

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

## **Joseph Bettencourt**

**Marist College**

**Poughkeepsie, NY**

**Transcribed by Erin Kelly**

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

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

### **Transcript: Joseph Bettencourt**

**Interviewee:** Dr. Joseph Bettencourt

**Interviewer:** Gus Nolan

**Interview date:** 15 November 2002

**Location:** Marist Archives and Special Collections Reading Room

**Topic:** Marist College History

#### **Subject Headings:**

Marist Brothers - United States - History  
Marist College History  
Marist College (Poughkeepsie, New York)  
Marist College Social Aspects

**Summary:** In the following interview, Dr. Joseph Bettencourt reflects on his past thirty-seven years at Marist. In the beginning of the interview, Dr. Bettencourt speaks of his educational years and the attainment of his Masters and Ph.D., as well as his continued research. Dr. Bettencourt's career in the Science Department at Marist College is outlined from its beginning in 1965 to the current time at which he is the Chairman of the Science Department as well as the Pre-Medical advisor and professor of many courses in the Science Department. At the end of the interview, Dr. Bettencourt speaks of the expansion of Marist College as a whole as well as the development of the science curriculum and voices his feelings concerning the current direction of the College.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**“BEGINNING OF INTERVIEW”**

**Gus Nolan:** Good afternoon. This is an interview this afternoon with Dr. Joseph Bettencourt. He is in the Biology Department at Marist College. Today is Friday November 15<sup>th</sup>. It's about 1:15 in the afternoon. Good afternoon, Dr. Bettencourt.

**Dr. Joseph Bettencourt:** Good afternoon.

**GN:** Joe, could you give us your full name please?

**JSB:** My full name is Joseph Sousa Bettencourt V.

**GN:** Were you named after any member of the family? It sounds like it. [Laughter]

**JSB:** Yes, my father. We've had a tradition, and my son is the VI so we're keeping it going.

**GN:** Where and when were you born?

**JSB:** I was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1940. March 5, 1940.

**GN:** And what about your early education?

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**JSB:** I went to Thorndike Grammar School, and I went to Cambridge High and Latin over in the city of Cambridge in Massachusetts.

**GN:** Do you have any siblings, brothers or sisters?

**JSB:** Yea, I have one brother. He's younger than myself and I have two sisters. So, there's a total of four of us and they've skipped exactly that way. I was first, my sister Virginia, was second, my brother Robert and then my sister Diane.

**GN:** Are they still active and alive today?

**JSB:** Oh yes, yes. Most of them lived in Maine. One sister lives in Massachusetts. The others all live in Maine.

**GN:** You are really a New Englander, born and bred.

**JSB:** Yes, born and raised although my brother did live in Florida for about fifteen years and came back and saw the life.

**GN:** What were your parents' names Joe?

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**JSB:** My mother's name was Margaret Catherine Bettencourt, Margaret Catherine MacDonald. It's from Nova Scotia. She was an American citizen, but she lived up in Nova Scotia for eighteen years of her life in Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

**GN:** Have you ever been there?

**JSB:** No, I haven't although I live right in Maine and we have family up there, this summer we're going to not teach for the first time. So, we're going to take the ferry over and visit.

**GN:** Liz and I were there last summer. Yea, that place in particular. And your father, what's he do?

**JSB:** My father worked in a book company, Ginn Publishing Company, in Massachusetts and he was just a factory laborer. He was manager of shipping for the company, the plant that was in Cambridge, Massachusetts so he published college and a lot of high school, grammar school texts. So, he was in charge of the fitness positions who commute to the schools and get them on the trucks and sold and so forth type of thing, so he was a shipping manager. My mother, most of her life, stayed home and raised the kids and in her later years, when we were in high school, she went back to work just to keep busy a little bit. So, she just did some work in a factory type of situation. Neither of my parents finished high school education so the big thing was I

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

was the first of my family to actually go to college so that was a big event and then to go to graduate school and so forth. So that was a big event for them. Me too. [Laughter]

**GN:** Let's change gears a little bit and talk about your personal. What about marriage to Martha? When and where did that take place? Where'd you meet her?

**JSB:** Martha, I met at college. We both went to Suffolk University. Martha had gone to a parochial school and she had received a scholarship for journalism even though she didn't study journalism at Suffolk University. She then switched to be a Biology major so I knew her from some classes. Because of her switch, I was ahead of her in courses and it actually turned out I was her lab instructor, or lab assistant, in Comparative Anatomy and that's when we started dating. It was senior year and then we got married after my first year at graduate school.

**GN:** Do you recall the year?

**JSB:** Yea, we got married in 1963.

**GN:** And what about the children now? Where are they and how many are there?

**JSB:** There are three children. Terry, she lives right in Hyde Park and has three children so I have three grandchildren through her. She works at Vassar College as Manager of Food Service or one of the managers in Food Service at Vassar College. I have a son, JB,

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

he's Joseph VI. He actually came to Marist, graduated from Marist with a degree in Mathematics. He is working now. He played on the soccer team here. He's working at Main General Hospital in Augusta, Maine. He's Director of Computers for the whole hospital so he is involved with both the medical end of it and the office end of it. So it was an unusual situation. He came here first thinking of computers so we bought a computer. I was against it. Now I'm the one that uses it at home. He circulated back and has gone into computers. He builds them himself so he's quite proficient at it. He has attained several certifications and software through getting certificates that he's gotten so he's doing quite well. He has two children so I have five grandchildren total. And they just bought a house in Gorham, Maine and he owns two other houses that he rents out and one in, well both are in Maine, one in South Port, Maine and the other is in Portland. So that's what he did. He had learned from Howard Gold on how to recondition places and so what he has done is he's bought a house and his first house what he did is he rented out two flats, lived in one, then he would renovate that one. Then he would move up because he could charge better rent then. He would move up and invade another so when he went to the third one, he was through so he's renting that house. And then I've got a son, James. Jim is the one that is still finding himself, so to speak. He's thirty-one now. He's worked at many different things. He started college and he has a hard time putting himself to taking tests. He's done quite well though, I mean, he works, again, in food management area. He has managed at several restaurants and he cooks as well.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** Okay, let's come back to you and your career. Where did you do your undergraduate degree?

