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## Elenore Koch interview, Vice President, Student Affairs, Wright State University

Jennifer Budzek

*Wright State University - Main Campus*

Elenore Koch

*Wright State University - Main Campus*

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Oral History Transcript

Wright State University Retirees Association

Interviewee: Elenore Koch

Interviewer: Jennifer Karen Budzek

Transcriber: Jennifer Karen Budzek

Interview Date: 24 May 2009

Interview Location: Downtown Dayton Marriott, Dayton, Ohio

00:00:03 Jennifer Budzek: Okay. Hi.

00:00:05 Elenore Koch: Hi. [Laughter]

00:00:06 Jennifer Budzek: So I'm here with Elenore Koch, and my name is Jennifer Budzek. And she is – she's the former Vice President for Student Affairs at Wright State University and she retired from there. Okay, let's talk a little bit about your background, your educational background, and how you got to Wright State.

00:00:23 Elenore Koch: Okay, I have a Bachelor's degree from Ohio University, a Master's Degree from Miami University in Oxford, and a PhD from the University of Florida.

00:00:34 Jennifer Budzek: What's your PhD in?

00:00:36 Elenore Koch: It's under sociology and political science, international studies, and city management.

00:00:43 Jennifer Budzek: Oh, wow. So how did you first come to Wright State?

00:00:47 Elenore Koch: I was an instructor, a beginning assistant professor, I guess, at Miami University, and my mentor for my degree was the head of the experimental school at Miami University. When they were forming Wright State, they had a newly formed Board of Regents; we never had a Board of Regents in Ohio. So they made a new Board of Regents and that Board of Regents had a survey done and Dayton was the only major city in Ohio that didn't have a state university. So the Board of Regents happened to choose the president of Miami University as the first chancellor of the Board of Regents. He decreed that Ohio State, which is 70 miles north of Dayton, and Miami University, which is 57 miles south of Dayton, had to go together to make this new university. So the professors for engineering and science and the professors for education, business, graduate school, liberal arts, came from Miami. The others came from Ohio State. The man that was my department chairman was coming up to this new campus. So, Miami University is a pretty unique place. It's beautiful, the

campus is – it's the most beautiful campus of our campuses in Ohio. And the people who are professors there don't want to leave, they settle into this wonderful community, this academic area. So the chancellor tells the new president of Miami University that they have to have... professors. Well they kept going down the list, and everybody – the deans and all – kept [saying] no, no, no.

So finally, my department chairman said, "Elenore, there's an opportunity for you." So my husband and I drove up, and we – to see the opportunity, and it was a solid corn field and forest. There was nothing. And I said, "That's an opportunity?" [Laughter] But he talked us into it, and so we moved up and I started as a – in the counseling service, which there wasn't any. They started the counseling service and I started it. And that's how I got there. And my mentor, the guy, started as dean of something, I forget what, and then immediately became dean of Graduate Studies as soon as we had a group that was going to graduate.

00:03:46 Jennifer Budzek: So then how – were you just the counselor and then you became Vice President of Student Affairs or how was that progression?

00:03:51 Elenore Koch: I – this is the thing that happened in my head. I had this swell idea, and I had all these ideas – it was a new university – and nobody listened, you know, the head of the departments or anybody listened. So I thought, I'm going to become head of the department, then I can make my own decisions. Then I found out that the department head doesn't have any decision making, the deans do. So then I thought, well I'm going to become a dean, and then I'd make my own decisions. And then I found out the deans don't have any decision making, it's, I thought, the vice presidents do. So I thought, well, I'll do that. So ten jobs later [Laughter] I was a vice president. That's how I did it. Just thinking I want to make a decision. If I come up with ideas I'd like to be able to implement it if I could, and not have somebody, you know, you give the idea and then it sits on their desk and nothing happens. I just wanted to try some things. So that's why I did it.

00:04:56 Jennifer Budzek: What were your first impressions of Wright State when they first brought you to the cornfield-

00:04:59 Elenore Koch: To the cornfield!

00:05:00 Jennifer Budzek: What did you think?

00:05:01 Elenore Koch: Okay. Well, I couldn't believe it. [Laughter] And, but I thought because I am more creative than stable [laughter] I thought there's a chance to do something. Miami University, clearly, is a wonderful university and it's

beautiful, but you don't make- you don't lift your finger to change a thing. Their claim to fame is to do it the same way. And they do. And they do it beautifully. But that's – I would never have really succeeded in Miami University. I'd get up maybe associate professor probably. And so here was – hey, maybe there's a chance and so when the university – we had one building. And then the university – the idea for the Board of Regents was 5,000 students at this university: that was the goal. That's as high as they thought it could go – 5,000 students. And so when the university, they decided it could be a state – it was just campus – Ohio State, Miami campus. When they decided in '67 that it was going to be a state university, then we all celebrated and made a little caravan of – I had – I gathered all the students and we had cars, you know, and got into this one-building campus that we had.

- 00:06:35 Jennifer Budzek: How long did you plan to be at Wright State when they first offered you the position?
- 00:06:39 Elenore Koch: I had no plans, no plans whatsoever. I thought if I could do the counseling, that would be wonderful, and then the next – it grew and then it grew. I had no longevity plans at all. I just stayed because I kept changing and getting new challenges.
- 00:07:00 Jennifer Budzek: And how long did you end up staying?
- 00:07:01 Elenore Koch: Oy. [Laughter] I started in '67 and quit in '88, so 21 years.
- 00:07:08 Jennifer Budzek: If you could, talk a little bit about your departments and how they worked and what the environment was like in the earlier years?
- 00:07:16 Elenore Koch: In student affairs?
- 00:07:17 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah.
- 00:07:18 Elenore Koch: When I was Vice President of Student Affairs, the departments were the real basic departments: admissions, financial aid, registrar – the basic things to get the university in. The counseling service, and then we started the placement, and each one we had to add – then international students. They made a University Center, then luckily we got one dormitory and couldn't get anymore. But we got one dormitory. So then we added each of the things – food service and things like that. My idea was that I would hire the best people for the job. I didn't want anybody who didn't see it as a challenge and wanting to grow. So, in truth I did. Those people that we saw at the reception that are still there or come back, they were wonderful, and became famous. What I mean is, the director of admissions because head of all the directors of

admissions in the state. The director of financial aid became nationally known as a financial aid analyst.

So the people were the key to the success. And then it just grew so that I had so many departments and everything. And we had weekly staff meetings and the directors came and they came with their problems of what's going on. And they had to tell the truth, what's wrong in their department so that all the other directors could chime in and whatever. But the big thing was they had to come with the problem and the possible solution. Then everybody argued about it and everything. But it was – I would go to a weekly staff meeting with the four vice presidents with the president. And I would come back and tell everything, whatever, there were no secrets that upper administration knew that the line didn't know. We just told it all. And I really think that solidified each of them feeling powerful enough to execute their departments well, so...

