2-2-2023

Judy Cathcart, Admissions, Institutional Research

Judy Carthcart
Kathy Morris

Follow this and additional works at: https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/archives_retirees

Part of the Oral History Commons
Interview Information

Interview date: 2/2/2023

Interviewer: Kathy Morris (KM), Associate VP for Student Affairs, Retired

Interviewee: Judy Cathcart, Admissions, Institutional Research, Retired

Transcript

Kathy Morris: Well, welcome. This is Kathy Morris, board member and chair of the historical preservation committee for Wright State’s Retirees Association, and today is Thursday, February 2nd, 2023, and I’m pleased to be interviewing Judy Cathcart, a two-time retiree of Wright State whose last term of service was in the Office of Institutional Research. So, I’m really happy to have you here for our interview, and I’d like to start by asking you to talk a little about your background, your family, and ultimately, we go right into how you ended up at Wright State University. So, we'll go from there. So, let’s get started!

Judy Cathcart: I grew up in Piqua, Ohio and went to Bowling Green State University and worked as a student employee there for three years. Then I got married and had my son, and my now ex-husband went off to National Guard training because he was going to be drafted into Vietnam, and a friend got him in the National Guard at the last minute. So, when he did that I was left alone, came back home, was living with my parents, I got an apartment-

KM: In Piqua.

JC: In Piqua, and within a few weeks- not even a few weeks- I had a job at Wright State and then an apartment-

KM: And what year was that, sweetie?
JC: In 1971. August 31st, 1971 was my first day at Wright State.

KM: So, tell me what was your first impression of the campus when you came to Wright State?

JC: Well, I kept getting lost the first time I came. My father-in-law was driving me and we ended up at the Scarf’s Nursery, the wrong direction on [route] 235 getting off. So, we finally got here, and I was interviewed by Warren Abraham in the College of Continuing Education. He oversaw all the off-campus programs at the time, and so the Piqua branch was part of the College of Continuing Education at the time.

KM: Okay, so let’s talk about this Piqua branch because I think most people have no idea that that even existed. What do you know about that and how did… tell us a little more.

JC: There was always at the old high school, even when it was Miami University, Ohio State, and OU I believe were the three that had programs, and Piqua was the longest running program. I think it started in like 1939 or something, I don’t remember, but they always had classes in the Piqua old high school. So, when Wright State became a university, it was called when I first started there, it was called the Piqua Academic Center. It had several name changes, Piqua Academic Center, Piqua Resident Credit Center, then finally we just called it WSU Piqua. Whether that was official or not I don’t know, but that's what we called ourselves.

KM: And what kind of classes were they offering?

JC: You could get a degree in business except for I think you had to take business law, some wrap-up course, and there were like three classes they wouldn’t let you take at Piqua, so you had to go to the main campus. Probably that 15-hour residence or something, they used that, but there were classes you had to take on the main campus, and you could also get a degree in either elementary education language arts or special education at Piqua. Again, you couldn’t do your student teaching and you couldn’t do your wrap-up course there. You had to do those through the main campus.

KM: And what was your role?
JC: I had probably 25 titles while I was there, starting as clerk because I had been away from typing for a while so I couldn’t pass the typing test. I was supposed to be hired as a clerk typist. I remember my beginning salary was $6200 and some dollars, I don’t remember the odd cents. It probably went farther than what money we make today goes, it seemed like. And then I kept getting different titles-

KM: And greater responsibility?

JC: No, the same responsibility the entire time, pretty much. Basically, I did all the registration, all the onsite admissions stuff that had to go back to admissions. I did all the bursar, I certified veterans, financial aid- I did the financial aid advising… I pretty much did it all.

KM: And you had to learn all of these things. Because who was there to train you?

JC: The only other employee at the time that I was hired there was the director, which was Joe Gatton, and we had a half-time librarian, which was John Black. We had about I’d say thirty student workers, they ran our av equipment for the faculty and I had one or two that would help do office stuff. Because we would have to type syllabuses for faculty that weren’t adjuncts, and didn’t have support. So, they’d come in and say, “Can you type this syllabus for me?” So, they would help me out with that, but we only had one typewriter, and it started out with a Selectric typewriter, then went to a Memorywriter, then we had the CRTs, and then we went to finally… I don’t think I had a computer until I was on the main campus. An actual, functioning computer other than the CRT that connected to the registrar’s office.

KM: Prior to our starting this interview, we were talking about this Piqua campus thing that I had no clue about it and I think most people don’t. When did that change? When did that by go by the by, and is that what prompted your transition to the main campus?

JC: Several things happened. I started in 1971. While I was started there was a group of people who were trying to get a community college established, like Sinclair, and it was the Miami-Shelby-Dark County consortium, and they were trying to get a community college established. Well, their levy failed several times, so, and at that time you had to be a community college, you had to have a levy. So, that didn’t go through,
so they ended up suing the Board of Regents, and I can remember we went to the court and watched the proceedings, Joe Gatton and I did.

**KM:** That had to be interesting.

**JC:** Well, it looked like it was a done deal from the beginning. But basically, it ended up that they won the lawsuit and they said that if the state can fund a branch campus—which we were getting ready to build our own building, I tromped out into the cornfield with Bridge Golding at the site where the building was going to be, Joe Gatton and I did, in muddy boots, we all had muddy boots on and went out there and traipsed in the thing, but this lawsuit stopped it. The land was given to Wright State, we had to transfer the ownership of the land that was donated to us to Edison State, and where Edison State is today was supposed to be the Wright State branch campus.

**KM:** So, was that the genesis of Edison State?

**JC:** That was the genesis of Edison State. So, Edison State was basically established in 1973, so that’s only a couple of years after I started. So, we had to give up all of our 100 and 200-level classes to Edison State. Well, for the first year and a half we operated them for them. We had the faculty, we staffed them, we scheduled them, we did all the work, but it was considered Edison classes. Then they moved to an old elementary school in Piqua- Spring Street, it has since been torn down- while they were building their building. So, some of the students, if they had a 300-level class and 100-level class, they would have to run to different buildings in Piqua, which wasn’t that far but a couple or probably 5 or 6 blocks.