**JSB:** My undergraduate degree was at Suffolk University in Boston.

**GN:** That's a four-year college?

**JSB:** That's a four-year college. It's most noted for Suffolk Law School in Massachusetts. It's right behind the State Capital. I spent four years there. I then...

**GN:** You have to clarify because we have a Suffolk Community College on Long Island.

**JSB:** Right, right I know. [Laughter] Then I went to the University of New Hampshire in Maine, I mean New Hampshire, it helps if it's in New Hampshire. You have to edit that one out. [Laughter] And I was there for my Master's and I had worked on a Ph.D. I have an unusual history with my graduate education with Marist. I was applying, I was working in the area of Parasitology and had done some work on a research project and I was applying for an NSF grant so my reason actually for coming to Marist was that I could not qualify for the grant if I had three continuous years at graduate school. So, what I did as I was leaving to try to qualify for this NSF grant and so I took a position at Marist but I was honest with them. It was a tender trap position and George Hooper had driven in from Princeton to interview me because he was on sabbatical that year and I was up front and said that I can only guarantee commitment for one year because if I get



Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

the grant, I won't go back. As it turns out, I did not get the grant in the national competition, so there was no guarantee. I ended up staying. I had been working on this research project so it was something that I could still do, going back and forth as Gus knows in the early days at Marist, many of us were working on degrees over prolonged periods of time. And I had a wife and two kids at that particular time as well. So I stayed a second year and I was going back and forth to New Hampshire to continue collecting data for my research and working at Marist at my writing. During my second year, at Christmas, I got a note from my mentor. He had gone to a conference, and someone was working on exactly the same thing I was working on and was just ready to publish it so all my work went down the drain. So at that particular time, I went back, I went up to New Hampshire to visit with him to look at what to do. And of course, the big question was with my wife, I already had the master's at that point, Marist did not require a Ph.D. I had to make a decision, but it was a family decision. Do I just stay here, or do I go back and start all over again on research? And she said let's go. So, I quickly went out with him, looked at other research projects I could possibly do and contacted the Chairman of the department to make sure they would give me fellowship or assistance, financial assistance, and he said no problem. So, I left Marist. At that time, George Hooper said "Well how long do you think it will take you?" and in science you never really know because it depends on how the data goes. So, what they did is kept the job open for one year and he called or I called and said I believe you understand you're advertised for a full-time person, etcetera and they kept it open for one more semester. At that particular point, I had enough data that I felt I could come back here and work in the office here. I

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

collected slides and so I could do looking here and analyzing the data and writing here.

That takes a long period of time, as you know, trying to do it at night at Marist.

**GN:** Yea.

**JSB:** And those days...

**GN:** Limited conditions.

**JSB:** Limited conditions, right.

**GN:** We're being modest about that. [Laughter]

**JSB:** Yea, and the second thing that was a big factor is one of the things that was intriguing about Marist is when I first was hired here, the condition I was hired on was that I would teach Embryology. And I said, well I only have only have had one course myself and both of the senior faculty members here said "That's good because one of us has not had any, the other one doesn't want to touch it." [Laughter] So actually that was one of the things that I benefited in going back was I taught Embryology. And when I went back for that year and a half, I took a couple courses and sat in on several seminars, so I was able to build up my own scholarly knowledge on that particular area and such. And then I worked on it and finally finished my Ph.D. in 1975. So, I started at Marist in '65 because of interruptions and things.

**GN:** Well, what was the connection? How did you get here though?

**JSB:** How did I know about Marist? Okay.

**GN:** Slide the car down and know where to park?

**JSB:** Right, okay. One of the things that we had at the University of New Hampshire in the office is that the Chairman of the department had a folder that was always... Marist had sent a flyer to various colleges, graduate schools and one of the flyers in there was Marist College. I went through looking.

**GN:** George Hooper was the one?

**JSB:** George Hooper was the one who circulated these out to the graduate schools and that's not uncommon by the way in the sciences. And what I did is I simply looked at it and I then went and talked to the Chairman because I didn't know anything about Marist at all. He did.

**GN:** Few people knew about Marist at that time.

**JSB:** Right, he did. As a matter of fact, he knew exactly where it was located geographically. I think he was from New York originally and so he knew about it and he

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

said, "I think you'll like it. It's a small atmosphere." He knew that I liked the interaction with students in the laboratory situation so he thought it would be a... And he said "Well, you're going only for a one-year commitment or you're only committing yourself for one year. It'll get you to another geographic location, see if you like the small school atmosphere versus the large school" since I was at UNH, where some of the lectures in the undergraduate were four hundred students. So, that was my history, that part of it.

**GN:** Okay, when you came back full-time, what was your first series of courses?  
What're you teaching? Is Embryology in there?

**JSB:** Embryology is in there. I was asked to... They had an unusual arrangement of classes in science at Marist when I first arrived. I had never seen it...

**GN:** We'll get to that later though.

**JSB:** Okay. I had never seen an arrangement like that at any college in the country. They hired a, well I guess they hired, they had a sister, I can't think of her name right now, from Mt. Saint Mary who used to come over here and teach Histology, Cell Biology and Genetics, which was all integrated into one course. And in reality, every other place, each one is an individual entity on their own. So, one of the things was they asked if I could develop this because, not putting anything against her, but that course would not exactly prepare students very well for med-school, graduate school, etcetera because they would have to touch a little bit on all three in one semester. So, I was asked to develop

