

**James Daly**

**Marist College**

Poughkeepsie, New York

Transcribed by Ann Sandri

For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections

Transcript – James Daly

**Interviewee:** James Daly

**Interviewer:** Gus Nolan

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**Summary:** Jim Daly talks about his upbringing and life at Marist College. While at Marist, he discusses his favorite classes, the academic life, and other aspects of the college while he studied. He talks about his job as an Admissions Counselor and Admissions Director in other colleges before returning to Marist as the Dean of Admissions. He discusses his wishes for the future of the campus and also reflects on the role of college education and technology in the contemporary society.

[00:04](#) **GN:** Today is November 30<sup>th</sup>. It's 11:30. And we're having an interview with Jim Daly in the Marist College Library. Good morning, Jim.

[00:12](#) **JD:** Good morning Gus Nolan, how're you sir?

[00:14](#) **GN:** I am good. Thank you. Jim this interview that's going to be use as part of our collection of the oral archives of people who were at Marist in the early years. And we're getting their recollection of how things were then, and comparing it to how we see things today. But before we get in to the details of it, just an overview. There's like three or four parts of this before Marist, Marist, after Marist and then some philosophical observations about the whole education program. So to start from the beginning, Jim, where were you born? What were the early years like?

[00:52](#) **JD:** I was born in the Bronx, New York. I was the third son of Donny and Chris Daly. My father was a captain, had been a captain in the infantry in the Second World War and soon after I was born, he was called back as a captain in the infantry in the Korean War. He left three sons at home in Parkchester with a young wife. He returned from the war. We eventually settled out on Long Island where I was raised. I went to St William Abbot Grammar School run by Irish Ursuline nuns. I graduated from St Anthony's High School, which was a school at the time was much like Marist in its early days. It was all an all-boys high school that was very small and the chemistry lab was an old concert hut and it was Irish Franciscans out of Brooklyn, New York. That high school today is a school of 2,500, co-educational, phenomenal facilities and doing very, very well both athletically and academically

[01:51](#) **GN:** Because of its graduates and the way they have contributed to support I'm sure.

[01:55](#) **JD:** Well, I'm very happy to hear you say that because I just mailed them an annual gift this morning. (laughter)

[02:01](#) **GN:** Let's look about those days in high school. What did you do? Did you [...] Well

besides being a good student because you eventually went on to college but did you participate in any activities? Were there sports for instance? Were you participating in CYO or anything like that?

[02:17](#) **JD:** You know I did that. I was much [...] I had a seminal event in my younger life was when I was fifteen. My mother who was forty-five died very suddenly and unexpectedly had a massive coronary in my grandmother's living room on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. I was in the room when she passed away. It sort of shattered my teenage years. There was two older brothers and a younger brother. The oldest brother ironically at the time was serving in Vietnam. It was a difficult time for the family, you know. It sort of entered a dark period. So while I was a strong student in grade school and I sort of... Sophomore year high school was not my highest achievement but those Franciscan brothers, they just wouldn't let you go. They were terrific human beings. Father eventually remarried a widow who had two daughters past my age, and just a wonderful woman who recently passed away. But she sort of rehabilitated my life and that the point that I could grab my high school career back. I did not have much time for sport at the time and I was able to gain admission to this wonderful institution.

[03:26](#) **GN:** What about work? Did you work during the summers?

[03:29](#) **JD:** Oh yes.

[03:30](#) **GN:** Give me some examples.

[03:31](#) **JD:** Absolutely I had a newspaper route. I delivered sixty-one copies of Newsday which was an afternoon paper at the time. It didn't have a Sunday edition. Six days a week after school. Actually the first real job when I was on the books, I actually ran two laundromats and then was able when I was turning sixteen to get a job at a local AMP and for a couple of years, my only job was to get the shopping carts out of the park lot whether it was hot summers or snowy winters. But those were [...] I remember them as good years and it was [...] Long Island was a

great place to grow up. It was... I still have family there.

[04:15](#) **GN:** What's the town now?

[04:16](#) **JD:** Massapequa which ironically is home to Jerry Seinfeld, the chair of the ethnic nation.

My father used to tease that the town could be called Matzo Pizza. It was sort of like the neighborhoods in Brooklyn and the Bronx at the end of World War II moved out to the potato fields of Long Island. Subdivisions were created. So it's a very "out of borough transplanted to Long Island" sort of culture out there.

[04:40](#) **GN:** Give me the years now. What's the ages you were in high school from when?

[04:45](#) **JD:** From I was born in 1950 and I was in high school from 1964 to 1968. And my mother past away in '65.

[04:52](#) **GN:** So the historical conditions at that time... Were we in Vietnam yet?

[04:57](#) **JD:** We were in Vietnam but we had not... the eruption the anti-war fever had yet to really to really come around. But I remembered a moment I remember exactly where I was. I was in eighth grade on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1963 when John F. Kennedy was assassinated. And then, there was a period of incredible uprising in the country. The civil rights movement was reaching its zenith which had begun in the 50s, of course. The cities were burning. Riots in Watts which is part of Los Angeles. When I was a senior in high school, the assassination of Martin Luther King in April followed by the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy, in June of that year. These are sort of very telling, very... the world was shaking. And you know, I can (?). I was an altar boy. I should mention that because recently we just had a change in the Catholic liturgy this Sunday. The first Sunday in Advent. And I remember going back. Many, many first Sunday in Advents ago when the Church began its liturgical year and the priest no longer had his back to the congregation but his face to the congregation. And the mass was said in English. And I had been an altar boy in the Latin, right. And I knew from that moment on that I was no longer necessary.

[06:20](#) **GN:** The ad deum qui laetificat juventutem meam. Let's go to the coming to Marist.

What's the genesis of you coming to Marist as a student?