00:09:46 Jennifer Budzek: What were the presidents like in the early years? Were they the same way – they really wanted the campus to grow?

00:09:52 Elenore Koch: Who?

00:09:53 Jennifer Budzek: The presidents in the early years.

00:09:55 Elenore Koch: The first president – the first guy wasn't a president, he was Fred White. And he was a business manager of some company that folded. [Laughter] And they made him acting director of this thing – acting whatever it was called. And he was a financial CPA I think or something and he didn't have vision, but he had great ability to organize. And so that's where the university was when I started. Then the first president was Golding, and he was wonderful for the time. He could – he was management, was his background – so he could do the managing and developing. We were just very fortunate to have the right presidents at the right time.

Along came Kegerreis next, and Kegerreis was a guy who got his PhD like when he's 45 or 50 or something. So it just fit the population of the students we had. And so he was a master at being able to handle people and leadership was his role and he performed it beautifully. So the university had wonderful presidents. How they reacted to me and my areas? They let me do it. What I mean is anything that was kind of sticky about students like discipline or – you know we had lots of drugs and stuff like that, all of that, I'll say okay I'll handle it, you do it. Well, like, when we had to raise tuition, that was a big thing, how much and I fought and I had to hear all the data and everything and they said now how are we going to tell them, nobody wants to tell them. I said I'll tell them [Laughter] I'm Vice President of students, and if I believe in it and it's the truth, I'll tell. And so I would tell about the student raises all the time. And so

they allowed me, which was wonderful, and what it was, was taking the problems off their back. [Laughter] I know that. But they allowed me to do it, so it was great. It was a symbiotic relationship that I thought worked out very well for the students, you know.

I can remember one time the black students, during the civil rights time, the black students barricaded the administrative wing and we happened to be having a conference and all the deans – well they knew it would not happen. All the deans and all the vice presidents and the president were in this one conference room. And they came in and barricaded the thing and stood three deep around the thing as we sat and just rallied against us for hours. And finally, I was sitting there too, and finally the leader – and I can't remember, Rick somebody – Rick leaned over to me and said "You can go, Dr. Koch, if you want" and I got up and left, sure. [Laughter] But the rest, they didn't let anybody else out. Student affairs and my goal was that openness to students and whatever students need, we work on. That's the priority – nothing else is the priority. And, and so the population grew very well, we did great.

00:13:26 Jennifer Budzek: What was it like working with the students? Did you enjoy it?

00:13:29 Elenore Koch: Wonderful! I loved it! I set up a system – I had a wonderful assistant, his name was Wayne Peterson, and he was a computer geek and – so it was wonderful. I had a system worked up where the admissions director, financial aid director, registrar, me, and a couple of others – I don't remember if there were any others – but Wayne Peterson would come up by random with names of students, and after hours we all had our list and we called the kids and we asked them, "How's it going? What can we do? What don't you like?" And the admissions guy always got new freshman, freshman that are in that year, asking. Financial aid guy got financial aid people, but by random, you know. And I did it too. And I – we kept right there, with the students. And we found out a lot of things that we could change and needed to change, and did. So that's how we kept – I love the contact with students.

My Assistant Vice President was Joanne Risacher, and Joanne you met. Joanne has the temperament, and I hired her for it, that is very stable and absolutely fair. Fairness is Joanne Risacher's strong suit. And I would – I am emotional, I'm – you know I would take the part of somebody because "Ooh, that's right," you know, not her. So I put her in charge of student government and discipline and our discipline never was questioned when we suspended – had to suspend a student – or they're caught with drugs or whatever. Joanne would have the government tribunal and make the diagnosis and execute it and it never, not one student, you know, said it was unfair or came to see me about the way it was handled or anything. She was wonderful. So that's what we did.

00:15:37 Jennifer Budzek: You talked about some of the big ideas you had for the university.

00:15:42 Elenore Koch: Some of the big ideas I had?

00:15:43 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah.

00:15:46 Elenore Koch: Well, it's hard when at the time each one is a swell idea. And what I developed was a philosophy for myself. I told you about – the director always was going to make a decision – so I came up with this idea. I'll come up with ten ideas of good things for us to do, and then I'd give it to the boss, whoever it is: the director, the dean, the president. And I don't ask him if these are good ideas or what do you think. I say would you prioritize these ideas and give the top three ideas to me? And they always did it, they never caught on, they always did it. And I would take that paper and I would say, "The president said he wants this done – he's listed it as his top priority" and it would get done! [Laughter] And it worked every time! And, and I found out that you can give a lot of ideas to people and if you try and tell them "We've got to do this," they're going to resist. But let them choose and they'll choose one and then they own it and they did it, you know, and I love it! [Laughter]

00:17:03 Jennifer Budzek: At the reception when we were there you talked a little bit about the "Famous Ohioans" posters.

00:17:08 Elenore Koch: Oh yes! That was a marketing ploy because when we were new, the big thing was in the states system you get your money from the state based on the population. And it's based on what they call FTEs, full time enrollment, so for every fifteen credits that's counted as one FTE. It might be three students taking six credits each, but it's how many FTEs. So the FTE population, for sure, comes from that eighteen-year-old that just graduated from high school. They take full-time. So my idea was we got to get a lot of them. Well, Wright State was so new in the state system, people said "Wright State? R-I-G-H-T," they don't know. And so the school systems have it that recruiters can only visit the schools to talk to students one time a year. Well, and they can get out of class. Well, that wasn't enough to talk about a new school. So the idea was, we would, here's how it came to be.

In their junior year, everybody has to take American History, so let's make a poster that the – all the American History teachers will want to put up. Make it classy enough, and then put Wright State under it so every day in the class there's a Wright State poster. That's what we did. And we – the art department was wonderful, and so we interviewed graduate art students and found an art student and he did a fantastic job of "Famous Ohioans," just in – excuse me – in general. And it was beautiful, really beautiful. And then the printer made some

kind of error, I forget why, I called him on it. And he printed us fifty of those on this classy velour where the paper is crackly on the ends, you know, classy. So I said, "Wow this is classy, let's have the artist sign it, and we send it to the governor and to all these people," and so we did. And we – the letter said – we had never intended it, we just made it up – the letter said, "This is the first of a series." [Laughter] We didn't have a series, we just made that up. But people kept calling and saying, "When is the second of the series?" So that's what we did, and we went to famous inventors, famous presidents, famous politicians, famous women, famous all that kind of stuff. And sent it out and the history teachers put them side by side and we had Wright State five times in a row right across, you know. And that, I think, the director of admissions took that and he just ran with that whole thing, it was wonderful, just really great. We got to hire two graduate students to research the people and find the thing, we hired a graduate student to be the artist, and it just worked out perfectly.

00:20:25 Jennifer Budzek: So each one was a different artist?

00:20:26 Elenore Koch: Each year was a different artist.

00:20:28 Jennifer Budzek: And they were all Wright State students?