**KM:** This is fascinating.

**JC:** So, Edison’s address is 1973 Edison Dr. The 1973 is because that was the year it was established.

**KM:** So, you did all the legwork for Edison in that transition period, and then how did you transition it to the main campus?
JC: Well, we continued to exist when the branch campus in Celina became WOBC, the Western Ohio Branch Campus. Before that they were somehow associated with Ohio Northern-

KM: Well, it’s not far.

JC: They wanted their own dean. So, at first we stayed with continuing education, and they had their own dean, but then they fought to get us under them and through that process all of our good subsidy classes kept getting pulled to the lake campus, and after a while nothing we did made money. So, in 1983 it was decided that they were going to close the Piqua branch, because it wasn’t…we only had 300 and 400 level courses, and if the good ones were being scheduled elsewhere, you know, we had trouble making money anymore. So, they closed the campus. Before the campus was closed, Ken Davenport knew that Charlene Sweet, who had been in admissions running the records department for many years was going to retire. So, he approached my boss, which was a new boss who came several years before- he was an ex-CIA agent who helped install the Shah of Iran and all sorts of… he had a very interesting history. He told me all the unclassified stuff he had done, I didn’t learn about the classified stuff. He was an interesting person to work with, his name was Ray Wilson. We were together I don’t know how many times, and we kind of covered for each other sometimes. He liked to golf, so he would go golfing and it was always like, “He’s at the chamber of commerce event”. [Laughs]

KM: How did he cover for you?

JC: Oh, when I took classes or something, I’d come down to main campus and take a class during work hours, so we kind of-

KM: -helped each other out.

JC: Also, my degree was- they made that a requirement, or not a requirement but part of my thing, so I sometimes got to- even under Joe Gatton- so I earned my degree, in 1976 I finished it. I was a junior through… I had like 96 hours that came from Bowling Green, and then the rest were from Wright State.

KM: And your degree is in?
JC: Business Administration.

KM: Okay. So, you finished your degree…

JC: I finished my degree in ’76.

KM: And?

JC: And then came down to the main campus through this transition, because I started where I would work a half day at Piqua, because it was kind of declining and not much was going on, and then I’d go down and I’d work from 4-7 on the main campus, and I did that for two months.

KM: Oh boy. That’s a long-

JC: Until Charlene retired. But basically, I worked on the… well, Records was across the hall there, so I guess I worked on the admissions side of things. Records was across the hall where Financial Aid ended up being, eventually. So, I worked there at night, and-

KM: So, this was in Allyn Hall?

JC: Yes.

KM: That main area, which for those who have any recollection of it was almost like the central-

JC: It was almost like a wing.
**KM:** Yeah, that whole area right in the center of that first floor, and I guess you could kind of look out your window and see part of the-

**JC:** Now, when I was on the records side, we could see the quad area and the moat.

**KM:** The moat, the famous moat.

**JC:** So, they did a lateral transfer from Piqua to the main campus, and I was lucky that that happened because I was told I had no rights with the state to move, even though the people at Lake Campus did have rights.

**KM:** Were you in OPERS?

**JC:** Yes, and I probably would've ended up fighting it and saying, you know, ‘I need a job and you need to find me a job’, but luckily, I didn’t have to go through any of that.

**KM:** So that was ‘83?

**JC:** That was ‘83.

**KM:** So, you and I both came to Wright State in ‘83?

**JC:** Yeah.

**KM:** Interesting.

**JC:** So, I drove here, and before that, I would come down here every Friday and I would go to the admission office, the registrar’s office, the financial aid office, the bursar’s, and I would take everything I had done during the week-
KM: -and merge it.

JC: -and give it to them I also had to pick up films for faculty, because this was before they had a courier service. That was not fun, lugging films back and forth.

KM: So, who were the players then? In '83, the president was still Bob Kegerreis, he was president here, and director of admissions was Ken…

JC: Ken Davenport.

KM: And financial aid, was Dave Darr there?

JC: It was Dave Darr.

KM: And registrar was…

JC: Lou [Faulkner]

KM: Lou, yeah. Gosh. So, what are your memories of those first couple of years?

JC: It was fun. It was fun, because I was around young people, I was close to supervising student workers, got to know all the deans because they did overloads and taught. So, I pretty much knew a lot of people from across the campus by the time I came down to campus, and Wright State really did feel like a family back then. I was hired in '71, and the big hire was from '71 to '73, I believe. I think in '74 wasn't that when the energy crisis happened and there was a freeze on hiring?

KM: I was still in college then, I don’t know. [Laughs] I don’t remember too much.
JC: For a while the Piqua branch had to move into the junior high school, because it was steam heated, during the energy crisis. So, if there was a winter where we weren’t in the old high school because it was not steam heated- I don’t know, it had a boiler- so, to save money they moved everything into this…it was bizarre, that period of time when the energy crisis was going on. And then when I came to the main campus I was well suited because I had done registration, I had done bursar, I had done financial aid, and I had done admissions. At that point in time, the admissions application we had log books, we had to log for two weeks-

KM: This is all before computers.

JC: We did this because it wasn’t on a computer right away, you know, it had to be punch cards, they did punch cards of everything that we did throughout the day, and then those would get converted, then finally it would get uploaded up to the computer system, and then we would get a new log book and we were back doing the same thing again. I think wasn’t email ’91? Our first email was in 1991.

KM: I’m trying to remember. I just remember my first computer was the Mac, the Macintosh, the little rectangular thing with the screen about this big (she holds her hands in the shape of a small rectangle). The only printer was over in the basement of… you know, over in the basement of Millett.

JC: Right, yeah, you had to order all of your reports and you had to do all your stuff-

KM: So, I guess email was maybe around that same time or something, maybe a little before then, I don’t know.

