

Interview with Michael Roy
Marquette Michigan
October 21, 2010

START OF INTERVIEW

Magnaghi, Russell (RM): Okay Mike, we'll get started the first question I always have is what is your birthday?

Roy, Michael (MR): August 15, 1945.

RM: Okay, could you give us a little of background, where you, you know, where you grew up and then your kind of educational background and so on prior to, you know, starting your career

MR: I grew up in central Illinois and I was raised in a small town just outside Kankakee called Urbana and spent like elementary school there and then actually high school in Kankakee and then went to school in Montana, I had a football scholarship at Eastern Montana College and so I went out west and played football for a couple of years and then my father passed away suddenly and decided that maybe I should focus more on college and less on football so continued there, I got involved in the student government.

RM: You continued at...?

MR: Continued at Eastern and graduated from Eastern in 1967 and worked for the college, actually I had a job teaching – contract to teach including ____ and I guess my involvement while at the college I was approached by a business manager at Eastern and asked if I might be interested in an accountant's position, sort of how I got my start in higher education.

RM: What was your major?

MR: It was business education and bachelor's degree – Bachelor of Science degree in business education and so I worked for the college for about two and a half years and decided that I needed to maybe to go on to get a master's degree. I wanted to get into the Midwest and so happens that one of the head of the business education department at Eastern was applying for a position at Central Michigan University and he was also responsible for data sale and I was on there waiting for a report to print out and sitting by his desk he had a bulletin of central's graduate school there and I was leafing through it and it looked like something I might be interested in and so I applied there and a couple of other schools and ended up going to Central, he also ended up going to Central as the Dean of the business education department; head of business education. So I worked for Central for about seven years and...

RM: That was between what years?

MR: it would have been 19, well actually I went to graduate school at Central and I was a student in the MBA program there, ran out of money so I went to see the people in the business office and they hired me as a student employee and after I graduated in 1970 they hired me to a full time accounting position.

RM: So was this, just to go back a bit, you said you were involved in student government? Did you just...

MR: At Eastern I was involved in what they called the student union which is university student organization. They actually ran, sort of advisory, student advisory group to the university, college student union and then I got riled up, became business manager for the student government did that for a couple of years and that's sort of how I got involved with the administration. There they had a student fee that covered most of the athletic program actuary allocations, significant allocation to the athletic program and as the students were technically responsible for reviewing the budgets and how we were going to use the money and we decided to actually put a little more rigor in the process so it did become a little bit better known among the administration and we asked for a little bit more detail and information. In and out of that then I got to know the president and the business manager Ken Heckless and that's how I was offered the position.

RM: Now, but you had also been involved in student government at Eastern Montana?

MR: That's what I'm talking about – at Eastern.

RM: Oh, oh, okay.

MR: This is all at Eastern Montana.

Rm: Oh, oh, oh okay, I thought it was at graduate school.

MR: No this, and actually in graduate school, I was full time. Actually started in February and graduated in December so I was sort of on the fast track for getting though, yeah.

RM: So you're kind of a good example of a student getting involved outside the classroom and kind of propelling your career process.

MR: And then, as I said, we had about halfway through my time as a student, graduate student at central, I got in the, their controller hired me as a student employee and I worked in the payroll office and I did some work for the budget director and some reconciliation for him and out of that as I said they offered me an accounting position when I graduated. And I served my time there and moved from accountant and then I decided to leave Central, I was a control – university controller – about a year before I decided to leave Central. I... we had been putting in a new accounting system that the other state universities if they wanted to opt into could get a significant reduction, so we at Central had a presentation that I did on the accounting system, and to the other colleges and universities to see if they might be interested and there was no particular advantage to Central, but it was an opportunity for them if they wanted, Lau Shau was one of the people in the group; he was the Vice President of Northern and after the presentation we got talking and he said they had a position open, chief accountant's position and it was basically what I was doing at central and I had some interest because at Central my boss was just a couple of years older than me and his boss was not much older than him, so I didn't see much upward mobility whereas at Northern, Bob Camp who was the controller during the time and the plan was to change the structure, the organizational structure and create an associate vice president or assistant vice president. So in that discussion I told Lau that I'd send him my resume and I did and he contacted me and after invited me up for an interview and I accepted, me made an offer and I accepted the position at Northern and came here in January of 1978, started my career at Northern, my first day was a snow day,

we were living in Norwood apartments and I was pretty pumped up about starting work so I couldn't get out of my parking spot in the parking lot so I decided to put my boots on and walk over to my office, and then my first day was actually somewhat of a quiet day on campus because the university was closed because of snow. Started out here in a chief accountant's position, and after about three years, Bob Kemp decided to retire and then I moved into assistant what's my title, it's right here, Assistant Vice President for Finance and Control and in there I had the responsibility for all the accounting functions, we budgeted, day-to-day budgeting, more the transaction side, not the development and at a point I also became responsible for purchasing area and all the areas that were purchasing and served in that position, till about from 1981- 1991 at which time Lau announced that he was going to retire and about the same time, Jim Appleberry announced that he was going to leave the university and go out east to Washington D.C. and so the board decided to bring in our president Bill Vandament. Bill started on July 1, 1991 and I assumed the responsibility for interim vice president July 7 and continued actually in the interim position for about two and a half years because they didn't want to make a decision on a Vice President until they resolved the president's position and so I sort of hung out there for a while. Then it was the served in became Vice President to ____ about two and a half years later in '93, December '93, and served in that until June, excuse me July of 2007, I stepped down as the Vice President and in between there I also served a year as the interim President in between Judi Bailey and Les Wong.

RM: What were some of the, not to go into all the detail, we don't want that, but what were some of the problems or challenges that you faced during that, you know during those years as a financial vice president and maybe something about some of the challenges and then some of the, because you're also involved in the development of the campus, and there was a lot of development that went on and then also your interaction with Dr. Vandament.

MR: Well when Bill came the first issue we were faced with was the university really hadn't put their budget together yet because the state had not decided on an appropriation at that point in time so he came in as an interim and I came in as interim VP and although I was familiar with the transaction side of the budget I wasn't really that involved in the development because I pretty much just did that. So our first task was developing a budget and I vaguely remember we had about a 3 million dollar problem to start with because of the... John Engler had just come into office and the state's economy wasn't great at the time and so I think we either got a zero or no increase ____ corporation from year to year that year but we still had salaries and things that we were sort of committed to, through contracts and that, that we had to cover so our first task was then to get a balanced budget. We spent a couple months working on that. Bill was great to work with because he had a finance background in his previous positions, so it was easy to talk to him about whatever the issue is, how do we go about this and...