00:20:29 Elenore Koch: And they're all Wright State grad students, yeah. And the researchers were all Wright State students too, who researched it out, so it, it worked out beautifully. Why it stopped, I don't know. I mean, that's after me. I don't know why they – lots of ideas are needed at the time and maybe they're not needed, maybe they didn't – whatever the reason, it's not going on, but it was great. Like you could walk into any of the banks, Winter's Bank or any of the banks and the poster would be there, you know it was great to see.

00:21:04 Jennifer Budzek: They also talked something about, at the reception I heard about, something about the tunnel system.

00:21:08 Elenore Koch: Oh yeah. On the tunnel system, and you know your mom – no, no, no, no, no – Ken and Slawa graduated in '72. Remember the school didn't even become – it didn't have four buildings in '67, and they graduated in '72. So they're like the first graduates.

[Knock on the door. The recording was paused to answer it and was restarted]

00:21:36 Elenore Koch: So your mom and dad, your mom talked about how they had to trudge through the snow and, you know, through the snow knee deep and how they [Laughter] always – but anyway, they had to trudge and hardly any students came to class and everything. So that tells you that that tunnel system was still not part of the student experience. So what happened was – that's how



I started the handicapped. We didn't have any handicapped student services and this kid just – I was in the counseling, remember I started as a counselor. I was in the counseling service and I finished whatever student and I walked out and Anne, my secretary, was there. And I said "What's that noise," and Ann said, "I don't know, but it's coming closer..." Like that. And so in rolls a wheelchair – a motorized wheelchair. I never saw anything like that. So, talking to the kid, and the kid says he got up the ramp. I said, "What ramp?" We don't know what ramp. We roll – he rolls out, we follow him, and he – it's the grade in Allyn Hall. Because the architect didn't have enough grade to make a step he made a smooth grade and that's all. Nobody made ramps. And so – so I said – so then he tells me he's taking this course, he loves it and everything. And I said, "How many courses are you taking?" He says, "Just one, I can only take one." And I thought, boy am I going to kick the registrar for that, he should have more. He said, "Cause there's no toilets." There were, in our new buildings, there was nothing accessible.

So I said well, what – he said it takes an hour almost to get into the van, get himself in and get him to class, and then an hour of class and then to come back – he couldn't take more. So we arranged with the – we didn't have a doctor, but we had a little nurse's station in the basement. So here's this basement little nurse's station. The nurses had a toilet and it had a canvas in front of it, not a door that – so the wheelchair could fit in. Anyway, so we arranged that the nurse – they could – he could go to the toilet there if he had to go before he went home. Then, you had to go down by stairs or, for him I used the freight elevator. That's all that we had. And so then I'm thinking, look at these big halls. Why can't the handicapped students go in the big halls instead of going outside – there's no ramp, they could only take courses in Allyn Hall if there was any because they couldn't get in. So that's where I started saying, "Hey we could use this for other things." I hit the maintenance problem, I hit everything, you know. And Fred White, the first guy, said "No it's for utilities and those elevators are to receive the stuff and not for us and all that." At any rate, it worked out that – I worked at it continually and—

[Knock on the door. The recording continued while the door was answered but that portion is not transcribed here. The recording was stopped and restarted.]

00:25:22

Elenore Koch: Then as the – as the buildings got built – four buildings are now built so they can run around all the four buildings. And that was really good and then I got myself – somehow I got, I really got into the disabled. And somehow I decided that we should be able to hire disabled. Now we've got access, we should be able to hire disabled. So I went to the maintenance department and said, you know, "I'd like to do this." Well, there's so many no's you can't believe, you know. They can't lift, they can't move, they can't – and so I had

documentation that they're good workers, they never leave the job, they don't quit they're so happy to have the job they do it good, you know, and all this stuff. They're not absent a lot cause a lot of times, like the midnight to seven shift, the guys don't show up on Monday and all that. So I said we'll put it on a trial – at a trial basis [“Goodnight! Bye!”] We'll put it at a trial basis [door closes] and you won't have to pay anything I'll pay it out of my budget for, like three weekends. And they said it had to be two maintenance workers for this one – to go as a trio. It ended up, of course, that the maintenance workers were so great and so loyal and so stable that they believed me and they hired then.

So then I got real brazen and I said to the college of education, “We should teach, you know, rehabilitation.” But they didn't have anything. So I wrote to – I wrote a grant. There wasn't any grant, I mean there wasn't any money appropriated, but I wrote it anyway, and I sent it and the lady from HEW, Switzer her name was, was the head of HEW forever and she was retiring. And the way grant money is issued, all grant money, it's issued but a lot of it doesn't – not a lot, some of it – doesn't get used and at the end of the year you either use it or lose it into the general budget. So they, HEW, decided that this lady, this money that wasn't used that she could, if she wanted to, choose the grants that would get that final money. So she – they make a conference in Boston, in some little Catholic college, for a week and I get to go too. And I went up there and there were sixteen people, things that they had selected, and then for a week we gave our presentations and she picked two. And she picked us, Wright State, and so that's how we got a graduate school of rehabilitation and counseling.

Yeah, that was a good idea. And I don't know how good the department is – I don't know anything about the department now or if there is one, I only know that then it worked. So it meshed this whole disabled thing, and that's where, I guess you don't know, that's where – how I almost got fired – well I almost got fired twice – but that one I almost got fired because – here's that only toilet in the nursing thing? So I think, that's not right. We're just building Millett and Oelman – no, we're just building Oelman and Fawcett – we had Millett and Allyn. And I thought, well, they're just building that, so I call up the architect. I didn't know you're not supposed to do that, there's some designated person in the university – I called up the architect, excuse me, for Fawcett. And the Fawcett architect said, “Oh, we could do that, and because it's on the drawing boards there's no cost to you.” I said, “Great! Do it!” [Laughter] I had no authority, I didn't know I needed authority. I thought it was a good idea! They wanted to do it, so I got called into Fred White's office and he was furious, livid, and of course he was the accounting, finance – he was a, you know, law and order guy, you follow all the rules. And so, and I was the only woman in

administration, and so he said, you know, how it's not done, he blustered around yelling, "Is there any reason why we should keep you, you can't follow directions," and all this stuff. And I just sat there and said, "I didn't know. I just thought it was a good idea." Ended up that Oelman – they decided to put one handicap toilet on each floor. So, male on one floor, female on another, you know. But they did it on their own. That was the beginning of making it admissible for handicapped students. We now have the tunnel that they can get around these four buildings using the freight elevators, and then we now have toilets that they can take more than one class.

If we stay on that handicap part, the next step was to break down the bias of the professors. Now, the professors. Okay, so I'd get calls like, "I have a wheelchair person in my – scheduled in my class in my first class. I had one last term, give it to someone else." Or, "I have to have, I have a blind person in my class and he has to be removed because he uses this stylus with the metal and it goes 'click click click' and it disrupts my thinking. So you have to get him out." What I did with that one, I remember. I bring the kid in, and I said, "Where do you sit in the class?" He says, "In the front row." And I go, "Why do you sit in the front row, you can't see anything!" and I said, "And it's disturbing the professor." And I said, "Why don't you go in and sit in the back, then there's – he won't hear the noise!" And it solved it. The other times were like, "My class is full. I don't have any seats left." And I go, "Don't worry, he can – he brings his own!" You know? [Laughter] And the threat!