JC: Admissions kind of was the stepchild of financial aid and the registrar and stuff, because registration came first, even though they couldn’t register until we admitted them. So, certain parts of our jobs would go through so that registration could happen, but then the rest of our jobs that we tried to get to improve ourselves wouldn’t get done because of registration stuff. We shared a coder, an IT person, the registrar and admissions. So, we didn’t get anything done for years and years and years. So, finally we convinced Ken that if you want to make us an efficient operation, we need our own person so that we get our own stuff done, because we never got our stuff done. Because the registrar always needed so much stuff that had to happen, mostly because
of regulations or whatever. We couldn’t not do the registrar’s stuff. So, we got our own person.

**KM:** Why don’t you talk a little about the dynamic, the Lou/Ken/Dave dynamic. Those three you always saw them together.

**JC:** Yeah, they were always together. They had lunch together-

**KM:** They were really tight. So, what are your memories of them, just as a trio in charge of the enrollment management functions of the university?

**JC:** Um, they worked well together. They would argue over little turf things sometimes but it never got in the way of their friendship. They were very friendly with each other, even after they retired they got together, so it was a good thing.

**KM:** A good team, and they worked together for so many years. You know, when you think about the longevity of three people in those important roles at an institution, you wouldn’t find that today. That’s not the way things are. Yeah, I have memories of that, too, especially once the Student Union was built and all those functions happened. But back to your story about where you were in Allyn. Let’s talk a little about how things began to grow and evolve and how that changed your work and your work spaces.

**JC:** I can remember the first thing I did when I came, while we were still on the CRT sending the stuff at night, was I changed that the transcript that was here to a “P” for “Partial”. That was the very first thing that I instituted, because we would have to go to the files and look to see if it was final every time a student called, and I thought this would save us a lot of work. So, that was the very first improvement I made to the system, which wasn’t accepted very well by the people that… you know, I was kind of a…

**KM:** A rabble-rouser?

**JC:** Yeah. At first, they didn’t like me when I came down, because they didn’t understand why I was doing this and making changes. It was funny, because it wasn’t
until we sat down to try to hash things out, and at that time we had international admissions and graduate admissions and undergrad all in the same office.

**KM:** I can’t even wrap my head around that now. I mean, back then, it’s really… it’s remarkable that things got done.

**JC:** And we did the student IDs.

**KM:** Yes!

JC: We took the pictures and did all the student IDs and faculty IDs. I can remember, you know, we had different color backgrounds for faculty and students and whatever, and some faculty member, I don’t remember who it was, complaining about his- well, he wanted the same ID as- I don’t remember what it was, some special ID because he was a dean or something, and I said, “This is the same ID that the president has, so you’re fine”. [**Laughs**] And the system used to take two pictures back then and we’d usually choose the best picture, but our student workers would take all the cute guy pictures and keep them in a drawer. [**Both laughing**]

**KM:** That’s a good one! That’s a good one, oh my goodness. Oh gosh, okay. So, Paige Mulhollan was pretty much credited for- when he became president- for being the president who changed the physical plan of the campus. He was in charge of really a lot of the growth of the buildings and projects. So, at a certain point in time, Allyn Hall was simply too crowded for all the things your area needed to be doing. I remember in 1991 or ’92 we were in our planning phase for the Student Union, which was to include a three-story tower that was funded specifically by the state for the purpose of providing student service functions, among other things. As you probably will remember, we were cobbling together the original University Center, the original PE building- it didn’t even have a great name. The P.E. Building- and then adding on this addition which would have a meeting room component and this three-story space, plus we were filling in the physical land in-between the University Center and the PE building to become the atrium. So, that was the genesis of the student union and I was fortunate enough to be the director at the time. So, a lot of things shifted physically to that end of campus. Can you talk about that?

**JC:** It was nice for us, because before, admission records and admissions was kind of “us vs. them”, because we were physically separated before then, and we were finally in
one office. So, there was a transition, of course, of getting together with each other, but it didn’t feel like “us and them” in the same office anymore. We were together, things were easier, the counselors if they were talking to a student they could come back a few feet and say, ‘Where is this person’s application in the process?’ and we could answer that question pretty easily. Because I think before we moved to the Student Union, records was on the third floor of Allyn, and that was very difficult to be separated like that.

**KM:** Wasn’t HR up there, too?

**JC:** Yes, well, Human Resources was on the second floor. There were various people next to us. There was Army-ROTC, for a while there was a room where you put people that you had to keep employed but didn’t want to keep employed anymore.

**KM:** I think there was always a special place on campus where the people who were exiting but had contract terms.

**JC:** Yes, they were beside us once, and I can remember there was a nursing faculty lady that knitted for 9 months.

**KM:** [*Laughs*] Great.

**JC:** Yeah, it was interesting. Because it’s not always easy to get rid of people in the state system.

**KM:** That’s true, that’s true. There was a place in the P.E. Building and there was a place in the new Student Union- we were responsible for the new P.E. Building during the transition with all this stuff- and there were rooms in both of those places before everything was pulled together that became that special place for people who were transitioning out, and we had to be responsible for it, and I remember us having a lot of conversations about that.

**JC:** Yeah. So, it was an interesting… but I really enjoyed the Student Union in its original formation. I think, again, admissions got shorted some space we were
supposed to get from the original plans, and then we had to give up our conference room and other things that we had to other people, so it was interesting. So, we shrunk a little when we first went over there, but it was great because financial aid was right across the hall, word processing was in the corner, grad studies third floor, bursar second floor, to me it was a perfect environment, and students didn’t have to go that far. The new configuration of it I never understood.

**KM:** You know, it’s interesting, when the building was built we had really one of the most remarkable Student Unions that I could think of in all of the country, and that was my dream job was working as the director. It was great because we had all those pieces and parts that a student needed for outside of their classroom experience, conveniently located in one 3700 square feet building. It was really great to be a part of that and the energy that was in there on a daily basis was invigorating. You know, you saw students, you saw staff, you saw faculty, administrators, every single day. Students who worked in the building really benefited from that because they had their fingers on the pulse of what was happening. So, you have the distinction of being one of the few people I know who retired more than once, so let’s talk about your transition from working in admissions.