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

each of those courses as individual courses and to primarily develop labs because Marist had very little lab space at all. I always remember my first walking into Marist. I arrived in August, and they had told me when I was interviewed they would have an office for me and so forth. I walked in and I said, well I came a month early and so I said I could get started and so forth, work on lecture notes, etcetera. And I walked in with a book, a box of books and I said, "Can you show me where my office is?" and they said "We haven't built it yet." [Laughter] So I was standing there with a box of books and what they did, I thought it was very intriguing, three Marist Brothers came over and they took a petition of plywood on the back of the lab upstairs had that little alcove doorway here. They put a wall there to square off the room, there was my office. It had a huge lab table like this in there and I could fit my chair in and they built a little bookcase on the side with three shelves. This was all done in maybe two and a half, three hours so I was ready to go in. They said, "Well, you have one." And the only thing I always remember is if I sat in my chair and someone came to come in my office, I'd get hit in the back of the head with the door [Laughter] so we had a thing, "Please knock." And I always remember the experience I had with the first day I left my notes on the table for the weekend. I said well I'll go home for the weekend, come back and work on this and I came back and everything was wet. Well someone says, "Oh yea someone should have told you, we know where some of the leaks are but if you put a bucket there, you'll be okay." [Laughter] So it was an interesting exposure for the first things but I've always been intrigued by how quickly they're able to respond and provided what I needed at best they could until further. I'm probably not going in the order you want.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** No, it's fine. We do instant coffee. [Laughter] Besides your first teaching classes, what were some of the assignments that you had?

**JSB:** Okay, the very first assignment I had was... Marist, at that time, was trying for the very first time what they call Freshman Seminars. And what this was set up was that an individual faculty member would have a group of, I think it was fifteen students but they would not, I'm a science person, they would not all be science majors. The idea was supposed to be that you get to integrate with different types of majors and so forth. Doherty, our faculty, was one of those students and so I've known Doherty as a freshman and all the way through when I was in college teaching.

**GN:** There was a strange name for that.

**JSB:** Yea, there was. I can't even think of it. You know, we had abbreviated just Freshman Seminars but there was an unusual name for it and so that was the first assignment that I had that was different other than developing courses. My first committee assignment came a couple years after that and that was with Brother Adrian Perreault from the library. [Laughter] That was my baptism. You hear about that?

**GN:** I want to hear about that one.

**JSB:** I always remember as a new person going to that committee, we had to make decisions on books, and I was supposed to collect them for the sciences and then you

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

were supposed to present things. And I always remember, I spoke up at one of the meetings and I got put down by Brother Adrian. He called me a pipsqueak; I always remember that. He called me the young pipsqueak and he said, "You should not be speaking at all your first year on this committee." So that was my baptism.

**GN:** Was Bob Lewis on that committee?

**JSB:** Bob Lewis, I think was on that committee.

**GN:** He spoke highly of that committee too. [Laughter] So you had library committee, work, and you had the seminars?

**JSB:** Yes.

**GN:** I think Howie Goldman called it the Chinese torture.

**JSB:** Yes.

**GN:** You went in everyday, and you never knew what the drops were going to do.

**JSB:** That's correct. [Laughter]

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** Okay, moving on, as time goes on, you've become a well-known faculty advisor.

Where did you pick up the knowledge that you have about medical school and being able to advise students in that direction?

**JSB:** That was an interesting baptism into that too. My wife has often said, "It's a wonder you stayed here." [Laughter] The first year I was here, George Hooper was Chairperson. George had been away the year that I was being to do... Dan Bean, I don't know if you remember Dan Bean, he was the other faculty member here. And so my wife when I first came says "You know, you've got one guy that's away and you've got another guy that's got one year." Dan had sent the letter who was Chairman of the Department, one year's experience, she says "Do you know what you're walking into?" I had offers at other schools but they were primarily state universities in Massachusetts, American University in Washington and I just really felt I wanted to try a small school atmosphere so that was another aspect. But, I'm trying to remember the question.

**GN:** What led you to med-school?

**JSB:** Oh, the med-school. The interesting thing about that was there is an organization called The Northeast Association of Advisors for the Health Professions. This is an organization of pre-health advisors that meet annually at various geographic locations. They meet with the deans of the various health schools, they meet with the admissions people so it's probably the most valuable information gathering organization that you can belong to. They help each other if you have questions. I mean now it's gotten so



Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

sophisticated, if I have a question and I don't see the answer, I can put it on a listserv, and you'll get responses from experienced health advisors and such. But the way I got it was George was Chairman in doing that at that particular point in time, and their meetings back then used to take place in June and they often were at a college or university campus because they could use the dorms, the hotels and use the facilities there. So, George had dilly-dallied. George had never gone to one and all of a sudden, he said well, we really should be doing this and all of a sudden, like the middle of May, to the last, it was something like ten days before the meeting was taking place, he throws a letter on my desk. He says, "You're now the pre-med advisor, you should go to these." So that was my baptism. I arrived in Hershey, Pennsylvania, where the med-school is located, Hershey Medical School and that's my first area. I drove to it, it was so late that I couldn't even get at the hotel where the group was so I had to be at a hotel down the road and then drive to the meeting which was not the best way. I always make sure now, I do my reservations early because a lot of the information you get is informally, chit-chat around and so forth. So that was my baptism into it. I had gone to those, I've actually presented at those conferences in the past and that's part of it. The other part of it is an awful lot of reading. There is a national association now as well so that's a solicit information... but a lot of reading, a lot of just...

**GN:** Give me a ballpark figure as to how many students you've been able to move through the system now into medical school specifically? Are there ten?

**JSB:** Over my whole career?

**GN:** Yea.

**JSB:** Oh, there's over one hundred. There are a hundred. A hundred and some over the years. Our program...

**GN:** Is one of the best kept secrets around.

**JSB:** Is probably one of the best kept secrets around.

**GN:** Yea, yea.

**JSB:** And Marist, we don't... Marist is not going to get the students into Harvard very often because our name is not... I always remember my first years here when I had the students who went to the interviews, the first question they ask, "Tell me what a Marist is?" They didn't even know what Marist was. I think one of the things that has happened over the years is that Marist has gotten better known also through the students going on. We have medical schools now that generally we have a track record with and they take some of the borderline students in some cases. So, for example, over the last five years, eleven out of twelve applicants have gotten in. If you look at the other health professions, twenty-nine out of thirty-one have gotten in over that same period of time. Some years, we'll have three, four. The students who go on do very, very well. I once did an analysis just out of curiosity to see how well they do and one of the things that

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

happens after med-school is that you can get what are called honors grades and you're put on the honors level. And I think I had one time thirteen out of eighteen students that I could assure were in the honors level in their medical schools. I have a student right now who's number one at his school graduating. I just got an email from one of our young ladies who's graduating from Virginia Medical School, which is one of the top medical schools. She is number eleven out of a class of 175. So, our students generally do very, very well.

