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D. Bruce Johnstone

President

State University College at Buffalo

Sister: This is D. Bruce Johnstone's Office. He is President of the State University College at the present time and will leave soon to be the Chancellor of the State University system. Good afternoon Dr. Johnstone.

DBJ: Good afternoon Sister.

Sister: As I stated in my letter to you I have a tape of all the President's except Dr. Rockwell. The only reason I escaped doing that with him is that he had gone to God already. I didn't want to miss out with you and hoped you would have time and I'm very grateful for this. I sent you some questions and it was just as a guide. We can skip some, we can go over some fast. There are some things that are not down in writing and I have a lot of information on you. There's not much about your background and your family. Where did you come from, where are your roots?

DBJ: I consider Minnesota still my home although I haven't lived there for a long time. I was born in Minnesota, grew up there and went to high school in Minnesota. I graduated from high school in 1959 during which time the most important thing was athletics, football, basketball and track.

Sister: Did you go to public school?

DBJ: Public school, Minnetonka High School. I enjoyed high school and was a good student, particularly in History and the Social Sciences. Although I went off to college with aspirations of being a Chemistry major. I'm not quite sure why but I did. I entered Harvard in the fall of 1959. Very quickly got disabused to the idea of being a Chemistry major. I'm not quite sure what did that either. I think it was probably something like terror and meeting all these housemates with their 800 college boards, math and such. I got into economics at Harvard

which I found was really a marvelous major because it was Social Science and somewhat scientific on the Social Science side. It also gave lots of room for other things and I wound up with probably almost a double minor. We didn't call them that at Harvard. With a lot of course supporting work in History and Sociology and I went ahead and took that Chemistry when I was a sophomore just to prove to myself that I could do it, which I did and it was satisfactory. I think probably sometime about sophomore or junior year I decided that in some fashion I wanted to go into education. Education in a very broad sense, yes it meant teaching but it meant other things besides. This was the 1960s now where we're talking a time when education was still glamorous actually. It was kind of a flush really of interest when young people in the helping professions. I was a little ahead of the late 60s and 70s with all of that implies of the kind of culture generations and such but still there were an enormous number of people around the country then who were thrilled about education and by and large money was coming into it, there was interest in new curriculum and I figured that I would teach for a few years in high school. I was interested in education but I would teach for a few years and probably go into administration. There was no education major at Harvard so I think I took one graduate course in graduate education when I was an undergraduate. Beyond that what one aspired to then was a Master of Arts in teaching which was a degree then, very, very popular designed for liberal arts majors to be able to combine a handful of courses in the discipline with a minimum pedagogy necessary for certification. So on graduation from Harvard in the spring of 1963, I entered immediately into the School of Education at Harvard a week later into their summer session and within a week or less, perhaps, we were teaching. We were teaching high school kids at the Harvard summer school. They were an extraordinary bunch of kids. Highly motivated. It certainly was not like a typical school. But it put you in front of young people in a teaching situation with a team of peers and a master teacher around you. You learn to hear yourself, you learn to

think about the teaching of a process, to plan it, to debrief it, to hear yourself because you are criticizing others and it was a very, very exciting summer and there was some course work as well. Then during the academic year of that program two of us, two students, would actually share the single teaching job, alternating semesters and the semester when we weren't teaching we were doing full-time course work at Harvard in graduate courses. Mind tended to be in history primarily. I taught the second semester as an intern in Medford High School. I taught history and then got out in June of 1964 ready to teach and took my first teaching job at Westport, Connecticut in Staples High School. Whether a plum of a job at that time is a very affluent suburb. They spent a lot of money in education, they had a gorgeous physical plant for a school and my teaching assignment was principally economics which fit with my economics major and was very exciting to me. They had a full year required senior year social studies with economics. I also taught some history. Even Westport, Connecticut, believe it or not, has its own socio-economic group. A very small group, a very minority group. A troubled group being in such a minority in an otherwise high affluent school like that. I did a lot of work with them. One of my most interesting assignments was teaching history to a lot of kids who were not college-bound and were not very academically inclined and not from a high socio-economic group in that system. Mainly I taught economics and did some, to me, exciting curriculum work. New curriculum work that, in fact, won recognition in a national awards program for teaching economics at the high school level. Developed new teaching units in comparative economics, in urban economics and personal finance investment and such. The summer between those two years at Staples I got married to Gail Eberhart. Gail had also been in the Master of Arts in teaching program at Harvard. She was a Kansas girl from Witchita. Had been a brilliant student and graduated first in her class from the University of Kansas. As a History major with a double minor in French and something else, she wanted to study French at Harvard bound for a Ph.D. in college

teaching in History and French and for some reason got an attack of practical something and decided maybe she really ought to teach high school. I was sort of sorry she did because I think she did because I think she would have been a remarkable scholar. In many respects she was more scholarly research oriented than I think I had ever been. She called up the Dean of the School of Education at Harvard and got her whole program transferred from the Arts and Sciences Ph.D. program in History to the Master of Arts in Teaching Program in the School of Education.

