

**Allaeddin Aldelraham**

**Marist College**

**Poughkeepsie, NY**

**Transcribed by Aubrey Geisler**

**For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections**

## Transcript – Allaeddin Abdelrahman

**Interviewee:** Allaeddin Abdelrahman

**Interviewer:** Gus Nolan

**Interview Date:** October 15, 2014

**Location:** Marist College Archives and Special Collections

**Topic:** Marist College History

**See Also:**

**Subject Headings:** **Abdelrahman, Allaeddin**

Marist College – History

Marist College (Poughkeepsie, NY)

Marist College – Alumni

Marist College – Staff

**Summary:** Allaeddin describes his role as the Senior Assistant Director of Safety and Security at Marist College. He discusses his early life and upbringing in Kuwait and his further studies in the United States. He describes events on campus and particular incidents that have occurred during his role here as the Assistant Director. He also reflects on the future of Marist College, university life, and the further improvements he would make to professionalize the Office of Safety and Security.

[00:11](#) **Gus Nolan:** Today is Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. We have an opportunity to introduce you to our friend Al Abdelrahman.

[00:22](#) **Allaeddin Abdelrahman:** Abdelrahman. It's a nice Irish name, just in case.

[00:25](#) **GN:** I recognize the spelling errors. (laughter) He's an assistant director here at Marist College. You've been here for twenty years?

[00:35](#) **AA:** Twenty-eight years.

[00:38](#) **GN:** Twenty-eight years. OK, I lost six somewhere along. I had twenty-two down in my notes, but that's a long time, and you're precious for this particular project which is the Oral Archives trying to get a picture of Marist in the past and then comparing it to the present. So, what we'd like to do is to get you to give us your remembrances of the early days when you first came on board, some of the experiences then, and then fast forward to the contrast to today and then a peek into the future. Where do you think we might be in ten years or fifteen years? You know it's an interesting project, and you're an ideal candidate to be able to do it? So, we might start with this first part, mainly kind of the thumbnail review of your own background; where were you born, early education, that kind thing.

[01:42](#) **AA:** So, I was born in Kuwait, which is overseas in the Middle East. I was born in 1965. May 5<sup>th</sup> of, 1965. And I came to this country in 1982 to pursue a degree in engineering, and I went to New Paltz. I completed a year and a half there, and then I got [...] You know, life changed, so I got married at a young age and then job searching; I worked different jobs in security, not at Marist, of course. This was the beginning, and then the opportunity came to start working, so I started part-time at Marist Security in 1985, and fast-forward here, I am promoted through channels. I left Marist in 1990 for a short brief, and I was a police officer in the City of Poughkeepsie Police Department.

[02:46](#) **GN:** Several people, security or people from the police department, come to Marist. One is a professor here.

[02:54](#) **AA:** Yes, Doc Doherty, he was very instrumental actually to help me get into the police department. Unfortunately, I didn't retire from there because I had a personal issue where I was pretty much the caretaker. I'm the oldest, I should say, and I was the caretaker of one of my brothers, and that's the year where you know he passed away in August of 1990. And that's the year that my family was back in Kuwait; the invasion happened, so there was a lot on my plate that took place. So, when I got back to Marist, I realized that I really needed to be educated to get a degree. So, I pursued an undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice, and Marist was very helpful to give me that opportunity, and I also pursued my Master's in Public Administration also at Marist, and here I am.

[04:03](#) **GN:** Some of the things I'd like to ask; you kind of covered it in between there like, when did you first hear about Marist, but I guess that was at New Paltz. You would have heard that there's another college on the other side of the river, and here we are.

[04:17](#) **AA:** Exactly, so when I started at Marist, it was very small. Everybody knew everybody.

[04:24](#) **GN:** Tell me about it.

[04:26](#) **AA:** And you know when I started here, everybody was very nice, and everybody was polite. And always very cordial to each other, it was truly a family, and everybody was very welcoming. It was helpful to stay here.

