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Dr. J. Robert Suriano interview (3) conducted on December 11, 1984 about the Boonshoft School of Medicine at Wright State University

Robert Suriano

James St. Peter

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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
School of Medicine Oral History Project

Interview date: December 11, 1984

Interviewer: James St. Peter

Interviewee: Robert Suriano
Interview 3

JSP	My name is James St. Peter and this is the third in a series of interviews with Dr. J. Robert Suriano, associate Dean for student affairs in admissions in the Wright state University school of medicine. The date is December 11, 1984, the time is 11 clock a.m. Dr. Suriano and I are in room 013 B. of the television center here at Wright State University.
JSP	Dr. Suriano, in this interview what I'd like to do is ask you questions about your perceptions of the overall medical school development. What was it like in the early days working with that first group of people? How has it changed?
RS	Those early days are probably the most exciting times in any institution. This was the second new medical school that I'd been at at. The first with Toledo and I think that there is nothing that compares with the first year, possibly the first two years, but the first year is the most exciting. Prior to the arrival of the first class there is a lot of planning, anticipation, expectation of what's going to happen. And then all of a sudden it's a reality a year of his new 32 students who have their own set of expectations. And the reality of now having to teach the reality of being a real medical school is there and I don't think there's anything that can compare with that. There is also a closeness that is established among everybody on board at that time between faculty and faculty and faculty and administration, students and students and faculty, that I don't think is comparable with any other experience.
JSP	How would you compare development at Toledo with Wright state?
RS	Some respects probably similar. Bill is very different, Dr. Beljan is a very structured organized person in the way he approached getting the school started. So there's a lot more structure here. When class finally arrived it was a lot more preparation and planning that had been very meticulously done ahead of time. The personalities of Toledo in the early days were very different. They were much more loosely structured and consequently the planning was not as meticulously done. Consequently there some things developed after the fact here a lot of things developed before the fact.
JSP	What is it like working with Dr. Beljan?
RS	It was exciting. Typically in the early years because he was a charismatic individual.

	<p>He was the type that sold you on a mission, sold you on the commitment, and moved people. Especially at first contact. I've met few individuals who have that ability to turn he wants it totally so quickly. And I think he did that to many of us, particularly during recruitment. I came down here at his invitation to look at the position he had available. At the time I came down I was really very skeptical. I left totally sold that this was the place to go, that was any worthwhile medical school to be associated with, and would a matter of fact be a place to really put one's career on the line for. And that's the way it was those first few years. He had a unique ability to do that. He is also a very directive type of individual, much more so than many individuals.</p>
JSP	<p>What do you mean directive?</p>
RS	<p>I guess that can mean many things but he wanted things his way. He is the type of dean that knew what he wanted and got involved in just about everything. So he tended to take more direct and personal control over operations within the school than some deans tend to take.</p>
JSP	<p>What was it like when Dean Sawyer first came into the medical school? Did you take part in his search process -interview process?</p>
RS	<p>Well yeah to a point, but telling how meaningful that part was is hard to tell.</p>
JSP	<p>Why?</p>
RS	<p>[Laughter] because I think. It's impossible to know how much influence one's own input may have been in any one direction if that's what you implied by your question. We were participants, at least we were observers let's say, more than participants in the selection of the new dean. If that answers your question. [Laughter]</p>
JSP	<p>If you were observers, who were the direct actors? Who made the decisions?</p>
RS	<p>Oh I'd say the former Dean was the decision-maker primarily. And obviously with the concurrence of the president and the Board of Trustees and so on. And that's not necessarily-that's probably as it should be. I'm not saying that's necessarily wrong.</p>
JSP	<p>Did all of the departments, at least all of the assistant deans, sit in on a interview or two?</p>
RS	<p>Oh yeah we all did. We all had an opportunity to interview Dr. Sawyer and the other candidates and make appropriate comments and in fact did.</p>
JSP	<p>How was he received by the faculty? From what you understand?</p>
RS	<p>I think there probably was a little concerned on the part of some for very different reasons I think people looked at it differently. Dr. Beljan was a very strong Dean, who governed very decisively. There was a great deal of dependence upon him and therefore</p>