One time a woman called from Chillicothe or some place and she's – whatever the handicap is, she's flat on her back, you know, and she wants to take courses. And she could get an ambulance and bring the oxygen and everything, flat on her back, into the classroom, right? And I thought – but she got really sick and couldn't come. But I thought this is a good one. So I said, every time I got another call from a professor like the chemistry would say, "Oh, it's not me, I don't mind that he's in my chemistry class, but he can't go in the lab because his breathing might be impaired." I said, "There's nothing wrong with his breathing, he had polio!" And – but I would say, "Oh well that's okay because I have this lady who is on [Laughter] a stretcher and we can wheel her into your class!" And it scared the hell out of them. [Laughter] And, and it wasn't long before all the professors saw the quality and the worth of our handicapped students. So it just grew because everybody cared, you know.

But funny experiences like one day – I don't know what I was, director of something. And I look out the door, and here comes a wheel- and I was like right – my office was right here, and it was a hall that went like that, Allyn? And here comes a wheelchair at the same time a blind kid with a stick is going like that, and the stick goes in the wheel of the wheelchair! Knocks them both down and

I'm thinking, "Oh, it knocked them down!" Not them. "You did it!" "No, you did it!" And they start punching each other! [Laughter] It was unbelievable! Then, the blind kid fumbles around, helps that kid in the wheelchair up and he goes off, and the wheelchair goes off. It was so funny to see but what it was, was such a reality check. And when we started with the dormitories, having handicapped in the dormitories, oh, it was the most wonderful experience.

We, we put – first we trained the handicapped student service people were wonderful that I hired, and they trained people to help the people who were quadriplegic, totally – totally not capable of feeding themselves or anything. They trained them to be assistants. Well, first our idea was that the assistant and the person would be in the same room. Then we evolved it that we would train people they hired. The kid hires, the kid pays, sends them to us, we'll train them to be their assistant. It now has evolved, before I left, I can't talk about now, but before I left it evolved that they don't live in the same room, even. They don't even have to live together.

One day I was touring right at the end, I guess, right near my husband's death, I was touring the dorm just to talk to the people and say, "What's going on, what's wrong?" And I go in and there's a guy in the first floor and I said, "How do you like it?" And he said "Fine." "Who's your roommate?" and the roommate was a guy, I mean a name I knew, and he was quadriplegic. And I said, "What are you doing?" He said "I'm here on an athletic scholarship." Here's an athlete. And I said, "Well, you know, how do you like it? Do you have any difficulties?" Cause he's not the trainer, he's not the helper. It's just roommates. He goes, "No! Ed's my best friend. This is the second year we're rooming together." Here's an athlete with a fine body and here's a quadriplegic and they're just the tightest friends and I thought "This is right. This is good." So the handicapped student services grew beautifully because everybody helped, but along the way, each thing made it bigger and better for the students. So that was what was cool about the thing.

00:37:19

Jennifer Budzek: When did it become a separate department of disability services? I know it's a separate department now, of disability services inside student services. Was it then that it became, like separate people that were hired just to work with the handicapped students?

00:37:32

Elenore Koch: Yes. We all had – I had grants, we wrote grants for that. We hired Pat Marx and Pat got us a big grant – wrote a big grant. She was wonderful, and it was the era – she was cute and – cute-looking – and it was the era of very very short miniskirts and she wore them to the extreme. So anytime she had to go and break down barriers, I'd say, "Pat, would you go over to that department?" [Laughter] But she did a wonderful job and we ended up – the idea that I had,

and I have no idea where it is, but the idea I had was, hey, wait a minute. Because we were getting that name of hand- for handicapped, all handicapped kids came. Now, kids with handicaps like serious diabetes and everything, don't need to come to Wright State, they can go anywhere. Blind kids should be able to. So my idea was, there is a – there was a consortium of the schools in our area, the Board of Regents made it. So all – UD, Wilberforce, Central... All the schools in our area.

My idea was that we'd become the central repository, but that we assist them. For instance, reading for the blind. We got all the equipment from grants and all of that, and we could read – and we had all the people reading chemistry or whatever – and they could send us the textbooks and we'd do it in Braille or whatever. And so that the blind kids don't all have to come to Wright State, because one of the things that was expressed was that we didn't want to become "Handicapped U," you know? So that was the idea, that we would help the other schools become accessible for whatever, or however. We knew Ohio State was at a – you know, they could never become accessible all over, but a lot of the schools are flat building schools. So that was the idea, to help the other schools become accessible too. I don't know if that happened or anything since then.

00:39:52 Jennifer Budzek: You said that was only one of the times that you almost got fired. What was the other time?

00:39:56 Elenore Koch: The other time for handicapped was the tunnels. I decided – now the tunnels are wonderful. Now I'm going with, "Let's paint the tunnels." They're not nice, paint the tunnels white. Well there was a whole discussion: You can't paint the tunnels white, there's going to be graffiti all over the tunnels. [Laughter] So it ended up that, okay, we paint the tunnels white and I will pay to have students smooth over the graffiti. Never. There was no graffiti ever in our tunnels. And then I – how about the time I decided to put food in the tunnels. While they're walking around to these tunnels, why not have a vending machine, you know, for candy and stuff like that. That was another big issue because the vending food service wasn't in my department. [Laughter] Whenever I stepped out of the line.

But the reason I got almost fired was, now we're going to build the University Center. University Center is up a hill and it's pretty far from Allyn and Oelman. And I say let's – they had no idea – let's build a tunnel. Let's connect a tunnel from there to there. The answer was no, and then the answer was it costs too much, the answer was the grade is too high. And I just – it was gone, that idea. However, they built the medical school in between those two. So then I think, let's connect the medical school and then we connect the medical school. That's

a good idea, I think. So somehow somebody, some connection, and I go to the congress or whatever they call it, and I tell the thing that we want and come back and got called in because, “You can’t do that and you don’t go to the congress. We have ways that paper has to do it and we make that, and you know there are many priorities and you have jumped over all the other priorities” – so it didn’t get done. But then, I think it was \$150,000 as I recall, and it turned out to be like a million something when they finally did it, you know, but it’s done and it’s all connected and it’s just a wonderful campus now. And I love it because, you know, if you’d come on our campus during the busiest part of the day, you don’t see lots of students. But if you go under the tunnels you see everything. It’s wonderful. The connections are so great. So, that’s the handicapped part.

