do not want to create that system. I really do not think that we want to reach that point. It almost reminds me of the feudal system, when the kings and the lords lived in a castle, and the peasants lived over here. I do not think we want to go back to that. I think we want to create a system where opportunity is available to everyone where everyone has a chance to get involved in the mainstream and make the country more productive. I really do not like the rhetoric going on about Affirmative Action. I do feel that it is okay to have a review of what is going on. I do not think that we should ever be afraid of reviewing any program activities. If your program is sound, and it is reviewed, it will come out still being sound. I do not feel that there is not a need for a review because there are perhaps some quota programs that need to be done away with, reorganized, or relooked. I do not feel there is a problem with review, but again I think there is a problem with blanket statements saying it is wrong. We need to go away from that and using it as a political ploy, and not really taking a

look at the people that are going to be affected, or how it is going to impact the country ten or twenty years from now when 80 percent of the population is going to be women and minorities. It is going to happen whether we want it to or not. I do feel that there is a need to review programs like quota programs. I do not think we need to step back from our efforts to make sure that we provide opportunity for everyone.

A: In your estimation (you have already begun to answer this), what is going to happen if Affirmative Action ceases to be because of the efforts of Phil Gramm and some of the others?

H: I think that initially, it is going to bring back groups like BAM, socialist parties, and groups that we talked about earlier because organizations like that are their strongest when there is a crisis to rally around. I think it could cause more polarization of attitudes among people. It depends on how it is handled **[[end of this side]]**.

H: It could cause polarization of peoples attitudes toward each other, toward where we are going as a society, and where we are going as a country. I also guess it is important as to how it is handled. For example, if it is handle the way it is now, as a political football **[[please finish thought]]**. Many of the other Republican candidates are jumping on the bandwagon because they see it as something popular. I do not think that is the way to go about it. If Gramm and others would have come and said, "As president, I think it is important for us to review Affirmative Action and to say is this right or wrong as a society?" That statement, to me, would carry a lot more weight and hope for the future, than the statement, "I am totally against it," without hearing the arguments pro and con. Maybe Phil feels he has heard all the arguments pro and con, so he can make a statement like that. I think a statement like that tends to polarize people and make people

rally around different areas and say, "Oh yes, I am for him because I lost my job because of this program." I do not think that is the mental attitude we want to create in people. We want people to think positive about themselves. We want everyone to feel that each of us is important, each of us has a place in society, and that each of us can achieve if given the right motivation and resources. I think that is true of everyone regardless of race. When you come in and say no, no, no, that it creates a bad feeling among people. It starts pitting an us against them attitude. It really divides the country. I do not think that is what we want to do. I do not think that is where the U.S. needs to be now, ten years from now, or twenty years from now. That is not where we need to be. We do not need to be a divided country because we cannot get along. We need a country working together.

A: Is this something that you discuss with students coming through your office?

H: Students, people that interview me for stories, or anything else.

A: This is the time to talk about it.

H: In fact, a lot of students [take] JOU 3101 and MMC 2100 [which] are two beginning writing courses in the college. [They] oftentimes have to interview people. I tell them I have plenty to say, so I am willing to say it. Those are my personal thoughts on it, but those are the ones I strongly believe in. I think again, if we are going to survive as a country, we need to work together. It is not going to work with all of us being divisive, polarized, and just looking out for number one. That is not going to work. That is not how the country got the way it was to begin with.

A: Is it something that your minority students express concern over themselves? Are the black and other minority students who come into your office worried about the elimination of the programs? Do they talk about the politics of it at all with you?

H: Some students do, but not many. I think there are many students who still do not understand the full implications. It sort of reminds me now of what is happening