**JC:** Well, when Banner came around, I was on the Banner core team, and that’s probably one of the most challenging things I did. I can remember they moved us to the basement of the library, we were down here and I can remember having this manual that I printed out of all of what was supposed to be admission stuff, and I can remember taking it home and reading it at night. every night and read it.

**KM:** Do you remember what year that was when Banner was…. [long pause] it was before 2000…

**JC:** It was like ‘94 when we first started talking about it. We knew that we had to get away from a mainframe system. Or maybe it was later than that, because we went through the Y2K thing with our old system.

**KM:** That’s what I was thinking.

**JC:** So, it might’ve been 2004?
**KM:** I just remember when we all survived the Y2K thing and everybody thought, ‘Well, the Earth didn’t shift’.

**JC:** I think it might have been 2004 when the Banner team went to Hawaii, and everyone got upset.

**KM:** Yes.

JC: So, I think that might have been it. So, we were in the basement, and I open up this manual, and I’ve read it twice already and I think, “What have I gotten myself into? What am I going to do?”

**KM:** How many people were a part of that?

**JC:** Um, On the core team?

**KM:** Yes.

**JC:** There were like 21 of us? Or 24 of us?

**KM:** And the departments that was involved in that? Because I think this is important, too, because Banner changed the way everything really was done on campus. So, who were the players who were having to be involved in that?

**JC:** Registrar, Bursar, Financial Aid… every office, basically, of the Student Union, the colleges, we had people representing the colleges. I don’t think we had each college represented in the beginning, I think that came later. But I think Joyce Howes was on the original core team. Scoff Rife-

**KM:** From CaTS.
JC: Kitty Friedman and all the IT people we used were on the core team. Scott Rife was the project manager. It was a good group, we got together and we worked. Finally, I opened the manual and thought, “I’ve got to do something, what looks familiar to me”, and I finally saw this thing called “student entrance” and I thought, “Okay”. That’s our first-time student, returning student, whatever. So, because I had to code all this stuff, I had to make the codes for everything that we did and decide which screens we were doing things on. Now, in some ways we kind of all resented it because we could do our work prior to Banner on 4 or 5 screens. It took 21 screens to process an application. So, it was struggle for the people who actually did the work to actually want to do the work. But we had no choice, we had to use what was there, and we had to build it to fit our system. So, there were a lot of changes, and I think I have pictures of us entering the first application into Banner, and everybody was standing around, Scott Rife and I think Financial Aid and I think all of us were standing around watching this first…

KM: Was it a random person or was it intentional, like-

JC: I think it was a random person. I don’t think it was anyone special, I can’t remember that. But then… I enjoyed the Banner experience, and like I said, it stretched me so when it was time to go back to work, I didn’t really want to go back to work doing that job anymore, and the person who took my place- because we all had to have someone step in our shoes while we were gone- was so good at it, I didn’t want to make her go back to just being a person who did applications. So, Kathy let me stick around for like 9-10 months helping different things, coordinating different things, and Barb Bullock and I were the only ones who seemed to care about what we call, “general person”.

KM: And for the record, the Cathy you are referring to is Cathy Davis.

JC: Yes.

KM: Who by that time was director?

JC: Yes.

KM: Of Admissions.
JC: Yes. So, we cared about the general person. Because nobody else had taken ownership of “general person”, and Barb had taken regulatory things that she had to report on, and I cared because I didn’t want everybody creating people in 25 different ways and then we couldn’t find them later. So, Barb and I got together and we created a General Person committee and we tried to make things standardized, because until then everything was kind of random. Because again, everybody was… we were working together but we were still working separate. was working together but…

KM: But you had Individual responsibilities.

JC: Right.

KM: And again, for the record we are talking about Barbara Bullock, who at the time was… I don’t know what her title would have been, she was in the Office of Institutional Research but I don’t think she was the director then. She would have been-

JC: No, she was still under… I think-

KM: Under… was Wayne still there?

JC: No, it was, um… hired by Pat-

KM: Darn. I’m having that moment. But that’s okay, so-

JC: It started with an R, the last name.

KM: Maybe it will come to us by the time we’re done.

JC: Yes, maybe it will come to us
KM: So, you and Barb Bullock, Institutional Research, were trying to get this process put together so as to enable everyone in the future to start in the right place-

JC: Right-

KM: -with that individual student.

JC: -and I don’t know that they ever really did it right. I don’t know what they’re doing today, and I don’t know that anybody cared after I retired and then Barb retired. How do we know if people really care about that standardization of how you enter a person and capitalization and that kind of- I mean, that stuff matters.

KM: Well, it matters for a couple of reasons, one of which of course is reporting that the institution has to do, and that was Institutional Research’s job to report to the Board of Regents, and obviously that affects your funding and all those other pieces and parts. Not to mention the satisfaction of the student and the records for the student that they have to follow that person through their time.

JC: Yeah, and so then we… I was in the office working on that kind of stuff, letting Laura stay as assistant director of admission records, which was still my title, too.

KM: Right, and what was Lora’s last name?

JC: Booher. Dues.

KM: I remember her. Yes, thank you.

JC: Booher-Dues. [Laughs] That’s how she’s in my phone, because she was Booher before. Because she was one of those people who was a student worker who worked her way up, and then became-

KM: There were many of those who then became Wright State employees.
JC: And she’s still here today.