But international was a great idea. I never fully got it done, but it was a great idea. The idea was that the students come on campus in their first year and if they’re rich, wonderful. If they’re not, if they’re on financial aid, if they’re on work study, whatever, they would get a job on the campus. I wouldn’t choose, it’s a job the department has in the library or wherever. And if that person- that department chose that kid, then the kids’ money would be accrued through the bursar. The kid would get a chit that says, you know, “Congratulations! You’ve saved this much.” We figured out how much they have to earn to get a one-month study abroad, everything paid. And they did it themselves, not their parents, not a grant from the government or anything. So I thought, because at least in my personal experience, when I have to work for something and get it, I really make sure I do it. I don’t slack off or anything, I got this. And so that’s exactly what happened. And we named them ambassadors because – for that reason – saying you’re not only representing yourself, Wright State, but America to these countries that don’t know you. The idea was that they could study on a different continent every year so they’d get a flavor because the continents are so different. And I ended up with Asia and South America and was doing Europe but then I left, so – and I know they’re doing wonderful things but they haven’t – but I heard the other day that philosophy hasn’t been settled. So...

00:44:47

Jennifer Budzek: And you have your own scholarship now.

00:44:49

Elenore Koch: Yeah, yeah. And the idea is that students, some students, don’t work on the campus because they have to work just to get tuition, you know, you’re talking more need. So they need, some of them need scholarships, so – and the thing that I heard the other day, which I was kind of sad about, but I’m sure it’s because of this working and money, or lack of it. When I had it, we took twenty students and the reason we took twenty students, the Wright State bus when the students, the twenty came, the Wright State – we only had a bus that held twenty. But anyway [Laughter] the – we had to interview to screen because

we had so many applications. And now they're taking five or six, so somehow the finances have not been the way they should be, but at the same time, lots of difficulties with this kind of program.

When we get a university to accept our students for a month, teach them the language, teach them the culture, the history, have them socialize, have them see the country for a month, they also want to have twenty of their students come, and that's not easy because our – we have to put them up in the dorm, we have to teach them, we have to have the buses and everything. Our costs had to be clearly made up by the students – the university would not put one penny into it, whereas in the other countries the universities subsidize as well as what we paid, so they had big experiences like you heard that guy say, he saw all of Japan. And we get as far as Columbus, you know, to the fair, and we didn't do that before, we got them to the Reds ballgame because somebody knew somebody to get cheap tickets.

But, but the difficulty was on our side bringing them in. It's not difficult at all to get home stay in foreign countries, but for us to find home stays, it's very very difficult. We're a two-person working family, so the mother and father are both gone during the day, so work – the family and the work situation it's hard to find home stays, but I had somebody just working on that all year, it really worked. And Brazil was a wonderful connection for us too, so that program, I think what I heard, is beautiful. It's flourishing; the people that I just met are wonderful people, so that's great.

They had somebody before these people that killed the program, just stopped it. And they had a president, don't put this in the report, they had a president, I don't know what his name was, and he – I met with him and he said – this is, I'm gone from Wright State. He said, "I don't travel, I fly but I don't travel out of the United States ever and my wife won't fly at all, so we're not interested in the international program." I said, "For everybody?" That was my answer, and he went, like that just glared at me. So it died but then – and he hired somebody that took it away, but now they've got the right president and all of that stuff and it's just flourishing again, they seem so capable to make it good.

That was just another piece of what we did, but some of the things were so great that the directors did, I mean, financial aid. Financial aid, talk about the handicapped, financial aid hired a quadriplegic and he – all he needed was a telephone adaptor. Somehow – his hand was, you know, solid, but somehow all he had to do was press a button in the telephone. That's the only adaptation that we had to make and we had a guy who was a CPA accountant doing intake for, you know, for work study and all. Really, most work study and all that are just not at all CPAs, let alone trained in accounting [Laughter] and we got this

great guy for that, so it worked – it works, you know, it works if you work it. It does.

00:49:54 Jennifer Budzek: What do you think is unique about Wright State as compared to the other universities in Ohio or in the country?

00:50:00 Elenore Koch: In Ohio the – Wright State stands alone. It is absolutely innovative, creative, it is not trying to look like Miami or Bowling Green and it doesn't compete with Miami and Bowling Green. Our whole goal, now I don't know now, our whole goal was to be number five in tuition. We would never try to go higher than Miami and Bowling Green and Ohio State. We're not there. We should be right in the middle on tuition and all of that. And our enrollment should be around there and we are unique in our innovative abilities and we should do that, we should have innovative new departments that no other school has, all of that should be our role because we're right on the Wright Brothers' deal. You know, if – they're the inventors and we should be following that goal, so, so I think it's unique. And of course in the country we're number one about disabled. I've written reports that have – I should have brought some that were published all over, and I won the Mitow Award, which is the famous award for research institutions and Wright State won it, so we – right from the beginning, innovation was our goal.

00:51:41 Jennifer Budzek: How did your department change over the years that you were here?

00:51:44 Elenore Koch: It kept growing. [Laughter] Kept growing and growing and growing. For instance, don't put this in the report, but the current Vice President for Student Affairs has four departments and I had fifteen.

00:52:00 Jennifer Budzek: Fifteen? Wow.

00:52:01 Elenore Koch: Yeah. They just dropped it, they just dropped off. But yeah, it was – it just kept growing as we kept seeing a need or as the department wasn't flourishing over there. Anything that related to students – housing and all – and how we got that housing off campus? Universities are not – state universities are not permitted any funds from the general budget to build housing. You can build buildings, but you can't build housing or arenas and stuff. So you have to get private bonds, private loans, and private investors. So we couldn't get any, and so I was doing some research because I knew that held us back, it held us clearly back from getting international students from foreign countries – where are they going to be housed? But all of our – I knew there were students that wanted to come from outside of Cleveland and stuff – we had no housing. So I don't know, I read in something, maybe *The Chronicle for Higher Education*, some place, that some school like Missouri or something – they had a unique



thing. They made a contract with a contractor, a builder – directly adjacent to the campus, the builder put up housing, and the university ran it. I thought, well that makes sense. So I went out there, talked to the guy, a nice builder guy, and talked to the school and they're happy, both of them. So the guy comes to campus, I bring him to the president and from then on, the president told me the other day one of the hardest things for him to get through and fight through the Board of Regents and all was that housing idea.

The idea is slick, but it was just too scary for too many people. The idea is the guy builds it and we contract 100% occupancy always, so if we don't fill it we have to pay out of the university budget which scared everybody. [Laughter] You can't fill it, you don't have the data to prove you can fill it. And now, of course, we have three thousand students housed and the adjacent housing is beautiful and the contractor – I don't know now – but the contractor then couldn't be happier. He gets the loan and he builds the building and he gets 100% occupancy. He doesn't have a leasing agent, he doesn't have anything – only thing he has to do is upkeep. And we do the rest. So it's like he's raking in about 18-20% net overpaying the debt. It just worked perfectly and we got total control, we had floor advisors and all of that. It really is a perfect synergistic thing. And it helped the international students and married students, everything.