Sister: Do you think you influenced her?

DBJ: No. We just met during that program. People don't believe it but we're the same age essentially. We met in the program and had a lot of mutual friends and began dating that second semester. We got reasonably serious during that year and kept dating weekends during the first year while I was teaching at Westport and she was in Weston, Massachusetts. Got engaged over the phone, very, very late about 4:00 in the morning that winter and got married in the summer of 1965.

Sister: Where?

DBJ: In Witchita. She was an only child. Her father is an attorney and still living today. Probably at the time a most prominent corporate attorney in Witchita. A beautiful writer. A prolific writer and student of the English language. He had a library which, because he's not well, we now have, that probably 10 feet of books on writing. On every grammar or vocabulary book ever written in the English language which he owns and read. So Gail and I were married. She then got a job at New Cannan High School in Connecticut where I was teaching my second year in Westport and about that time I decided I wanted to get back to graduate school and move on. I guess I was rested and perhaps ambitious and Gail certainly encouraged that. When I finished the second year at Westport, I was looking for doctoral programs in education where I could

do some additional work in economic education and found that the University of Minnesota, which was my home state, had one of the largest centers of economic education in the country which is designed to help promote the teaching of economics and curricular work in economics throughout the curriculum, K-12 and then college. It also had a very flexible Ph.D. program and I think more for those reasons than because it happened to be my home state I went back to the University of Minnesota for doctoral work.

Sister: You didn't mention how many sisters or do you have any siblings?

DBJ: Yes I do. I have a sister who is two and a half years older than I and who has always been in education herself. Is married to George Hartman. My sister is Mary and they live now in Potomac or McClain, Virginia where he is head master of the Potomac School. A large day school now both upper and lower school and Mary has been teaching fourth grade for many years there. I have a brother who is about six years younger than I who went to Hamlin University in St. Paul and studied Philosophy as an undergraduate and went on for some graduate work in Philosophy at Sarah Vaughan for a bit, University of Minnesota and University of Kansas got a Masters. Got into publishing textbook sales when he had to start making a living instead of being Aristotle. He is now with MacMillan. He does the editing for their texts in the engineering field at MacMillan and lives on Staten Island in New York City.

Sister: Are your parents still living?

DBJ: My parents right now are alive and very, very well. My father was a horticulturalist all his life. Chief horticulturalist for North Seed company in Minnesota. Did all their flower seed buying. He is a kind of a marked trail type. Very tall and slim and athletic looking and good looking. Very outdoors. His real love is canoing and camping, much of which he passed on to me and growing things. Dad can walk down the field and give all the botanical and other names to every green thing there and my mother is a woman of especially enormous intelligence

and articulateness who taught me a lot. Writing I think. Love of learning and scholarship. She used to substitute teach when I was in school.

Sister: Are you close to your parents?

DBJ: I think I am. I think I am quite close. I have picked up a certain appreciation like botany. I have become a late in life amateur of wild flower botanizer, which my father is very proud of. I work with some things in that field. Dad is 79 years old, I think and he retired in his early 60s and then did a lot of writing. He wrote a couple of gardening books, a little book on canoing the little rivers of Minnesota. He still gets up on canoe trips once or twice a year. They're easier than they used to be but he still likes that kind of work. Goes up ice fishing in Northern Minnesota in the winter time.

Sister: Do you go with him?

DBJ: Well I haven't for a long time now. We did a canoe trip about six years ago and it was a family venture but they've been in Minnesota all their lives. He was born in Minnesota and as one of two boys in the family his older brother was the intellectual of the family. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in History back in the 1930s when that wasn't as common as it was today. They were both children of, raised simply, father sold something, my grandfather whom I never knew. He died when I was a baby.

Sister: Were they Swedes or any particular English?

DBJ: Scotch and English. Raised in Excelsior, Minnesota, a small town where I was born. I went to the same high school, essentially, that my dad did. He was a remarkable athlete in the 1920s. One of these little schools that had about 14 boys in the class and a lot of them were a football team and they were unscored upon in his senior year and he was an all-regional basketball player. I still get back home. Minnesota is home town, Lake Minnetonka area west of Minneapolis. We grew up in a home in the country. Much of the area tends to be very affluent. On the South part of our property was a real

vegetable home dirt farmer with 17 kids who plowed horses. It was a real rural neighborhood. I grew up working hard in the gardens and had my first jobs picking strawberries when I was in fourth grade. When I was in sixth grade I was a dishwasher. Very intensive work ethic. My father believed in long lists of chores at home and you had a job when you were, however old I was, in sixth or seventh grade. Between dishwashing and carryout boys in grocery stores I always had to have a summer job. Sometimes it was lawnmowing when I was in high school, finally it was lumber yard work and loading freight cars, driving trucks, but always it was a summer job and often during school time when I wasn't in football, basketball, or track.

Sister: You were good in sports I'm sure.

DBJ: I was good in sports, but I was not a great natural athlete. I was a good natural athlete. I was big and strong and I was very aggressive and determined.

Sister: You were really more interested in books and learning.