	<p>the management of the school. When you go through transition to a new dean and a former dean is going to step out; All of that creates expected anxiety and consequently no matter who becomes the leading candidate and is finally chosen, that person is going to raise some doubts and questions as to suitability. Competency with respect to the job and so on.</p>
JSP	How many candidates were there?
RS	Gee, I don't remember. There must've been more than half a dozen. But now looking back I can't recall. I can vaguely remember two or three others. But Dr. Sawyer obviously stands out as the most dynamic.
JSP	How long did the process take, it was a lengthy process or short process?
RS	I'm trying to recall. I'd say at least six months if not longer. That's my recollection, I may be wrong on that.
JSP	How did Dean Beljan's appointment to be vice president in charge of health affairs affect the medical school?
RS	Affected in what way?
JSP	Anyway?
RS	Exactly. [Laughter]
JSP	The great open ended question.
RS	<p>Oh I think in numerous ways. It became apparent that Dr. Beljan would, was now on the way out of function as a dean because the condition of assuming the vice presidency had to it the stipulation that he would no longer function as Dean. In other words in this institution, the vice president would not also hold the position of Dean. That means the chair of the deans tenure was ending. That was the most obvious. Less obvious than that was other things. A new office was created over and above the medical school whose impact on the medical school was vague and hard to define but the position was to be held by the dean. How he would function in that role is obviously an unknown. How we would impact the new dean was obviously an unknown. Whether it would be a positive or negative in terms of further development of the medical school in other words was a real question mark. Whether the position of the vice president in fact had any meaning in this institution, which was a fairly small institution compared to other medical centers. The vice president was in charge of presumably 3 to 4 schools; nursing, medicine, professional psychology -the size of those programs relatively small. That raised real questions as to what the viability of that job was to begin with. There was another impact or another affect that certainly remains to be seen. What resources the new vice president would assume in that role that might've been those exclusively of the medical school, at least in the past, remained to be seen</p>

	too as the situation developed in that role took on whatever form it was going to have.
JSP	Did you feel, or did the faculty and staff feel that it would be a drain, a possible drain on the medical School of Medicine's resources? Going into the office of the VP of health affairs?
RS	Oh that was a very real possibility.
JSP	Why was that?
RS	The vice president had to have more than a desk and chair. Dr. Beljan was not the type that was going to govern a phantom. He obviously had to have resources with which to have a base of performing a function that needed to be defined. The library for example came under the direction of the vice president, animal resources came under the direction of the new vice president. There was much concern as to which financial resources ought to come under control of the vice president. There were many meetings the dean held with his staff to discuss the development of that office.
JSP	It seems to me that there is a parallel there; the way that the school of medicine and the vice president's office and the university with the school of medicine when it was developing. The same question of drain on resources and things.
RS	Sure, anytime there's a threat. Any time there's a change there's a threat. Because resources have to be juggled around a little bit. I think there's a little bit of difference though because the development of the School of Medicine brought resources into the university. The development of the vice presidency realigned resources and also some of the personalities that were here were realigned. So that's a little different than bringing in new people and infusing facilities.
JSP	When you say that personalities were realigned,
RS	The dean became the vice president, the associate dean moved from the Dean's office to the vice president's office. That's a re-alignment. Some people assumed different posts within the university. Some assuming posts that were supervisory in some respects to functions of the school of medicine.
JSP	Was there a difference in the styles between the new dean and Dean Beljan?
RS	There was a great deal of difference. Dr. Sawyer and Dr. Beljan are very different types of managers. Very different.
JSP	How do they contrast?
RS	Dr. Beljan's style, as I indicated before, is very direct. If he reaches a decision, sometimes very quickly, and tends to implement that decision. Dr. Sawyer is very analytic. He analyzes very carefully a problem in reaching a decision. It's a highly

	intellectualized process from problem to solution. He does it very quickly sometimes, the speed of the decision making will rival that of Dr. Beljan's, but the style of reaching the decision is quite different.
JSP	How did Dr. Beljan reach his decisions in contrast to Dr. Sawyer? Was it a verbalized instead of intellectualized type of decision making process?
RS	It tended to, at least from my perspective, to be articulated very quickly after being confronted with whatever and the rationalization came later. Very often the decision was the correct one so instinctively many of Dr. Beljan's decisions were correct because he had very good instincts. But the process of why was retrospective rather than prospective. I think Dr. Sawyer style is more prospective.
JSP	How do you feel he interacted with Dean Beljan, now Vice President Beljan, when he was here?
RS	I think any dean will not interact favorably with any vice president that's above him.
JSP	Why?
RS	It's a self-destructive system. And we can have St. Peter or St. James or whoever up there and those two offices are going to conflict because the nature of a Dean is to be a dynamic individual who is in charge of his institution. To verbalize and articulate the position of his institution both internally and externally and be the visual representation of the school. That's the nature of deanships. That's the nature of the personalities who go into deanships. And that's very good, you want them to be that way because of the magnitude of that position. Some one individual has to be on the line. The personality of an individual who says I want to be dean is to put himself on the line and when he puts himself on the line he has to be visible. The nature of the vice president who sits above him very often is of the same type. And the vice president therefore sees himself as representing not only the school of medicine but the school of X., Y., Z. along with it and the institution at large, and will therefore try to present himself in a more global way and I think conflict is the inevitable result. Also it puts a buffer between the president and the dean, and by nature deans like to have access to presidents because that way they can be sure their positions are heard and that their views are going to be respected and so on. So irrespective of the nature of the personalities involved, it's not surprising that the interrelationships they are sooner or later would get a little rough.
JSP	What was the reaction of the faculty and staff when Dr. Beljan made his run at the provost position and then finally left?
RS	I guess he was-
JSP	The vice presidency was reshuffled and that particular vice presidency was done away with.