00:55:25 Jennifer Budzek: What did you struggle with the most and what did you find the most appealing about Wright State?

00:55:34 Elenore Koch: [Pause] I really couldn't say struggle, I would say challenging. I never was disheartened, you never – I never got that feeling – Wright State people were all in it, and – but the challenges were when I went up against finance or went up – I would always have to figure out a way, well I'll try it with my own money, you know, just to show and stuff like that. Those were challenges, but new ideas were like developing the Artist in Lecture series. I mean, it's because somebody – somebody knew the secretary to Phil Donahue because "The Phil Donahue Show" was broadcast in Dayton and he's from Dayton, and so somebody knew the secretary to Phil Donahue and when I started the Artist series, the secretary talked to Phil Donahue – his secretary talked to him and said, you know, some of the people that you're getting on your show – could they ask if they would come to Wright State and deliver a free lecture, because I'm not paying.

And we got everybody. We got Gloria Steinem, we got Dick Gregory who was a black activist – he was wonderful. Here's the joke he told that I will never forget: Remember – who's that guy who did the heart transplant? Oh, you know in South Africa – the first heart transplant. I've forgotten his name. He did the first

heart transplant and was a black person's heart put into a white person. And he said, he mentioned that, and he said, "Don't you honkys think we black people are going to be your spare parts factory!" [Laughter] But, but Gloria Steinem was another funny one that came. Gloria Steinem was vivid in her use of cuss words and vulgarity and she was strong in her purpose and the president, Golding's wife, brought her knitting club and they put – they went and sat in the first row. The auditorium was Oelman and sat in the first row like that. And here's Gloria Steinem and she delivered just like I hoped she would. I get a call to the president's office, and the president said – this is his way of thinking: "If I could dig a ten foot hole I would put you in and cover it up." [Laughter] Well he was so mad about it – his wife was incensed, incensed.

But it went on and we got Oprah Winfrey, we got all these people free. And it was wonderful. Now, how it developed is wonderful. First it got loused up after I left but then it got better, and the president – it's now a Presidential Series under the president and he's delighted with it, and the Artist Series is under the music department or something. I don't care where it is, that it goes is important, you know. So those were – those are fun things because here's what I put in just for myself. On the Artist Series, they always didn't want big things, they just wanted to – they're doing it free. They just want to come, have dinner, do the thing. So I made it up that they would have dinner only with me in the presidential dining room. [Laughter] So I got to sit with these famous people [Laughter] and just have dinner with them. Oprah Winfrey and everybody! [Laughter] So it was – that was fun. I liked that part of it. Like Jane Fonda, you know, people like that. But it was a good time in history, you know, very radical things happening, so it was fun. That's what's fun about Wright State.

- 00:59:48 Jennifer Budzek: You were one of the first, I think, right, the first female Vice President on campus?
- 00:59:52 Elenore Koch: On campus and in the state.
- 00:59:54 Jennifer Budzek: Now what kind of opposition did you come up against with that?
- 00:59:56 Elenore Koch: Big.
- 00:59:57 Jennifer Budzek: I bet. [Laughter]
- 00:59:58 Elenore Koch: Big opposition. I can give you one, because I'm an old women's libber. I can give you one – the president – the provost happened to be a medical doctor and he was head of the medical school and chose to be provost then after we brought that [unintelligible]. He – we're at a meeting – four vice presidents and the president, and he says "Now, you know, we're – I'm having

at my ship, my boat, on Lake Erie we're having a fishing trip for the weekend and I think, you know, you'll all love it and everything." And I said, "Well, when is it?" And he goes, "Oh, it's not for you. We only have one bathroom on the ship." Talk about straight-out bias and that's just one, don't write it though. But that's just one of the – it was all the time. All the time.

The president Kegerreis –when that first dormitory that's connected to the University Center was being built, I went everyday to see how they're doing and talk to the men who were building it because it's going to be the place for my students, you know? And they told me, and the head of the – manager or whatever they call it – of the crew also said, you know, "This is a flat-top roof and that is the worst thing. It's not – you shouldn't have a flat-top roof – they leak and everything." I run back and tell the president, "President," remember I told you he got his degree later? He and his father were in the construction business and he says to me, glaring at me, "I have all the background and that building is proceeding correctly, you know nothing about construction so keep quiet." That's what he told me. But it turned out that it's terrible and it leaked and they've replaced it a million times and everything. [Laughter] So...

01:01:56 Jennifer Budzek: If you could go back and do it all over again, would you change anything and what would you change?

01:02:01 Elenore Koch: If I would do it all over again... what would I change? [Pause] Knowing the circumstances of that time, and then the circumstances of this time and where Wright State is, it's so vastly different. If I could go back and it would be that time I wouldn't change a thing. It was wonderful to do it. But nowadays, I would tread differently knowing that the university has a place in history and everything – I wouldn't be so cavalier on trying things and everything. I would be much more serious looking at what we should do and making five-year plans and stuff like that. So as the university has grown, they don't need this person like I was back then.

01:03:01 Jennifer Budzek: Is there anything that you want to mention or talk about that we haven't discussed so far?

01:03:06 Elenore Koch: I love that question, I used to ask that [Laughter] when I interviewed people, you know I – here I'm going to hire an associate or a director or something, and then they give me the references. Well, I would always call the references and I'd call the references and at the end say that question. When I came up with that I couldn't believe it. I, you know, I'd call somebody and they're saying all the right things and "This person has great experience and yes he's taught classes for fourteen years" – "Is there anything else you'd like to say?" "Well, we wouldn't hire him in our department.

[Laughter] He has – yeah! He has had affairs with students” and stuff like that! They’d tell you at the end! I mean, because I don’t ask did he ever have affairs with students – they don’t answer. [Laughter] So that question is a perfect question. So, is there anything I’d like to say? I’d like – about Wright State. [Pause] I’d like to say I hope it doesn’t get stayed and, and you know, twenty years from now the people are saying there’s no difference between Wright State and Miami and all. I hope it always stays innovative and, and changes part of it – not that we don’t make change that we know what we’re doing, you don’t have to tell us to change. I hope it always stays innovative.

01:04:46 Jennifer Budzek: Well thank you so much for doing this interview.

01:04:47 Elenore Koch: Oh, you’re welcome, Jennifer! [Laughter]

01:04:49 Jennifer Budzek: I’m going to turn of the recorder now.

01:04:50 Elenore Koch: Okay. [Laughter]

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Unbeknownst to the interviewer, the recording stopped then started again and captured the following information:

01:04:52 Elenore Koch: The philosophy I made was we have to be the best education institution, that’s what they’re paying us for.

01:05:00 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah.