RM: Could you just kind of in general you know give us some idea of when your faced with that kind of a problem, how do you deal with it? Do you say you look at the budget and what kind of, in general, what sort of happens there?

MR: Well the easy part is actually figuring out that you have a problem because, I mean, it's more into the calculation; here's where the revenues are and project your revenues and what's it look like our expense is? And so that part really the first step, we actually knew that pretty much from day one that we had a problem the second part was really thinking through a process for how do you go about addressing this because it impacts the whole campus and so we sort of had to come up with a process, for what do we in the budgets and put into place something where when we went back to the department heads and had a target, excuse me, division heads and had a target amount that they had to identify, not necessarily that we were actually going to reduce their budget by that percentage, but it

was, gave us some basis to have a discussion about what was the impact of the those reductions without, and then Bill and I went through a process with all of the division heads gone through what they proposed and had a discussion about well what kind of impact this had and you know sort of what were some trade-offs I believe there was a budget committee more of a broader university wide committee that was established at that time, and actually sat us during the last few years Pap Bill's Presidency. So we had a discussion with them, a proposal of what we were going to do and then started to share with the broader university community and this all happened in the early part of the fall because we were...

RM: This was the fall of '90...?

MR: '91.

RM: '91.

MR: And so we did that and I think the other thing that happened I think was in '91 the governor also vetoed the appropriation, state appropriation for the USOEC that was actually a grant and took it out of the appropriation bill supposedly thinking that it was to support the operation of the dome, but it was actually to support the operation of the United States Olympic Education Center. So right away, you know right around the same time, basically, I don't know, we had another million dollar problem that was just added on to the do list which Bill, Rose, and others started working on; how do you fill this gap and how do you address this and fill it up.

Rm: But then you also had the problem of the bill because the dome opened and then governor...

MR: Yeah actually that happened, it was that fall. The plan was... the dome was finished and the plan was the dome was going to be open at the end of fall and that was put on a little bit of a hold until we identified where the money was going to come from because we originally were supposed to receive like \$900,000 in additional operating funds. We received a portion of that, but nowhere near... I think we received about half of that in our appropriation and never received the other half so there was this gap and now fortunately it turned out that the estimates for the actual operation of the dome were somewhat inflated, it was mainly in the use of energy and what it was going to take to heat the dome, the dome actually is more efficient you know as far as the original projections. The systems turned out were much more efficient.

RM: But just to put it in perspective, you were then facing a million and a half dollar budget problem in terms of the Dome and USOEC so...

MR: Yes, they seemed to keep coming in the door, the issues. Yeah and here's Bill, he's the interim President and it's like one after the other and then there was a pressure in the state to take money away from Northern and move it to other universities because we... people said that we were over funded.

RM: Was that, that was still part, just to put it in perspective, that was still part of the discussion, the anger, on the part of some people – downstate legislatures over the Jacobetti years over what had happened.

MR: Well Jake was still there so he had some ____, his power had started to wane as soon as Engler got into office and so it just added to the stress.

RM: Sounds like the house of cards coming.

MR: You know, is there anything else that could happen? But you know Bill worked through the issues with the dome and the final, you know, how to put together a final, you know, financial obligation enough to operate.

RM: Now was it easier to be working with Bill Vandament than say some other presidents because of his, I mean, you had this kind of crisis situation or crisis coming on but was it easier to work with him because of his financial background?

MR: Yes, part of it was Bill's demeanor in the first place it was more you know, he's a pretty laid back individual so you know, something bad happened and then he, his approach is well let's figure out how to solve the problem and the fact that he had this financial background and you know really had experience at a number of institutions and a number of universities yeah, it did have great deal to making it a lot easier to go through and bounce ideas back you know, I mean, I knew a lot about Northern but he knew a lot about ____ and some ideas from other universities that actually helped to help us work our way through the process and so then after we got through ____ there were some cut backs and stuff in that first year and everywhere actually first three years we went through pretty much three rounds of that because the state corporation didn't get much better. We might have got a small increase one year and then another one with small increase so we were always, each year we were faced with about a 2-3 million dollar problem every year. And so we went through this process tried to identify areas within that we were maybe higher than other institutions and then take a look at those areas to see why that was the case and if there might be something that we could do to adjust our cost to depending on our, that's pretty much how we approached that short bill and then in about, oh it was 2000, end of 2000 Engler was in transition from Engler to Granholm and it was in December and funds in the state actually started going down even more and so when, just as Engler was leaving office, he issued an executive order ____ our appropriation and it might be supplemental I guess is what they call it and then in February after Granholm had come into office, she issued another one. It was our appropriation and all the state's university appropriations even further to try to stopgap. So all through this time we spent a great deal of time talking about budgets and our focus was how do we reduce our costs and change things to bring it more in line with what our research was. During this period of time and actually into the years with Granholm, early years of Granholm administration we made significant changes to the organization of the university we had at one time in essence eight divisions cut back to basically three which was down to the president, vice president for finance administration and academic president, academic vice president and at the same time, we reduced the number of colleges that we have and changed some departments around eliminated some programs and so this began the process that everybody on this campus knows. It's a painful process because it obviously effects people's lives and I think we worked though it relatively well and tried to make sure that if we were going to do something we did it though incentives for people who might want to leave the university, created vacancies, and then tried to adjust the organization so that the people that actually ended up getting laid off were over this period of time was relatively minimal and even some of those ended up coming back because we had vacancies later on I think but yeah.

RM: So is so that kind of position is what was there ever a time in as financial vice president that you, in the course your tenure that you could sit back and sort of enjoy life and you had money coming in but the budget was balanced or was always you were under siege with cuts coming?

MR: There were a few years that we actually did good on, increase in appropriation oh I think in the last ten years the increases that we had received most of them were taken away you know current, that same year through executive order reductions or reduced in filing so in the last ten years there really hasn't been much that was much in additional funds but there were a few years during Engler's administration that there were increases, two, three percent increases and those were nice, the other thing though that happened during that period of time was the state had created, the state government authority and for many years there was never enough money to build a lot or do a lot of construction of buildings so there were long periods of time where the campus didn't have any new facilities. And the reason for that is the state constitution says we cannot borrow, we cannot go into deficit spending and so...

RM: Could you talk a little about that because during that... during the '90s there, we had quite a bit of renovation that went on – the university center and...