DBJ: No sister, I'd like to say so but it was about even. I was a very good student and I loved high school and part of it was being able to be in both.

Sister: So you finished your degree there and, of course, Gail went with you.

DBJ: That was a three year program from 1966 through 1969 and about into the first year I suddenly began getting very attracted to the idea of higher education as a field of study. Although I had gone there with an idea of doing Ph.D. work in education curriculum, economics, social sciences. I kept doing some work in that field and I kept doing teacher training of economics as a job while going through school. I had an assistantship in the CETA Economic Center. I took my first course in higher education as a field of study. I was fascinated by it. Professor Mary Corcoran and Ruth Eckert and rather quickly began changing my research interests into the field of higher education and wound up finishing up my course work in two years. A lot of statistics and quantitative

methodology and some courses in curriculum and social sciences but a lot of work in higher education and curriculum economics, finance, management and government and this kind of things. I did a thesis entitled, "The Erosion of Innovation of Higher Education". It was a thesis looking at the phenomenon of innovations in higher education being impermanent. In fact, unlike innovations in business or agriculture which really were the basis for the innovation literatures and the search for if one ever adopted a hybrid core then one never disadopted it, they just kept it. But in higher education you have all sorts of innovations all marked by very short life spans. In fact, more frequently than going back to a new innovation they went back to the pre-innovation state and there was something interesting me as a student of organizations and of management and of why things work the way they worked. Lead me to wonder why things worked the way they worked. Lead me to wonder why it was innovations in education can't seem to last and, in fact, were not conservative in education in the literal sense, we change all the time, it doesn't stick. So I began musing on that and came up with a lot of ideas, a lot of reading in the field and then did a case study of an innovation which was quite extraordinary. It was a radical departure from the typical undergraduate curriculum and it was adopted by three colleges, Colorado, Allegany and Lake Forest College in the 1960s which had had different fates at these three schools and it eroded more or less at all three of them in different ways and in this dissertation which was kind of a anthropological organizational anthropology tried to figure out what happened to it after it was adopted and why. In the event I finished up my degree of work in 1969. I had some very close brush with the draft early on. This was the height of the Vietnam War and I was deferred while I was teaching at Westport and the moment I stopped teaching high school I had a draft notice. This would have been in 1966 I think. I tried to appeal it on the basis of being in graduate school which I was but my local draft board wasn't buying that any more. They thought I had enough deferrments and so I



really was reconciled to be drafted. There was no way around it and again the Vietnam War was raging and I thought I might as well go in as an officer and make an interesting experience out of it if I could so I did all my tests and got accepted into officer candidate school. I was still holding things off as long as I could and almost at the last moment to finish this last semester an opening arose in the reserve outfit in Minneapolis which was very difficult to get into. Most of them had seven year waiting list and this one did not. They took people on the basis of tests. They must have had the smartest parachute packers in the world but I went down and took the test and and got into the their Quartermaster Reserve Corps and was about to go off to jump school. I had my bags packed and was two weeks away from leaving and I had to go back for a final physical which I did and I remember still lining up before the doctor at the receiving station and him saying, "Have you been to a doctor recently," and I said, "No, I've been to the campus health service for my psoriasis," a little skin scaling problem which is really with one for life as mine is very controllable and he said, and I can still hear his voice ringing in my ears, "Psoriasis huh, how bad do you want to get in boy," and I had no idea that this was the kind of affliction that might lead to medical deferment. It was the farthest thing from my mind and I stammered something out about, "Well sir, I would really rather stay in school for awhile," and he said that they didn't like skin diseases of any kind in the Army, they don't psoriasis and they could easily get me deferred for a year unless you want to go in very badly. I told him lets try the year deferrment. I got deferred for a year and it wasn't too long before my wife became pregnant. It seemed to be time for that and at that point fathers or expectant fathers were not being deferred. In some respect, I feel that an important part of my life, the life of a man, I would have loved it. I never did military service and I certainly had no love for the Vietnam War and therefore no fondness for serving in that war and I am sure I can do without two or three years in the military as well, but there is a kind of a chunk out of many of my peers

lives that also a lot of us didn't have. In any event 1969 rolls around and I am looking for a job and I had a couple of offers, one from the University of Minnesota, not a very good one, one from the University of Washington, also not very good. A rather nice one from the University of Pennsylvania where they were starting a brand new center for Research in Higher Education and I and a man, who has now gone on to be a college president himself, Dr. Kenneth Mortimer, were the first two that this gentlemen hired as fresh Ph.D.s to begin this new research center and as I had my papers to sign on my desk with the University I had a call from my Senator, Walter Mondale. The early summer of 1969 and it turned out he was looking for a new staff director and his assistant had been given my name where one of his then top aids were departing. He wanted not a political person or someone involved in that life but he wanted a writer, an academic and the University had given him my name and one thing led to another and I was offered the job of being Walter Mondale's Administrative Assistant in Washington which I took. It was an exciting several years, 1969 and 1970. I lived in Washington. Nixon had just been made President. The anti-Vietnam protesting was reaching its peak. In a sense the whole kind of revolutionary climate was at a peak. It was a time for the poor peoples march on Washington. Reverend Ralph Abernathy and this city was full of mule carts with the poor.