[06:30](#) **JD:** Small high school, about 600 boys, about 150 in my senior class. And David Flynn was then the dean of admissions, the director of admissions I guess. He visited St Anthony's out in Smithtown, Long Island. Boy, he was... He was a good-looking, sharp guy ... told the real nice story about this place. And I went home and asked my dad about it. And my dad was a graduate of St. Agnes High School in Midtown, Manhattan run by and own by the Marist Brothers. And I have to tell you a story about this this one has to about my dad's experience as a senior high school with the Marist Brothers. He said, "Oh, the hermitage." He knew it as St Ann's Hermitage. So he said, "Yeah, you should look at that. It's a good place." I also applied to Siena, to Fairfield University, and Niagara University. Again I had a sloppy sophomore year and because of some things going on at home. So, I made the trip up to Marist and interview with David Flynn. And it was a one-on-one interview. Unlike the way it is today and I had a personal tour of a fellow who was two years older than me, Vinnie Begley who I am now back in touch with. Dave said he wanted to see my seven semester grades because my sophomore was a bit of a challenge. So I was offered admission. And ironically enough, out of my class of 150 at Anthony's, eleven of us enrolled in Marist. And by the way, ten of us graduated.

[07:58](#) **GN:** Is that so? That's an amazing story because the old story is look to your right and look to your left. One of them is not going to make it.

[08:05](#) **JD:** They had a good high school education. But let me say the story about my dad as a senior at St Agnes' High School. This is very, very important. He was born in 1919. I believe in 1936 he graduates. A pretty bright fellow, he was the vice president of class because he lost by one vote. This is a true story. He didn't think it was right to vote from himself so he voted for the other fellow he lost by one vote. But that's not the story. The story is this... it's the depths of the

Depression and his family is feeling it like everyone else. And he's a very bright young fellow and gets an acceptance letter to Harvard. But there's no money in the family and he often says even though Jack Kennedy was two years old that Jack had started at Yale and graduated from Harvard ... stopped out for his bad back, health reasons ... he would have been in the same class as Jack Kennedy. But that was not going to happen. He had to get a job. In fact that was many times. The only time he ever called the principal's office at high schools was because of tuition bills that were late and it was the tough times. I don't know who the principal was at St Agnes' High School in 1936 but out of the entire class, only three boys were on to college 'cause only three families could afford it. The rest of them are going for work. He called a meeting of the senior class behind closed doors and said, "Lads when you look for a job, you're going to go to an employment office they're going to give you a preliminary application and on that application they're gonna ask you your religion and depending on how you answer that question will be dependable whether or not you get called back. So when you come to the question regarding your religion, I want you to put down the First Church of Christ and you won't be lying." A very wise Marist brother.

[09:46](#) **GN:** It might have been Brother Leo Hyacinth who also had another request made to him once that the boys want to have a dance and he said, "Sure fine, but no girls." Coming to Marist, did you know anybody here before you got here?

[10:02](#) **JD:** You know St Anthony's again that was became a feeder's school. In fact there's a young woman on the basketball team today is very hot point guard and she's a St Anthony's graduate. She's a real cracker jacket I saw her played against Yale a couple weeks ago. Now there were several boys. There were several fellows in the class ahead of me and some even the class before that. So I knew some folks and the nice thing about it ... it was a little over a hundred miles from my home. So and if you had to get a train the long railroads to Penn

Station over to Grand Central and take the Hudson line up to Poughkeepsie.

10:40 **GN:** Let's go to the time here at Marist now. What was your major?

10:45 **JD:** I majored in Political Science and I was ... It was a new major ... I came in as a history major. I wasn't ... didn't have the strong skills in math and science but I would like to tell you that I did graduate under the original core curriculum which included ninth credits of math and science including a lab science. I am very grateful to George Hooper for getting me through biology.

11:08 **GN:** Oh, very good. Now, did you know Balch for instance?

11:13 **JD:** Roscoe Balch was a teacher of mine. Louis Zuccarello, Italo Beneen, Jerry White, Caroline Lando, Gerard Cox. In freshman year, I had Kevin Caroline for college calculus. So, he oh ... college algebra maybe it was. I don't think I was that good at math but we get halfway through the semester and he gives us this test ... He said, "You guys, you folks are fine. See you are all up to speed in algebra. So this is maybe was dumbbell math. You're all up to speed. You all have the algebraic concepts down pretty well so I'm going to teach you how to program because we have this computer." so he's going to teach us FORTRAN. So it was the days of the punch card. It was not online. It was no cloud. It was ... you had to punch those cards correctly. In Adrian Hall, that was where the business office was. It was a computing center and of the couple .... In the couple of stations ... where you punch cards. The cards sort. So I'm in there. I have to get this done for Brother Caroline. I had to get it done for him on Monday so I came up early on Thanksgiving weekend. And interestingly enough this time of year, it's 1968 and I'm trying to get this thing to work and it's getting late and it's not working. I can't get it to work. And there's an upperclassman there who gave me some help. He had no patience with me and he was sort of a bright and he knew what he was doing. Maybe he was a work-study student running the center but it was open to anyone. All of a sudden, an adult walks in ... an older gentleman I



thought, I recognized but I didn't know who he was. And he asked this fella some questions and he came over to me and asked me what my trouble was. And I told him and he didn't do it for me but he showed me how to do it and I still made two mistakes. We did it again. He sat with me for about an hour until the program ran properly. When he left, the upperclassman said to me, "You must be pretty important around here." I said, "Why?" He said, "Because that was the President of the college ... that was Brother Linus Foy."

[13:18](#) **GN:** Wow, that's a good story. One day on a train coming back from New York, I met you and you talked about ... You knew Nilus Donnelly. Tell me about your ... you knowing him.

