

Interviewee: James Fay
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

October 23, 2002
MHP

James Fay

Marist College

Poughkeepsie, NY

Transcribed by Erin Kelly

For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections

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Interviewee: James Brendan Fay

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Summary: In the following interview, James Brendan Fay reflects on his years as an adjunct Economics and Accounting professor at Marist College. In the beginning of the interview, James Fay summarizes his educational years, as well as his service in the U.S. Navy and his employment with IBM. His transition from IBM to becoming a Marist professor is outlined along with James Fay's perspective of the expansion of Marist College during this time. The end of the interview covers James Fay's contributions to the College during his former teaching years as well as his hopes for the future direction of Marist College.

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“BEGINNING OF INTERVIEW”

Gus Nolan (00:01): I have an introductory statement. Good morning. Today is October 23rd. We’re meeting in the Marist College library. The interview this morning is with Jim Fay. He’s an adjunct professor here for many years, recently retired. He’s a former IBM full-time employer. Thank you, Jim for coming and good morning.

James Fay (00:31): Good morning.

GN (00:31): Jim, will you say and give us your full name please?

JBF (00:34): James Brendan Fay.

GN (00:37): And Jim, were you named after any member of the family?

JBF (00:40): Yes, my father.

GN (00:42): Do you recall where and when you were born?

JBF (00:45): I was born in the Bronx on February 11, 1930.

GN (00:49): Are there other members of your family?

JBF (00:52): Yes, I have a sister, Anne Griffin who also worked here at the College for many years.

GN (00:59): What were you parent’s names and what did your father do?

JBF (01:06): My father’s name was James and he was a subway motorman in New York City. My mother’s name was Margaret and when she worked, she was a domestic.

GN (01:16): And can you tell us something about your early education? Where did you go to grade school?

JBF (01:20): I went to Lady of Assumption Grammar School in the Bronx.

GN (01:24): Do you recall the years you went there?

JBF (01:26): Yes, I do. [Laughter]

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GN (01:28): Can you tell us those years?

JBF (01:31): I couldn't remember many people that I met in later life including Gus Nolan, who is now interviewing me. [Laughter]

GN (01:40): So, you went there from about 1936 or '35 to '43, I guess.

JBF (01:45): 1936 to 1943.

GN (01:48): Right, okay. And then what about high school? Where did you go to high school?

JBF (01:53): I went to Cardinal Hayes High School in the Bronx, New York. That was from '43 to 1947.

GN (02:01): Okay, let's switch a little bit and talk about your personal life. When did you meet Pat and when did you get married?

JBF (02:07): I met my wife in 1947. We got married in 1953 at St. Benedict's Church in the Bronx, New York.

GN (02:16): And do you have children?

JBF (02:18): Yes, we have seven children. Six are still alive.

GN (02:22): Okay, could you say something about where they are now?

JBF (02:26): The oldest girl Patricia lives in Los Angeles, California and she's a nurse. My second oldest daughter, Kathleen, lives in Modena, New York and she's a high school teacher. My third daughter, Colleen, lives in Melbourne, Florida. She's a nurse. My daughter, Erin, lives in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and she's a physical therapist. My daughter Marlene lives in Milford, Connecticut. She is a health consultant. My son James lived in Lansing, Michigan. He was a police officer for six years. He's now in law school.

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GN (03:02): Okay, fine. Let's come back to your education then, college and graduate?
Where did you go to college?

JBF (03:09): My undergraduate I did at Fordham University and I graduated in 1951.
My graduate degree was an MBA from Siena in 1963.

GN (03:21): Okay, I think, did you do a military tour?

JBF (03:23): Yes, I did. That's was in between my undergraduate and my graduate.
From '51 to '55, I was a Supply Core Officer in the U.S. Navy. I served at the submarine
base in New London, Connecticut.

GN (03:36): Did you ever go overseas?

JBF (03:38): No, I didn't go overseas but I served at the submarine force there. I was
there at the time we launched the first atomic submarine. I remember doing this with
Admiral Rickover.

GN (03:50): Is that so? [Laughter] What about your work career, when did you start
with IBM and how long were you there?

JBF (03:58): With IBM I started in 1955 after I had left the service. I had thirty-five
years of all kinds diversified accounting experience at IBM and I also did teaching at
IBM. I taught many, many courses, both in the voluntary and the different training
programs for the IBM education department.