Sister: Where did you live?

DBJ: We lived in military country to be able to afford our first house. We were in Springfield, Virginia. It was a commute through that dreadful at that time Shirley Highway. But it was an exciting time because of Vietnam, because of the first of Vietnam moratoriums, because of the poor people marching on Washington and it was the first birthday, it was environmental consciousness and all that was awakening and Mondale was, at that time, first emerging as a real favorite among the liberal press. He was bright, he was independent, he was sort of a Humphrey protege and I wound up doing a lot of work, not for education, but actually

in tax and trade and finance work and became the staff head along with Senator Jacob Javits staff man of a Senate-led liberal trade opposition to a then major protection coming down the pike. I did all of Mondale's foreign trade work for him, wrote his first anti-Vietnam War speech along with him. It was exciting, it was difficult work. I don't think I was very well cut out for it in lots of ways. I was a real babe in the woods in politics and I did a lot of good things and made some mistakes but it was enormously enriching experience for me and certainly tolerable for Mondale. I think he needed someone with more political savvy and really there for the longer term with him and after about a year and a half I decided it was time to get myself back in the higher education track so I went back to the University, to Penn State again to see if my old job was there for me and it was. I went back to the altar a second time but a second time I left the altar before consummating the marriage because I had a call then from the Ford Foundation which had just been getting involved in a brand new large research program and income contingent lending and wanted someone with a background in economics and finance and higher education and this was a wonderful chance to do a very high profile, national project. So I went with the Ford Foundation instead of Penn State as a Project Specialist which was really being like a research professor at a university with no teaching assignments and unlimited budget.

Sister: Where was this?

DBJ: It was in Manhattan. A beautiful facility and I had economists and legal help. I had survey research help and led this research program which gave me really, in a course of another year, a book, a rather important book at that time, a couple of major publications in the field of educational finance and loan work and brought me into what is still my field of research in prominence as a scholar which is higher education finance, student finance and especially student loans. I finished that work up in 1972 and was again going to look for

honest work in higher education and once again a job came to me, the President of the University of Pennsylvania, Martin Meyerson, had note of my work at the Ford Foundation and was interested in it himself and was looking for an Executive Assistant and came to see me and Penn was an exciting place and Martin the same thing to work for so I went with Martin Meyerson in 1972 as an Executive Assistant and that began a seven year collaboration with Martin as an Executive Assistant, later as Vice President for Administration and I had an adjunct appointment as Associate Professor in the School of Education and taught a course most semesters, a graduate course in either economics of higher education or in management in governments of higher education. Continued to work and write and be part of the analytical world of folks who do test molding and such and paddles and consulting in the field of student finance and student loans. Again that was an exciting time. Things got difficult at the end for Martin, they got difficult for all of us I think. There was a lot of opposition to the Meyerson presidency and I think most of it unfair but those things happen after awhile I, as Martin's chief aid, came in for lots of criticism and probably some of it was deserved but in any event it was a good time for me to be leaving as it was for Martin soon there after. I had been interested, with his encouragement, in looking at a presidency. I was in fact looking at, or being looked at by and several during that last year, one of which was Buffalo State College. Another was a Minnesota presidency, another was a Pennsylvania one.

Sister: You said you had three.

DBJ: I wouldn't say I had three offers, I was in three finals and I was still in the final two, three or four in the other two at the time the Buffalo State made its offer to me and I really think Buffalo State was where I wanted most to go anyway.

Sister: But it was the smaller of the others.

DBJ: It's about the same size. One was Mancato State in Minnesota and

the other was Indiana University of Pennsylvania. But Buffalo State was a good size, it was an exciting campus. Meyerson spoke very highly of it because he had been President of UB some years before and knew Buffalo well and Buffalo State rather well.

Sister: When you came did it meet with your expectations?

DBJ: It's hard to think of what one expects. Nothing is like being a president. Certainly a Vice President is nothing like being a President. Buffalo State College is not like the University of Pennsylvania. Penn was a private institution, a distinguished research institution, a complex university and this was a public, smallish college. All dimensions being different I think I was very well prepared for a presidency at Penn partly through watching and observing Meyerson and being very close to the presidency and partly I think my own interest as a scholar and teacher. I had been teaching administration and governance and finance of higher education so I think I had been worrying about and thinking about the kinds of questions that are important with the presidency for many years.

Sister: I wonder if you realize your role with the urban community as much here.

DBJ: Much, much more here. One of the exciting things about Buffalo State was that the community in Buffalo is a small enough one and I think new faces within it are infrequent enough that if someone comes in with an office of prestige, then the community is enormously receptive, really voraciously, to use you and in kind of exciting ways and so I became very quickly involved in a number of things. The County Executive and the energy crisis was going on then. I became involved in the Energy Task Force and I became involved with Studio Arena Theater first as an honorary trustee and I said I don't want to be an honorary trustee and if you want me to be a real trustee then I'll be a real trustee or Board of Director and I did and I was very active with the theater for many years. I became involved very quickly with an emerging young black who owned a non-profit

community neighborhood health center and was a charter member of that board until a month ago when I finished out my last term and left that after working particularly with their intermediate care facility for the developmentally disabled. That's a very rich part of my life here for community service. I was on the urban league board.