[13:32](#) **JD:** I was a senior and it's springtime and it's before graduation. But it's after the finals for something called Senior Week. A lot of antics with that ... And I wanted us to go to a Yankees game but they went to a Mets game and I wasn't a Mets fan ... so I stayed up here and you know ... I was living in Poughkeepsie but I went over to campus. I said, "There's one more thing I want to do." Nilus Donnelly lived in a duplex apartment on the top of Champagnat Hall. I've never been there. And I always wanted to be there so I got in the elevator I went to the top and I knocked on his door and he is a very gracious man. And he came, he opened a door and I told him what I was there for. He said, "I am just about to have lunch. Why don't you come in and join me?" And he poured me a glass of white wine and we looked at this magnificent view and he told me about the construction of Donnelly Hall and the construction of the chapel and I've got a story to tell you about the chapel in a little while too.

[14:26](#) **GN:** Okay. Well, we'll hold on to that. And getting back to the academics. Did you change your major? You started in History and then you went to political science?

[14:35](#) **JD:** When political science became available I'd thought I want to be a lawyer 'cause you know I'm a chatterbox and I thought ... law might be in my future so I thought political science would be interesting. And you know another professor I have to mention because I actually took

five classes with this fellow who was a very important ... became a very important friend of mine later in my adult life. But he was a phenomenal teacher was Tom Casey, just a terrific lecturer. And his discussions ... he would lead discussions you would have to have done the reading or else he wouldn't dismiss you or insult you. But you would just know that he thought less of you that you would dare to come to a discussion group without having done the required reading. He was very good, yeah.

[15:25](#) **GN:** Remember he's still with us. That's ... academic conditions at the time ... Where did you go to school? Did you go to Donnelly Hall? Was that the ....

[15:38](#) **JD:** Well Donnelly Hall classroom and occasionally what we use to call the campus center rooms 249. Most of the class were in Donnelly hall. Look ... this was an interesting situation I came into the college when it was a men's college. And my freshman year, they admitted women as commuters but basically on campus it was all-men. And...

[16:05](#) **GN:** How many dormitories where there?

[16:06](#) **JD:** There's just Leo, Sheahan, and Champagnat. There's like nine hundred fifty students senior live in the top half of Champagnat, top floors of Champagnat. You knew that 'cause you didn't walk under the windows because they saw freshmen and they would give them ... Most of these ... most of these fellows were my classmates sons of salesman, of firemen, cops, all first-generation college kids, sons of veterans of World War 2. These were ... this is a pretty special place and the faculty sort of reflect that. So I think I have since learned from Richard Foy that his inclination was to hire bright young academics who ABD and get them in the classroom and they were demanding. I mean folks like Zuccarello, Gerard Cox they would ... They were demanding.

[17:02](#) **GN:** They were not pushovers.

[17:03](#) **JD:** They were not pushovers and you know what and they were great teachers.

[17:07](#) **GN:** Yes. Let's focus on the dorms a little, life in the dorms and all men's ...

[17:15](#) **JD:** It's pretty rigid when I got here. There was eleven o'clock curfew on a weeknight.

Two o'clock on weekends. And there was a "no you couldn't have a girl, a guest in your room."

Once a month on a Sunday afternoon from one to four with the door open. So it was all pretty rigorous mandatory study hours if your cume fell below a certain grade level depending what we

call the proctor now 'resident advisor.' By the time my freshman year ended, a lot of that

changed. And it was sort of a liberalization going on. There's no alcohol allowed in the dorms

when I arrived. By the time I graduated, that was not the case. The dormitories became co-ed. I

thought that was a civilizing effect. There was ... I was living in Leo Hall. I moved to Sheehan

Hall to room with a friend of mine from high school and then came under the tutelage and

guidance of Brother Joseph Belanger. He was a pip. He's a lot of fun. Very enthusiastic man, full

of ideas, full of energy. He would also ... He would brook any nonsense and he would let you

know if he didn't think well of you.

[18:25](#) **GN:** You never took a class with him though.

[18:27](#) **JD:** I actually took an Intermediate and Advanced French with Joe Belanger.

[18:33](#) **GN:** You did. And you didn't go to Europe?

[18:34](#) **JD:** I didn't going to Europe because I had an opportunity to be an intern. This is the

interesting bridge here I had an opportunity in my junior year to being intern in the admissions

office with Dave Flynn ... which had a great effect on my later life.

[18:49](#) **GN:** That was the beginning of the whole business of students going out to recruit and participate in the program.

[18:54](#) **JD:** We were the group that was the famous article of the New York Times. That Paul

Brown by the way ... did you know that Paul Brown was a stringer that got that article in The

Times?

[19:01](#) **GN:** No I didn't realize that.

[19:02](#) **JD:** He was a year ahead of us. And Paul Brown got that article placed. And I think I remember the headline, “Marist gives its students, cars and credit cards and sends them out to get their next one(?)”. So I was part of that group and that was sort of fun. So I thought very highly of David Flynn and so that was ... I opted to do that. And it was a way of paying for my help pay for my junior year and get me some field experience which eventually worked out very well for me.

[19:31](#) **GN:** Was Brother Paul Stokes was the sheriff yet?

[19:33](#) **JD:** No, Tommy Wade, Thomas Wade was the dean of ... He was enough. He was more like a coach. Tom Wade was like he would have meetings with him in the cafeteria in the dark of night. The whole student body had stand on a cafeteria table and bark at us. He’s a good fellow though.

[19:51](#) **GN:** Best academic experiences. Best classes.

[19:55](#) **JD:** Louis Zuccarello. Very demanding, very challenging. I hate to say this the way I am going to say it. He read everything a student wrote. He never skipped the paper because he would know if you were if you wrote it. Zuccarello was... Tom Casey of course. I only took three credits with Jerry Cox but it was a great class.

[20:22](#) **GN:** How about Peter O’Keefe.

[20:25](#) **JD:** He's a friend of mine now, boy I didn't like him as a teacher.

[20:29](#) **GN:** Peter had opinions. Didn’t he?

[20:31](#) **JD:** Peter was the type of Irish man from the South Bronx that would put you ... and I know those kinds of folks. He’d size you up from day one and you'd never get out of that box and if he didn't like you up front.