KM: Isn’t that amazing

JC: So, at that point they decided they were going to do away with Word Processing. Well, the colleges and other people, we all depended upon Word Processing, so Barb and Scott Rife got together and convinced me that I could be this person in charge of General Person and help the colleges do their thing, because this responsibility was going to be on them. They were going to have to send out petition letters and dean letters and all this stuff that they’ve never done before. So, I decided I would retire, and I retired for one day, and it was funny because I came in that day- I came in the very next day and HR came up and said, “Do you want a severance check?” and I said “Yes”, and they said, “You have to go home. There has to be a day where you are not here or we can’t give you your severance check”. So, I scurried on home, I think it was about 10 o’clock. I scurried on home and then that was a Friday, so I came in on Monday then.

KM: So interesting. So, you came back-

JC: So, I came back.

KM: -and your title was what? Do you remember?

JC: At the time? I don’t remember. Some kind of a specialist.

KM: An analyst?

JC: No, I wasn’t a records analyst yet. Um… [long pause], I didn’t become that until maybe a year or so afterwards when I got promoted to that. So, basically, I had 106 clients that I did reports for to or I helped, and some people I’d have to go over every time it was time for their college and time to do dean’s letters or petition letters or whatever it was and help them.
KM: 106 people?

JC: 106 clients. So, I’d do reports on housing people, they wanted to know people who lived in housing, or for fraternities, and the combination sometimes. How well their GPAs were, did it make a difference, were they higher or were they lower and that kind of thing. So, I’d do those kinds of reports, and that’s how finally I became an analyst because I was doing the same kind of jobs that they were doing. Um, excuse me. [brief pause]

KM: It’s so interesting to hear about the evolution of our job. One that evolves because technology drives it and because the data insists that it must be; that people need that information. Yeah, and when you think about the fact that before we had computers and before we had a Banner system, people were having to cobble everything together in a very different way. It’s pretty remarkable.

JC: And there are probably people today who don’t like Banner, and I know they don’t initially process applications through Banner anymore. They have a simpler application system and then it uploads to Banner. Which I can understand, like I said, it took 21 screens in Banner to load an application, so, it was kind of clunky in some respects. But you had more information at your fingertips, so I think it was good, and something we had to do to get away from that mainframe system that was so maxed out and IBM wasn’t going to support the equipment anymore, so like you said, it was driven by technology. I can remember when I worked for the faculty, there were thermofax machines, and spirit duplicators running off things on different types of… and the wax things, I don’t remember what we called those where you typed and …mimeographs.

KM: Mimeographs, yeah.

JC: I mean, all the different technologies that I started out with.

KM: And when you were talking the students who were hired to take care of technology in the classrooms in Piqua, those were probably overhead projectors, and the little slide projectors, you know, things that we thought were really…

JC: And film.
**KM:** And film, right.

**JC:** Yeah, mostly.

KM: Yeah, a lot of changes. So, the computer changed quite a bit. And this was all before we had the cellphones that we’re all using today.

**JC:** Right. I can remember when we did email in ’91. I was sending an email, I was testing it out, and my son was a student here so I was sending him a test email and it was about Star Wars, and I thought I had sent it to the whole university, I worried all night long, and that the president was on there and stuff. I can remember saying something to Dave Hopkins about it later, and he goes, “I like Star Wars, I wouldn’t have minded”. [Laughs]

**KM:** [Laughs] That would’ve been a nice change from the usual stuff, right? It could have been worse, you know, if you think about it.

**JC:** Yeah. But it didn’t go to everybody. I got in the next day and ‘Oh, good’. It only went to my son, it didn’t go to the whole universe.

**KM:** Oh, that’s funny. Yeah, I’m sure in our early days of using some of that technology, we all made bloopers.

**JC:** Because I can remember there were people that did send stuff to everybody that shouldn’t have gone to everybody. sent things to everyone that definitely shouldn’t have gone to everyone.

**KM:** Exactly. So, okay, so you’re fully involved in Institutional Research work-

**JC:** And that was my most favorite work, and Banner kind of groomed me for doing that kind of work, and so did the branch campus, because I did financial aid, the bursar, I knew all that stuff.
**KM:** You understood the foundations of all of those pieces which, you know, someone who maybe grows up working on a computer and learns how to code, but they have no concept of the purpose of that work and the people that are involved. So, you have all that experience from the ground floor.

**JC:** Yes, and so it just kind of evolved, it was like doing puzzles all day. It was fun to work in Institutional Research, it didn’t feel like a job at all.

**KM:** That’s great.

**JC:** Where if I would be gone back to my old job, I wouldn’t have been happy at all.

**KM:** So, in your new job who was the team? Who were the people?

**JC:** It started out as Kary-

**KM:** Kary Brigger.

**JC:** Carrie Birger, Tiffany Wellinghoff, um… *[long pause]* Pat wasn’t with us right away, we didn’t get to hire a secretary right away

**KM:** And the current director of Institutional Research-

**JC:** The current director was Barb Bullock, and we were right above the President’s Office was where we were located, and then we kind of expanded with Craig…

**KM:** This.

**JC:** Yes, This. And then Aaron…
KM: Umm... with an “S”.

JC: Skira.

KM: Skira. His brother was in housing.

JC: Aaron and I worked really well together because we had that joint knowledge, and we understood students so well, so we... and we were always wanting it to be... and we worked against production data, which they didn’t like, but it’s right. So, if you correct something in the system, when you run it against production that comes out. When you run against what they wanted us to do, which was Cognos, that correction wouldn’t have come out in our data.

KM: Explain Cognos for those who don’t know what it is.

JC: Cognos was a reporting system that we had for a short period of time. It didn’t last very long because people did not like it. It was clunky. If CaTS built the reports for us it was fine. When we tried to build our own reports, you weren’t always sure you were getting what you needed to get, and you didn’t always have the resources to have CATS write those reports.

KM: Okay, so the year that you moved upstairs to University Hall would’ve been... do you remember that? I think we moved into that building in... when did that open?

JC: Well, when I first started in IR, we were still on with Keith Ralston.

KM: Yes, you were part of... that’s right, you were part of Keith’s team.

JC: That’s the name we were trying to remember. Yes, we were still part of Keith’s team.
KM: And his area expanded to budget. It was- what did they call it, Budget and Regents Reporting or something.