GN (04:17): Were you always here on the east coast with IBM?

JBF (04:20): Yes, I was.

GN (04:21): Either in Kingston or Poughkeepsie?

JBF (04:22): I was in Kingston and Poughkeepsie and then back to Kingston again at
the end of my career.

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GN (04:29): Okay, let's talk about your teaching career at Marist. When did you come to Marist and how was that contact made?

JBF (04:34): I first came to Marist in 1964. I had gotten my MBA in May of '63 and I thought that I'd like to put it to some use so I had sent out some resumes to some of the various colleges in the area. And in January of 1964, Brother Cornelius Russell, who at that time was the department Chairman and the controller of the college contacted me and said that there was an opening. They needed somebody in a hurry. The teacher who had been teaching economics, who was an IBMer, had left. He had taken another position down on Long Island. They needed somebody quickly so down I came.

GN (05:09): What year was this now?

JBF (05:11): That was 1964.

GN (05:13): 1964, and Brother Cornelius was the controller at that time?

JBF (05:16): He was controller and he was also the Department Chairman for the Department of Business.

GN (05:21): Okay, and the president at that time was?

JBF (05:24): To the best of my recollection, that was Brother Linus Foy.

GN (05:30): Okay. When did Jack Kelly come on the scene? Do you recall?

JBF (05:34): I believe Jack came in 1963, which was about a year before I arrived. Brother Cornelius had been to a meeting in New York City of the American Economic Association and he had been doing some survey interview local prospective candidates and that's where he hired Jack. He met him down there and he hired him in 1963.

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GN (05:57): Okay, let's go back to your teaching here. Were you always teaching basically the same course or were there a number of courses that you were doing and attempting?

JBF (06:06): No, I taught quite a few courses. As a matter of fact, the first course I ever taught was a course in economics because that's what the teacher who left was teaching and I said, "Well, I don't know about that" and Jack Kelly said "Well, as long as you keep Lynch happy or ahead of you, you'll be fine. [Laughter]

GN (06:20): Alright.

JBF (06:21): So, I taught that course. After that, I taught a course called Manager of Accounting, which was what they offered at that particular time. Okay, as time evolved and we started offering an Accounting major, that's when we started expanding options and that's when I started teaching some of the other courses. I also taught a course in Financial Management one summer but primarily my teaching was always in the accounting field.

GN (06:46): And this had been one night a week or two nights a week? What was the timeframe for that?

JBF (06:50): In the beginning, in the early days, it would be one night a week and then it was changed because what was happening was that they wanted to give the adults that were coming at night a better chance, a better opportunity to pick their courses. So initially it was one night a week and then it went to two nights a week.

GN (07:09): And in the summer, it continued then?

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JBF (07:11): I only taught in the summer on occasion, usually would be when some teacher would get a grant or something and they couldn't teach so they'd ask me to step in and fill in. I usually liked to take the summers off.

GN (07:25): Right. Then when you would come here, do you recall certain aspects of the buildings? Where did you teach? Were you teaching in the Donnelly building?

JBF (07:34): Oh, I have vivid memories of that. Everything was in Donnelly Hall and as I say in my notes here, I can remember very well you'd come out to go to class at night and you would meet the dorm students coming back from taking a shower because they were living in the same building. [Laughter] Everything was there. That was all we had, was Donnelly Hall and I believe the library was even not built, okay. But the students lived in that building. The food...

GN (08:03): Cafeteria was there?

JBF (08:04): Right. They were living in that building and it was sort of odd to see them coming down along with their robe tied. [Laughter] There were no women students at that particular time.

GN (08:14): Yea, okay. And these students, these were not just Brothers now? These were lay students who were...

JBF (08:22): Lay students and there came a time when I did have some of the Scholastics, the Brothers who were with the Scholasticate at that time.

GN (08:30): Do you recall the spacious office arrangements that you had when you were teaching?

JBF (08:34): Because it was a small-knit group at that time and it was small. The office space was shared by three adjuncts who are on a round table in the middle of an open

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space. The big-shots had cubicles [Laughter] and a desk but it was a very close and a very warm atmosphere. There was a chance to get to know everybody very well. And it was a mixture, it wasn't just the Business Department. There would be people there from other disciplines.

GN (09:04): Do you recall some of the people who were part of this close-knit group?

JBF (09:09): Okay, so I can lend you with one.

GN (09:10): Give me three.