[20:44](#) **GN:** Pause here. You’ve already asked about work on campus. Outside of the internship,

did you do anything else?

[20:49](#) **JD:** I was a bartender at the Brown Derby when I was a senior. It was a famous watering hole for the Marist students. I also worked [...] I worked all the time. I worked in the cafeteria in what was called the dish room which is really a disgusting place to work. But it was sort of like a bunch of gremlins where the students would put their cafeteria trays with whatever leftovers where put it on a conveyor belt that was going to this room would slap and clean all of the dishes it was pretty messy work. So you know that was I was a volunteer tour guide. I worked in security. Ran the ... Didn't like this job very much didn't last very long ... When Joe Brown was the activities director, I ran the game room for a while ... the pinball room for a while. First of all I thought it was amazing that people waste their money on this thing. Second of all, the noise drove me crazy. I didn't last there very long.

[21:45](#) **GN:** How did you get into the admissions? How did that come about? Here, I mean as an intern.

[21:52](#) **JD:** Well, I was a tour guide. I really liked David Flynn. He was a class act. I thought and he's very ... He was good to me. Yeah and so they asked me if I would want to be a tour guide. And by the way the school was going co-ed at the time so it was more and more girls coming up. It was a nice way to meet some nice women ... nice girls. And from that, and then David asked me to apply for it and I did and I was selected.

[22:28](#) **GN:** I guess I want to move on to. When did you graduate?

[22:31](#) **JD:** 1972.

[22:33](#) **GN:** And then what happened right after that? Was Vietnam still going?

[22:36](#) **JD:** Vietnam was on. But the draft ... In December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1969 was a national lottery to make the draft seemingly more fair. It wasn't by the way because if you were in college, you didn't have to go but if you were a working-class kid or kid from the ghetto, you had to go. Yeah

so, we could buy a way out. And I've often thought that was not a good way to run the draft. The draft, my own feeling was ... And I didn't think Vietnam ... I had two brothers who served ... I didn't think Vietnam was a real good idea to begin with. But second of all, I think they should have been universal. Everyone should have to go. I had a draft number that was pretty low when it first came out because they were drafting up to like two forty I was one nineteen. By the time I graduated, they were only drafting up to ninety. So I wasn't drafted. Had I been drafted I would have gone. Wouldn't have been happy about it but my father was a veteran. My brothers are veterans. I certainly wasn't not going to serve. But it was an opportunity to ... There was Brother Patrick George from the Marist Brothers who was, who may have been in the Lloyd high school at time could have been Mt. St. Michael come up [...] He was running a program called the Lay Volunteers for the Marist Brothers. I sat for an interview. I was originally going to go out to Eugene, Oregon. I'll never forget the first question he asked me. He looked me right in the eye and said, "Do you believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ?" I said, "That was the most direct question I've ever been asked. I've never been asked that before." I looked at him and I said, "Absolutely." And it was affirming for me that a Brother would but you know why you're doing this you're not some kind of liberal trying to [...] You're doing this for a higher reason. So, my first year out of Marist, I taught in St Joseph's Academy in Laredo, Texas. And for a hundred dollars a month room and board I lived with the Brothers in the community in the school and would've gone back honestly for a second year. But the school was open during the Depression but it just couldn't make it. They closed school at the end of I hope I was the reason why they closed it but the last year I was .... I taught the last year the schools open the brother still have a community in Laredo little further south. St. Joseph's Academy in Matamoros. There's a Marist Brother School.

[24:57](#) GN: Similarity between you and Bill O'Reilly then?

[25:00](#) **JD:** He went to Miami. He went out to Florida. But ironically, this was a pretty powerful program. This fellow I mentioned before, Paul Brown who wrote that article as a stringer for The New York Times about the admission effort here and at one time was a vice president for advancement here. Paul Brown and Brendan Mooney and Phil Glennon all classes a year ahead of me, they went to American Samoa for the Marist brothers. O'Reilly and Joe Rubino his roommate Joe would be no one to Opa-Locka but in Laredo Bob Merhoper, Chuck Meara by the way had been the President of the student body and ... one other fellow, they taught at the Laredo I picked up some of their classes. It was a great group of people. I mean this was a very special place at time.

[26:54](#) **GN:** Marioft is that the triples?

[26:56](#) **JD:** Yeah, he's the older brother of the triplets. The identical triplets who show up.

[26:05](#) **GN:** Yeah. So one year then volunteer service and then after that...?

[26:08](#) **JD:** I come back home and living in Bergen County, New Jersey with my family. My family had moved from Long Island. My father remarried the business reasons. They had moved to a town call Wyckoff and made a little money because the arrangement was a hundred dollars a month and they give you a bonus when I went home. So I had a little bit of money and by those with my mind and I owned an automobile when I was a student here. I sold it and didn't have a car in Texas. So I had some money so I was going to look for a job back home and my stepmother didn't like idleness. Because you know everyone had to contribute. Yeah so, I told her that I would give her twenty-five dollars a week. I got a job unemployed twenty-five dollars till I got a job at thirty-five dollars a week after I got a job and then well it was pretty good money. And that is. But then there was no pressure on me because I'm a paying member of the community so long story I searched for a job and wind up using my internship under the Dave Flynn and I was hired as an admissions counselor for a small Franciscan College in Biddeford,

Maine and I represented them in the state of New Jersey. St Francis College in Biddeford Maine now called the University of Southern New England and Southern Maine. But I worked for them for two years.

[27:36](#) **GN:** What kind of hours?

[27:38](#) **JD:** Visit four high school a day. Talk about the school. Recruit for the school. And it was a really ... It was a give me a lot of time to think about things because I wasn't up at the school very much and there was a school that was very risky. It was an at-risk school, severely at risk and there's a lot of things that there at the time that ... Long story short with two years after that, Mt. St. Mary College now living in Garrison New York and Putnam County has expanded my territory to be the metropolitan area of New York. And Mt. St. Mary college was looking for a Director of Admissions and I throw my hat in the ring. It was an assistant director of admissions. I had some experience at Marist and I was hired and I was hired as the Director of Admissions at Mt. St. Mary College in 1975 where ironically, I meet my wife.