JC: Research. Budget and Research. So, they decided to split those out, and then that's when we went upstairs, and Barb was the director.

KM: And you were right down the hall from the Student Affairs, my area, and around the corner from General Counsel, and down the hall from the Physical Plant and Engineering.

JC: And we had our Friday lunches.

KM: It was a whole thing. It was a really interesting group of people on that floor. Different units, but yeah, there was a lot of good comradery there.

JC: Yeah, we had the engineering people- building engineering, not the College of Engineering-

KM: It was the Physical Plant. The Physical plant leadership and then Vicky Davidson's area, which was essentially planning.

JC: Yes, she was on the side.

KM: Mm Hmm. So, a lot of unusual pieces and parts, but it was an interesting dynamic up here. And from a student affairs perspective, I loved having Institutional Research up there. It was great for things that....

JC: Getting a quick answer.

JC: Um, it's for... well, we had several we had to do. The college board one, then we had the one we had to do for the Board of Regents, and we had to make sure those two matched.

KM: You would hope. [laughs]

JC: Because they have different approaches sometimes, so you would have data and 'how would we make this reconcile?' Because they want us to do it this way, and we wanted to do it this way, and probably the correct way might have been a third way, so you had to sometimes finagle data. Then we had to do the different...

KM: Then you had the student data... it was the student... um... I'm not going to get the word or the term right. It was, like, basically it was the profile book which had everything you wanted to know about students in one academic year, and it had every profile about every college, their student information, and I remember that book getting passed out every year and a lot of us wanting to look through it and see how it evolved from one year to the next and compare some information.

JC: Yeah, and that took months to put together. It was mostly Barb and Kary and Tiffany who did that book, and I would maybe do a little few tiny things that I would have to look up. And I had to do some weird things with Budget and Planning. It had to do with the rate students paid, how much revenue we brought in against... I don't remember what it all was, but it was some convoluted thing that they couldn't do on their own that we had to work together to do.

KM: Some formula.

JC: Yeah.

KM: Well, I always appreciated the people who were the good data folks, because that was never like my particular area of strength, but I was knew I could walk down the hall and get it very quickly from any of you, which was a nice thing to have. I think my vice president felt that way, too, that you could just walk down and talk to Barb.
JC: One of the people interaction things that I learned- lesson I learned- was from Ken Davenport. Because we would be in meetings and people would say that they wanted to add something to our application. Well, it wasn't really something that give us that much bang for our bucks or something, and I would say, “We can’t do that”, and I would say that pretty quickly. Well, Ken finally said to me, “You’re looking like a no person, because you say these things quickly”. He said, “You’re right, but you’re looking like a no person”. He says, “So, don’t say that so quickly”. Listen to everybody, let all the other things get out there-

KM: -comments play out. And they’ll come to that conclusion themselves.

JC: -then finally you can show how it won’t work”. That was a very good lesson that I learned, because before some people would say that I was abrupt or something, and I didn’t get those comments anymore after learning that lesson of being patient.

KM: I think for people who are not data people at heart, and that don’t understand the dynamic and certainly weren’t involved in the creation of Banner, won’t have any great understanding of what it takes to turn a document into something that is going to provide the data the institution needs. It’s hard to help someone understand that when it’s not their orientation. So, yeah, I’m sure a certain amount of diplomacy was really necessary in that world to help people understand. I learned things from Barb- you know, just going down the hall and asking for help with some things- that was really helpful to me, and when you get the right people helping you interpret the process and the steps, it’s a lot easier to take the response and the answers about why you can’t do something, or that maybe we can do something different. You never know, and every now and then you’d get, “Well, maybe we could do it this way”. But, yeah, the nice thing about working with great people is that you can always try to find a way to resolve an issue. It may not satisfy everybody’s every whim or desire, but you come away feeling like you were understood or you were heard, and that was one of the best parts of working with some of those people, including people from your former office.

JC: And I did petitions.

KM: Oh, you did?

JC: I was head of petitions for I don’t know how many years, and I think that’s the thing Wright State does the worst is academic advising and probation. Because I would have
a stack of people’s academic records, and they would prove that I have to tell a student to go somewhere else to get their degree. Luckily, they changed our “fresh start” policy to three years, but I still don’t think Wright State takes that initial step soon enough to give a student a warning.

KM: So, you think they’re too far in before-

JC: They’re too far in before we say- I can remember at Bowling Green, if you got below a 2.0 your first term, you had to wait out a semester back then, and you couldn’t come back until… and you usually had to come back during a summer term and prove yourself. Wright State has never done that. We’ve been too liberal in letting students dig themselves in holes. That’s one thing that I wish a change could’ve been made. But I don’t know what the process is today and how quickly it is, but I think we’re not serving students if we let them dig themselves into a hole they can’t get out of.

KM: I agree with you on that, and I think there was a time, too, when our enrollment, especially when it was at its peak- I don’t know if you were… what year did you retire for the last time?

JC: My first retirement was 2007.

KM: And then when you retired…


KM: So, just 2 years before me. So, you were here when our enrollment hit that 20,000- I think it was 20,000- mark and a lot of us was really concerned about the standing of a lot of those students and whether or not they could actually get to a point of graduating, because their circumstances were pretty dire. So, yeah, I agree and I would think it would be better for someone to be told that it’s important for you to step back, and maybe do some work at another institution to get some things taken care of.

JC: And I did that a lot as conditions, that I will admit you if you go to Sinclair and come back with a- and it depended on their major- sometimes it might be a 2.7 if they were
going into business, or if they were going into science or math it was a lower requirement, so you would give them- like, if you’d come back with a 2.25 if they’re science and math or a 2.7 if they’re business, and you’d do that if they weren’t in a hole that they couldn’t get out of, then I’d let them come back the next term. I can remember arguing with parents whose son wasn’t petitioning because he was a baseball player, and I mean this father called me all the time, and I finally said, “Let him go to Sinclair, prove himself, and then I will admit him.” Later, that father finally came back after all that arguing and said, “You were right, he learned what he needed to learn.”