**GN:** I was surprised at the number. I didn't think you had that number.

**JSB:** Yea, over my thirty-five, thirty-seven years, definitely over one hundred.

**GN:** Okay, let's come back to the department and you maybe would recognize some of these names and maybe you could say something more about their participation. Hugh Turley, George Hooper, Bill Perrotte, you mentioned Bean.

**JSB:** Dan Bean.

**GN:** Dan Bean, okay. Am I skipping somebody? Is there another significant person? I hate to say that, but I don't know.

**JSB:** Not that I can, oh, Teresa Snyder was probably the other one that stayed the longest.

**GN:** Right, okay. We'll mention those.

**JSB:** Okay.

**GN:** What did Bill do?

**JSB:** Bill was a botanist here. Bill was an interesting character in many ways.

**GN:** Another New Englander? [Laughter]

**JSB:** Another New Englander or Vermonter. I think my first getting to know Bill was kind of interesting because Bill was hired while I was on that leave to work on my research and I was out collecting data and the secretary came by and Bill actually, you know Bill would leave a little note even though he hasn't met you. Bill had been hired and heard that I was on leave, and I would be one of his colleagues back at Marist potentially someday. And Bill dropped in, and I was out collecting my data that particular time and he left a little note, "I am Bill Perrotte. I dropped by, I'm on my way to Marist." I think it was as he was moving down here and he just sort of swung his way from Vermont to New Hampshire on his way here and left a note. So that was my first and then when I arrived, of course, I got to meet Bill. Bill and I worked together quite well.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** He didn't have his Doctorate either when he first came?

**JSB:** When he first came, he didn't have his Doctorate either, correct. He was getting his from Vermont. He was in the writing stages. He and I would often be here at night doing our work in our own offices and sometimes Bill smoked a pipe so Bill would take a walk and you're allowed to smoke. You could take a walk and just say you're going to take a break so we would take a break together and sort of look up at the stars as Bill because you know, Bill would take a walk out. And sometimes we'd just take a walk around campus and come back, "Okay, that was a good fifteen, twenty-minute break" and then go back to work. So, Bill and I worked as sort of... we were to come at about the same time. There's only like a year, year and a half difference in our coming. Hugh truly came afterwards. My recollections of Hugh are interesting because when Hugh was at Catholic University, George had communicated with him and he was being hired to develop Microbiology as a course here and we had been hiring for a number of years. Bill actually did Microbiology for a period of time, but we had hired people from Dutchess to teach the course previously. And Hugh was sent this, George had sent to him, we have to get the orders in once we're- and George comes down with this to Bill and I and says, "Look at this guy, he's in la-la land." You know he was ordering sophisticated equipment. We don't have budgets like that. Again, that's someone who's at a graduate school where they have everything and so we had to pull human to reality. So Hugh and I, of course, became very good friends because we became racquetball and tennis buddies together. So, we played both together for a long period of time. I always consider Hugh one of the losses at Marist. He was a very gifted teacher. I always

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

remember some of the things that he did when he was here. He did a lab. Hugh liked to organize things, everything was color-coded, red here and blue there and everything was labeled. And Hugh, to Hugh and to me, he enjoyed more the setting up and this is what he said, he enjoyed the developing, the organizing, and so forth much more than he did the actual presentation in class and that's what made him decide really to be teaching. But he was always interesting in that respect because he had to do, sometimes we had to do things that we weren't experts in. And he had to do a lab with George Hooper, and it was a fruit-fly lab in General Bio and the comic one would use in there and he's got this vial and the students were saying, "Well, these flies don't seem to be moving" and he was saying, "Yea, yea look at that! He just jumped." Well, Hugh would grab the wrong groups. I grabbed the "morgue" ones, that's right they were called the "morgue" ones. They were all the dead ones. [Laughter] And here he is trying to get this, he pulled it off faking it for about an hour. Then George comes by, he sees and says "Joseph, where'd you get those? Those are all the dead ones!" So that's one of my recollections.

**GN:** He was in the development of Marist Brothers now?

**JSB:** That's correct. Yea, I still hear from Hugh. I still hear from him periodically and he has visited when he comes up for the summer meetings, so he's dropped by. Often, we have still done this, Hugh, George, and I get together if he's in during the summer. We find a time and we go up to lunch. We've gone up to Easy Street or someplace like that in between. Last time he was too busy to do it, he's a little more involved.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** Right. Were there any part-time people in Biology in those years?

**JSB:** Not really, not really. Not in Bio. We're not big on part-time in Bio. One of the reasons is it's very difficult to find people. One of these stories with that, with George Hooper too with that, I always remember, I would not get a sabbatical for my first twenty-two years here at Marist and the main reason was that I was told that you had to get the Chairman's approval. And George says, "I know you deserve it but I can't give it to you because there's no one to teach these courses." I have always had the heaviest teaching load. I developed eight, nine different courses at Marist in my time here and the funny one in there with George is we got the Med-tech program at Marist and one of the requirements there was they required Immunology and Parasitology. And Parasitology is my field so that was no problem. Immunology was not. When I was in school, immunology didn't exist as a field. Immunology usually was integrated partly into Parasitology, partly into Microbiology but Immunology has emerged as one of the dominant areas in Biology. So, I always remember George said "Well, you're the most likely one to do this." And so, he said "You've got a year to develop this." So, I during the summer, was sending to publishers to get books and starting to collect data, things that I would begin to research. Then all of a sudden, George comes in and says "We need this in the fall." So that sped up my beginning at that. And again, one of the things I always liked about Marist at that particular time as things have changed, usually you would get credit for scholarship, which was scholarship of preparation, scholarship of retooling, scholarship of relearning, things that you could do in subject areas. So, I took several courses in Immunology by going to Chataqua courses and so forth. So, I always

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

liked learning, I always liked doing new things so that as George says, that may have been one of my pitfalls and in a way, you were willing to do these where we would say we can't do these, we aren't willing to do these. But it also may have been that I was the youngest one at that particular time, not any longer but at that time I was.