MR: I was getting, going to get into the state building authority was an entity that was created by the state to allow the state buildings that actually borrowed money, as opposed to the state to borrow money. They would finance the construction of buildings and then the state would lease those buildings on the state building authority. So it was a mechanism for the state to renovate facilities both on campus and other state and do it in a way that didn't violate the state constitution. And so as, during this period of time part of the offset for the lack of funds was to start saying well we can provide with some renovation or new building fund. So we started a process both state funded facility money and we also did some borrowing on our own to renovate some of the start as you mentioned at the university center renovation and filed with a series of facilities all actually the dome was a state building authority project the Jacobetti center was done and started somewhere in the mid '80s. It was a state building authority project, but the project started come a little bit faster than the dome and we got the heating plant money, we had a project to put in a new heating plant for about capital outlying request for about 47 million dollars and the state said well we don't have 47 million but look at the number, maybe you can come up with something a little bit lower and Bill said well let's see how we might reconfigure this so rather than spending a lot of money to build a much larger plant to sequester off steam to the campus, part of the reason for that was that we had a lot of inefficient lengths in our steam system, steam line system, decided well, let's fix the steam lines as opposed to building just a bigger plant to blow our steam out.

RM: And so this \$47 million would have been for the expanded, for the new steam plant?

MR: Right, and so what we did, was take part of the project was to do steam lines, part of it was to renovate, upgrade our existing boilers at the steam plant. And then we also part of the money went to a new services building which allowed us to combine some operations and actually gain some efficiencies though doing that.

RM: Now was that, could you comment on that because the stories I've heard, oh I don't know, rumor I take it rather than truth, but that you got the money, you got the money for...

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RM: ...and then you had a... you had... you didn't spend all the money and then Bill went to work something out to use the money for a service building and the expansion of the art and design facilities for ____.

MR: I think it actually... more it was one of what I recall, it was ____ now, but I recall it was actually one project. What happened was that we had this bigger project that they didn't have enough money for and then just said that you can do something with this, this smaller thing here reconfigure it. Well when we reconfigured it we had enough money to do the steam lines, upgrade the heating plant and then we still had enough money to do the services building. Well the services building went into the bird's eye building and so we, which art and design had their studios and so it was and where art and design then moved to well it used to be facilities part of the facility operations so we moved things around on campus as part of that project gave art and design new or renovated space for art and design and then the services building or staff, took over the space in the bird's eye building that art and design was located in and then we put the addition onto the bird's eye building also, public safety ____.

RM: So it was really the focus was on the service building, getting that expanded and so on and then in the process...

MR: We were able to do the art and design.

RM: You had to do something for art and design?

MR: Well, I mean it worked out, obviously. We were able to take this project and turn it from just upgrading our steam lines into a new service building and also a new art and design facility. So it worked out.

RM: Yeah, I was always impressed with that process. It's like the most efficient and well... you know well spent money.

MR: Yeah.

RM: That was there...

MR: Now actually I remember going over and seeing the facility building that is now the art and design, part of the art and design complex and the facility building that was there or was one of the original, wasn't the original but I think maybe it was second heating plant on this campus and it had a big three story section where the boilers were well the boilers weren't in there anymore, I remember standing up in the balcony there with Bill Vandament looking down and him saying, "You know, we had a project like this out in ____," and it was an art and design facility and created a sculpture area and that was sort of the beginning of, you know, gee this might be a good facility for that.

RM: Oh so he brought, like you were saying he was bringing outside ideas, this was one of them from what Bigimton. So okay, because I also remember him, seeing him when he was first here I didn't know much about him but he was running around campus one day with a clip board so here's the president out in Learning Resources taking notes and writing rather feverishly and then I presume he then met with you guys and said you know...

MR: Yeah, we spent a lot of lunch hours having a burger and sitting at a table and over... actually over at Whiskers and getting out napkins and drawing with ____ and sitting there and saying, "Oh could we do this and that," and actually out of that came a lot of ideas for how we might change things or renovate things to better our campus and etcetera and stuff. Bruce always sort of chuckled, "You go to lunch, you guys have a lot of napkins you know, lot of plans done on napkins."

RM: Did any of those survive?

MR: Oh yeah, absolutely, a lot of them.

RM: They're on a file? So...

MR: Oh, I mean I don't have them, they might be over there in the facilities, I don't know.

RM: It would be sort of interesting for some future exhibit or something. You know that a lot of this was done on napkins from Whiskers. Let's see, this brings us up to the... what was that, the last big project or... no, no, no. Then we had the West Science renovation and...

MR: Yeah that was an interesting one too, that was. West Science became our number one project and when Bill was here we were trying to get our, what we wanted to do with these buildings in as much detail as we could on our project list so that if we got money then we would be able to get ahead of the project really fast because the state valued the idea of giving you the money and getting you know they expected next day you'd be digging in the ground, it doesn't really work that way but. So we started looking at the west science building because they really there was a great deal of need there and started having discussions with ____ and we really didn't get much from the faculty I mean there was well you know the ventilation ____ we could use a few things her but it was pretty modest requests and so Bill said well we need to talk about this a little bit more. So he started having a discussion with some of the faculty and saying you know, is this really where you want to be in the next ten fifteen years, twenty years? And I think there was an attitude on campus that you know for years we never had any projects and it was always these problems and nothing ever happened and there just wasn't the money, that this was never going to happen anyhow, so Bill got them to start rethinking that and they did, they got some people in, some architectural firms in to assist us in the process and came up with some designs and some ideas they weren't the actual ideas that we you know some of the original designs weren't the ones that we finally ended up with but they provided some ideas and concepts about what the faculty would really like to see in this facility, what the need was at that time and what they thought would be cutting edge.

RM: I guess what I'd like to just make a comment to put it I think in the right context, I think when Bill came I personally remember that there was a great deal of hostility between the faculty and the administration and he then he said at one point I think he had a letter to the editor in the north wind you know, why does this have to be? Personally I thought he was out of his mind you know that he was ever going to bring the faculty and the administration together and even talking and he did, he eventually did, it was kind of a stunning development but that sort of where all of this is coming from.

MR: Yeah I think Bill's first year on campus he sort of was an interim and I think that's actually Bill's decision to have the faculty come forward and say we would like to see this. He's very open; his style was such that you know he was easy to talk to and I, with his academic background I mean I think there was a, and his involvement with all these other universities he was able to you know bridge that gap that was

there and get things back so there was a lot more communication between the administration and the faculty. So that was, I mean West Science sort of an example of that I mean they really had minimal requests and then you know when they started talking to him more about it and these are the things we would really like and fortunately we came up with a plan and I's one day I was sitting in my office I forget what year it was but he got a call from the department of ____ editor of the facility section of the Department of Management and Budget and she says to me there's going to be a capped outlay of Bill and your number one request is West Science facility and there was a stipulation that we're going to have to come up with over twenty five percent of it because before you just come up with the whole project are you willing to do that and I need an answer by Friday. So I forget what the number was but it was like a \$36 million project so we had to find 25% of the 36 million dollars and I called Bill and I said I got this call and I mean it was really a no brainer because even though we had to borrow money to do it, it addressed some deferred maintenance things that we had and allowed us to create a facility to provide, you know, for programs going on in the future and so, but it was, I mean, we had very little window of time to decide and...