[04:44](#) **GN:** I had happiness [...] experience being a Marist Brother and then becoming a member of the faculty, and I know well what you talked about. 1970 until [...] I retired in 2002, I think. I don't know if I ever retired, I retired officially from the faculty, but I'm still here. I enjoy it. About security, tell me how Marist differs or does it? From security in IBM or Vassar Hospital, or New Paltz College. Is there a difference, or are they all virtually the same?

[05:29](#) **AA:** I think there was a difference. You know when I started, [...] we were only twelve guys. The Director by the name of Joe Waters was the Director back then, and really, the day shift was run by one officer. I remember him very well, and he was really, what they called, a terminology that they use in New York City, is the 1-2-4 man. So, he's the guy who did the traffic, did the payroll, did the interviewing and hiring, if you will. He was pretty much the unofficial assistant Director to the Director back then. We relied so much on students. But the professional staff, because we were very small, everybody shared a lot of their intimate things. We're more like a family. So if somebody really had an issue, everybody chipped in. It was very, very close. So, a very small operation.

[06:36](#) **GN:** And do you have [...] Was the same feeling take place more than likely in some respect to people at Vassar and at New Paltz on the security staff.

[06:49](#) **AA:** On a security staff. I wouldn't say so because I knew somebody who worked for IBM. And back then, IBM was in its heydays, for example. I said it was very competitive, and it was almost business-oriented cutthroat. So, it was a very challenging, more corporate type of setting. But Marist was somewhat different because we dealt with a different environment, obviously. We dealt with students with the faculty. But Marist was always, in my eyes, if you compared with Dutchess Community College and or Vassar, we always had more presence of security here than they were there. So, I think there's a difference.

[07:33](#) **GN:** How does law enforcement does it differ from security?

[07:39](#) **AA:** Oh, absolutely, it's night and day. Absolutely. In law enforcement, you really don't have a lot of discretion. I think you really have to go by the laws, the rulebook, and you know the rules of engagement if you will. In security, it really relies on discretion. And you have a lot of it. Obviously, if there is something [...] a violent crime that was committed in front of you, you have a duty and the due diligence to pursue it and follow up with that. But I think in the security setting, it's more about customer service. It's really about trying to resolve a lot of the issues. You are pretty much [...] because really, if you think about it, it's after-hours, so you're the parent away from home depending on your age and how'd you fit in. You're the psychologist because you'll sit and listen to the kids, you know the explanation of things, and you are the enforcer to say that "This is the way it should be done, and you can't have it this way." And you're the [...] You break up the fights, so you're more in a sense you really play or wear many hats as a security officer. While in law enforcement, it's really cut and dry. You know there are other people that do what needs to be done. Really your job is to enforce the law, period. The security has to really deal with the public, and it's really the institution, whatever the mission is at the time.

[09:17](#) **GN:** What's the hardest part of security here at Marist? Is it parking lot? Is it dormitory? Is it the McCann Center? Is there an area where it's more problematic?

[09:30](#) **AA:** Well, that's very difficult to answer because I play a different role. As an hourly employee, when I was wearing the uniform, you dealt with the parking enforcement. You dealt with the student population in terms of [...]; like I said, we talked about enforcement. You know, what used to be twenty-eight years ago, it's different than what it is now. Crimes back then were just really bringing in the alcohol and drinking and intoxication and the fights. Now it's more in a uniform setting; it's really the parking enforcement. It really is trying to deal with this new technology of crimes, which could be the Facebook, the e-mail that it's more advanced at a higher level. There's still the alcohol, the basic foundation of it, really. It's a college, right. So, you know they do that. But on an administrative level, you deal with a different side of it which is really controlling your staff, making sure that they are performing at a level where public service is really embedded in everybody's brain. [...] It's really all about customer service. Being there, the presence, the attitude of some of the officers. Plus, you deal with the administration. We have there's more demand on us to perform and produce in terms of. Now there's benchmarking. It's more gearing into, "How do we measure up with other institutions?" And we're very unique in the size that we have at Marist because we have seventy-five officers and [...]