01:05:00 Elenore Koch: To be the experts. But we don’t know diddly about food or police or any of that, so let’s find people who they say they’re the experts in that area and do it. At that time, that wasn’t done but now it’s the common thing. You subcontract out all of that. I subcontract out the counseling service. When we got – I think they still do but I don’t know – when we got the school of psych, what are we hiring counselors for, when they’re training them over there? Why not have that school do it? And the health service, why not have the medical school do it? What are we doing with a retired doctor that’s the kind of – all health services that are run by universities, they get retired doctors who had heart attacks and they can’t work anymore so they work, you know, at a university, it’s not much and all of that. So why do we need that when we’ve got a whole medical school that could be – so that was my, my thought process. I don’t know what they’re doing now. I do know the food is contracted out.

01:06:10 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah. I know that’s still that way, I’m not sure about counseling. I know that they always have, like job postings for like counselors

occasionally, but there's Health Services, then there's Counseling Services and then there's Student Support Services, which is where I used to work with Katie Deedrick, I don't know if you know her.

01:06:27 Elenore Koch: Sure, I know Katie!

01:06:28 Jennifer Budzek: But, she's still the head – she's Student Support Services, she used to be something else.

01:06:32 Elenore Koch: Didn't Katie get her doctorate?

01:06:34 Jennifer Budzek: No.

01:06:35 Elenore Koch: No that wasn't Katie it was another one.

01:06:37 Jennifer Budzek: But they kind of shifted everything around just in the last couple of years, I mean I was working with Katie and then right when I started working with her they had just moved her from somewhere in Student Activities and made Student Support Services.

01:06:48 Elenore Koch: And who – from whom – to whom does it report I think it reports –

01:06:52 Jennifer Budzek: Dr. A, the Vice President for Student Affairs.

01:06:54 Elenore Koch: Yes.

01:06:56 Jennifer Budzek: And so they sort of made, I don't know, I guess it was – it used to be sort of one big thing and now they made it a lot of sub-units and they all report to him, I think.

01:07:04 Elenore Koch: Yes.

01:07:05 Jennifer Budzek: That's how they're doing it now, I'm not sure.

01:07:07 Elenore Koch. Yeah. But it's – there's so many pieces, I mean when you're talking about financial aid, bursar, work study, placement, all of those had to be developed, you know, our placement services, oh we went through so much to just get employers to come to Wright State, IBM and that, you know. To get them to come here as opposed to going to the other places.

01:07:30 Jennifer Budzek: And that's huge now, I mean Career Services is massive and they have so many job postings for students and they counsel you on-

01:07:36 Elenore Koch: Yes, Yes!

01:07:36 Jennifer Budzek: Helping you find something and job fairs all the time.

01:07:39 Elenore Koch: I know, I know.

01:07:40 Jennifer Budzek: And so I mean, yeah it really-

01:07:41 Elenore Koch: And we just had to start that from scratch because Wright State was totally unknown.

01:07:47 Jennifer Budzek: And it's amazing because, I mean, it hasn't even been around for that long.

01:07:49 Elenore Koch: It's so short.

01:07:50 Jennifer Budzek: And how quickly it grew is really a testament to that.

01:07:53 Elenore Koch: You don't have it on tape, do you?

01:07:54 Jennifer Budzek: No.

01:07:55 Elenore Koch: Okay, one of the things that's a real issue, but I, you know. In the state university system, Central State is a state university, and it's like thirty miles away. When the Regents said there is no state university in this area, instead of putting the money in Central State and making Central State a big university, they just put another state university thirty miles away. Black-white issue. And put it thirty miles away. Yes.

01:08:35 Jennifer Budzek: I never really put that together.

01:08:36 Elenore Koch: And they run and ran and state money for Central State, leaving it over here. Isn't that something?

01:08:46 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah, it is.

01:08:48 Elenore Koch. Yeah. I-

01:08:50 Jennifer Budzek: Wow. I never really put that together in my head, because it's – they're so close and it seems weird that they'd both be state-

01:08:55 Elenore Koch: Who puts two state universities thirty miles away from each other? [Laughter] But they just – it never comes up, you know? But-

01:09:03 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah, nobody ever mentions it, it's never an issue, but wow.

01:09:07 Elenore Koch: But that was an issue with the black people at that time. And, you know, they said it's not in Dayton, but neither is Wright State, it's in Fairborn. You know, yeah. There wasn't any solid reason, and, and the Board of Regents funds both. And that's a chunk of money. My thing was, every time budgets got real tight every year or when it went down, my idea was let's take some part – a

real part of Wright State that's growing – and we put it, like for instance the College of Education. Let's put the College of Education in Central State, and make that a wonderful graduate school, Central State is everything. And the people who want to be teachers go thirty miles more. And so... but never. Never. And one time they loaned one of our provosts over there to head the College of Business or something, but nothing. We never – and it operates as a separate entity now. And I used to call the Vice President for Student Affairs from Central State, you know, they had like a thousand students, to come to – in Columbus there was – the president had a meeting, all the presidents once a month, the vice presidents for student affairs, the all – so the vice president for student affairs meeting once a month, I used to call the vice president there to come with me because – and he would never come. They never attended one meeting.

01:10:45 Jennifer Budzek: It seems like there's no sort of communication in between the two universities.

01:10:49 Elenore Koch: Or the Board of Regents.

01:10:51 Jennifer Budzek: You'd think it would be, kind of maybe a sister university because it's so close, you'd think they – and it makes no sense why you wouldn't work with them.

01:10:54 Elenore Koch: Why not? And I guess, I guess. Right. I guess the – if I would say a concern is back when the civil rights issues were on, okay, I could see there was so much bias and prejudice and everything. But this is forty years later and we still. But it's soft, it's soft now. Then it was raw.

01:11:22 Jennifer Budzek: Only now the rhetoric is, "Oh, it's not a problem. Everything's completely equal."

01:11:26 Elenore Koch: Yes! It is not, it is not.

01:11:29 Jennifer Budzek: It's terrible to say, but at least then it was out in the open, you know, and now it's secretive.

01:11:33 Elenore Koch: It's... yes. The water is smooth, but.

01:11:37 Jennifer Budzek: It's not politically correct to talk about it, yeah.

01:11:38 Elenore Koch: But, but the other thing was women's lib. That was another issue with me and with, with what was going on at the time. And what I did was – I don't know how – I met this woman who, she couldn't have the nightly news at 11 because there were no female commentators at that time, none. But she had special – for the Dayton, the Dayton station at 11 o'clock she had five minutes

about what's going on in Dayton or something. And so she and I and the woman who was assistant to the mayor, there were no women in the business, and a woman who was a person who was like head of the Red Cross volunteers and stuff like that. Four of us met together. Now, you have to know the times. We absolutely had no one to talk to. I mean, I couldn't let my hair down one bit. Only the men could go golfing and the men could do their thing, I had no one. And neither did anybody – those four women.

So we met and we would just tell it like it is and I hate that guy and the prejudice and we liked that. We needed that. And so we expanded that to Dayton Women's Network or something we called it. I forget what. And we expanded it to women and there was an assistant in the bank and, you know, and it had to be the top woman, whatever it was. It wasn't the top job, just the top woman. And we expanded it, and it absolutely was needed, we, you know, nothing left the room but we could tell it like it is and we all knew. And it got so great that women aspiring wanted to be in, and that was a big issue because that's not what we wanted. We didn't want to be a training program, we didn't want to be a support system, we wanted – we needed that.