RM: And that's why you had to have these plans on file because now you...

MR: Well it helped us because then we knew, we gave them a number we knew we had enough money in there, because one of the things with these projects is once you hit a number, that's the number I mean there isn't a couple of schools have gone back, but it's a very painful process to go back and try to get more money for a project that comes in, you know, comes in higher than what you had in the bank so...

RM: Because then I guess it also becomes a personal thing; why didn't you come up with the right number?

MR: Right, right.

RM: And they'll probably give you the money, but at the cost of kind of ____ you for...

MR: Yeah, it's been an interesting process with the legislature and you know state, because on the one hand we've put a lot of effort into on the front end of these projects to figure out what do we really want in program statements and that and then the state though, when you get approved, sometimes they say, "Well why'd you do all this already?" And it's like...

RM: Oh.

MR: You know because then you don't get reimbursed for it so it was something that we really had to be hard enough that to do it, it sort of was damned if you do, damned if you don't, you know. So it's been interesting over the years

RM: So that was the last major project the whole West Science complex?

MR: That when Bill was here yeah. And then we also... then after that then we had a lot of ____, basically buildings that were built in the 60s and some in the late 50s that really not much had been done to them for years because there really was no maintenance money and so in the state, John Engler really put in a policy that they wanted to put a priority on existing space, redoing existing space because it's a, you know, costs you less money to do something and you don't have to tear buildings down and that so that

was a priority. And then and the other thing that was sort of interesting was one of the projects that we had was a performance center for 20 some million dollars and when Bill was here we went through a process to see if it made sense to convert Hedgecock into a performance facility and what it would cost to get in there and we did come up with a project but then John Engler, I can't remember, and the department managing budgets said that they're not funding performance facilities, which they'd gone back and forth on over the years on. So we took that one off and then we went back and said, okay we wanted, they were funding projects up to about 50 million dollars for the smaller schools and we said, "Well we really don't have one particular project that would get to 50 million dollars with the existing buildings so what happens if we package the deal?" So we put together Thomas Fine Arts, Hedgecock, and an addition to the art and design building and I think it was actually, we had Jamrich in there and we might have had one other building in there but I mean we had like a whole conglomerate of buildings and I think we called it east campus renovation project or something like that and we got up to oh, I don't know, close to 50 million dollars with all of those projects. Well the state said no, we're not going to do these multiple buildings, you know, we're not going to do all of them, and so it got scaled down and came up with Hedgecock and Thomas Fine Arts and the art and design, now out of those buildings was that project, go back to where I said we're not going to do a performance center, we got everything that we had in this performance center, which components were an art museum, we also wanted a black box, which was a project that we did on our own but was actually related to this we up graded, did some work on the Forest Robert's theater and what else did we put in? Probably the Reynolds recital hall that was part of all this performance center and we, other than the 12 hundred-seat auditorium, we got all the pieces that were in the original performance center. So with pieces in three of these other buildings and that actually, that project was during the '80s.

RM: That actually came together – the financing?

MR: Yeah we were planning that before and then Judi came and we pretty much finalized the plans when Judi was here but that really started when Bill was here.

RM: So that was the last big project.

MR: Right, we got out, and I'm sure you know, through Kaufman fine arts what the name was.

RM: And then could you comment, because at about that time there was also the sort of, looking at the aerial view here, this was also the time when Northern was able to get, to purchase the sports areas there along the lake, the old cliffs now, could you comment on that?

MR: Yeah the city was working with the companies actually that were responsible for the site. There's like three different companies ____ Pacific was one of them and Cook's was another one but anyhow there were like two or three companies that were responsible for...

RM: Probably the Dow?

MR: Yeah, Dow. Dow was there, responsible for the side, so they were... the city was talking to them about acquiring that for basically a dollar and ____, but what the problem was is that the site's contaminated and some of that the companies cleaned up, and the north side I guess would be towards Presque Isle, they cleaned up some of the contamination but there was still quite a bit of like arsenic in the soils and that with the remaining site so in that process we got in a discussion with the city about us acquiring a part of that because it was obviously adjacent to the superior dome and the university

actually at one time had, when Jamrich was here, some discussions about acquiring part of that property actually about the time they were looking at building the dome, and I don't remember what happened but it didn't quite come through and it was Rocharski, he owned part of that...

RM: Oh yeah.

MR: ...property at the time and so when the city had this ____...

RM: He got rid of it because the area that the dome eventually went on was added land that was an outdoor Ice rink I think for a while.

MR: Yeah we had the short track speed skating down there.

RM: And that was from Rocharski?

MR: Yeah and he still owned the other piece too, along the... I'm not sure what the arrangement was and I think he basically gave up that piece so he wouldn't be responsible for any of the cleanup and these other companies took over that piece so they acquired that whole strip because they were legal... their state ____ were holding them responsible for clean up so I believe 75 acres which we got 20 some of those acres and then the city kept the other part so we acquired like for a dollar the property but we then had to mediate the property in essence we had to put a cap, a one foot cap on top of that soil, and that's what we created the sports fields that are out there.

RM: Now was it a one foot cap on it or did it have to be more?

MR: No, it was the contamination scientists said there's probably a lot of places that this contamination exists in Michigan just naturally, but because it was a site, you have to address it, whereas in other places where it wasn't a, you know, I think this was classified as a super fun site, they didn't really have to address it, it was just there naturally so we had to address it and the solution for the problem was that we had to put a cap on it. We also have to monitor this and if there's any work that's going to be done down there we have to go and refile, and there's a process that we have to go through so, but it's not, it was really just to put a separation so you don't come in contact with it, it isn't I mean it wasn't like a highly contaminated area it's just from...

RM: Because I've seen aerial photographs of that plant and the part that we have was, where the fields are, was the rail yard.

MR: Yeah and it was like wood storage and lumber storage and...

RM: And then the actual plant was about where Wright Street is and north that was kind of the heart of the plant.

MR: Right, and that's where the big cleanup was when they did it.

RM: Yeah.

MR: Take a break.

[RECORDING STOPS, THEN CONTINUES]

RM: The other thing as we're talking about the property there along the lake, do you have any comments about that triangular shape of property north of the lake marina and then you know, borders the university property that kind of forest,

MR: Yeah that actually is university property.