[11:09](#) **GN:** Is it around the clock the same? Is it 24/7?

[11:14](#) **AA:** It's still 24/7. There is more demand in our service. In terms of, we have more buildings to cover. More academic buildings. We have a lot more involved in more events from basketball, parking [...]

[11:29](#) **GN:** What other categories here then would entry, building security, violation parking?

[11:38](#) **AA:** Yeah, so, the job set up there is entry dorms. The offices in the dorm set the access control. That was a new thing that was added after a certain year. There are the academic buildings. We've added more academic buildings, so there is coverage in those academic buildings. There's more parking lot. So we do more parking lot enforcement. We are involved in every event, whether it's basketball games. We were not as much. But now, we are inside the arena, outside in a parking lot, controlling the flow of traffic. We're at football games. There is more presence at graduation. And as a college continues to grow, there is also more presence that are needed in our level to really be there. Meaning if we have an event, it could be, you know, the Congressman today coming in and say, we need to make sure that there is a security detail assigned. We have events obviously at the Boathouse because now it's really in demand. The Payne Estate that's a new addition. So, there's more presence of us. And it's really all about controlling traffic, but at the same time, there is a side of it that you have to do security, which is really protecting the VIPs if you like. And then any other duties as assigned. It could be [...] making sure that we pick up a dignitary from one point to the other.

[13:05](#) **GN:** Is there a movement of responsibility? Do individuals get changed from one job to another job? Often or once in a while?

[13:14](#) **AA:** The philosophy in our department and John- since John Gildard took over, and he's done a great job because we kind of work hand in hand. In 2002, he became the Director. He selected me to be his assistant, so we pretty much looked at some of the things that we've done in the different categories of job assignments and what the initiative was to make sure that everybody really has the title of a security officer. It gives us that flexibility to move people from one assignment to the other. So now, when you become a security officer, you should be able to be [...] cross-training is very important. To do the entry, to do the building guard, to do the traffic. So, there was really no one set job per se that, "Oh, he's a dorm officer or he's a building guard." We were trying to get out of that title. And so, we wanted to make sure that everybody's a security officer. And I think we are at 95% success to convert because

we, as the population changes, [...] everybody here is a long-term employee. So because Marist is very good so the retention rate is pretty high. So unless we have a retirement, and when that officer leaves, then we post a job as a security officer.

[14:40](#) **GN:** So, Barry could be sent from Lowell Thomas over to McCann on a given occasion.

[14:45](#) **AA:** So, Barry was very unique. And Barry was, I would call, we pretty much started around the same time. He started after me, actually. Because I remember when he came in the first day, he was a building guard officer, so he was only assigned to this building or that building. And he pretty much was a fixture there. But then, once Barry left, that job slot was posted as a security officer. So, the sort of person that comes in now will cover Lowell Thomas, will be in the patrol car and will do many job assignments as needed for the department.

[15:26](#) **GN:** Tell me about the staff development training sessions. Are there in-house trainings perhaps being first? Are there seminars? Are there professional literature, the covers of magazines, journals, or whatever? Can you talk a little bit about that?

[15:44](#) **AA:** Sure. So New York State, in terms of training requirements, I think it was in '88-89 somewhere, and I think, I want to say close to '90 maybe, they came out with a requirement that everybody must be fingerprinted. Everybody must have an approved eight hrs license, New York State license. Everybody must have 16 hours. So, before you could even walk into our door now, you have to be certified by New York State, which is not rigorous, but it's really a way to control the funnel, so everybody had to be fingerprinted. Everybody had to make sure there's clean records. So, you just can't hire anybody off the street. And that really was probably a monumental step that New York State took to make sure that we weed out a lot of the bad apples, and they were successful. So we do that. So since we've done that, we became Marist College Safety and Security Office. We became a New York State Licensed School. John is a certified instructor. I'm a certified instructor. And we have a guide that we have to provide internal training for our guys. So every year we do that. And actually, the upcoming training is scheduled for August 7<sup>th</sup> and August 19<sup>th</sup>. And there is a limit on the amount of people that you could have in a classroom. And thirty-five is the maximum number. And because we're seventy-five.