RS	<p>I think part of it was there was mixed feelings in terms of support of Beljan for provost in the medical school. When Beljan was dean he was a very strong father figure and everyone in adolescence loves their father, at least early adolescence. It's often when one begins to achieve a certain degree of maturity that one begins to reach a point where there's a rebellion that comes in a desire to achieve a degree of independence and individuality, if you will, that goes with it. Therefore fathers tend to get pushed aside. I'm beginning to sound like the father that I am. And I think that's exactly the situation with John Beljan. While he was dean he was loved and respected as dean. Towards the end of his tenure, the school was reaching a degree of maturity, however, and the strong father way, if you will, that he was running the school was beginning to be resented. A little bit at least to where the desire for individuality and identity of all the souls that are out there were trying to manifest themselves. So there was a little bit of relief that now is the time for a new leader, with a different management style. When Beljan became vice president and acting provost he took on a different hat. He took on the hat of university administrator who had to make decisions that weren't always in line with the decisions of many in the medical school faculty or particularly desired. And accentuated by splitting feelings, a separation identity, between father and son or father and daughter and I think it's always sad to see the parent leave, but it was the natural evolution of things I guess.</p>
JSP	<p>In the executive committee of the School of Medicine, was there a contrast in styles there? Of the individuals that share that body? Was there a change in the body style of functioning when-</p>
RS	<p>Oh sure, I think that, I think the early leaders, the first leaders has to be a very strong one like Beljan was. I think consequently those who set managing subunit such as departments have to function in a more subservient role, being directed more closely from above. And that is good and perhaps important for a while. However the time has to come when they too have to take on a more directed leadership role and that happened when the new dean came in. Dr. Sawyer's style is to allow chairmen much more freedom in their decision-making within their department. That's painful at first and I think some pain was felt, but I think with time that has been curbed. There's been some change in leadership throughout, but the change has been in the direction always of creating centers of leadership throughout the school, and I think that's another manifestation of the differences in style between the two deans. I'm not sure Dr. Sawyer's style would have been as effective if he were the first dean, nor would Beljan be as effective as the second dean. Perhaps we're fortunate that both came when they did.</p>
JSP	<p>If you were in a position to effect the basic development of the medical school, and if you look back and could change something, what would you change? If anything? One of those, if I had to do it all over again questions.</p>
RS	<p>The school's student affairs [laughter]. It's kind of gullible to say what I would change in the school of medicine, kind of presumptuous to comment on that. I think perhaps there are some directions we went in the very beginning in establishing departments</p>

	<p>and being careful to, within the university with respect to the interrelationships that were created, that we need not have been so cautious about. For example the creation of programs of microbiology and biochemistry and physiology, establishment of those corresponding departments was a necessity in retrospect. I'm not sure that that was necessary or good thing I think. I think functionally some of the parts were accomplished within the university could have been accomplished in other ways. And as programs that were established as departments within the school of medicine with greater efficiency. Let me comment perhaps more on student affairs though. Because there I could be probably a little bit more specific. I think we spent a great deal of time and effort and devote the admissions very carefully and that became a very very important function particularly in those early years of very effective function. The less time the student promotions and standards for promotion and graduation. In retrospect I would place much more emphasis on developing academic standards earlier. We were rather vague in some of the standards. We would let some standards evolve with time. Dr. Sawyer's arrival was the impetus for change in that respect. He insisted on better definition of standards. That was a few years too late I think, not too late obviously came about, it would've been better had it been done initially. I think that that's a major change. Personally I would have, I should have stayed more active as a microbiologist. I think an associate dean in student affairs should maintain, one associate Dean in whatever should maintain his academic credibility and his academic role. I should remain highly visible and active within his professional field. For a variety of reasons I didn't do that despite the fact that he served out very active here in microbiology. In retrospect I wish I had retained activity. But I think we survived despite those-</p>
JSP	<p>What I'd like to do in the next section of the interview is ask a few questions pertaining to individuals in the school of medicine and just make a comment if you will if you don't have a comment one to the next one.</p>
RS	<p>This is an association test?</p>
JSP	<p>More or less yes [laughter]. Let's start off with the obvious, Dr. Robert Conley.</p>
RS	<p>I had little contact with him really. My only recollection of Dr. Conley is a few parties, receptions for prospective, for candidates of various positions in the school in the early days. He seems like a very reasonable rational type. Not as knowledgeable about medical schools as you might expect as he was involved in writing the original proposal, but then unless you're actually part of the medical schools, how can you really have that knowledge without the direct experience. What he did do was probably remarkable for the type of experience he did have. I really can't comment on him though.</p>
JSP	<p>Dr. John Beljan</p>
RS	<p>I've already made some comments on him I guess. He's a dynamic charismatic individual. A stickler for details and paperwork. Often commented that we probably defoliated the forest of the state of Washington just making the paper for his memos</p>