JBF (09:12): George Doran, who taught I believe it was Economics. He left and I believe he went to the University of Duquesne and he was followed by a math teacher whose name just doesn't strike me right now, but I can remember a very funny incident happened one night. This particular fellow was teaching math, said that he was a bachelor and he was in the area and he hadn't had to opportunity to really meet anybody of the opposing sex. And George said, "Well gee, you know, I have a sister who lives down in Newburgh and he took out a picture and he showed the picture and she had lay clothes on, all dressed up in civvies. And then he said I have a more recent picture and he took out one and she was a nun. [Laughter] So we had a lot on banter back and forth.

GN (10:04): And other departments, did you meet anybody in the English Department or anybody in the...?

JBF (10:08): Oh yes. Yes, I can remember Dr. George Sommers, okay.

GN (10:12): Oh, you know George Sommer?

JBF (10:14): Oh yea, I knew him very well. I knew Kevin Donohue in Philosophy and Kevin Carolan. In fact, a lot of nights, on Monday nights, after we've finished teaching, Kevin and... The two Kevin's would invite me down to eat in the place where the

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Brothers were living at that time. We'd have a couple of beers and watch the Monday night football and my wife would want to know why the class was so late. [Laughter]

GN (10:35): It was on your breath. [Laughter] Tell me about the age of the students that you were teaching in those years.

JBF (10:45): Yes. In the early days, the majority of my students were IBM'ers who were taking advantage of the IBM tuition reimbursement program. They were older, they were serious students and they had to get an education okay. Some of the students that they started from the very beginning were taking a period of about nine years in order to get a Bachelor's degree. And after thirty-five years at IBM, I wound up working for a manager who had in fact done that.

GN (11:19): Is that so?

JBF (11:20): Yea, I had had him in class years and years before that and he had graduated from high school at eighteen and went to IBM in like a tool builder's apprentice program. And then when he got out of the tuition program, he decided to go back to get a degree.

GN (11:37): How big were the classes? Were they small classes or were they twenty-five?

JBF (11:40): The average class was between twenty and twenty-five.

GN (11:44): And there weren't too many regular lay students from the college itself?

JBF (11:50): Very seldom that. They would have to get special permission in those days to take the course at night. There would have to be some reason, maybe they couldn't fit it in their schedule in daytime and they needed to graduate or something like that but it was the exception rather than the rule, okay. But the older students had a very

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definite effect on them, you know, they were almost like fatherly. You know what I mean? And the younger students said well, we better do some work because these guys are serious. [Laughter]

GN (12:17): Right. This was the change in some years down the line, was it not? When did you see a change come that more of the regular college would take the night classes? Was that ten years after you were here or something like that? The early seventies, maybe?

JBF (12:35): Yea, the late sixties, early seventies. I'd say it's definitely like during the Vietnam War timeframe, you know?

GN (12:40): Yea.

JBF (12:42): There was a change in that more of the day students came in as the expansion of the enrollment of the college.

GN (12:48): Well eventually the dormitories went up and they moved them out of the Donnelly Hall and the cafeteria was moved out and they put classrooms down there.

JBF (12:57): Right, right.

GN (12:58): So that all helped.

JBF (13:00): That would be the timeframe. And we went through some turmoil in the sixties with the students, you know, it was an adjustment for some of us traditionalists to accept the long hair and what have you but I find you had to resolve the fact that if it's clean, it's fine, okay.

GN (13:18): And you had seen...

JBF (13:19): As a matter of fact, I had one student who some years later I was sitting in my office and he came in one night. I didn't know who it was, I didn't recognize him

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and he asked me if I would sign an act of data that he was sitting for the CPA exam. And I said, "I don't know if I know you" and he told me that well, he said "Well, the last time you saw me, I had dirty dungarees on, I was unshaven, I had long hair" and he told me who he was. And he said "I always remember you telling me that if I'm going to get any kind of a decent job, I'm going to have to clean up my act." [Laughter]

GN (13:50): Good. At what point in time did the female population begin to take courses with you?

JBF (13:58): It was sometime I believe in the later sixties. In fact, the first female to take courses here was a nun. She was a Benedictine nun from Benedictine Hospital in Kingston, New York. She was the controller up there. She came through, was an outstanding student. She was actually the valedictorian the year she graduated but she declined it because she felt that much... Be an indication of some kind of favoritism or something.

GN (14:26): Yea.