[17:14](#) **GN:** But there wouldn't be necessarily all Marist people in that class.

[17:17](#) **AA:** It's all Marist people. It's all internal for us. So, because we had that seventy-five number, we will bring our guys, and we got an exemption to squeeze a few numbers here and there just to offset that and to have the seventy-five. So in terms of training that is done in-house, we do bring in this year we're doing an outside contractor, licensed professional, if you will, to incorporate training. And one of the requirements that we are looking to address, and it's approved by New York State as well, is diversity on campus. So we have a professional that's coming in to address our group, and it's part of our training. The annual required training. So that's been done, and we always look for different things that we can improve and really raise the professionalism level on our campus. We also belong to the Dutchess County Chiefs of Police Association. John and I, the new Assistant Director, we attend these meetings. And that's really involved different chiefs from the entire Dutchess County area, State Police and all. And a lot of them, we will have what's hot, what's on the table. We try to incorporate that into our training. We also deal with local directors. So, there is that connection that nobody had before. We did. We have annual meetings that we meet, and we bring in professional, you know, topics instructors that we rely on. That doesn't happen as much because, again, it's a 24-hour cycle. The other thing is in terms of magazines. You know there's the campus safety magazine which comes out on a monthly basis. I belong to various organizations. One of them is the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). And also, there's what's the other one there's one that's URMIA (University Risk

Management and Insurance Association), and that's really compromises of other colleges throughout the nation. What else other organizations that I belong to [...] Really, there's a lot of stuff that [...] The Chronicle comes in once in a while to our office, but I'm not [...] I don't subscribe to that, but I think we should because it's really academia. So, there's a lot of different things that we belong to, and we go on a personal level. Like the administration again, there's only three of us. We belong to different [...] We do professional training on a regular basis.

[20:12](#) **GN:** And then there's an association of colleges. There's something like two hundred colleges together make the Eastern United States or some combination like that.

[20:21](#) **AA:** There is the Northeastern [...] NECUSA, it's called. And we just hosted the NECUSA Conference. That really every college on the Northeast was invited. A lot of people belong to campus directors and assistant directors, so we hosted this last week; I think it was and [...]

[20:43](#) **GN:** And the CIA did the food for it?

[20:44](#) **AA:** Well, not really; we use Sodexo. The one for the CIA. We realize that the directors from the different colleges, Bard, Vassar, New Paltz, and Dutchess. We get together and we always kind of in a nice way put the arm on Rich Cover(?); he's the Director, so he hosts a lot of these meetings, lunch meetings I should call.

[21:12](#) **GN:** OK, let me go back to your own personal experience. Now you know I'm trying to get a snapshot of life when you first came on here, and you said there are about twelve of you, but you had a spread that around 24 hours. So would be for [...] Is more security on at night or the day?

[21:33](#) **AA:** It was at night. And again, with twelve, you got to think of it there was not a lot of people that [...] For professional staff, you had a supervisor maybe had two guards on a 3 to 11, 11 to 7, and you had the swing shift. On the day shift, there was only one officer. There was a secretary in the clerical staff, obviously. But we relied heavily on students. We were allowed to work with student guards we used to call them. So there were a lot of students that we would give them hats that said student guard, and they were out on the field, if you will, and the officers in uniform would respond if there was an issue. So and again, a very, very small operation. Now we're not allowed to use students except in the office. We have a program that we've developed, which was approved. It's run by students. It's S.N.A.P. It stands for Student Night Auxiliary Program, and it's an escort service that is run by students, and it really is monitored by our office.

[22:51](#) **GN:** How about the extra help that's needed for parking for a football game or basketball game? There seems to be a flood of extra people coming on board. Are they trained by you, or are they part of the staff? Auxiliary or?

[23:06](#) **AA:** Many are our own staff, but we rely on a contractor security that we have been utilizing. A lot of colleges do that because you just don't have the numbers to bring twenty people to an event. So we rely on them, and also we rely on local law enforcement. So when you go into an event, there is always a police officer and extra security. In these events, you always have an administrator; one of us needs to be on-site.