01:14:01

Jennifer Budzek: An outlet, yeah.

01:14:02

Elenore Koch: Yeah. And so we made a subset and it grew to like two hundred women in that subset. I don't know where it is now, but I remember one day I got a phone call. One of the women went to her doctor, to the gynecologist, and they found a lump in her breast. And she wrote to us and said please get an examination. This was back, remember, when that wasn't common. And so, I didn't do it, and – but Gail, the one that has the five-minute commentary, did it and found a lump in her breast. And another person – the other woman – did her own breast examination and found it but it was benign. But Gail had to have a mastectomy as well as that woman. And then I went to the doctor. [Laughter]

But, but I mean that – there was nothing for us. No way, no avenue of communication or any of that. And had we not been in our group, that other woman could have died because she didn't know she had a lump in her breast, you know. But that was interesting and starting – that's why it's so important Wright State stay innovative. Starting the public radio – we didn't have – Dayton was the only city that didn't have a public radio station. We hooked up through me to Miami. Miami had a station that was not NPR, but it was a non-profit FM. And we went to New York, I remember going, to get a lawyer, there's certain lawyers that only work on that.

01:15:48

Jennifer Budzek: Sure, sure.

01:15:50

Elenore Koch: And, and we got it. We have a wonderful one – NPR.



01:15:53 Jennifer Budzek: Oh yeah, it's fantastic.

01:15:55 Elenore Koch: But we did it all with volunteers. A lieutenant from the base loved music, loved symphony music and all and just had all kinds of records, and he went and taped the Philharmonic, the Dayton Philharmonic, and put it on radio. And we did it all with volunteers in the beginning. Now it's a great station. But it was like – just creating everything new and I don't know in my mind which is better. I think the other way is better, probably. But I never – like if I wanted to find a way to make coffee, I would figure out a way to make coffee. I didn't research out how do other people make coffee – I didn't know that. And I think nowadays with the computer and everything, that it's a better way to research out and then build on that creatively. Instead of making your first coffee pot by yourself, you know. [Laughter] and then you find out, oh other people do that too. [Laughter] So that's it.

01:17:23 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah. Okay, I'll pack up all my stuff.

01:17:24 Elenore Koch: Let me take a lick and see... [Pause] if there was anything... No, I think I have it all. I... [Pause] One of the things that didn't work – that I wanted it to work and I didn't stay long enough to make it work... I made a consortium – my nerdy guy, Wayne, we made a – the lack of data for commuter universities – it still exists but then was non-existent. So they compared our graduation rates with Miami University, where everybody's 18 to 22, graduates in four years. And we looked abysmal all the time – we still do. But because our population is a different population it's apples and oranges.

01:18:20 Jennifer Budzek: Sure, with older students.

01:18:22 Elenore Koch: But first generation, also kids stop out, work, stop back in. That doesn't happen at Miami. So I tried to figure out how to find universities that are like us so that we could compare data. Is our data real terrible or is it similar to oranges and oranges? And so we – I identified sixteen schools and we wrote to them and twelve of them wanted to do it. And we met like in the Louisville airport or Indianapolis, you know, places in the airport. We made a conference – had a conference room.

And they came together and what the idea was to confidentially, I mean, not to be made public, to share the data – to be honest and share our honest data of all kinds of things. How many black students do you have? And how many, you know, they're not "other" [Laughter] and how many 18 to 22? What is your graduation rate after four years? After six years? After seven years, you know? And, and all kinds of things, and – but first we had to make whole profiles. How many – how many resident students do you have? What percent is that of your population? How many students over forty? What percent is your population?

You know, we had to keep honing that down and Wayne loved it, [Laughter] and we got all kinds of data, but I left then and we were doing good but I don't think it went anywhere after that. I think the data was so useful for us, but for the common public it wouldn't make any of our universities look great. So I think it-

- 01:20:36 Jennifer Budzek: Right. Sort of died.
- 01:20:37 Elenore Koch: Dissolved out, yeah. But I talked to the president the other day and he said 40% graduation rate.
- 01:20:46 Jennifer Budzek: Wow.
- 01:20:47 Elenore Koch: No wow. I said, in how many years? And he said six.
- 01:20:51 Jennifer Budzek: Oh.
- 01:20:52 Elenore Koch: See? You have to ask the right questions. So they – our graduation rate is still low after four years, but that has nothing to do with the quality of our students. It has to do with the pattern of their need for educational progress.
- 01:21:11 Jennifer Budzek: Right, and how the university is set up. I mean, the fact that it's a commuter college alone lends itself to an older population.
- 01:21:16 Elenore Koch: It's getting to be a lot more known, but the data is still not good. Like, for instance, we did a survey. I'm a survey person. We did a survey of the students who came in the fall quarter and didn't come in the winter quarter. Okay, why don't they come in the winter quarter but they came in the fall. Full-time student. So then I had picked out at random and had my department and me call up people at random – why aren't you – why didn't – here's the statement we made because that's what was listed – why did you drop out? And they go, "What do you mean I didn't drop out. I can't come winter quarter I have..." In other words, in their mind they're a continuing student, they're just not enrolled this quarter. But on all papers that we had to report-
- 01:22:07 Jennifer Budzek: It looks like they dropped out.
- 01:22:09 Elenore Koch: They're a drop out. And so, you know-
- 01:22:12 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah, that makes a big difference.
- 01:22:13 Elenore Koch: It's a big difference and so here we were, classifying people as drop outs, when they – in their mind they weren't drop outs. I remember asking – changing the application in admissions because of the handicapped. Changing the application in admissions to say, you know, "Do you have any disabling handicap?" and I threw that line out because people would say, "I had a

gallbladder operation” [Laughter] And stuff like that. And the people in the computer couldn’t figure out whether that fit or not – we had to figure out whether diabetes – how severe. [Laughter] We made the whole thing up! That was one of the stupid ideas I had, which are many. [Laughter] So we don’t ask. You don’t ask about disablement because – what I think what we added was, “Do you have any need for specifics.”

01:23:17 Jennifer Budzek: Yeah, I think that’s what the question is now.

01:23:19 Elenore Koch: Yeah! [Laughter]

01:23:20 Jennifer Budzek: They changed it from disabled to need, like is there any extra something you need.

01:23:24 Elenore Koch: Yes, yes! [Laughter]

01:23:27 Jennifer Budzek: That’s so funny.

01:23:28 Elenore Koch: Yeah, we got gallbladder, oh and you know, “I had a hysterectomy” or something like that [Laughter] – we don’t need that information!

01:23:36 Jennifer Budzek: Not on an admissions form! [Laughter] Alright, well I’m going to pack this stuff up.

01:23:42 Elenore Koch: Okay.