JBF (14:27): She later went on and got her MBA and she is now the Treasurer of her order down in New Jersey. She's had some serious health problem but...

GN (14:37): Well, she must be on in years then.

JBF (14:40): Well, she would have worked for the State Tax Department for the State of New Jersey for fourteen years before she entered the convent.

GN (14:46): Well, so that gives you a clue.

JBF (14:48): And in those days, they wore the full habit if you know what I mean. And she had to come with a companion and her companion was Sister Marie Paul, the short little nun, who just died last year. She was ninety-one years old. She was more well-

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known around the College than Sister Teresa was and at graduation, they gave her a little honorary diploma. [Laughter] Everybody knew her.

GN (15:16): And the other female population, the regular, when they came in were they a distraction for your serious students?

JBF (15:22): No, the first lay person to come in here was a Linda Foley. Her father, although I believe was a... I think he had a pretty good job at IBM in Poughkeepsie and if I'm not mistaken, he was on the early Board of Trustees of the college here. But she came in and, I'm not sure, it was sometime after Sister Teresa Paul was admitted to the College. They weren't a distraction except I can remember one... We also had a contingent of state troopers here. The state police had a tuition reimbursement program so we had a lot of state troopers from the Millbrook barracks who were getting up in towards the end of their years, getting ready to retire and felt that if they had a degree, that would help them when they got out to look for something else. And I can think of one who I turned out to be very friendly with. He would sit next to, behind this Linda Foley and she was a very attractive lady, I must admit that. And he would look at me and I knew what he was doing and I would have to sit on the other side of the classroom not to be too distracted. [Laughter] John, John Saltis is what his name is, a great person. He was the police chief up in Woodstock after he retired the State Police. He died several years ago and I'd say, I've become very close to a lot of students and I've been to a lot of funerals of my ex-students. [Laughter]

GN (16:51): Yea? I bet you have.

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JBF (16:53): Some of them are very fine people and that's one of the things that I enjoyed about the many years that I spend here was that I met many, many fine people, among them students.

GN (17:06): A quick mathematical then would tell me you had thousands of graduates? I mean if you had twenty-five or thirty students each semester for thirty years, that would really put it up into several thousand students.

JBF (17:19): Oh yea. I have all the records at home.

GN (17:22): Well. [Laughter] Well, you're an IBMer and you have that kind of personality and an archivist next to me would generly be happy [Laughter] to look at some of those things. Did the female students do as well in class in terms of the academic performance? Were they able to get the concepts that you were dealing with? Generally, they don't do well in math but I was wondering whether you felt that way.

JBF (17:45): The early students, in particular the two women that I just did work with were excellent students. Near the end of my career at the college, I would agree with that the female students didn't get the concept as well as the males. Okay, I don't know why but that... That's a true statement.

GN (18:04): And...

JBF (18:05): It might be due to a lack of interest because near the end of my career, I was teaching Financial and Managerial Accounting and this was for the non-Accounting majors and a lot of these students were taking it to fill in...

GN (18:19): Requirements.

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JBF (18:20): Requirements and it may be that it was “Well, I have to take it,” rather than something that they thought they were going to use. So, I’d try to convince them it would help them balance their checkbook and... [Laughter]

GN (18:31): And tell me about in the span of your years here, would you say that the maturity of the students, the capability of the students, changed in any way? Or were they fundamentally the same? Was it pretty much the same cut from in 1965 period to the 1995 period?

JBF (18:51): My general observation is that I’ve seen a decline in maturity from the early years to the later years but that’s my observation. There’s still a lot of fine students out there but overall, I would have to say on an average basis, I saw a decline in maturity.

GN (19:08): When the first students were generally, maybe the first of their family to go to college...

JBF (19:12): Right, right.

GN (19:13): And there’s the hunger to get it.

JBF (19:14): And I think some it was due to the fact that the environment in which we live today were in some cases, there’s a lot of parental pressure to have their child go to college whether they want to go or not and I don’t have to be a... In fact, in some cases and because of that, they don’t take it too seriously. And they’re not mature enough to handle the situation.

GN (19:36): Okay.

JBF (19:38) (: Maturity... The lack of maturity I find predominantly with the freshman and that’s understandable because some of them are coming into a newer environment and they don’t know how to handle the newfound freedom.

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GN (19:48): Right, first time away from home and living on their own.

JBF (19:52): Right, right, some of that it has to do with that.