[23:44](#) **GN:** What were some of the more difficult situations that you had in your experience?

[23:49](#) **AA:** At Marist?

[23:50](#) **GN:** Yeah.

[23:53](#) **AA:** That's a good question. Really dealing with parents can be very difficult. I remember.

[24:03](#) **GN:** Face to face?

[24:04](#) **AA:** Well, not so much face-to-face, by telephone you know everybody is somebody rightfully so. You know, sometimes they look for answers that you just don't have the answers to. I recall there was an incident that was reported that an African-American student was allegedly assaulted while crossing the bridge. And this was 2005, and you know we had to do by clear we had to send that announcement, and you know the police were involved and everything else. Well, the amount of phone calls that we received were unbelievable. "What're you doing?" "You don't have enough security." "You got to do a good job. You're not doing a good job." You know it was a lot.

[25:00](#) **GN:** From the media from everybody.

[25:02](#) **AA:** Pretty much from parents in general, you know. I can't believe this happened on your campus kind of thing, and that was probably, you know, three days of a lot of just fielding calls and holding the company line if you will that you know it's an incident that was reported to us. We're investigating. This is all we can comment on. Thank God that it turned out it was a false report, and the young lady was arrested for reporting a false incident. But really, I think it varies on the situation. You know, every situation is different, but this one sticks in my mind. We had a kid years ago that died from meningitis. Yes, and that was a tough, tough situation because everybody clammed down that. You know, they thought they had something if they coughed, "I need to be transported." And our guys were nervous because they had families of their own, so they did not want to be involved. So we have to develop a plan to kind of deal with this. If somebody is really that sick, you call an ambulance, and you know we had to, but it was a lot of, you know, hype around it. So yeah, some of those.

[26:21](#) **GN:** That was another maybe before your time, but there was a murder on the campus. A girl was shot by her boyfriend from Bruce(?). Yeah, I was here at the time. What leads me to another question; to what would you attribute unless I am misinformed of the lack of major events? I mean, I don't know if there was one murder that was certain weren't five. We might have kept four under the cover. But you know you don't do that too easily. What would you attribute to the tranquility of Marist? Or is that just thought of the misnomer that there are a lot of problems beneath the waves? You know, but it does seem to me that there is a certain order and a lack of that kind of violence that you hear about on college campuses.

[27:20](#) **AA:** Well, I think I can attribute that to you know; Number 1: it's a very small community. Number 2: I think the large presence that we have is really a good deterrence, and deterrence is really something that's very hard to measure. So I mean, I could attribute that [...] I mean there's incidents that come up where you know that doesn't make it on the radar. You know this is years ago before I was in administration, we had a guy that came in, and I know the kid when we had the St Peter's Program, and he was a second-time



felon. Kinda. Anyway, he came out he was a nice kid, wanted to learn, and really fell in love with this young girl, and she was breaking up with him. And the next thing I know, he goes up to her townhouse, and he had an Uzi gun, and he took the magazine out. He's on the table, and there was a little kind of loud dispute that another young lady in the townhouse heard it and looked through the window. This is back in the days when the townhouses had sliding windows in the back. Now we don't have sliding doors. We covered it up, and now we have windows. So she looks up through the window, and she sees a door open. There's a gun on the table. She calls up. She goes in, grabs the gun, and throws it out or something, and then she calls us. So there was this big pursuit, you know, and cops, and you know, a SWAT team. So stuff like that does happen. But I think [...] we do a good job I think there is a lot like I said, the presence that we have. But incidents do happen. I mean the recent kids that we lost in the fire that happened two years ago. That was, you know, very emotional for everybody, and it's something that never encountered in the Marist community. And again, you know we're just expanding; we have more students. I mean, knock on wood. Hopefully, we never have a major incident, but you know there's also now more media coverage. There is [...] that the media back then. Maybe you know, you have how many channels we had back then. Not a lot. Now, if it's a slow day, you'll say, "Breaking news, and there's a car broken down on the highway." That's breaking news. There's really no news. So they want to create news; everybody's hungry for it. But I think you know incidents do happen. It's just they're not as-