**KM:** Those are hard lessons. It’s hard, too, when you’re talking to parents who technically aren’t entitled to have certain information about their son or daughter unless their son or daughter gives permission, or they demonstrate that they-

**JC:** Right, and this time the kid was with him, so I didn’t have that issue.

**KM:** That’s good. But it is awkward because I think those of us who work directly with students in situations of crisis, whether it’s academic or otherwise, you could often be…

**JC:** One thing, though, if the parent is paying, they have the right-

**KM:** Yes. If they can show on their W-2’s that they are dependents.

**JC:** If they can show, right, that they are paying for the student, they have a right to the information.

**KM:** But FERPA changed a lot of things, too. We had to shift in the way we were sharing information. Yeah. A lot of things are different. I remember when you and I both started at Wright State, everybody was writing their social security numbers down and posting them on a wall with people’s grades. I mean, the things we used to do would never be done today. So, yeah.

**JC:** Yes, and I remember some office getting in trouble because they didn’t shred their papers small enough and somebody could still read the social security number. That’s when we started getting big containers and have Printing Services shred the stuff for us.
KM: Or a company would come and pick up all our shredded stuff. I know, there’s a lot that’s shifted in the time.

JC: And then we had all those different laws that would come in, like the red flag law, where you have to protect the address because we’re considered a financial institution and all these other things, and that’s through the FTC. You know, you wouldn’t think we would have to worry about the Federal Trade Commission, but they came and said, “You have to do this”.

KM: Lots of things regarding privacy. There’s been a massive, massive shift.

JC: Then there was “clean address”. We had to start worrying about clean address, where when you mail stuff you had to run it through the clean address service, to make sure you had the correct address, otherwise we were paying for all our return mail. That changed things.

KM: I didn’t know about that, okay. Yeah.

JC: That was part of the general persons stuff that Barb and I were dealing with at the time. Sometimes we were working on stuff with some of the rules that came in and affected the way we did stuff.

KM: That affect the way we do everything. That’s a really, really important conversation, and when I think about even here in archives, what the university is obligated to maintain in the way of records and for how long, and what they do with those things when it’s time for them to be removed. But every year we would get some kind of notification about records that we had to-

JC: Chris and I talked about when we first came up here, because I said to him, “I don’t think we always responded quickly”. Because Admissions had all those publications that had to be submitted, annual policies and procedures were supposed to be submitted, and sometimes we thought, “Who has time to write down policies and procedures?”, and I tried doing that in my position, because I always felt like other people should be able to do what I do, I should be able to do what they do-
KM: Cross-training.

JC: -so that if I get hit by a truck- so I had this file called “Retire-Fire… “, what was it… expire, “Retire-Expire” file, so that they knew what to do if I was gone.

KM: Be it willingly or otherwise

JC: When I went on vacation they would share different parts of my duties and it would all get done. I wouldn’t have to get back and have two weeks of petitions to process.

KM: I always felt like the best people that I worked with, in teams and staff that I worked with, were the ones who did just that. They made a point of cross training or providing training for certain functions that other people had to do, because as the university grew and things evolved and changed, people became more specialized in some of their roles and if somebody was gone, you’re right, they would be like, “How do I do that?”

JC: Well, in our office in Admissions, we were so dependent on our student worker’s work. We couldn’t do our work if the student workers didn’t do it. So, if the student workers weren’t there, and there were times when they tried to cut the student workers, and get you to not hire anybody that wasn’t on work-study, and we would go through all these things and it was like our work stops until the student workers work is done, and we finally got that message through. But, you know, it’s hard because there is so much inner processing that happens that you have to do it in a certain order, things have to be done first, and what the students did was sometimes very tedious.

KM: But critical.

JC: But if they weren’t there I wasn’t in my office, I was out there doing their work, and o, if the workers weren’t there I wasn’t in my office doing my work I was out there doing their work, and Dot, Faye, and Bernice, they would step in and do work, and Becky Baltzer would, you know, we all just stepped in and did the different positions that it required, because it was all so interconnected. Even after, you know, no matter what system we used.

KM: That’s right. Well, I think we all agree that our student employees were among our greatest resources, and those students benefited in many ways for being a part of the
university’s operations because they gained so many skills, and as you mentioned, many of those students became our employees. I mean, they graduated and we hired them full-time for various positions across campus.

JC: Like Jennifer Penick, who became director of Financial Aid.

KM: And Pam Davis, who ultimately became our budget manager. I hired her- actually, she was still finishing her degree. I had a staff who left, and she became my temporary, she graduated, and then we opened the job and we hired her, and then she rose through the ranks. So, yeah, there are a multiple examples of really great student employees. Good experiences. Well, what would you say is your best memory of Wright State?

JC: Best memory. Boy, that’s hard, [laughs]. Hmm. I don’t know that it’s one thing. I would say it was the camaraderie of everyone that worked together, of those that did work together.

KM: Institutional Research, or Admissions?

JC: I’d say It didn’t matter which department it was. Like you said, when they were team players, when you had team players, whether it was interdepartmental or within your own office. It was just when everyone got along together, and everyone worked together and you accomplished something.

KM: Mm hmm. Okay. And anything else for the record that you would like to share?

JC: Um, when I first was hired at Wright State, I thought I was going to be here for three months and then quit.

KM: Because in three months you thought you would be...?
JC: I thought my husband would be home, he would get a job, like, whatever. Well, I kind of decided to keep the job, then a few years later the husband was gone, but I just enjoyed my time at Wright State. I enjoyed the people.

KM: That’s pretty much what everybody says. The people that I’ve had the chance to talk to, and the feelings about the people, and the opportunities to be part of something that benefitted so many younger people and got them off and going.

JC: Yes. To watch students grow.