GN (19:54): Yea. Let's move onto other aspects of your work here. There's been changes in the buildings. Eventually, did you move from Donnelly to what was your next experience and facilities to be able to present your material?

JBF (20:14): We moved from Donnelly over to Dyson, okay. I've never had any complaints about it. For the course that I taught, Donnelly was fine. Dyson's a beautiful building, no question about it but in terms of functional use, it was the same to me in both buildings.

GN (20:31): You need a blackboard?

JBF (20:33): Blackboard and overhead projector and all that.

GN (20:34): Right, yea.

JBF (20:35): I wasn't teaching anything that required anything special or that you know, would make a difference to go to Dyson center.

GN (20:43): How about research materials, were there times when the kid took complaining about the lack of resources in the library or was that not necessarily a part of what's involved in accounting?

JBF (20:54): It's not a part of the environment of accounting.

GN (20:56): Okay.

JBF (20:57): Not in the courses that I was teaching, some of the upper level courses it would be but not in the courses that I was teaching.

GN (21:03): Okay, from your perspective looking around the campus, where would you say the most dramatic changes have taken place? I mean because you knew the Marian

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building, that it was another gym which then became a dormitory. And the building of the McCann Center which is the recreational one. The putting up of the whole series of dormitories, Champagnat, then Sheahan, then Leo. The geographical changes on the body of the campus, what strikes you now as you come on here?

JBF (21:34): The building I was sitting in right now, the library. I mentioned to you before this is my first time in the building but it's unbelievable, just from the outside. I can't imagine what's in here but from the outside it is a very striking building.

GN (21:49): Yea.

JBF (21:53): The other two buildings are very attractive, Lowell Thomas and Dyson certainly enhanced the overall plan.

GN (21:59): Yea. You saw the chapel going up. You saw me building that.

JBF (22:01): Yes, I did. Yes, I remember the old Marist construction crew with seventy eaves. [Laughter]

GN (22:08): And that brings me to if you could just touch a memory or some memorable events that you might have had here. Were you here for some of the dedications or some of the funerals or some of the...?

JBF (22:26): Yes, yes. The most recent dedication I came down to was the dedication at Fontaine for Brother Paul. I was down for the dedication at the classroom in that building in memory of Tom Casey. I was down for the dedication of a classroom in Dyson for my late brother-in-law, John Griffin and I was here for the one for the other fellow, they had the room named after him... He was also an Economics professor.

GN (22:53): Kilgariff?

JBF (22:57): Kilgariff, okay. Greg Kilgariff.

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GN (23:01): Yea. So, you had more than just teaching experience here? You have come back because you seem to...

JBF (23:05): I have a lot of tie ins

GN (23:07): Ties ins to this institution.

JBF (23:08): Right, yea.

GN (23:10): What do you think are some of the major assets that the College has going for it? When you consider where we were and where we are?

JBF (23:18): Well, there's no question about that. The physical plan stands out. I mean, what you see here today, fifteen, twenty years ago I could not in my wildest dreams have imagined that it was going to turn out like this. They developed I think an excellent faculty. They have a good variety of programs, you know. And they've got a good location, you know, anyplace between New York City and Albany, okay. I think those are the major contributions.

GN (23:51): Were there, in you experience in the development of the various Business and the Masters program in Business and so on, did you hear that from afar how the thinking was going about this? Was this ever a part of the meetings that you were at or was that more on the Jack Kelly administrative time?

JBF (24:13): Yes, we had... Remember the adjunct faculty was not a part of that. We, I think I remember a funny little episode at that. Back in the beginning when, you know in the early time, the adjuncts did have a vote with the vote fore Department Chairman and they decided in those days that the adjunct would only be entitled to a half a vote but we did that for a couple times and then they stopped it because they always knew who I voted for. [Laughter]

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GN (24:46): Okay. You did mention something though that, and I had forgotten that from all the John Griffin, your sister's husband who worked here... Was there a connection between you two also along with Brother Cornelius was a friend of yours.

JBF (25:03): Right. What happened was I had been here for a couple years teaching and John was teaching at NYU in New York City and he was wanting to get out of the City and move someplace and Brother Cornelius told me that he was looking for somebody to teach economics. And so, I said to him, "Would you mind if I had my brother-in-law put in a resume?" He said sure, put it in, I'll consider it. So that's what happened and they hired him. Okay, I think it was back in the sixties sometime, '63, '64? No, it must have been later than that, '65, '66 may have been.