Sister: Did you deliberately set goals for yourself or did they just come naturally?

DBJ: I set some goals. I wanted to do something significant with the minority community. It meant a lot to me and meant a lot to this campus. This town has a major problem in the city with the minority community, the black community, especially and now the growing Hispanic community. It was an area where leadership and followership were badly needed and I don't do it on any sense of morals, it's part of a job. When one is fortunate to be in a position at a public university like this, one of the parts of the job is to help the community so I probably got overextended. I think the Urban League and the Community Health Center and the Studio Arena Theater. We're involved in the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of which I was also President toward the end. A number of other Schroeder task forces with the Greater Buffalo Development Foundation which is really the group of CEO's of major institution that works on economic development in downtown. All of these, if anything, were toward the end a bit much. I think, if anything overwhelming about the job it was biting off more than I probably should have, particularly in officer positions and these outside obligations.

Sister: You brought the city to the college too you know.

DBJ: Well yes, one of my first goals was to educate the city about the college and to get a group of allies who would come to know the college and hopefully love the college and spokespersons for us and also give us some advice.

Sister: Don't you think you've accomplished that?

DBJ: I think it's one of the most successful things, frankly, that I did. We had, of course, the council which is established by law and we had a foundation which was a little bit sleepy at the time. It hadn't yet begun an annual fund drive, in fact. It had maybe a couple hundred thousand dollars in assets if that. And now it's almost three million dollars in assets. We had one advisory board that was not at the time meeting in technology and I insisted that we begin forming advisory boards for key program areas and work very closely with the various faculty, staff and department chairs in getting them. I think business was one of the first ones and we would pick people together. Our strategy was not to invite people to serve on a board, because to them that meant I would probably ask them for money or something. It really wasn't the object. The object was friends. What we would do is invite people for a breakfast and talk about the program, talk about the college and I also began a series of Town and Gown breakfasts which continued through this year and I would give a 15 minute spiel about the college and then we would have some questions and answers and some discussion and they would be in at 8 and out by 9 but for these breakfasts we would talk about a particular program like Business or Technology or Information Systems Management and then inevitably toward the end of it we would say we have to come back. Would you be willing to serve in this capacity on a continuing basis on an advisory board and they, I think to a man and woman, they said yes and we would then decide jointly that we would make ourselves an ongoing advisory board and keep in touch with each other and meet three or four times a year. I think at last count we had about 17 of these with three or four hundred people. They weren't all working well. It takes a lot of staff work and really more than we have the staff capacity. I think we may have overextended a little bit. It takes a department chair and/or dean or someone who really gives it attention.

Sister: It brings the city to the campus and the campus to the city.

DBJ: In fact we had a dinner for them one time. We had a dinner, the guest list for which was all people who were serving on any, sort of a board capacity, all the council, all the foundation, all these advisory boards and I think we probably had a dinner of about four, five or six hundred people to say thank you to them all for helping us. Each time you have that you also give them a new pitch, get them reexcited about the new things in the offering. If we're having political problems, suggest they might want to write the governor and they leave as advocates of the college.

Sister: You feel though that it has been very successful?

DBJ: Enormously so. When I got here, my sense about the college was it had a lot of affection, but no one to do anything about it. It was what I called the good old Buffalo State syndrome. It was that nice college on Elmwood Avenue which, unlike that university, which had troublesome people and had all those agitators and all those people from New York City and, of course, that they were wrong about UB as well but for us they were wrong the opposite way. They gave us affection but they didn't know why they were doing wrong. We were a little, non-troublesome place on Elmwood Avenue and I wanted to be seeing it as troublesome once in awhile if we had a problem with something but we needed to get them onto the campus and the curious thing about the campus physically is that it's a hundred and some acres, a hundred and four acres I think right here, almost in the city, it's very tough to weigh. It's almost hidden between these two long North and South perimeters. The South side being the Psych Center, the state hospital, and the North side being the Expressway. They seal it off in a way that one can only replicate with a huge wall so that unless you go by Elmwood Avenue, where you see the tiny short side and Rockwell Hall only, or unless you are driving Grant Street into a



sea of parking lots, you don't see the campus and we would bring people on here. I didn't do that much entertaining in the home because I wanted people on the campus. They would come here for breakfast and look out over and all of a sudden see 34 buildings and they were astonished. They had never realized what was back here.

Sister: That was one of your challenges wasn't it?