**GN:** Yes. What about the development of where the labs are now, where they came from. How do you define or explain that kind of development? More students came into Biology, there was a more definitive need that could be presented.

**JSB:** Well, that's an interesting point too because one of the things that we... We used to teach all of the Biology in two labs, two rooms that were all Bio labs and one of the things that happened there is they were talking about renovation and we were constantly fighting for space. And Jim Daly was the Admissions person and one of the things that we used to meet with him, and Dennis finally said you know, I'm not going to do anything for science because he's the line that...When you get more students, then I'll build more space, or we'll have a reason to build more space. And we asked for a meeting with him. We were a school of science at that particular time. And we said, you know, this is kind of ridiculous. We can tag many different colleges, you have to build first and then they will come. You can't wait because you can't fit them in. So, one of the things is we felt that we were very critical in the renovation of Donnelly in that we said we need better facilities if you want us to attract more science students. And Jim Daly was one of the few times, I think Jim Daly was an advocate of science. Jim Daly made the comment that they are correct, he says "I can not recruit science students." As



Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

a matter of fact, he says I never send them over to even see the facilities” because he says it’s embarrassing. There are high school kids that are going to come looking at the labs at Marist and say that many of them have high school labs that are better at that particular time. So, we get a lot of things with shoestring type situations.

**GN:** Yea.

**JSB:** I always remember Histology when I developed as a course, I had one complete set of slides, and I had forty-three students in it. This is where graduate school slows down. In order to do that, I would run lab sections at night and another afternoon and so forth. So that was one of the aspects. We often apply for grants to get equipment in science and that was one of the things that was important to us. And of course, then we got the grant to develop the Med-tech, Nursing and then there was supposed to be a third component, which the school then backed out of at that particular point in time. As you know, the Nursing program went under. I’ve always been disappointed in that because the actual reason for the Nursing program going under was not...

**GN:** Falling on the table.

**JSB:** Walking the table, yea. It was a hidden agenda. There were other aspects to it which was very sad because we would have far more science students at Marist, you know, Nursing, the wound. And it would have allowed us to expand that furry area and I said, they funded as the three developmental programs. The third one was to have been

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

Physical Therapy and that would have got us an identity. Our argument always was that that would also help us in getting more students into more prestigious schools because you get an identity as a science school.

**GN:** Another interesting topic for me at least is to hear you talk about the development of the various committees. You played a part certainly in some of these. Let's talk about rank and tenure, upon which you served for eons.

**JSB:** Yes, I had three different terms. I always remember that because I replaced someone for a two-year term and then back then if you didn't serve three that meant you get...

**GN:** Go back to...

**JSB:** Got back on, and so I was going to have five continuous years on it. I found my only way to do anything against that was that's when I decided I'm putting in for promotion.

**GN:** To apply.

**JSB:** Right.

**GN:** I found that a tactic.

**JSB:** Right, so that was the best and it was the year I was going to be Chairperson. So it was perfect, it worked out ideally for me particularly since I got the promotion so that was an ideal. Yea, I was also involved with the development of the faculty association, which was an aspect of some of our growing pains, I guess, of looking at the workload and looking at financial situations and fighting for the fact it is such...

**GN:** Yea, well there's a break in the development of the College. At the beginning, there's a kind of unity of administration and faculty and it's one happy growth. And then along comes some kind of a divide where there's an antagonism that seems to develop between faculty and...

**JSB:** Right.

**GN:** And I think now, I think, there's much. That has certainly been resolved in my view, I don't know whether in what your...

**JSB:** Right, yes.

**GN:** But they're two separate units for sure.

**JSB:** Yes. I've also served on FAC. I don't think there's a committee that I haven't served on.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** They wouldn't know what FAC is, Faculty Affairs...

**JSB:** Committee and there was the Academic.

**GN:** Academic...

**JSB:** Academic Fairs Committee. In actuality, I was on the Executive Committee, but I was never on FAC. I was on AAC, and I was Chairman of AAC. They're two different committees. I...

**GN:** You've dealt with programs that...

**JSB:** That deals with curriculum. I've always been more interested in the curricular end of it, not in the...

**GN:** Personnel.

**JSB:** Personnel and the priorities and so forth type of thing.

**GN:** Okay, thanks. What about your view on the role of the Core program, the change of the core to well we have the Core now. We used to have a sixty-sixty program. Were you strong for a change in that area?

**JSB:** I didn't like the sixty-sixty at all because I think it was a little stifling. It was a little manipulative in many respects and for science students, it was very, very difficult because in science quite often, you have to go beyond the sixty. And they would have to really crunch to try to get some of their courses in. I remember the course development. I remember the program with Xavier Ryan. I can remember all the battles on the core. [Laughter] And again, I see the core has changed. We in science have different views sometimes than... Some of the energies have it all. I mean, you know, the modes, I was not a big advocate of the modes primarily because I don't think the modes were all treated equally and that was my big problem with it. The scientific mode was always short-tripped was number one. Number two, I had many debates with the way they did it. I mean, they were giving articles of reading that were 1930's in Physics, which to me, was rather archaic and to try to grab anybody and to be perfectly honest, most of the Philosophy people, they didn't really know any of the science to be able to do it. The biggest problem I had was they weren't willing to give up anything either. They wanted total control.

**GN:** They put it on the table and [rationalized it]...

**JSB:** Yea, that's [rationalized it]. And they really, you know, would deal with the scientists, even when they dealt with the scientists, they were dealing with... Scientists are very interesting. They do their research, they do their work and then what happens is... so that's usually considered that you're sort of focusing in very narrow-focusing

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

range. Quite often scientists then in their old years become what are called generalists. They start to reflect and try to tie their things into the big picture. And that leads more to a philosophical approach to it. So sometimes, I felt that they could have picked better people to look at than some. But the students used to complain all the time, you know, where's this science mode coming in, I'm not getting it. So, most of the people considered them okay, they're doing philosophy and I don't think that's bad at all, I'm not against that at all but I don't want to look at it either. I don't want to you know, really...