GN (25:40): Okay. Did you ever have to deal with reports at times or were you under supervision? Did people visit your classes and did you ever have any kind of a...?

JBF (25:52): Yes, in the early years. In the early years, they used to come around and they would oversee the class, you know.

GN (25:59): Sub in for the...?

JBF (26:02): They would do it once a semester. But then in the later years, that died out.

GN (26:07): Well, they knew you could do it so they spent time to visit other people.

JBF (26:11): But early on they would do that. They would come in and check the classroom.

GN (26:17): Okay. From your perspective too did you have any experience to know something about the leadership? You were here for Linus Foy for a good number of years and then there's a change to Dennis Murray. Was there any interaction on that high

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administrative level? Did you have to have a situation where they were present or see a difference? Or what was your take on their administrative roles?

JBF (26:41): I think with Foy, you know, he was here in the early years and he developed and formulated a lot of the academic programs along with putting up some of the physical plan. But then in '79 when Dennis came on board, there was no question about it that he expanded the physical plan and the academic offerings.

GN (27:01): Yea.

JBF (27:02): I think Dennis really has put the college on the map, okay.

GN (27:08): Any public relations aspect of it, the name of it being out there, public opinions survey, groups, MIPO...

JBF (27:14): Oh yea. Right, right.

GN (27:16): Has made it big. From your area in Kingston do you hear anything about the college? Is it frequented by the students?

JBF (27:26): Yea, there's quite a few students from that area who come to Marist College and it has a good reputation.

GN (27:34): Okay, moving onto now where you are and your career of having just recently retired full-time or at least at your position as the adjunct. Looking back, what are your, what's your take on the experience here? Do you think that... What was your contribution in terms of this development?

JBF (28:01): Well, I honestly can't say that I've made a major contribution to the College but what I think I was able to do, because of my work experience, I was able to bring a practical application to the subject matter that I was teaching. And I know that to be a fact because the students told me that and they appreciate it and they come back

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years after I had them as a student and told me that was an amazing thing to them, having been able to learn the practical side and put it to the application of the period.

GN (28:34): I think you've minimized your contribution. When you think about the thousands of students that have gone through and you've filled a very important plug in terms of getting them...

JBF (28:44): Well, that was one of the reasons I've stayed so long. I focus on days that maybe I was making a difference in their lives and hope that I did.

GN (28:53): Would you encourage someone else like you, like yourself to do this?

JBF (28:57): Yes, I would. I think it's a tremendous experience and I enjoyed it. I've met many wonderful people and as I say in many ways, I think I got back more than I gave to the College over the years. And it was a very rewarding experience for me.

GN (29:11): Well that would have to be spelled out because we didn't give you very much for coming. If I recall, the pay scale was something like minimal.

JBF (29:18): Well, in the beginning we got \$200 for books.

GN (29:23): Don't say that out loud. [Laughter] But consumer price index now we'd say that we're worth about \$30,000.

JBF (29:33): For thirty-five years, I had to hire a truck to take me to the bank.

[Laughter]

GN (29:42): So, it wasn't really the money you found? There was a certain joy in doing it?

JBF (29:45): I enjoyed doing it and it was a rewarding experience and maybe it's a little bit of the old ego, you know.

GN (29:55): Your teaching at the college?

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JBF (29:57): Yea, yea.

GN (29:58): Yea.

JBF (29:59): Let's be honest about it, you know. It kicks your ego up a little bit.

GN (30:00): Okay, but it took some time at home? Did it on the weekends to prepare for that and do the corrections? And how...?

JBF (30:08): Well, in the beginning, yes but over the years, you know, I got it down pretty good so I didn't have to do too much preparation work. Most of the work was in correcting papers and doing the grading and coming up with averages and things like that. What I did was something I learned from basic singing. Every semester I started from scratch. I threw all my notes out and I started over with a fresh set of notes and that forced me to take a new look at the subject matter and make the changes that I wanted to make but I never relied on a prior set of notes. So, I started from scratch every semester.

GN (30:53): But the subject was pretty much the same. Accounting doesn't change.

JBF (30:55): It was but I wanted to take a fresh approach and not rely back on an old set of notes.

GN (31:00): Alright. And you said you made applications of the theory of accounting to real life?

JBF (31:06): Right, right. I would give an example when we'd we talking about different things and I would bring in a practical example, something that actually happened and...