DBJ: Yes, it was. Of course, the college was new and we had to emphasize that it wasn't Teachers College all the time being to preserve pride in that part of the college's past and present which was teacher's education. But at that point teacher's education was only about 15 percent of our enrollment, in fact, now it's higher because it's coming back. We had to let people know that here's the place where students were majoring in Business and Technology and applied computer science or Information Systems Management, Journalism, Broadcasting, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Dietetics. These were the hot growing technical fields and we had to get people to know that as potential employers, as parents of students, as neighbors, as friends with kids looking for colleges and thinking that if they wanted business they had to go to Canisius or UB. And that's true, they can go to Canisius or UB, but they can also go to Buffalo State College. They may think they want to go to UB and computer science but maybe what they really mean by that is working with computer software for a bank in which case they actually want is Information Systems Management at Buffalo State College. We were trying just to get the word out about the programs to as many people as possible. I spent time out in the field as well. I went to Niagara Falls, we had council members around. We asked our council members to host breakfasts on the campus or elsewhere so that, for example, our council member then, his name was Dick Spozanzo, the lawyer from Lockport had me up to Lockport and Niagara County. He introduced me to the business and civil leadership there. We went out to several schools when there were

lots and lots of Buffalo State alumni teaching. Bringing the news of what I called then the new Buffalo State College.

Sister: Maybe I'm wrong in this, but I think the challenge, the main challenge, introducing the college to the urban community, involved a lot of other challenges?

DBJ: We needed to articulate the mission of the campus. There were a lot of people who thought that the college had no sense of its mission, had no goals, had no plan. In part they were wrong. I mean that in this way. In fact, the mission of a large, public, urban college is very diverse, it's very broad and, therefore, what may look like no mission or no goal or no priorities can, in fact, be simply a very complex priorities. What I would say to back that is yes, it's true, Buffalo State can't be all things to all people, it's kind of a cliché, but it can be and must be an awful lot of things to a lot of people. Unlike Swathmore or Canisius, you see, Bonaventure which can and must be rather narrow in their focus properly, we had to be broad. We had at one time be able to appeal to students with high academic aptitudes, the good students, particularly if students wanted those things that only we had, the dietetics, the social work, the design, the fine arts the visual arts, the teacher education programs and yet we also had an obligation as a public college, as an urban college, as a large college to appeal to a very broad range of abilities to be a place where students whose academic background is not so strong. They could have a chance, often a second chance, may these are older students, maybe these are returning students who may have had difficulty elsewhere. Many were minority students and that's another part of our goal. So partly what the campus needed to do is have a sense, a mission that this diversity of goals was okay. But it had to be said, so I worked for the second summer after I had been here a year, I wrote what became the "Blue Paper" and it was a long, very personal memorandum to the faculty and staff about what

I had observed after one year. I remember beginning this drafting and doing most of it up in vacation in Michigan on the beach and I put that out as a thing to chew on. It had a lot of thoughts about types of students that I thought we weren't appealing to sufficiently, things like, for example, we call ourselves an urban college and, indeed, we were in the middle of the city. An urban college doesn't shut down at 5:00 in the afternoon as we were doing and, in fact, we had very little outreach to an adult in a real sense. I put lots of these thoughts down, what scholarship means to the college, what our expectations ought to be for five more years and such. I then met with Deans and Chairs and the Senate Planning Committee on that the following year and out of that then came an agreement with the faculty with the Academic Planning Committee and the Senate that we needed a plan that they were willing to give input and be a kind of guardian but they were willing to have me draft the plan and it gave them the assurance that nothing would go in the plan that they didn't want and couldn't live with. It really put me kind of in a commanding position and being able to articulate and express it the way I wanted with the agreement that anything they wanted changed I would change. It was a very good agreement. We wound up with a plan then called, "A Plan for the 80s" and it was a series of, I think, 16 goal statements with sub-parts to it. A history of that goal statement, why it was important, a sense of the objectives on behalf of the goal already accomplished. Incidentally, it's very difficult once you see the history of it and once you see the things already accomplished to deny a goal is a goal and the third set of things we write about is specific objectives now on the agenda and then, fourth, enumerated some issues that we were meeting about. It's rather easy to live with and mainly what I set out to do is corroborate the sixteen goals. One of them, for example, was to become a more attractive campus for the transfer student. It's sort of hard to say it's not a goal, even if it is by definition of a public, urban

college to be, by SUNY policy, to be accounted into especially the SUNY college transfer students. Once you have accepted, then what does it mean. It meant a lot of things about transfer, recruitment, program articulation, not having the kinds of undergraduate, freshman, sophomore requirements that made it difficult to get a BA in two more degree years for an associate degree holder. A whole lot of very real things like that. Once we got the basic goals agreed to, then we could get down to work with the appropriate faculties and committees and offices in the objectives and then in implementation of the objectives. The plan was a very, very useful document for probably three or four years, from 1983 when it was a major part of the agenda, I think it was formally approved in 1984. We didn't have various task forces around at 1985 or 1986. I think it was useful for three years. I think it began losing some of its edge after awhile. It gave us a thing to shoot at. A lot of them were built around the kinds of students to whom we ought to appeal. I came here, for example, in 1979. We were in the midst of a real sense of threat of the declining 18 year old college going pool in Western New York especially. From 1977 to 1992 and we're just into that right now that pool was known to decline by 50 percent. That's a very frightening thing. We had already been losing students and the State Education Department and the Division of Budget, I think partly because they wanted us to become smaller, were putting all sorts of population projections out that suggested we're getting smaller. Being smaller, of course, meant losing faculty and staff and lines and resources and we were really very frightened about that. Now, as you know, our application rates since that time were up by about 50 percent and we're already over-enrolled. What we did in the "Plan for the 80s" was target many of the plans on kinds of students to whom we would appeal and there were six kinds especially. One was honor students, and we needed to have an explicit promotion for honor students, partly to bring back the image and the reality of Buffalo State before which was not seen for the