RM: Yeah.

MR: And there's... it's been used over the years by the biology department or there's been times when we've looked at possible projects there and there's usually an outcry that it's a place that we need to preserve and that and so we've, although we've looked at it a few times for some ideas related to ____ we pretty much backed away and said let's retain that as it is but it seems like every time we raise that it does create a discussion on campus.

RM: It does, and then the university also holds the beachfront property.

MR: Yeah we have actually quite a bit of lakefront there ____ 1200 feet or maybe more along there.

RM: So it's pretty much from that log cabin house north to the...

MR: Probably down to... probably pretty close to where Wright Street comes out... the extension, the street extension somewhere, maybe not quite that far, but somewhere around there.

RM: Because I think one time in the '70s, well we picked it up, then John Jamrich wanted to create a park down there or students wanted to create a park or something that's still university property.

MR: Right.

RM: Okay so that was the other kind of big project. Now that was the, I mean the playing fields and whatnot, that was what under Judi Bailey?

MR: You know I don't recall if Bill was here when we actually acquired that. The work I think, I'm almost positive was done during Judi's tenure but then I think we acquired that actually when Bill was president.

RM: So there was sort of a flurry of activity back then during his presidency.

MR: Bill actually got the ball rolling for a lot of projects when he renovated Gries Hall. You know, the remnants were down at the time so we were looking for how to maximize the space, we had excess rooms in residence halls and so we converted Gries hall into office space and also created, renovated the Sax, Sax Hall, and that's ____ going back to central ____, the two residence halls down in the quad too.

RM: And then you started the well, that was the other project you started the renovation of. You started with Magers in '03 or so, then the apartments, and could you comment on that development?

MR: Well what happened is when Bill was here and during that period of time our enrollment was down and so there was winding down and actually closed in 95 and you know White Pine shut down and so

our numbers were down quite a bit which added to our budget problems kind of like how we had issues with the state keeping our appropriation well over enrollment, our numbers were way down, and so, but at the same time we had this issue with faculty offices in the Learning Resource Center. I mean the concourse there was made into offices with no upper part; the walls didn't go to the ceiling so there was very little privacy in the little cubicles and so we came up with the idea of using some of the residence hall space for faculty offices and actually psychology was over in Carey Hall. Some of the space that was there was not that great ____ but a lab down in that basement it was just, it wasn't a great situation, so anyway we looked at Gries. Gries actually became the project that we actually ended up renovating. We put in the first connector on campus which people referred to as the draggle tubes and a few other things, which sort of amazed me because there was all this discussion why do we need this and that in the building and ever since everybody really likes it. But anyway, so we did those renovations and created, basically trying to move the faculty out of the space and get them, I don't remember if we got them out of there with this project, I think we did ____ with this project so we don't have to use the library space. And so there was not only the state projects but we had all these other self-funded university projects that we were doing at the same time and we were also in discussions with the city about Lakeview Arena and possibly renovating that and trying to see if, you know, how we might do it and they got their number up so high, and us renovating Lakeview Arena which we didn't own and said, well maybe we should look at an alternative that we'd actually just build an ice facility... build an ice arena and so that's sort of where we the idea for the Barry, the Barry Center came out of and that was on the drawing boards, you know an idea and concept started in Bill's administration and came to fruition after Judi came to be president. Where are we as far as, well really up to probably a few dailies?

RM: Well yeah.

MR: As far as Bill was here to transmod facilities, started some and actually did some and then that carried really into Judi's tenure as president and during Judi's tenure we implemented a little idea that started during Bill's. Some work that ____ did on the Laptop idea and Judi said yeah, let's go with that and so that got started during Judi's administration and also we did some... took a real close look at how we were going about recruiting our Financial Aid program, how many people we had out in the field recruiting them and beefed that up and as a result of those efforts our enrollment started to grow significantly and so we went from having a lot of residence hall rooms that were vacant that we converted to office space back to a situation where we needed residence hall space because in the city there was kind of a problem with apartments and all and I don't know if you remember but the city got in to a big process of redoing the apartments and clamping down on some of the land lords so during that period of time we had to hire ____ to identify how much space we might need in the coming years and out of that we ended up doing the, backup, we did, when we did the west science and new science facility we were able to move people around and really move people out of some of the residence halls and move the USOEC out of there and move some of the faculty offices and that was sort of what the New Science facility and the West Science renovation we were able to create enough office space to vacate that so we went back in and started renovating those but at the same time we wanted to do some apartments because of the summit street apartments were there were some issues there with the...

[TAPE 1 ENDS]

[TAPE 2 BEGINS]

RM: Tape two, Michael Roy interview.

MR: So we developed the new apartment complex facility and project.

RM: Could you comment on that? You told me about it in the past I'd just like to get it on the record here, how that came into being. You were gone on a trip to Chicago or something, to Milwaukee and you...?

MR: Yeah I was with my family. My mother still lives in Illinois and I have a sister and brother that still live in Illinois so occasionally we go down there and take 43 and to the south side of... well just north of Milwaukee and an apartment complex it actually turned out it was a senior citizen's facility combination of that, really attracted by the look of the facility so I suggested maybe we talk to our architect he had kind of come up with some ideas that pretty much followed the pattern of apartment complexes that we've had in the past. You know the multiple buildings and you know they were nice looking but they really didn't feel like they fit together and that it was just more institutional work so...

RM: Sort of a repeat of summit.

MR: Yeah, except you know, move forward in time 40 years, but the same pattern so I saw this and I suggested to the architect that he go down and take a look at it see and that really was the basis for a lot of the ideas for the design of the apartments in the new apartment complex.

RM: And then wasn't there, weren't you also concerned about making it attractive for incoming students?

MR: Right. I mean a big thing in recruiting students is sort of, I hate to say this, but it's curb appeal and you first have to get the students to come on the campus and say wow this is this is really a nice campus and that's when they usually get more into taking a closer look at the institution and so we wanted to make sure that we had something you know that students could say, wow, this is nice you know really nice feel and so that was a big motivator in making sure that we built something that would help recruit students.

RM: Let me just take, I have...

[RECORDING CUTS OUT AND BACK IN]

RM: Okay, so we were, we talked about the apartments, we got that set up and that was opened up and completed under Judi Bailey's administration.

MR: Yeah.

RM: Okay and are there any other developments...?

MR: Well then we started renovating residence halls to start, quad two renovations and...

RM: You want to comment on that because...