[30:02](#) **GN:** And again, I mean the normal course of events with the number, we are small, but we are something. We got four thousand or whatever people on campus. And half are male. More than half are female. So you know that certainly is going to be a situation. A situation has to be monitored. And I'm just saying, you know, it seems to me that that security is preventing insecurity with a lot of you around. How about communications between the offices? Is there instant communication? If the fellow walking around here needs help, how long does it take him to get it?

[30:50](#) **AA:** It's pretty good. In terms of communication, we've upgraded the radio systems on our campus. Again this happened in 2002. We went out and purchased a whole new radio system for the entire campus. So we have, I think, state-of-the-art radios. Everybody has one, a walkie-talkie, that is. So if there is an incident, you know it's just one radio away. And I think also with technology now; it's getting cheaper and cheaper. Everybody has a cell phone, so you know when you pick up the phone and say, "Hey, you know, what are you doing." If you're not answering the walkie-talkie, you call somebody on a cell phone, they'll answer it, and you know.

[31:30](#) **GN:** Where does the walkie-talkie go? Is it to the office over there?

[31:32](#) **AA:** So we have in our office, there are security officers right at Donnelly Hall. Donnelly Hall is really this dispatch center, and within that dispatch center, I would welcome you to come up and take a look at it. It really is the command center, if you will, that all the communication comes into our office. In there, we also have the swipe access control that everybody that swipes in and out we have a list that comes up. We also have a graphic monitor for the entire campus that monitors the alarm system on campus. So if there is an alarm, an actual building lights up, and it shows you the building where the alarm is so. We dispatch people to that location. We also have another graphic monitor that it only covers the thirty-one call-boxes, emergency call-boxes. So the blue light really is another nice thing feature. If somebody needs help and you call the call box, the communication not only will come to our office with the exact location where that is. But that communication will go to every walkie-talkie; any officer on duty will listen to the communication.

[32:46](#) GN: Is it interrupted? Is it a buzz?

[32:49](#) AA: It's not, it's not a buzz. It's just like somebody keying in the mic. You'll hear the mic. You hear, you know, "Hello, I am in the Sheahan Lot. I need help. I need a jump start. Or I see somebody that's laying down." So that communication is instant. So we also have a redundant system that in terms of our fire protection system. The fire department, when they respond to the campus, they monitor our radio system so that we are able to communicate with them. So yeah, there is that redundancy in there.

[32:22](#) GN: What I want to say in terms of your needs now. What would you say, you know, if you had a chance to go to the Board of Trustees and say, you know, "Here's what I think would be really helpful for us." "If we could get ten more offices, five more vehicles, or a helicopter." What [...]

[33:44](#) AA: I'll tell you. It would be really getting a space to a place where we can [...]

[33:52](#) GN: Call your own?