**GN:** That was the period of Xavier Ryan.

**JSB:** Yea.

**GN:** And the four modes of consciousness...

**JSB:** That's correct, that's correct.

**GN:** And four ways and those things...

**JSB:** And the problem I've always seen with the philosophy is there was... You know, when I started, I remember Peg Bermingham was here and so forth and you really saw the Philosophy department starting to split. Those that wanted to hold on and those who were saying well, not everybody has to be the same so...

**GN:** Okay, let's come back to the college in terms of some other developing things now? Where do you think the college is going for? What's one of its strongest points now? Is it location? Is it the grounds?

**JSB:** Oh, I think its geographic location and its size are significant factors for people. I mean the campus is beautiful, there's no question about that. The campus right now is a definite draw, I think the clearing with the river and view, if I was to say what Dennis's strength would be I think that would be one of them, his visions to the less.

**GN:** We're going to get to that. [Laughter]

**JSB:** Okay.

**GN:** And how...

**JSB:** Its reputation has significantly grown too over the years. I think that's a significant factor because I can remember when I first came to Marist everybody was from Long Island, a little bit from Connecticut.

**GN:** Yea.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**JSB:** And most of them right the Island and New Jersey a little bit and most of them were very parochial. You know, I was a public-school educator personally but when I talked to these kids almost, I had to strain to find someone with a public school education.

**GN:** Yea and now more than half.

**JSB:** That's right, that's correct.

**GN:** Not in New York State.

**JSB:** I mean, I see it's interesting that their range has gotten up to Maine. I don't know how they somehow reached up to Maine, but they had a Maine connection for over fifteen years now. I don't know how they first established it. It's a significant one.

**GN:** What do you think is a weak point of the college? If you had to go up to the Board of Trustees and had the opportunity to talk to them in a friendly sort of way, what do you think you'd say as something that they should be careful of?

**JSB:** Well, one of the things is I think they're starting to stretch it calling Marist a liberal arts college any longer. If you look at the development and we got this from one of our... We had off-campus visitors, in others words, these schools are supposed to now have an outside person and one of things they pointed out is Marist really is trying to



Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

defend its being liberal arts but to the outside its beginning to look more and more vocational, in other words, career or professional-oriented. And I kind of agree that that's true. The only thing that they're trying to hold on to make it more liberal arts I think is the core and I don't buy it myself but that's doing it. I would think one of the greatest weaknesses is, and this is going to be personal, is to consider yourself a liberal arts college and not have a science building is absolutely insane. You can't pick a school in the United States, literally, that of our size, liberal arts. The schools we like to compare ourselves to, Siena and so forth, I mean, they're expanding their science buildings. Vassar, this is my example, and I said if you want to increase your science students, Vassar when they built their new science building, doubled their enrollment over that period of time. Siena the same for that. And again, Siena built the science building, hired five faculty, and they developed the curriculum even though they weren't teaching courses very much at that time. Ours just has small boarding students and the students came so I don't know what that means. It's what you want it to mean.

**GN:** I read this, and I think we want to see one of your doctor friends maybe [Laughter] about a contribution to the foundation of this science building. What about the students? Have you seen a significant change in Marist College students in your forty years here? Thirty-seven.

**JSB:** Yea, the main thing I find is okay, the students as people I have found have stayed pretty much the same. It's one of...Okay, I'm going to get... Things overlap. One of the things I've always liked about Marist is this type of student that joins. I've had visitors

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

that I'm taking on tours. Marist students are just pleasant generally. They greet you. They say hello. You can walk across campus, people will talk to you, say hi, etcetera, etcetera. I've been at other places, you don't see that. You walk at New Paltz, a big campus, no one's going to say anything or acknowledge. So, I like that. The preparation of students, I think I still am an advocate that says that all of the students today coming out of high school, they had higher scores of whatever ways they try to calculate the...I think that the students in the past, even those that had the lowest scores, were stronger students because they had greater capability to think. I think the kids coming in our high schools in this day and age, know a lot of factual knowledge and the hardest thing is to get them so they can apply that knowledge and think. When I think back to the students I had in the past, even my first years here, they weren't the brightest of students but if you taught them something they could then find links and expand on it. The other thing I would say is they wrote. They were better at writing things; you know on written exams they were much better.

**GN:** Have you experienced a big difference in the male-female composition?

**JSB:** Yes. Of course, I came to Marist when it was all male and I was scared stiff with that because I had never been in a unisex situation in my whole life so that was strange to me. I had never been in an environment where you had parochialism. In other words, when I first came, half the students in my class had cassocks on and sore knees etcetera.

[Laughter]

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** Yea.

**JSB:** I always remember my experience there. I came in and back then you had to wear a shirt, tie, and jacket and I could remember after the first week, I would go in and say good morning and start my class and all of a sudden one of the student Brothers came over and talked to me and says, "You're supposed to be leading us in prayer each day." And he said, "Would you like me to do that?" I said fine but no one had explained that to me. It probably had been assumed. I had never been in a parochial environment. I know the cross over the door was appropriate, but I didn't know that because we didn't do that. We salute the flag in public school.