with financial aid. A lot of students complain about financial aid and the fact that there are now more loans, college work study, and grants being cut back. A lot of this was created when Reagan was president. His policies were voted on, approved, and passed a long time ago. In fact, before you came in earlier a student was in, a student that we gave a scholarship to. He may not be able to accept it because the Financial Aid Office has a policy of 50 percent grants and what they call free money, and 50 percent loans and work study, self help money. So even when we try to give a scholarship to students so they do not have these loans, so they can concentrate on these studies and will not owe more for their college education than they do for their first car or house, financial aid still insists on the 50 percent policy. A lot of this has to do with things or changes that were created by the federal government. Now students are complaining. I am telling them you were hearing about these things a long time ago. This is the impact. Now you are feeling the impact. I do not think again with Affirmative Action and programs like that, that many students have thought about it or taken the time to think about it as critically as maybe they should. There is one group of students, students from the Caribbean, who have traditionally been students that work very hard in the classroom. I think part of the reason for that is that many of them are just one generation removed from their homeland. For example, as many people are aware right now, Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere. When Haitian students get here and have a chance, they say, "I am going to get money to go to school? All I have to do is go to school?" To them it is like the greatest reward they could ever find because here is an opportunity to better yourself at no cost or minimal financial cost to you. Students in the U.S., I think have become a little bit more low in that they just take things for granted. Using that same example, remember that I mentioned to you the students that come back and visit the students that were in

the University before our program started, graduated, and saw how our programs were able to make a difference? Those students appreciate the resources, advice, and support that we have given them that made a difference in their life because they saw the before and after, where a lot of the students now just see the after. It is assumed that these programs have always been in place, and that these programs are going to be there to help them. They do not take advantage of the resources, as a percentage, as much as the students when we first started the program. Getting back to that, I compare that to students from the Caribbean. When they come to the United States and get a chance to go to school, they take advantage of it because they know what it is like back home where they do not have a chance to go to school because of class differences or simply because the government does not pay for people with low incomes. Only the rich go to school. They see that as an advantage and they come here and take advantage of it. They work hard and do well in school. They see that as a key to betterment of themselves.

A: You mentioned before we started the interview today that there is a new project you are going to be working on.

H: As of this morning, our dean made an official announcement in that our current scholarship and placement director has decided to go one-fourth time. Because of that, the dean looked at the structure of our office. My Minority Programs Office is a part of the Scholarship and Placement Center. They looked at the work that I have done, the things that we have discussed, the projects I have told her that I would like to accomplish, and the things I have seen that we could do a better job [of]. Not that we are not doing a good job now, but there is always room for improvement. Because of that, I have been appointed as director of the Knight Scholarship and Placement Center. We are going to rename the office the Scholarship Placement and Multicultural Affairs Center, and take away the

minority name because minority for a lot of people had a negative connotation. So we are going to change the name to multicultural to reflect trying to work with all cultures and not just a minority group of students. So that is effective today. I have been appointed as the director of the Scholarship Placement and Multicultural Affairs Center for the College of Journalism.

A: Congratulations.

H: Thank you.

A: I guess there is one last thing I want to ask you. I think in a way you have already answered it. Do you see yourself as a role model?

H: Yes I do. I see myself as a role model but I sort of take the Charles Barkley approach to that, in that although I am a role model, the best role models are parents. I think those are the people that students should look up to, and try to strive to be [like]. I know that there are students that have told me that I am their role model. I want to be a role model in that I want to try to encourage students, as we talked earlier. I think the most important way you can make a change in a life is to not always be the leader or the drum major, but in your own little way, take time to help out by doing the little things, taking time to work with kids in an after school program one Saturday a month, volunteering for boys and girls clubs, or whatever, but returning something to the community. I think by doing that we can make a difference. We will make a bigger difference in the world than trying to lead a group against Tigert Hall or anything like that. Trying to make a difference in our own communities is I think going to be the most important thing for us. I am uncomfortable when students call me mister because I see myself not that far removed. Although now it is getting on twenty years, so I think I need to break that link there. Role model is a real strong term, but I do appreciate those students who do see me as a role model. Again, I try to lead by example and by what I do to help them. When they come in, it is not why

are you having a problem, it is what can I do to help. For most of them, if there was not a problem, they would not be in there. I like to be a strong advocate for students. I do not feel that we need to retreat from Affirmative Action programs. I think that the future is bright for the U.S. I think that we have a lot of people in the U.S. that really do understand the importance of what we are trying to do in the name of diversity. I still think there are a lot of people that really do not understand what diversity is all about, and see it as a personal attack when really that is not what it is about. It is just about trying to get everyone involved rather than leaving anybody out.

A: Thanks a lot for helping us out.

H: Thank you.