KM: Yeah. It’s a pretty good thing. So, you’ve been retired now for 8, almost 9 years, and a lot of things have happened, and in some cases, it’s been difficult to hear about or talk to people about it. But I think the thing that most people that I’ve talked to in these interviews have said is that they still have an affinity for this place, and lots of good memories, and are hopeful for the future.

JC: Yeah. Because I have a total of 43 years here, and that doesn’t happen in today’s world anymore, at all.

KM: No, it does not. It does not.

JC: Some people are lucky to be in a place 43 weeks.

KM: That’s right, and I think that’s part of the evolution of employment and careers and just the way the world is. You’re just not going to find too many people who started at a particular institution and stay there for any great length of time, and so those of us who were fortunate enough to retire from this university, a lot of us have a lot of good memories and had a lot of opportunities, and that’s why we stayed. I think part of that, too, is that the institution was young and new and there were opportunities to grow and evolve and be part of those changes.

JC: You could move your fences. That’s what I call it.
KM: Yes, you could. I like that. Move your fence.

JC: Move your fences. You just took on a little more responsibility, and that's really how my job description kept getting changed over the years. I would do a little bit more, and a little bit more, and a little bit more. In Piqua that didn’t… like I said, I was pretty much dumped into all of it all at once, and it was just mainly getting your title changed, and that was worked into the… you know, the state system was so rigid back then that you had to make these certain thresholds. So, it was somehow just how you described your job. But basically, I was doing the admissions function, the registrar’s function, the financial aid function and all of that, and here I was a clerk typist, you know?

KM: And how that served you so well when you came to this main campus, to be part of what you ultimately ended up doing. That’s pretty remarkable, and I’m so glad that we had the chance to have this conversation because I’ve learned a lot of things today. I mean, I knew of your long history and I knew of it in the admissions area, but I had no idea about the Piqua campus. That Is just remarkable, and I hope others will tune in to that when they-

JC: Yeah, I used to always want to somehow have a reunion of Piqua campus students, but I don’t know how you would even go about that because like I said, I don’t even know where the records are anymore for that.

KM: Where did they land? Did they land at… Edison State? Are they there? Or are they at the Lake Campus? Or are they at Edison State? Where could that stuff be?

JC: I don't know, they were in the Kettering Center last I knew.


JC: That stuff may have been destroyed when they-

KM: Who knows. Maybe Chris knows. We should ask him. Did you ask him?
JC: I told him that’s where they went, but yeah, where they went after that, I don’t know. They were all in just banker boxes.

KM: Yeah. Wow, interesting. Well, who knows. Somebody is going to maybe open one of those banker boxes someday one day and have a field day reading some very old documents about some former students. Well, thanks, Judy. This was a really great opportunity to talk, and what will happen is that someone from this office will transcribe all of this in printed form, and the video will also be maintained, and then they put it on the library’s archives site for the retiree association, and so they’ll notify you when it’s up and ready, and you can see it.

JC: I don’t want to see it. [Laughs]

KM: Why? You never know, it’s kind of fun!

JC: I’m one of those people like if they get an Oscar, and they never watch their movies.

KM: It’s really fun to go into it and see how many people have been interviewed over the years. Because Lew Shupe and Gary Barlow started this, and it’s really a great record of people who were a part of the earliest days of Wright State.

JC: Yeah, I can remember going to the first retiree’s association event they had. It was like a bread pudding thing, and it was before the… the lounge. What we used to call the… it was still there.

KM: The Allyn Hall lounge?

JC: No, the Student Union, in the lounge. Where the fireplace is.

KM: Oh, the Dixon Hearth lounge.
JC: Yeah. We had it in there, and they let you join even if you weren’t retired yet, and I can remember joining right away. But they had some bread pudding tasting thing, and Marlene Birely, Lou, and Gary started it.

KM: Well, it’s a good group, and we have a number of fun, interesting events that will be coming up. You can see that on the website, too.

JC: I always look at them, you know, I always get the emails.

KM: There are a couple of really good ones that are coming up, we just had our board meeting yesterday, so you might want to check it out, and our luncheon will be in May, so you might want to come. It’d be fun.

JC: I’ve thought about it over the years.

KM: Think about it. Barb’s on the board now, and Joyce is, too, and of course I am, and we had a nice time last year, even though we were still kind of on the edge of Covid, and our speaker, Kelly Dickstein, got Covid that morning. She called me at 7 o’clock and said, “You’re not going to believe this...”. We were going to talk about the city of Dayton and all these great things that were happening. She ended up sending her budget manager and another person, it was still a really good presentation. But it was like, gosh, we just couldn’t get past Covid stuff. So, hopefully this year will be... that’s when we have a former Model UN student who now works for FEMA will be coming to talk. It will be interesting.

JC: One fun fact I learned from I think it was Ken was the reason Wright State is Dayton, Ohio, even though we’re in Greene County was because of Central State, and they didn’t want- when they applied to be a university, they didn’t want it to look like we were that close.

KM: It is kind of strange that we’re that close, isn’t it? Yeah. Well, I’m going to be interested to know in ten years what our state system of universities looks like.
JC: And what they’re allowed to teach, with some of this crazy stuff going on. They want universities to not teach about inclusion? That’s the latest thing I’ve heard. You’ve got to be kidding me. We’re going back to the dark ages.

KM: Well, check out the really great stuff we have coming up with some speakers. We’ve been fortunate to have some Wright State faculty, retirees, and others do presentations, and some of it’s really been interesting, I’ve enjoyed it a lot.

JC: Yeah. The one I wanted to go to but I didn’t have the physical ability go to was when they went to the cemetery.

KM: Oh, we’ll probably do that again. There were a lot of the people who enjoyed that walk, and we also did an event where we went to Carillon Park and got the tour, which was- I had been there before but I haven’t gone through all that with a tour with docents. So, yeah. Keep us in mind. I’m going to go let Chris know he can turn this off now, because it’s going to keep rolling. [Laughs]

JC: Alright.