MR: I think one of the things that happened with those is that we came up with a design, we had the existing building and they were built in the 60s pretty much from any campus in Michigan that was built, residence halls that were built at the same time they look like you know you could go from campus to campus and find the same look, and it's a very institutional look. It's the flat roofs, not much to it, so we

wanted to add a little to it so the architect came up with some ideas that take the, some stone to but with the brick so the end parts and then the window sills we put some stone and gave it a little bit more of a better feel but one of the issues we had in the designing it was we had all this air handling equipment that had to go on the roof because under the current air requirements we need to move more air through the buildings.

RM: The buildings didn't have any of this?

MR: Yeah well they had some but it was just at the capacity that was enough to meet the standards it was, the requirements were getting stiffer and even with a certain percentage of error, to match up with the, you know, the engineering aspects of the... but all of this requires equipment and we had a choice, you could take up space in the building with rooms, reduce your rooms and number of beds you had or find another place. A lot of basically... you could put the stuff on the roof so we were thinking well how is this going to work? We've got these flat roofs and then all this air handling equipment sticking out so... And the other issue that came up is the employees that have to work on this equipment even in the middle of winter that's not much fun to do, you know, on top of these roofs, the wind blowing, snow blowing. You know it's not the best working condition so somebody and I'm not sure who came up with the idea but let's put the you know, a regular roof on and that and so we put the roof over the top, a peaked roof over the top of the equipment and it dramatically changed the feel of the buildings and it gives them more of that you know like a housing complex as opposed to maybe a state mental institution.

RM: So this wasn't an aesthetic thing to begin with?

MR: No, it just sort of happened to solve a problem. To solve this problem with the... and it solved the problem about exposing the workers to this outdoor environment. To actually be under a roof to be able to and at the same time add a significant aesthetic value to the building so...

RM: Now how did the, I think you also developed, which was something new, an actual schedule that had to be met. I know we had to move out of Magers hall there because they were going to start construction early January. It had to be done by August for the start of the school year.

MR: Yeah, so the situation was we were already hurting for space for residence halls because our enrollment had grown quite a bit when we started this, by the time we had started this project, so we really couldn't afford to shut down a whole wing of a building. So I said well lets figure out how we can do this during the three month period of time that we've got from beginning of May to the middle of August was basically the window of opportunity. And the facilities people sort of took a long look at me and said what have you been smoking but we talked about it. We talked with the... we got some of the construction people in and said you know, how can we go about doing this? And we got the architects in, we got the engineers, and we actually came up with a way that we could actually get in there, get the work done and meet the dead lines and we, the first project we actually did this on was the market place. So we did the dining facility and again, the same problem we had x amount of time you got this window of opportunity that you need to get it done, that was the one that actually stressed everybody out because it was the first time that we had done something like this and again, everybody, and you get into a project like that and get problems and unplanned problems that you have to address and give credit to both the contractors that we dealt with but the facility staff they just stayed out of, addressed the problems and get it done. They got it done in time for the opening of school and then we started doing each of the wings of quad two.

RM: Now is that process continuing?

MR: We put it on, right now it's been on hold because it's an expensive thing and we had to. You know, we bumped up our residence hall rates a little to help us do that and it's as a cost of doing these projects has gone up it's made it now more ____ in the costs of construction and so we were running pretty close to about 75 cents on the dollar compared to new construction and so we stepped back and said maybe we need to take a longer look at whether we want to continue doing this or do we want to look at something, a different approach to it and then we got into this master campus plan when Les came and started it. So at that time we said let's put a hold on this and take a little breather and see what maybe makes sense down the road, whether the same approach makes sense or if something else might be better. So I guess then I'd really, during Judi's tenure we did the Barry facility and started on some of the residence halls and we got into the leads, the green certification of the federal government and those building projects and we got that, we started doing that in the middle of the now I think it was on the second residence hall we started trying to meet the requirements for that to be certified under leads and well that actually brings us to near Judi, the end of Judi's tenure. Judi had decided to actually put her name in at Western and she called Fred and I into the office and said well, you know probably going to take a position at Western and just a heads up, so things started moving relatively fast after that I think that was in the spring sometime and that all transpired pretty fast. Part of it was because it became public and invited speculation.

RM: But wasn't it, I think she said that it was kind of a... she didn't originally look for the job, but it sort of went her way and so it kind of came pretty much out of nowhere.

MR: Yeah well I think part of it was that Judi was very involved in ____ development and it was something I think Western was looking for and had a lot of success as far as enrollment and so I mean there was a lot of qualities that Judi had that they were looking for and I'm not sure how it actually transpired, how it all came about but...

RM: But it came to you as a surprise when she called you?

MR: Well it was really a shock because I thought Judi was going to be here for... until she decided to retire.

RM: Yeah.

MR: So then one day, one night I got a call. Mary Campbell was chair of the board at the time and said if I was asked to, you know, serve as interim president would I, you know, what would my answer be and I said, well I don't know I got to talk to my wife about this and so we talked about it and decided that we were willing to do it if the board decided that that's what they wanted to do and so the...

RM: Now was part of your decision to... positive decision to do this sort of flow with the experience, the time you'd worked with Bill Vandament you know you seemed to have been, you were both in the financial management and so on was that sort of an influence? That you had sort of been close to the president and some of the problems?

MR: No, actually not so much. I really never expected to serve as either interim or as a president of the university and still to this day is experiencing stress financially, looking for ways to and I think the board

was looking for someone to get them through this period, this interim period that understood the finances and I was closely involved in the what happened in Lansing. I spent a lot of time in Lansing too and so I think they felt that was probably the easiest transition. Quite frankly I was surprised when I got Mary's call again. Surprised and made the decision, pleased to do it and it was quite a compliment to be asked it with what was going on.

RM: Now did you... now how did you find the position because at the same time you kept your Vice President?

MR: Well what we did was with Gavin, Gavin and I have been worked together for a number of years real closely, and you know my I guess thing around us was to make sure that when I decided to retire that somebody at least was an option for the university to step in to my position and that's what over the years I worked with Gavin on. I made sure that he you know had those skills and exposure to and things so when I stepped in as interim we just moved things around in there really and sort of picked it up. He took over some of the responsibilities and I kept some, mainly the facility stuff just because for that period of time it would just take too much and he had been involved in all the financial stuff so we sort of divided things up and he stepped into and took over parts of that and I took the other parts and then I also had the responsibilities of interim president. Anyway, it made for some exciting times because there was a lot on our plate so that...

RM: But how did you, when you got started all of a sudden, becoming president what... did it sort of change your life? For instance did you move into, did you and your wife move into the president's house?