GN (31:14): Could you give me a little example of that? I'm just curious as to... Is it for banking or...?

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JBF (31:20): Well, okay we're talking about internal controls. Okay, internal controls have to do setting up the proper procedures so that somebody doesn't deliberately steal your money or your assets or your possessions, okay?

GN (31:32): Yea.

JBF (31:33): And I gave them this example of an engineer that I knew. He was a very fine gentleman but unfortunately him and his wife had gone their separate ways. He had five children and he ran into some financial difficulties and so what was happening as he an administrative assistant to one of the head engineers... Engineers in his area also played pinochle at lunchtime. They didn't go over to the cafeteria. They stayed at their desks and played cards. And when they were doing a lot of traveling he would say look, "I'll take your travel boxes over to the cashier stage which is in the cafeteria and I'll process them for you." And they say "Sure that's great, we don't have to go over there. We can continue on playing pinochle." Well, he got onto this idea. He put them in some phonies because he knew that man number's going to list stuff. So, he was slipping some phony expense accounts in and taking the money and that went along fine until one day he got a little sloppy and he put one in and he didn't put the man number, what we call a man number, on the document. And it happened to be the last work day of the accounting period. He went upstairs to Accounting and the girl was keypunching with no man numbers so she called the accountant. She said "Look, you want me to get this in, we want to get out. It's Memorial weekend. You've got to get a man number." So, the guy said "Well, alright. I'll call him up." So, he called up the guy's name that was on the document and he said "What's your man number?" and he gave it to him. And he sat down, "What do you want to know it for?" He said, "Well that travel lodge you've been

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in, you didn't put your man number on it." He said "What're you talking about? I haven't made a trip in six months."

GN (33:09): Uh huh.

JBF (33:10): Ah hah! [Laughter] So, to make a long story short, about fifteen of us accountants were in that weekend going through records. Making a long story short again, we found out that he had taken that game for about \$25,000. IBM wanted to go "whish wish." We wanted to avoid that.

GN (33:26): Yea, yea.

JBF (33:27): Bad publicity. The bonding company said, "You'll prosecute him or drop low on the bonding." So, he was prosecuted in Ulster County Court and he did time. But see, unless you can bring something out you and bring out the importance over why we have controls or in that case, we had a lack of controls, okay. That should never have been allowed to happen, okay.

GN (33:43): Yea.

JBF (33:44): And there was another case in Endicott where the guy was processing payroll records after somebody would be transferred from one location to the other. He was slipping under the carpet there and then certain things had happened, okay. So unless you're there and you see that actually happening, it's pretty hard for them to understand what is this guy talking about?

GN (34:06): Yes, yea. Right, right. I have a similar story. My brother told me about in the military and I actually introduced a guy into the service, promoted him, sent him over seas and discharged him over a period of years, you know. And I picked this, you know, it was a virtual reality or something like it [Laughter]... That kind of thing. Well, let me

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ask you kind of in coming to a conclusion since we're into storytelling now. And more practically, is there something that you would like to say that I didn't ask you? You know, thinking about your experience here and what do you see? Do you think the college is going to be able to maintain this image that it had or what it's going to have to do, to do that? If you had to go to the Board of Trustees, what would be a message you might give them to maintain themselves?

JBF (35:00): Well, this is maybe it's just a little on the self side. I've always liked they to come up with like, in the School of Math to come up with a School of Accountancy or something like that in finance. A little old specialty that would put them on the map, you know what I mean?

GN (35:15): Yea.

JBF (35:16): It would take funding to do. If I won the mega lotto maybe I could fix something. [Laughter]

GN (35:21): Yes, yes.

JBF (35:22): But I think something like that. I mean, they have a very good reputation but something that would make them different than everybody else. Oh, there's that School of Accountancy up there in Marist College. Or finance, whatever it is.

GN: So we, within the Business program and in the MBA program, there seems to be a focus...

JBF (35:37): Focus, yea.

GN (35:39): That has to be developed.

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JBF (35:41): Yea, right. But even if it would have to be that they were known as a school that specializes in Forensic Accounting or something like that. Those going on the field of accounting today, that might be very appropriate for them. [Laughter]

GN (35:54): Well, on that happy note Jim, I'll say thank you very much. It's been a delight talking to you.

JBF (35:55): Okay.

GN (35:56): Okay.

JBF (35:57): Alright.

“END OF INTERVIEW”