[28:33](#) **GN:** Is that so?

[28:35](#) **JD:** Yes, I met my wife at Mount Saint Mary College and we're married.

[28:39](#) **GN:** Was she working there or?

[28:40](#) **JD:** Yeah, it's a terrible story. Mt St. Mary had a very funny thing. They had full time director, a couple of staff people and an assistant director. And then, these two odd-position six-month contracts just to have folks go out and recruit in the fall. My wife, however was a graduate of the academy that was run by the Dominicans. But a graduate from SUNY Oneonta with a history degree. She'd just finished a six-month stint for them. I get hired in July so that was it was over in January and she went over to New Paltz to get certified to teach in a public-school system in New York State. And she still hadn't gotten the job so my assistant said Chris Supple real nice girl. She did a job for us last year. So we should hire her back. She's looking for work.



So bring her over. I met her in July I was twenty-five and she was twenty-three. She had a six-month contract started secretly dating in the Fall. And we were married. We came back from our honeymoon on the anniversary of our first date and we're married for thirty-five years.

[29:45](#) **GN:** You're living in Garrison?

[29:46](#) **JD:** no I was living in Garrison at the time then Cold Spring. And then the two years at Mount Saint Mary's and David Flynn. I don't say anything bad about him but he sort of soured on his career at Marist

[30:05](#) **GN:** This is about 1977 then?

[30:07](#) **JD:** Yes. David Flynn gets a job offer from Fairfield University to become their admissions officer and sort of brings you back to Marist.

[30:19](#) **GN:** Is Dennis Murray here now?

[30:20](#) **JD:** No. Linus is here. And Linus and Louis Zuccarello and the academic team decide whether we should let David move on with his career. David leaves not happy about it and because it causes schism between he and I because I applied for the job. He thought I was being disloyal. We'll leave it at that. Yeah I went before a search committee. Remember Peter O'Keefe was on that search committee. John Schleppe was on that search committee and several other people.

[30:51](#) **GN:** Was my wife?

[30:53](#) **JD:** I think Liz Nolan was on that search committee.

[30:56](#) **GN:** A guy, John Newman applying also.

[30:59](#) **JD:** John Newman was number two in the office and he was applying. John Newman is still in admissions by the way he runs Southampton College's admissions. He's part of SUNY Stony Brook now. And I won. Zuccarello offered me the job.

[31:16](#) **GN:** Zuccarello was the dean?

[31:18](#) **JD:** He was the academic dean. He was the hiring line officer. I would report to Louis Zuccarello. Linus Richard Foy was the president at the time. He was the same fellow that helped me run that program back in 1968. My final interview before the job offer was with him. I actually worked with Linus for two years and the school was having some problems. The school ... We'd just opened the McCann Center. The enrollment was slipping ... The draft had been over so the student deferment was over ... We had dropped the core. We had changed the core to a sixty-sixty curriculum ... more liberal maybe less therefore less demanding 'cause students could find easy way out. Yeah. Schools enrolment dropped down to about 1600. My first year ... So I got here in August. It was tough and I won't say we had open admissions but it was pretty damn close to it because we had to make the budget. The next year I had discovered a company up in Boston by the name of Epsilon Data Management. Colleges by the names of students take the SATs from the College Board. They pay so many cents a name and you can sort on major fields, desires, geography, gender ... I've been using that for a while and so had Flynn but Epsilon Data Management had a new wrinkle. They would take that information and personalize it and send out personal letters. Now the school's having trouble financially. There are some quarters of the faculty that I think it's time for a presidential change. I never agreed with that. But Linus' last year as president, my second years in the admissions offices ... we had a forty five percent increase in applications because we sent out personal letters to prospective students. And they thought ... wow they must really like me. And we did. So we had [...] I spent ten years [...] two years with Linus, I worked under Dennis Murray. Eventually wound up reporting to Dennis. he promoted me to vice president and my family ... I started my family. I was living in Cold Spring. I was actually a justice of the peace little village. I was in the village is actually Nelsonville. And worked at Marist for ten great years ... The enrollments got to be over three thousand. The applicant pool, we had five times ... we increased the applicant pool five folds.

But it was time to go. So in 1987 at the ripe old age of thirty-seven, I made an abrupt career change and [...]

[34:01](#) **GN:** In 1987?

[34:02](#) **JD:** '87, yea. In an abrupt career change, I went to Wall Street.

[34:06](#) **GN:** How did you manage that? Were you studying finance prior to this?

[34:13](#) **JD:** No. Actually ironically enough we mentioned Fairfield before. While director of admissions I followed Gus Nolan over to Fairfield University ... got a masters of art in communication in the Center for Human Communication ... and a degree in political and corporate communications and we studied under the same props as my interviewer here. No, John Lahey was here at the time. He's now the president of Quinnipiac University. He and I started the same month and left the same month just about ten years we became very close friends but I was a reference for him but on his candidate for the presidency and he asked me to go with him. I thought it'd would be disloyal to Marist. So there was a trustee committee. Bill Nickly(?) was a partner at the old investment bank, Alex. Brown & Sons based in Baltimore but there was an office here in Poughkeepsie. He was a trustee who chaired the admissions committee. And I went to sit down with him and told him my dilemma. And he said, "You have a PhD?" I said, "No, I have a Master's." He said, "Well you'd only do that if you'd only do that with Lahey if you would like to follow him someday and be a college president. Would you really want to ... Would you respect a college that would hire a president without a PhD?" And he asked me if I had a PhD in me and I didn't think that I did at the time. He said to me, "You know you can go with John and be new adventure do for John what you did for Dennis Murray. You can be loyal to Dennis Murray and stay there or you can think about something else cause two fellows are leaving my office, an office in Greenwich, Connecticut. I have some openings and if you want, we could talk about you joining us." And that's how it started. So I went through

that some soul-searching and actually it was a rough year ... the first year out because I took a thirty percent pay cut to join Alex Brown. I was no longer a judge for my community I was no longer dean of admissions or vice president of Marist College ... I was sort of a learning stockbroker at the age of thirty-seven.