MR: No, we, the 13 months that I served as president we spent one night in the Kaye house and when I was president we had our home and my wife Joanne was working and continued to work in Escanaba at the community college so it just made, would have been more miles for her to drive, for us to move into town and so it was just easier and less costly to just stay where we were. The one night that we did stay there was during homecoming and we forgot that there was this motion detector alarm system in the Kaye house, woke up in the middle of the night to get a glass of water and set off the alarm.

RM: Oh my word.

MR: City police, and the university campus police knocking on the door you know, I was like... and but as far as my life changing it changed dramatically during that year because to start with you know we had a board meeting like in early May and since Judi was going to Western which was another state university competing for dollars, the board wanted me to step in and testify at some of the senate and house and these were already lined up and so like you know one week I become interim and I'm down... actually it might have even been before I stepped in as interim I went down to testify for a house and I'd been with the president, several presidents, they're all and ___ before at these hearings but it's different when you're the one who's got to get up there and talk about it.

RM: So you weren't just there as the back up to the president?

MR: Well one of the things, this happened so fast it really, probably a good thing cause I didn't have a lot of time to think about it so went through it did the hearings and that, that all went well and then we had the problem with the dam bursting and the that was a big building made potential flooding the campus and there was all kinds of things happening on campus when it started out.

RM: Now that was, what year was that?

MR: That would have been in probably 2003, June or actually May of 2003 I mean everything was just coming when I was up, all at once and we made it through it.

RM: So were there any particular major events or anything? I mean you had a crisis here with the possible floods and so on...

MR: Well a lot of my facility problems and issues during that period of time had to do with water, I mean, I came in one morning I was walking in one morning and there was water coming out of the side of Cohodas a pipe had burst and it was flooding actually not so much in the building I think it might have been causing problems in the computers thing too so I had that happen and then the west science building was relatively new but there was a fire suppression pipe and it was probably a three or four or five inch pipe it was right around the exterior of the building and there wasn't adequate insulation and that froze and base called me and said we got a problem over in west science, go over there and there's water flowing down the steps of the, you know, it was a brand new, a new building and you know water coming out the door and I mean, oh jeez. So we had to take care of that

RM: Now then, you didn't... you weren't in that position long enough to have, or you, the budget situation and so on was something you were dealing with anyway so it wasn't...

MR: Yeah it was just another year of reductions I mean we, what happened before was we had, I forgot what we called it, we had a budget committee that identified, budget reduction committee that ____ And as Vice President Fred and I chaired that and went through it when I became interim president it was just easier for me to just continue on so I just chaired that I think it was phase two or put together phase two or three I forget what it was, but again, it's still the same process, looking at things that you know we were a little higher than other campuses, we went during all these years of budget reductions, we went from being the highest cost in almost virtually every category in our budget to being the lowest, or one of the lowest in the state and in our cross, all this over the years we gradually adjusted to a level of ____ that we've had.

RM: Then was there some point or you don't even think about it now, but for instance today we don't hear of the maybe it was more of an Engler spin, but you don't hear the animosity between the legislators or maybe I've missed something but the legislators in Lansing and the Jacobetti days how Northern was over-financed, has that been diffused as a problem?

MR: There's still some of it there but part of that's term limits I mean some of these people or most of these people weren't there when "Jake" was there you still get some of the other universities reminding like crusaders about the "Jake" age but that's a long time now, long times past and a lot has changed.

RM: But I was always sort of surprised that some of that did linger for a while after you know he was gone and so on it was like bringing the dead out and you know, what's this about?

MR: And I think there's probably still, I'm not that obviously for the last two or three years I haven't been that close to it. I went out there still but there's a little bit of that but I think because of the turnover in the legislature and the government and a lot of people are sort of history so and that's interesting.

RM: Yeah, but it's not an issue with our...

MR: I don't think it's an issue.

RM: With our, for themselves, they were part of it and...

MR: That was a serious concern you know the university was well aware that we were going to get significantly cut and some of the proposals were to cut our appropriation check in half ____ but fortunately we managed to get ____, managed to work through that, you know, ____ everybody else.

RM: Yeah. Now I have a question here because it's personal curiosity but it also affects the University in today's world or you know the national economy and then the Michigan economy in particular. Universities around the state I hear, Grand Valley and others are having financial problems they're in debt and so on, how does Northern... what did you guys do to make Northern at least from my point of view rather solvent and not the faculty and the people though will always complain but certainly from my point of view it's not sort of the way it was in the past where you're on the edge of things there, if there are any cuts we're going to terminate, we're going to pull back and so on, how are you guys able to under these, as you pointed out in the interview, under these rather difficult times with budget cuts and so on from cutting your whole time and position how were you able to survive all of that and kind of get ahead? I mean, and the interesting part is kind of getting ahead...

MR: Well, actually part of that is its credit to, a lot of credit to our board. They really, over the years they've said, we really need to look at the part where they're not always having these major issues or when you have a problem but it's more of a question of magnitude and we still have problems but we're not on a point or anywhere near a point of missing payrolls or you know having to borrow money to make payroll so and in that process of discussions with the board Sam Benedit comes to mind, they can go ____ so this is a back and forth with ____ here and Judi used to lay out some plans and we did we set some targets to change the budget where it it wasn't so dependent on expenditures that you had to make no matter what, I mean basically staff, to be, reconfigure how we staff so some of the money if we had to cut back it wasn't money that we had to lay people off to get to and so we set up the ____ equipment replacement fund which is, I'm not sure what it is now but close to a million dollars a year. We started putting money away for facility replacement which you know is makes sense because which we never really had a significant amount but what that does is it gives us money to do those things that if our dollars, you know our corporation goes down or something happens all of a sudden we can turn to those guys because they're, they give us a little bit of a buffer we didn't really have that buffer when we started this back in early 1999 most of our departments were like 90% or 100% academic departments were tenured we had really no very little flexibility in our budget, what we did was actually set a target so ____ set aside about five million dollars to have some flexibility in our budget and capitol equipment replacement was part of the facility infrastructure and this money was part of that so and you know working with departments and you know here's what we got to do and funds have been very good and you know watching the dollars and another thing we did was we used to have a situation or policy that any general fund money that was left over at the end of the year departmental money was swept back into a big pile, you know to central fund well the incentive was to spend all of the money before June 30th it created two problems, one there was a lot of spending right before that, people filling their closets with supplies and that, that they may or may not use in the next twelve months and it put a lot of pressure on purchasing because they had all of these orders right at the end of the year and so we just changed policies, saying we're not going to take the money, the departments can keep it but they're also responsible for any short problems too. So we put responsibility back in the departments to manage in

their budgets and that has helped us a lot too because they become a full partner rather than somebody who, sort of...