most part as a place to go for the highly able student. This meant recruiting, this meant some scholarship money and it meant a program that would make sense to the honor students. All of since we have since built and we are very proud of that. A second is that at the same time we were going out for the honor students aggressively to make certain the EOP program, the program for the educationally and academically disadvantaged was the best it could possibly be. I think it is the best in SUNY. It's the largest in SUNY, it's the most professional in SUNY and it's a thrill to go to their honors programs in the springtime and watch these kids coming out with "B" and "B+" and I saw one girl with a 4.0 average. They would have not gotten into college without this program. I was going over data this morning which showed very clearly that the EOP students which, by definition, are not really admissable by conventional measures, do better, the EOP students from the City of Buffalo do better than the non-EOP students, in freshman year GPA and in retention. I think it's all the counseling that we provide. EOP was the second and a third very important one was the adult student. I mentioned a bit about them. We talked about the non-traditional student because that was part of the, all colleges were, particularly urban colleges, we were talking about non-traditional students because we believe we had to have them to fill our rolls and prevent the decline in numbers or perhaps we believed it was part of our public mission. If you looked at what happened here, again we shut down at 5:00, we have no place for the older student. We had a Student Union and it was probably kind of exciting if you were 20 years old but it was pretty loud and intimidating place if you were an adult. We knew how to recruit kids out of high school and we knew the kids in high school will take a lot of abuse frankly, they'll stand in lines for a long time, then they'll do what they're told and all such things that frankly a 35 year old woman or returning veteran won't put up with. We had not place for them to come and get something to eat or get help or if they

had a question about registration or financial aid and they were here in the evening the offices were closed. We had no degree programs that one could be assured of getting entirely at night. So a major, what's easy to say is that we ought to be accommodating to the adult student, but to make that real has taken years but it has given us a thing to hang on to and that task force is commissions with people in charge of it and we opened the Paul G. Bulger Lifelong Learning Center which gave them a place. We installed a person, Roz Park, who is an Evening Student Assistance Coordinator who, if he couldn't answer a question at 8:00 at night, would get answered the next afternoon and the answer would be there for the student the next evening. We've changed the starting times of our classes. We used to start at 4:00. Why, because all students here were teachers and teachers ended at 2:30 or 3:00 and they got here at 4:00. If all of a sudden what we're teaching is business and technology and social work and criminology and things of this nature where now we have a clientele who work to 4:30 or 5:00 they can't get here in time. It took us years to get something as seemingly as simple as a starting schedule that made sense to the real adult population. We required departments to be honest about one could get an entire degree at night so that they wouldn't give them a smattering of courses at night but then say, "Hey, by the way, here's the prerequisite for the rest of your courses but you have to get this one at 10:00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday," which meant the working adult couldn't do it any more. We now have seventeen programs which can be taken in their entirety all in the evening. We have implemented such innovations as sunrise courses at 7:00 a.m. which sounds ghastly if you're a full-time student who wants to sleep to 10:00 if you can and wants to avoid 9:00 classes, but if you're a working adult, it may be that 7:00 is a beautiful time rather than 8:00 at night. A lot of things have happened. We encourage and, in fact, got some funding for an adult student support group, a club. They don't just happen

by themselves, they happen partly because you want them to happen. In a lot of ways we've focused on the adult. Minority students. It's too easy to equate a minority student with an EOP student. Too often I think they were. So we began to look at minority students as a very different population than the disadvantaged student, with lots of overlap to be sure. But we needed to make certain that we were recruiting aggressively the non-disadvantaged either academically or economically minority student. We needed to target the right kinds of feeder schools, both the New York City schools and local schools. We needed to do work for the Hispanic population. I began a President's Advisory Committee on Hispanic Affairs very early during my time here. We worked on such things, for example, as special courses in Spanish we needed a Spanish speaker. With the obvious premise that a lot of people who speak Spanish speak bad Spanish just like people who speak English speak bad English. And yet, the Spanish course for non-Spanish speakers didn't fit them. They were terribly fluent in the course conversationally. They needed a special kind of attention to their grammar and to their usage just as we have in English courses. It took a long time to get the language department to think it was part of their mission. We had to work on and we're still working, it's one of my frustrations.

Sister: I was going to ask you, do you have frustrations?