[36:24](#) **GN:** That's why you stayed so trim over those years.

[36:26](#) **JD:** I was scared to death. The irony is this: I actually did this on purpose of my last day at Marist College was March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1977 because I want to start the brokerage business on April Fool's Day. And that was a Wednesday.

[36:43](#) **GN:** Thank you for that little insight. On after Marist. That's one of the things now again after Marist while here 'cause you really ... What was the hardest part of the admission work? After the first year and you got going?

[36:57](#) **JD:** The alumni were angry at the school. They had felt that they had not gotten ... The school wasn't moving ... They thought the degree was worth what they thought they had put into it. They were angry at the school particularly the local alums ... just not happy. There was deferred maintenance. But there was always the faculty and I say this is not because you're sitting here Gus. The faculty was truly very good faculty. One thing that Linus and Richard LaPietra and his predecessor had done and they had assembled a very, very good teaching faculty who are very serious about, very professional about what they were going to do. Money was tight, just money. I remember hearing when they opened the McCann Center. They took four maintenance folks of the original part of the campus and moved them to McCann Center ... They couldn't replace them because they didn't have the money. So the whole idea was to grow the school. You had to grow it. So I grow it and you know ... brought in young fellow in from California. Dennis Murray, he was very young guy gave him keys to the campus when he's thirty-two years of age, it was a big risk ... but they gave me the keys to the admissions office

when I was twenty-seven. They gave Linus Foy, the key to the presidency office. I think he was twenty-seven. Marist has always made good bets are the young men and young women I hope. So ... but I am very fond and loyal to this intuition. I was privileged to serve a term three-year term as the President of the Alumni Association therefore represented the alumni at the Board of Trustees. My son is a graduate of this institution. He did go abroad. He spent his junior year at Cambridge University. My wife recently completed a master's degree.

[38:47](#) **GN:** Is this Owen now?

[38:47](#) **JD:** Yeah.

[38:49](#) **GN:** Where is he now?

[38:50](#) **JD:** He's a captain in the Marine Corp. He's a helicopter pilot. He's stationed in Okinawa. He has about ... He told me yesterday on the phone that "I have twenty months left." And he's going to graduate school.

[39:01](#) **GN:** And how old is he now?

[39:02](#) **JD:** Twenty-nine.

[39:03](#) **GN:** Like Michael.

[39:05](#) **JD:** Michael Murray grew up together, born the same summer. They're very good friends. In fact, they met and they both served in Iraq and Afghanistan at the same time and they both met each other in Iraq. Michael was on the ground. I have to say something about Michael Murray, Michael Murray was a true hero. What he did in Afghanistan and Iraq was on the ground, leading young Marines. He was a platoon commander leading young marine in combat. That is meet this young man nice fellow now ... what he did is incredibly courageous leader of men.

[39:46](#) **GN:** I also heard that he had offered to stay in Washington but went back with the troops to return to Afghanistan subsequently. Alright, let's step back a little reflect on things now. What

would you say to the argument of those who would make it that college is not worth the effort? It's not worth the expense. You know the money you have to put in, the time you have to put in and then when you finish the possibility of a job you might as well be a mechanic or a carpenter or something. How do you answer that? Is college worth the effort? Or the investment?

[40:27](#) **JD:** Let's begin by saying I don't think [...] I think we have cultivated an urban legend, an urban myth in this country that college is for everyone. I don't think it is and I think we have lost respect for the skilled trades, whether it's an electrician or a plumber or a carpenter or a mechanic. I think we've lost respect for those men. And candidly I think that's a shame. However I want to talk about someone who used ... College is you know it should not be ... My father told me never finished his degree because of having to combat a career ... Fordham at night NYU at night never finished his degree. He told me. He said, "When you go there, question the questioners." So it's about the educational process. It's about being learning how to learn. It's about being. It's about satisfying your curiosities when you satisfy one curiosity, you create another. The expense, its enormous. Unfortunately when I look around at the college administrations have grown rather dramatically. College faculty have not grown rather as dramatically. I do think there's a while ... a reliance on some adjunct faculty because you get men and women who have experiences in their discipline or their fields they can be very valuable in the classroom. The reliance on adjuncts. I always thought that was unfortunate because I think what Marist College has done in particular, we have built a phenomenally beautiful campus. I think it's time now to go back the days of Linus and LaPietra, Zuccarello and ... let's start really building a phenomenal faculty again. I'm sure there's wonderful teachers here but the point is I remember when the McCann Center was built was a fellow named Charlie Hoyt came over here to join the faculty when Bennett College closed. And he asked where the intellectual equivalent of the McCann center was on campus. I'd like to see the structural

equivalent of the building I'm sitting in and building we just constructed. I think we need to develop to enhance a faculty. Not that they're inadequate. I just think that is the heart and soul. Holy Cross has 2,700 students. They have 220 full-time faculty members that makes the experience enormously different. But college is worth it.

[43:03](#) **GN:** I thought about it other ways too. What about the bonding. Do you have friends now that you have meet college?

[43:07](#) **JD:** Absolutely.

[43:09](#) **GN:** And how does that happen?

[43:11](#) **JD:** Well the great thing about Marist ... I said this once at the Board of Trustees. I was again ... the alumni representatives to the board. It's kind of nice 'cause they treat you as a full trustee. You sit there in executive sessions as well. The student president doesn't honestly ... the faculty representative doesn't and we're talking about the capital campaign now being completed and I said the one thing that struck me about Marist when I went here and when I worked here and my son had the same experience is that Marist folks I was referring to the students really like each other and they are very supportive of each other. I met some phenomenal, phenomenal people in this institution and fellow students. I may not be in touch with them now but when I run into them. It's ... The bond is strong. I think it's because we come from similar background. I went to a faculty meeting again sitting on the board ... went to a meeting with the faculty policy committee and faculty executive committee ... the two important.