RM: Sort of on the dole, the hand out?

MR: Right.

RM: Was that also part of the idea that it... and it was done during your term of letting departments keep their summer school funds?

MR: Yeah that's one of the things I realized early on as vice president ____ well it's half the structure, when we start cutting budgets part of it was we always cut the summer school budget, but the way summer school works is that it's pretty much more one time funding for positions, it wasn't an ongoing basis figuring out what the demand was and then you'd fund the positions well the way, what was happening is they'd keep cutting down the summer school budget which meant our summer school kept shrinking, shrinking, shrinking because there wasn't any budget there so we said, this doesn't make sense, let's go on to a basically a self-supporting approach to it where the departments can scrape up whatever they want as long as they hit their numbers on the enrollments then they can offer whatever courses they want and then they retain part of those dollars in the department rather than coming back to a central pot and that's actually worked extremely well, at least initially with the _____. So again it was putting the responsibility back into the departments for the managing of the funds rather than trying to manage it from a central budget.

RM: Because as a department head I know it works quite well, we offer as many courses as we want as long as they make, they ____ and then you do have the money to pay off any bills that have ____ particular and then you have extra money to travel or whatever you need it for.

MR: I think it's a department's potential to seek money to try some things that you know they don't know if it's going to work or not but they got a little cushion so they don't have to worry that. Yeah, I think it's worked well I'm a little biased but I think it's worth it, it's really the philosophy is putting responsibility back into departments where they have control of it. It isn't somebody telling them this is what you're going to do and not do and it was really to even the approach in the budget process although some people will say that we cut our budgets by 3% or 5% every year, but that's actually not true we start out with a number whatever number that's suggested and as a starting point and we look and balance the impacts across campus and some departments may not have any reductions whereas other departments might. Historically on the administrative side reductions have been much higher.

[END OF TAPE 2, SIDE A]

[START OF TAPE 2, SIDE B]

MR: I guess the other thing that's helped us over this process is the laptop initiative – the TLC initiative, and what it's done is it's made sure that everybody had access to technology and so we've been able to do a lot of things as far as processes and that, that are online and which helps us reduce our, the staff that we were required to have to do things, we really rethought too a lot of our processes to say do we need to have you know people coming to us for transactions I think it's something that's really ongoing as the technology changes and the philosophy changes that those are things that you can continue to do obviously ____.

RM: And I think if you remember back when all this got started the well came from the faculty and students and people were complaining about the cost and so on and so on but then there were people like Judi and others that said this is the future, and now when we look back it's just part of life, if you all of a sudden took the computers out of the system people would think they'd lost their minds so it's just become part of the system and it's what young people are into today or all of us now.

MR: Well one of the things that's happened over the years, we did the laptop thing and changed our recruiting and attitude. I think locally you know Northern is a good school but you know I live here so I have to go there you know for the local students but that actually I think has changed over the years and when students start seeing students coming from other states to go to school here and you know they say jeez you know maybe there's more here. I think the attitude about Northern has changed dramatically in, they view Northern like they should have viewed it before and as a possibility of school but it was just because we let some local people coming in more of the out of state students coming in and the students ____ there must be more here than we thought there was.

RM: Now you just kind of finish off with your career then, you retired in...?

MR: Actually I never retired, there was a couple of news releases saying I retired so everybody thinks I retired and what happened was, I was planning on retiring in February of 2008 and Gavin and a couple of board members and the president talked me into staying around for a while and helping out so I agreed to stay on and I've been for the last couple of years, this year Gavin and I sat down and had a discussion of what he needs to get done and then what my plans are and so we say we're going from year to year the last couple of years really. Decide whether I was going to continue working or not but I work about three quarter time and fortunately I get to work on a variety of things, projects and using some of my background at the institution and what we've been though and it helps some of those, good financial analysis, some facility stuff.

RM: Well I think also your department does a good job what you were saying, of passing on the institutional knowledge and how you operate, deal with the budget and so on and all of that to the incoming vice president Gavin in this case so that you haven't caught or the continuity that you have in some departments where you might bring somebody totally new and there's no connection to the past.

MR: Although Gavin had been there has been there for a number of years so we worked together he just, it wasn't that environment facilities that these and he was involved in some of the budget process but not totally so some, from time to time we'd sit down and say well this is what we did before and here are some of the mistakes we made before, you might not want to do those again but so that's yeah and it gives him a sounding board for some ideas and concepts that he has that he's working on.

RM: Okay, any final statement you want to wrap up? Statement or in terms of your years here and...?

MR: I actually feel very fortunate to have been in a situation at northern that had always been very close for me and my family and so I feel pretty lucky to have had this opportunity here especially as interim president and you know it's been interesting over the years to people that have been here for a while and go on to other institutions and other areas and while they're here we got all these policies and procedures and that and they go to other institutions and they come back and say boy this was a great place to work in I go, I guess it's the thing about northern and actually about state universities in Michigan is that we have a lot of ability to create our environment because of the way the constitution is and so

from that aspect it's been it allows you to be creative and accomplish things and it's consequently very rewarding because you can do a lot of things that you don't have to worry about two or three more levels that external approval is to do things so it's been a great experience and you know I feel very fortunate to have.

RM: Sort of despite all of the, sort of the waves that hit you.

MR: Well I mean those are, I've always looked at things as challenges and looking for solutions and quite frankly I enjoy them I mean I can't say I enjoyed the stress but I get a lot of rewards from the fact of finding solutions to problems. It's very satisfying and I think for most of the things that were thrown at us we found solutions, a few that we didn't solve very well but I think over all I think looking at Bill, Judi, and Les ___ as you've pointed out steered the institution in a very positive direction that...

RM: But then also just to kind of recap what you said just a bit earlier the way the system works here it allows you to be creative it allows you to solve the problem on your own. You know you're not caught in with some other...

MR: You don't have an overall, over-arching system saying these are going to be the policies and you know it's both good and bad it put more responsibility on the president and the administration of the institution and the board because they're responsible for it but on the other hand, it's your call you know it isn't like somebody else 400 miles away saying this is how you've got to operate the institution and so you can be creative and do things like the laptop program and you take heat over it we had people over at the legislature ___ are student I mean our tuition significantly that year to cover that but we made it through it and then we made it through that conflict there that was created by that and I think the end result was extremely positive.

RM: And as I said if you tried to end it you know people, legislators and students would...

MR: Say what are you doing?

RM: Yeah. Okay, alright, very good, thank you!

MR: You're welcome.

RM: Very informative.

END OF INTERVIEW