[33:53](#) AA: Well, not so much. I looked at it from both sides. And I kind of attend to see the higher administration's side. It's really nice to be in the center. Yeah, and that really is very unique because you want to be approachable, number one. Yeah. But really what we need is an office space that could accommodate a large amount of people that we have. For example, you mention about communication and training. It would be nice to have a conference room if you will, that could accommodate fifteen to twenty people. So when the shift changes, we should see our office like a subway station. You know everybody's in the hallway. They're banging into each other; they can't get the radio. It's very loud because everybody's talking. So if you have an interview, because we deal with the public, you know. We deal with the student population, with the faculty and staff, with all walks of life, so if you have an incident that you're looking to, create a professional atmosphere to hold an interview. It doesn't exist. We don't have that luxury. In terms of manpower, I think we're at a good stage, if you will. I think what we need, in my eyes, is more of an administrative staff. And maybe the administrative level, when you said administrative staff, that's probably hard to absorb. [...] There's something called *span of control*. And while you have a supervisor on every shift, that supervisor we're only deal with because he's an hourly employee with just, "You're post one, you're patrol two, you're patrol three." We need someone that can take some of the weight off of the administration, meaning I was an hourly employee and I was a supervisor on a shift, and now I'm an administrator. I tend to hold many, many, many bags, and I think the weight is not distributed equally. So I think what we need is more of to run a professional operation. And if you look at any police department, you have the structure which is a director equal to a chief, the captain's equal to the assistant director, but the supervisors are lieutenants. We don't have that. So there is a missing step of really holding every shift accountable. If I get a call from Dr. Brackett or Dr. Murray and they want to know how many tickets I've written in an eight-hour period, I should be able to drop their phone call or that e-mail to a lieutenant in charge of that to retrieve that information. If I'm looking to look at stats in terms of how many drills that we had last year, I should be able to call one guy. So I think what's happening is where it's growing pains. It really [...] But facility [...] We need an added space. We definitely need probably a conference room, maybe one or two more professional staff to kind of help us out into this really a big operation. I mean seventy-five guys. It's a big number. And if you compare us to Vassar College, they have maybe fifteen to twenty guys. So they have a director, and they have an assistant director for fifteen, twenty guys there. You have seventy-five, and you still have the Director and the Assistant Director. So it really needs to be really evaluated. And now again, because we're the unique that nobody sees an end result, if you will. I mean, for a faculty member, you get the evaluation. You're really contributing, and that's what the whole theme of Marist College as it were a

college is to your producing something but as a staff and every department's different. Security staff, I think it's being viewed as the last thing that you know we don't need to worry about. You know it's working. If it's not broken, don't fix it.

[38:11](#) GN: Are we geographically larger than Vassar? Do you have more places to supervise than Vassar does?

[38:23](#) AA: I don't know the answer to that.

[38:24](#) GN: Well, in terms of those numbers that you mentioned. We're a little bit bigger but not that much.

[38:30](#) AA: We probably are the same size as Vassar College in terms of, you know, physical structure. In terms of the amount of students that we are.

[38:42](#) GN: But we have a river.

[38:44](#) AA: But we have a river. Right. They're really are in [...] right in the heart of the town. So, they got [...] Actually they're bigger than us. If you think about it, they have a huge property.

[38:57](#) GN: They have the farm, and they have the dorms.

[39:00](#) AA: Yeah. So it's I think they're probably a little bit bigger than us but with the less manpower. But again, it's a different philosophy on campus there than it is here. Yeah, but again as a parent, you know, if I was given the option, I think Marist would be the place because it's a more secure environment now. You know for parents, one of the attractions is that, when people can bring their kids here, yes, the quality education is wonderful, no doubt about that. But also when they see the presence that we have, and when we get up there, we say, "We got seventy-five guys." And they look at you.

[39:37](#) GN: The word is out there. You can see them marching through here today. I mean, they're trying to get into it. A telescope for the future: What do you see down the line for Marist development? There's a new dorm going to go up in a couple of years or maybe sooner than that. To put it more, I guess the question is, the number of students off-campus now, is it better to have them on campus than off-campus? I think Dennis would say that "Get them out of the hotel."

[40:13](#) AA: I agree. I think getting them back on campus is better for everybody. The education level would be better. It's better for the student's quality of life. I think it's a way to go, and I think they're going to build more residence halls to replace or trying to substitute, if you will. But I think I see Marist in the future, if you will, it's going to be more a very selective. I mean, I see the quality of students improves every year. So I think it will be very selective to get into Marist. Hopefully more diversified in terms of the student body that we have. I think you will have [...] In terms of security, I think we'll continue to add numbers to our fleet, if you will. So seventy-five, we might be at eighty or eighty-five. I think the more students you have on campus; the tendency to have more issues to address would be larger. But not as much. So I think I mean, I can see that, I think we're at a level where we're going in the direction that we will add a different clientele here in terms of professional development or our academic programs that we offer. We're talking about a Physician Assistant program. So that's going to attract a different clientele into the campus, a more mature, level-headed hopefully into that program. But now, you'll have two types of the student population. You'll have the mature, and you'll have the younger

generation. So you know, nobody has a crystal ball. But I think it will be very, very selective and-

[42:10](#) **GN:** Your crystal ball. Do you see any weight to the concept that college is not worth it?