**GN:** Okay, let's talk about some of the administrators that you've dealt with. Can you recall Linus Foy?

**JSB:** Yes, very fondly.

**GN:** What's your view? I liked Linus a great deal. I was impressed with both Linus and I'm trying to think of...

**JSB:** Ed Cashin?

**GN:** Ed Cashin. I was very, very impressed right from the start when I was interviewed. Their sincerity, their integrity, I always remember because at that particular time, I was

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

moving to Marist or was being offered the job and both of them, they'd comment that "We will try to help you with moving expense. We've never done this before." I suppose I was the first, I really was going to have this. And I always remember I got my contract letter, and it didn't have anything above moving expenses, and I said "Gee" and my wife happened to be present. Well, she says, "You've got nothing to lose, it may have been that they just forgot." And that's exactly what it was. I called and he says, you know, I apologize. He was so apologetic. Two days later I had an \$800 check in the mail to help with moving, to help defray the moving expenses. Again, they said we're new to this, we can help but you know, it's complicated. So, I hired a truck and moved myself here. The thing I always remember about both of them is their commitment to the academic end. Again, I've always been most interested in people who are committed towards the academic end because that's what we're all about. And I always remember both of them with contracts and things, you just negotiated, set a price, you shook hands, and you didn't think of anything else. It's just going to happen, no matter what. And getting help a second time I moved back, they didn't have to do that. I was coming back a second time, you know, for the year.

**GN:** You had to deal with a number of Deans over the years, vanderHeyden, Artin Arslanian, LaPietra, Shea maybe or I don't know who is the first Dean that you had. Oh Brother Paul, that's who it was.

**JSB:** Brother Paul, yup.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** He was a high school principal really. [Laughter]

**JSB:** Yes, yes, right. I always remember Brother Paul because he was scary to me when I first came to Marist in that he was at the door inspecting as you came in and out of the building. Even as a faculty member, he had me intimidated like an [ascew] sergeant. Is my tie on, stuff like that I got it pulled up going into the building and I remember him stopping students who didn't have socks on. They couldn't go to class and back then the rule was if you missed five classes, it was an automatic F and I, as a faculty member, had no control over it because each week I had to turn in the attendance so that therefore people would not be keeping the actual count yourself because you just take it and turn it in and then that office would, was it Brother John O'Shea?

**GN:** Yea.

**JSB:** Is that who remembers in that capacity upstairs?

**GN:** Right.

**JSB:** And the student would get a note and I would get a note that the student has got an F and you don't have to bother giving them exams anymore [Laughter] etcetera and it's like whoa. So, that was all new to me at that particular time.

**GN:** A kind of military academy.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**JSB:** Yes, yes. And then there was Ed Waters. I remember dealing with Ed Waters. Ed was a high school person who I actually got to know through working with Upward Bound. I was one of the, I'm trying to think...

**GN:** Summer instructors.

**JSB:** Right. I'm trying to remember the name of the Brother that founded that.

**GN:** Murphy.

**JSB:** Murphy, yea. And I was on the committee that was working with him to write the grand consult boards, so I was committed to that sort of thing. So, I got to know a lot of them in that particular area. I think back then if I were to make an appraisal for most of them, it was more like you worked with them. I view the newer era of time as they're doing their job, you're doing your job.

**GN:** Okay. What do you think Dennis Murray did bring to the College?

**JSB:** He brought structural change that was more business-like and less academic-like. It became more of a situation, to me a least, is that they are like the bosses and the CEOs in the company and we are more like the workers in the particular departments.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** Very much concerned with image and public relations.

**JSB:** Very much concerned, yea. I mean, I can't say it unless you turn it off. [Laughter]

**GN:** Well.

**JSB:** But there have been nicknames that have been used for him over the years because of that, the images, everything type of thing.

**GN:** Alright, time is running on Joe, and you've been very honest and open and I want you to stay that way for these next points. [Laughter] What would you say is your particular contribution? What are you proudest about here? What have you done in your time that you, I wouldn't say put on your gravestone. [Laughter] What do you take joy in?

**JSB:** I take joy in serving the students. The students, I have seventy-five advisees right now. I will not turn down a student. My Dean has tried to get me to realize that...but my idea is I've had students and if they prefer me to be their advisor, then I feel I should try to be their advisor. For one thing, they feel more comfortable with their pre-health. The first two years you can tell the students it doesn't make any difference until the third year but when someone is with the Physics person, they don't feel they can ask the Pre-med question, what if I get this, what if? So, I'll automatically always sign that. I'd say service is... Generally, I've been told service is my strength. I don't say no. There are

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

people in my department that say I have a flashing neon sign. They walk down the car, and they say “You gotta do this Joe because I’m the last few” and you’ll say yes, so you really have to change that. I would say that and probably my curriculum development. As I say, right now, the Dean is concerned when I retire. There are areas that I teach that there’s no one else that can take them and the likelihood that you’re going to hire, in this day in age, one person that will be willing to teach eight areas is not very likely. So, what the Dean is saying, he’s trying to say is you’re going to have to go too possibly. Why change the path of what you’re doing? Because there is only one course there that someone presently on campus could teach once they have time.

**GN:** What would you think about this? What did not happen that you wish would’ve happened in the last twenty years or so?

**JSB:** The biggest thing that I would’ve wished that would happen, and again I’ve alluded to it before and that is a greater commitment towards science, to consider that science is a part of a liberal arts education, the commitment to building or improving laboratory situations. Dennis is not very committed to science and that’s clear and it has been clear for many, many years and we meet with him each year and he says, well I’ll try to... We meet with him and try to spruce up and we’ll be saying, “Look at what it looks like.” And so, one of the problems, in particular as far as I’m concerned is with the switch tube scholarship for sciences, it’s almost impossible because you can’t go anyplace else where you don’t have separate laboratories. We can’t set up a research thing in a lab where you’re going to use it for General Bio and the public. How do you



Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

know it's not going to be tinkered with when you can't blame students? So, it's very hard hiring faculty, I mean, it took us three years to get a biochemist. They all sort of joked, you want us to get X number 2 publications per particular period of time?

Where's the facilities? Where's the equipment? You know, how do you expect that from me? And this is your teaching mode. So, I would've liked to see, if they were going to go to this scholarship, and again Marist is trying to make changes and I think one of the things that I regret is that whenever Marist made a change, they dropped a max. They never grandfathered anything. So therefore, I feel very strongly that I'm in that old car. I was used, abused, and burnt as a consequence because like someone says, it's an old adage that says in science, for every one year that you're not in research, you're falling five years behind. And so, if you've got people that can't do research, and again in my early years at Marist, we would discover this from doing research. We were encouraged to develop a curriculum, to establish that. So as a consequence, I mean, my wife, Marist is not a favorite word with my wife at all... She, as many wives here.