[44:20](#) **GD:** Faculty meetings, yeah.

[44:21](#) **JD:** I had lunch with members of the board whoever wanted to go and one of the things I was struck at was Don Anderson who's a member of the English faculty who taught here when I was here ... I didn't take a class with him. He was sort of hip young new prof when I was here.

[44:36](#) **GN:** He just retired.

[44:37](#) **JD:** Well there you go. I should retire ... I am sixty-one. He said, one of the things that he talked about was the students. They couldn't understand ... they were shocked at how polite, how polite the Marist students are. By the way my wife worked here with Garry McNulty in the Marist media program internship and she said the same thing and they were shocked by how polite these students are and I looked at them I said look at where they come meet their parents. These are great families. These kids come from great families. There are so many people who graduate from this institution who met their spouse here. You know Bob West back when he was the Vice President for Advancement did a very cool thing. He went ... did ... 'cause I mention that to him. He came back to me and he said, "You know you're right. There's lots and lots of them." So on Valentine's Day, he sent the married Marist couples Valentine's cards from the college.

[45:43](#) **GN:** Terrific. You've had experiences with other colleges. What is there? We talked about values and I'm sure St Mary's is not much different from us in terms of what would they pertain to be their values.

[45:57](#) **JD:** Mt. St Mary's? Look the Dominican nuns are just phenomenal, phenomenal woman. Marist college was a very, very entrepreneurial place and I hate to say this because it sounds misogynist and I don't intend that to be but there were men here who were providing for their families and this was of an institution in its formation and they had to make it work. So they made it work and even the Brothers who didn't have families had to support like Joe Belanger who made the Marist Abroad program work who ran a Foreign Film Festival ... big stuff. there was much more of an entrepreneurial flavor and very, very experimental and very good way very, very much different but it was part of the DNA of this institution and I'm sure it started with Paul Ambrose for god's sake. It was just the entrepreneurial nature of this place. I mean the fact that the Marist Brothers built the chapel. The fact Marist Brothers built Donnelly, built



Marian Hall.

[47:10 GN](#): With their own hands.

[47:11 JD](#): With their own hands. I was a senior in high school when that ad appeared “Meet the builders of Marist College.” That was the other thing that struck me about the institution. Yeah, that's the other thing that struck me about Marist College I just want to say one more thing when I was still the Dean of Admissions of the colleges I was in Greystone hall and ... I was asked ... We were ... a long-time basketball coach and athletic director Ron Pietro. We had separated the roles. He was going to become the A.D. We were looking for a men's basketball coach so I was on the search committee and it was winter time. It was the last interview. We were interviewing a man from France by name of Mike Perry who by the way ... brings Rick Smits probably the most ... one of the most famous graduates of the college ... brings Rick Smits to the Marist but that's not the point. The point is: I am sitting in my office. You got to understand. I think it's 1981 maybe a little later. And one of the secretaries outside the gym says there's a phone call for you. It's a ... The fellow says he's Coach Bob Knight and Bob Knight was a coach in Indiana, a controversial coach but he just won the Olympic gold medal for the US in the 80s Olympics. So this Coach Knight on the phone calling as a reference for this fellow, Mike Perry. So I, Jim Daly talking to Bob Knight. “So, thanks for calling Coach. I will make sure everyone knows you feel this way about him.” Hangs up the phone and ... half an hour later. I thought she was kidding. She said, “There's a Coach Conaseca on the phone.” Lou Conaseca from St John's. I love Lou Conaseca and he's got the same raspy Lou Conaseca voice. “How're you Dean Daly?” “How you doing?” And he doesn't talk about Mike Perry although he is calling to support it. He says, “Do you know where the chapel is on the campus, Dean Daly?” I said, “Yeah Coach, I am looking out my office window. I'm looking at it.” He said, “Because you know the Marist brothers built that chapel?” I said, “Yeah I do know that, Coach.” “You know I coached at St. Ann's and you

know what I need during the school year. I needed summer job. I helped build that chapel.”

[49:07](#) **GN:** Well I believe that if he says so.

[49:13](#) **JD:** He said, “He helped build the chapel.” But I don't know if Conaseca is still alive but somebody should call him about it.

[49:16](#) **GN:** We have a woman on campus here, Connie (?). There's no Marist brother that comes on this campus that doesn't claim he built that chapel. (laughter) You know.

[49:28](#) **JD:** Well, Conaseca wasn't a Brother but he was a coach.

[49:31](#) **GN:** For one who work here, there weren't that many. Nevertheless ...

[49:35](#) **JD:** I know you're in the ad, Gus.

[49:38](#) **GN:** Yes. Alright moving on, tell me this. Marist isn't perfect. If you had a chance to talk to the board one day, what would be the one thing you might say to them that they might do?

[49:51](#) **JD:** Start an engineering program. I think Marist has become a little, honestly, I think this is endemic of the academic world [...]

[50:05](#) **GN:** stay with the true and secure

[50:07](#) **JD:** A little politically correct. Yeah, I think it's a little liberal not as liberal as radically left as others. I'd like to see a little more balance in the worldview but I would think that. I would like to see the schools ... I think an engineering program, first of all, I think the country needs it. I think we have to respect that kind of scientific discipline.

[50:34](#) **GN:** One that I just heard recently that Steve Jobs talking to Obama before he passed away. He said, “We need thirty thousand new engineers just to bring back the jobs that he founded overseas.” Seven hundred thousand.

[50:48](#) **JD:** That's correct. That's in the biography. And by the way you know about Steve Jobs, I read the eulogy that his sister ... She was also given up for adoption and they were reunited as adults became and were very close. Steve Jobs was adopted as a baby. She was at his ... His

family was there when he passed you know what his final words were.