DBJ: Yes, this is an example. For years and years we worked on the need to provide a course work both in language and we're talking mainly Spanish here. And also in Hispanic culture, principally Caribbean or perhaps Mexican, even classical Spanish culture, for people who are in professions who will work with Hispanic populations and obvious social work brings instantly to mind as a profession, unfortunately, high proportion of whose clients who will be a minority or Hispanic in major cities of the Northeast. It seemed to me to make great sense to be able to have along with a social work major, some kind of a minor perhaps, something beyond the certificate, beyond the degree

and certainly would have intact a curriculum in a combination of Spanish language and Hispanic culture. So a student could present himself, I've got a BS in Social Work but I'm also prepared to deal with a Hispanic population and we still haven't won that one. We've been talking about it, I've been pushing it and prodding it and the faculty, for obvious reasons, and many of them good reasons, it still disappoints me still. It has been very, very reluctant to grab this as being meaningful and tend to often come back alleged to not to understand it and wonder what the president means. What I want to say is, I've said already more than I know and it's imperfect and it's only a start, I think you must know what I mean, you figure out the answer. I'm talking about this focus on students. We focus on all our students, on disadvantaged students, minority students, adult students, transfer students. We were not seen as an attractive place for transfer students. They would come here not knowing for sure they could graduate in two more years. The private sector in this state is very hungry for transfer students for the same reasons we are but even more so. Not only do they get enrollments, see for us one of the characteristics of SUNY is that we don't get to keep our tuition at all. We'll get punished if we are underenrolled but tuition goes into Albany. Where a private college a body is a body is tuition. And better than that an upper division body, a junior, a standing junior, is very nearly a standing senior and they're very nearly a baccalaureate degree winner and they need Bundy aid. So the private colleges will die to get transfer students, they're even better than freshmen and, therefore, they will make a very attractive deal for them. SUNY didn't seem very hungry and Buffalo State didn't seem very hungry enough so we were not really getting the faculty and staff that ECC and NCC and elsewhere pushing Buffalo State even though we were the single largest taker of transfers from any college in the SUNY system.

SMJ: It just seemed natural.



DBJ: It did, so we had to work on new equipment in transfer in community colleges. We had to work on program by program agreements with ECC and when your business students graduate with an Associate Degree in Business or Data Processing or Graphic Arts from ECC and they want a BS in Design or ISM or Business, here's what we will credit them for, here's what they have to take and they can do it in two more years and it's all guaranteed up front and we will sign an agreement and here's my name, ECC president's name and we now have the agreement. We've had to work these through step by step, course by course, now for I don't know how many programs. Buffalo State is now the largest taker for transfer students in the SUNY system. I still think we need to do some things differently. For example, this spring I took probably the first visit for a SUNY president to a CUNY (City University College) to talk with them about students at, for example, Kingsborough which is Brooklyn's community college and why they should start thinking about not just going to Brooklyn College or Queens or Manhattan or another borough or something, but think about if they want to leave home, if they wanted a four-year residential campus, think about SUNY, think about Buffalo because we're the closest thing, we may not be much like Brooklyn, but we're an awful lot closer to Brooklyn than Plattsburgh, or Potsdam or Oneonta or Oswego or Fredonia. I think we were very well received. Again, what is required is lots and lots of follow-up.

SMJ: You have a lot of students from New York.

DBJ: But very few transfers. We do not get transfer students from the CUNY community colleges. I think it's a fertile ground for us.

SMJ: Most of them stay in New York.

DBJ: Yes. They stay in New York. Buffalo is a very strange place for these Brooklyn kids.

SMJ: Yes, as one person said, isn't it near Seattle.

DBJ: So, those were a lot of goals. Let me talk about some academic

goals because that's the heart of the campus and in the decade, near decade, nine years that I've been here has been a nine years characterized, we knocked so much by new programs as I think was President Fretwell's years or President Bulgers where the college was changing dramatically. It, in fact, academically hasn't changed programatically that much. The big programs now, today, were big programs when I got here. It has been much more a time, I think of stability and maturation of the programs. The business program having grown very, very large, very, very fast, with lots of problems in it has now had six or seven or eight years to kind of settle down, look at its curriculum, get some faculty that now have had some experience at other kinds of schools teaching business and settle into a curriculum. Same thing with Information Systems Management and with Journalism, Broadcasting and Speech and Technology. That has been a good year for that. We have worked very hard at general education that was a reform movement that was about done when I came and all I had to add to it was a kind of final stick saying, "If you got to do it then you got to do it real fast," or I didn't finish the threat maybe I'll do it for you but it was to the faculty, it's your job, your responsibility, you're almost done, you have to finish it and here are (I wrote a paper) a few things I feel strongly about. They're very, very general things and as long as these are met with whatever you come up with, a pre-guarantee but as a small example, the previous general education curriculum had defined anything taught in the faculty of Natural and Social Sciences as appropriate for general education curriculum. Well, physical education is there which is a fine department and has an important place but I'm not sure the theories in taking some basketball belongs in the general core curriculum and it runs in the old system. I merely said you can't define general education simply by the department that offers it and therefore make it become blanket eligible course. You can't do that. If you do it, I'll deny it so and with three or four very general and things like ...

(Tape malfunctioned .. no more transcription)