**GN:** Okay. Did you ever think of changing your voice a little? Why did you stay here for so long? Certainly, your commitment...

**JSB:** I had an offer without even applying. You're going to get into areas that are [Laughter] uncomfortable with my wife and I for sure. I had an opportunity to go to a master's program in Massachusetts where I would be able to do...

**GN:** Research.

**JSB:** Research and have a load that would allow me to do those things. Lou Zuccarello once made a comment that I went through an angry period in my career, and I did. My wife can attest to it. [Laughter] That angry period, I guess it would be like someone would say is a midlife crisis but it wasn't quite necessarily that. And what it was I was becoming frustrated with Marist and was pushing for scholarship and I'm saying I did all these things and now I'm getting burnt. And I should've gone someplace else. I stuck it out. I love teaching. I love teaching with a passion, and I just love the interaction of being in the lab. I like the interaction with the students. I'm not teaching a laboratory this semester in a freshman course because I've become Chairman, but the Dean says I'm in there more than I would be if I was teaching because the areas that I can help out with got two new faculty in the area. I'm a lab assistant to one of them instead of just an undergraduate student because it's to try to help to overcome...

**GN:** Yea, all of the issues build up with great repertoire, the bio department particularly in the running of the labs and that kind of a by definition, going back to Friday afternoon.

**JSB:** Right.

**GN:** But you guys spend a lot of time with students.

**JSB:** Yea.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** Has that been a bonding thing with you at Marist in other words?

**JSB:** It was.

**GN:** It's a love hate thing, but you can't give it up...

**JSB:** Right.

**GN:** Because you love it so much...

**JSB:** Right.

**GN:** Even though you hate some of the stuff that's involved.

**JSB:** I mean my love is, as someone says, my wife actually asked me the question. I was Chairperson for four years. I got out of it; Vicky was doing it and then Vicky was... Things came up and it was asked if I would be willing to take it back and my wife says "Are you sure you want to do this because this means you'll do one course less of teaching." And she knows for me to give up anything with the teaching is always difficult and she said she knew I would still be in here. She's talked to the people; she knows I'm in on it anyways.

**GN:** Yea.

**JSB:** One of the things that we do a lot of in science is come in at night, come in on weekends, review. One of the reasons I think that they... I still hear from students that have graduated twenty-five years ago, emails, etcetera.

**GN:** They know you're here.

**JSB:** They know I'm still here, right. The key thing is that recall was built up over all those years. We have our breakfast thing; I'll get emails of apology for why they can't make it.

**GN:** I see.

**JSB:** And we've got an advisory board for our Pre-med which is made up of physicians and some of them are former graduates. I could not make the first one because it was in New York, and I had to be at a wedding actually in my family. It was on a Saturday. There's one coming up on Tuesday, the one where I was told that I had to make the next meeting, otherwise they didn't want the Dean to form that meeting because there was an opportunity to see. He needs to see some of that. So, I actually have to get my students because it has to be arranged with so many MD's that it's on the tenth in the afternoon when I teach a lab and I've got a small group and the Dean says you must shift, get the group even if you have to come in on a Friday or a Saturday. And that's what I've done.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** Yea.

**JSB:** So I think, to me the repertoire with students is the most important thing. There's more learning that happens outside than inside the classroom, you're lecturing to a large extent but in the laboratory that's where the life, the flame goes I guess as far as I'm concerned.

**GN:** Is there anything that I didn't ask you that you would like to say in terms of this year?

**JSB:** Oh, you've made me think about a lot. I can't think of anything more.

**GN:** Okay, well just comment then how about some of your running relationships with those people you've met here. George Hooper is still on your screen I already mailed you.

**JSB:** Yes. I mean, my wife will say that I bonded with George very early on because my own father died very early in my career at Marist. So, George became sort of...

**GN:** Like a father image?

**JSB:** Sort of like a father image to a large extent.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**GN:** Yea.

**JSB:** You know, we had ours, just like a son and a father, we'll disagree on things. We've had our disagreements on things but yea, that bond was sort of like that to a large extent. George...People like to work with George. As a whole, George was my first Chairman, then he was my first Dean. It was during the period of time when the school of science was, not the school, the division of science. We were the first division; we were the only division. Everybody else was. Interesting history with that too was we were formed really because we could save money by ordering chemicals for chemistry and biology together, therefore you get a discount, whereas when we ordered separately. So that was one of the bonds that would take place so I would think that that would be one of them. Of course, Hugh Turley had become almost like a brother or a close friend. We did a lot of athletic activities together. We took our breaks together.

**GN:** Do you still play racquetball?

**JSB:** I still play racquetball now and then, more tennis now. I've sort of run out of racquetball people but some of the new faculty coming in are starting it up so I bought a new racket again and played some last year. So, we'll do it again. Tennis has become more my... My wife, I played indoors during the wintertime, and she says that I must do that because that keeps my sanity.

**GN:** Right. Okay.

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP

**JSB:** So, I play tennis three nights or two nights and one morning on the weekend.

**GN:** Can you whisper when you're going to retire?

**JSB:** It's getting closer, but I have never had any thoughts of retiring in my whole life. I basically have made the comment that when I decide I don't like going into the classroom anymore, I probably will retire. My wife says that when my pension plan equals what my salary will be, she's going to make me retire. [Laughter] So, we're actually getting pretty close because my number of years in the pension plan so... But I know I would stay at least until I'm sixty-five. I'm not sixty-two. At sixty-five, I will have forty years in at Marist, so I know I'll do at least that. And my original aim was probably at the earliest, seventy. That I'll have to see. There are things that are occurring that I'm not as happy with anymore so there will be things that...

**GN:** Well, you look good. [Laughter] You look enthusiastic.

**JSB:** Yea.

**GN:** And thank you very much.

**JSB:** Thank you.

**“END OF INTERVIEW”**

Interviewee: Joseph Bettencourt  
Interviewer: Gus Nolan

November 15, 2002  
MHP