[42:21](#) **AA:** That's an interesting point. I have been reading a few articles on that, and I think the question will come up. Yeah, it's already popping up its little head here and there. The actual value of a college education. Does it weigh all the expenses? I think you're going to see probably more not diverse; I think we'll probably see [...] the four-year college experience is great, but I think it's a long time. I think you're going to see maybe a faster track which I'm all for. I think the four years need to be done in two. I think [...]

[43:00](#) **GN:** They can be more practical aspects to it.

[43:03](#) **AA:** Absolutely, absolutely. I think it needs to be the same concept as the Culinary (CIA) does. You know you're here to be a chef and that you know what you want to do. What do you need to be a chef? You need to master your cooking which is the basic thing; you need to know a little bit about running a business which will send you to that. And you need to have the public relations. How to be customer service oriented? Get them in a year and a half, two years, you're done.

[43:35](#) **GN:** Yeah, the other part I used to ask is, is it worth the investment? And investment as a couple of things. Money is one thing. You may not get your money out for a number of years. But the investment in terms of relationships that you will develop, contacts that you would have, opening your mind to new kinds of experiences. You can't beat that other than paying for it by investing in it, you know.

[44:00](#) **AA:** Well, I agree with you. And I think I'm all in favor of a traditional type of setting when the whole online versus traditional classes. When I got my Master's, I was forced to take a few online classes. I hated them. The reason I hated this was because there was no interaction with teachers. And it was not [...] But what I really wanted was, [...] give me the best of both worlds. Give me a traditional setting classroom and make it quicker. Now I've taken summer classes, and I've taken winter classes, and I used to say to myself, I wish we had more summer classes. And I wish we had more winter classes, and I think when you have, you know, the semester, a traditional semester, three months, four months, that whole thing. It's great, but I think we're the society of 30 seconds or less. You know, I want to fast, I want it now. And I want to get me in and get me out. I think if somebody comes up with a program, that really recognized [...] it has to be a Bachelor's degree because we still hold it in a different place, you know. Can't be a certificate. It has to be an undergraduate degree in something, but somebody needs to come up with a solid program that can you know if you put your mind to it to finish it in a year and a half and save yourself another twenty thousand dollars, I think you'll see a lot of people going into it. Times are tough. Parents and there's a lot of kids that want to get in and get out. Now you mentioned, you know, the friendship and people and the interaction with the faculty. There's nothing wrong with having that. I think you will have that. But I also think that you know, you can develop that relationship afterward. Everybody now carries a phone and text messages and all that. So I don't think you're going to lose that. And then you know, how many times did you get into a conversation where people [...] I find myself doing it now. I'm grabbing the phone as I am talking at home with the kids and looking at the phone. [...] It's very fast-paced. [...] So, I think the faster we move, the more innovative we have to become to create a new degree model.

[46:22](#) **GN:** Well, we're nearly an hour through this. Is there something I didn't ask you that you would like to add to our conversation?

[46:30](#) **AA:** No. I think this is wonderful. I think it feels like [...] it validates some of the things that we've accomplished, that we've done. I want to say that's a wonderful experience and I think everybody here [...] I think this is what you've done [...] It would be nice to do this interview if you will, in a video where somebody starts to work at Marist and when they decide to retire or when they decided to exit to ask him the same questions, to see how they viewed it then and how they are ten, fifteen years.

[47:13](#) **GN:** Know I've asked early graduates, you know, the same kinds of questions. So when they came here and of course their experience of Marist when it was primitive even twenty years before you came here. So I mean, it was really basic, but there's a certain spirit I think that has survived it all. That maintains it, a kind of a nice place to be, you know. Ok, Al, thank you very much.

[47:41](#) **AA:** Thank you so much. Take care.