[51:13](#) GN: no

[51:15](#) JD: You know it's amazing. This is on her this is it her eulogy. Oh wow, oh wow, oh wow.

He said Oh wow three times before he passed on.

[51:26](#) GN: Maybe he saw something coming.

[51:29](#) JD: Well. I hope I get to see it.

[51:32](#) GN: I wouldn't want to rush there though

[51:34](#) JD: I don't want to rush there. I have a lot of work to do here. I think the engineering would be ... I think it would be a stretch for the school. I would like to see ... Look we stretched when we built this library. It's a magnificent building. Stretched when we built Hancock. Stretched when we built addition to the athletic facilities on the campus. Yeah, I'd like to see the school now stretch to expand the academic (?) I think will be very good for the community and the very good for the state. It's very good for the nation. Marist would consider to raise some money and find a way to build an engineering program here. And it will be difficult and demanding.

[52:15](#) GN: Have you mentioned that to the president? Has Dennis know your feelings about it?

[52:18](#) JD: You know, I think very highly of Dennis Murray I'm not as in touch with him as I think he's been here since 1979, thirty-two years. And I guess when you get ... and he's enjoyed it. He's had a remarkable effect on the institution. I always ... When I used to introduce Dennis Murray when I was Alumni President, I used to say one of the great, one of reasons why I believe Marist College has been so successful because two men made it their life's work. I said the fact is ... for fifty years this institution only had two presidents Linus Foy and his successor and I would introduce Dennis Murry. He didn't really like that. But I teased Tim Murray. Tim Murray, the athletic director does a wonderful job, a fine human being. I can't believe he is as

good as he is and not having a degree at this institution. But he is. But I once try to him because there's only been one undefeated athletic team in history of the college. And that was club football. There was no recognition of that in the McCann Center and I tell him that you have the Murray disease and he goes, "What's that?" I said nothing happened before you got here.

[53:42](#) GN: Alright moving on. What would you say about the advances that Marist has made in technology?

[53:48](#) JD: It's phenomenal.

[53:50](#) GN: And is there a danger there that we go too far?

[53:53](#) JD: No.

[53:55](#) GN: Distance learning?

[53:57](#) JD: Not a danger. I think it's remarkable that first of all ...

[54:11](#) GN: Distant learning for whom ...

[54:14](#) JD: I remember having ... I think technology on its own can take on a life of its own of course. But the values that this institution not only says it believes it, might truly ... Believes it. I think that I'm not concerned about the reach of technology you know interrupting the human experience. I understand that we have students who are taking courses online who live in the far reaches of the country. One person I know the only time they were on campus was to pick up their degree flew in from the West Coast to do that. You know, I'm sure there's probably some concern about that. But no, I think that technology advances the human experience. It's just ... It's an extension of the power of God's creation.

[55:15](#) GN: Do you know the name Cathy Manning?

[55:17](#) JD: I do not.

[55:18](#) GN: she was a graduate of seventy-two I think and she's a doctorate. She teaches at the University of Vermont was in last week for an interview. She had put it this way for those who

are not going to college other than by technology ... that's the way to go. It's better to have it that way than nothing.

[55:39](#) **JD:** I agree.

[55:42](#) **GN:** Although we much preferred to have on-campus experience, the technology for graduate work .... Her other point was that Marist from what she has seen is about fifteen years ahead of most institution on innovative stuff.

[55:59](#) **JD:** Well, I think that's true. That's ... We can go back to the early founding's of this intuition that I truly believe is in the DNA of this college. And I just want say something about technology. When I was as an undergraduate, I participated in a student activity group called the Appalachian Reaction and is founded by fellow by the name of Brendan Mooney, I've recently come back in touch with, Brendan came out Mt. Saint Michael's High School in the Bronx, a Marist Brother school.

[56:27](#) **GN:** He was here, two weeks ago.

[56:28](#) **JD:** Terrific human. Brendan started this program we would go out wash cars, paint houses, raised money so we could send money to this priest was operating out of Berea, Kentucky and we would go down. We would also pay for volunteers from the college to go and spend summers down there working with a summer ... here a summer camp there and his whole purpose to be honest with you ... These people live in the back hollows of eastern Kentucky which was very, very rural. You know his whole purpose was to help these people to raise them up and to convert them to Catholicism, to be honest with you which was fine by me. But I remember I went down one spring break. It was Easter vacation and they had a week off so I was ... we raised money and I went down with two vans down to Berea and we're going to help get the summer camp ready, paint, do some carpentry, actually built a spillway because of the man-made lake, wild stuff. But the priest there was a remarkable guy and he's showed us a slide-show

some of the people he's working with. And it was kids from Notre Dame, kids from Xavier, kids from Marist. It was about twenty of us and there were some permanent volunteers there great people and he and he said you know what I really like about this photograph and this was a bit of a shack this family was living in. But those television there. Nobody could figure ... I like that the television was there. He said, everybody calls it the boot tube because that gets them contact with the outside world. So that's my answer maybe on technology.

[57:56](#) **GN:** Yeah, we're down to our last two or three minutes. Something we didn't say, things should be said about Marist?

[58:06](#) **JD:** I always hope that this institution remains faithful to the heritage in the founding of the Marist and to the Roman Catholic faith. And I always thought that the blessed sacrament always in the sacristy of this chapel and I always thought this college is never afraid to defend that. And I worry about that. And I think that a school whose motto borrow from the brothers is "Prayer and work." Shouldn't forget that, you know. And that's very important. That as admissions director I can tell you that's a very important thing about who wants to come to school here whose parents are willing to write a check to have their sons and daughters come to school here but I think that combined with the as we talked about the entrepreneurship. That is my wish for the future this institution that the school remain faithful to its heritage.

[58:04](#) **GN:** Thank you very much Jim. Good talking to you.

[59:08](#) **JD:** Thanks, Gus.