	<p>while he was here. In a very different style than the style of the deans I had been associated with. It was very hard for me to adjust to that style. In retrospect I guess I wish I had made more of an effort to adjust instead I probably made efforts to subvert it at my office because it was more fun doing runs around him that it was following him. [Laughter].</p>
JSP	How did he- how did he react to that?
RS	<p>Every now and then he'd get serious., he'd send me nasty memos asking why I wasn't sending copies of all my correspondence. So I'd follow up by sending him copies of all the garbage mail we send out, all the trivia and we'd get hundreds, hundreds because we do deal in that volume of mail that doesn't really amount to anything, it's all fairly routine. And I still wouldn't send him the things that I didn't want him to see [laughter]. But he didn't know the difference and would send a memo thanking me for following through on his memo [laughter]. I guess what I'm pointing to is that Belgium for all his concern with detail was very bureaucratic and it's easy to subvert bureaucracy, particularly when you're an anti-bureaucrat.</p>
JSP	Mrs. Regina Borum
RS	<p>A very delightful assistant to Dr. Belgium. Like most assistant if you want easily get things done you don't antagonize the assistant. And Regina was particularly that way, you had to be nice to her or you'd never find your way into the deans office. But Regina was I thought a very effective assistant, never had any problems with her, always very helpful to me. Never compromised the role of her office as far as I could tell. It was a pleasure to work with her.</p>
JSP	Dr. David Buzzard
RS	<p>Dave saved us in the early days in the typical way that the beginning with everybody being concerned about everything, those were the Kettering days, we were attempting to put together a brochure that would be used in lieu of a school bulletin. In a fashion that was prevalent. Someone would write a draft and that draft will be circulated around. By the time it reached Dr. Belgium's office had been rewritten several times but of course it would be rewritten by Dr. Belgium. Then again they would start around again. And after three or four cycles this way it had obviously been massacred so badly no one could recognize anything or understand it or even remember what we started out to do. So at some point somebody thought of somebody named buzzard who had a degree in English and might be able to help us out. Dave worked up at the, I think the Cox Heart Institute if I remember correctly. For someone up there – no – Dave worked for somebody. I think it was at Cox, I don't remember the details now. He came on with someone else whose name I can't recall and was given the task of looking and listening to us, looking at our draft of a brochure and listening to our description of the school of medicine one afternoon. And over the weekend he put something together that for the first time made sense. When Beljan looked for a new individual to head his public-relations office Dave was a natural, he was a very good</p>

	asset to the school.
JSP	Dr. Ira Fritz.
RS	The first chairman of biochemistry. The only one I know who can teach a course in nutrition and his visual aids of course show the film Deep Throat. [Laughter] I won't explain that, but that was the story that went around, I assume it was true.
JSP	Explain that please. [Laughter].
JSP	I can't picture it in my mind, but please explain it.
RS	[Laughter]. He did teach this course and that was the film he showed in the course. I sat in on his lectures I would've liked to have sat in on the film.
JSP	How do you get that by the curriculum committee?
RS	[Laughter]. This was an S&E course. He was chairman of biochemistry and program director of the school of medicine in the beginning. Department put together a biochemistry course. [Laughter]. Still thinking about nutrition, huh? I can make all sorts of comments, but you're rolling that tape so I won't. Ira was a nice guy he was a remnant of the old Wright State days and had many of the limitations of that inheritance. And by limitations I don't mean that in a way that implies fault it just means that within an institution there can be only just so much expertise. And that expertise does not necessarily extend over to do something new and different is beyond the capability for which those people who were here at that time were hired for. Ira was hired as a member of the S&E faculty as many other people were that became part of the school of medicine faculty too. Ira's expertise was very different from being a member of the medical school faculty.
JSP	Would you say he was out of his depth in the medical school?
RS	It was beyond his capability, let me put it that way. And consequently the biochemistry course that was put together was not a course that was suitable for medical students and that became apparent once that course started. To say it was a disaster I guess would put it mildly. Then again, this is not fault. This is a fault I would place more on management than on the individuals concerned in the department because I think here was managing wise we should not have expected some people to do things for which their background and education and experience did not provide them with the appropriate ability.
JSP	In other words the matrix situation was not working?
RS	Yeah and that's probably the basis for my comment earlier but that's something that I

	<p>would have in retrospect preferred to have seen set up differently. We had to pay some prices for that and this was one of the price, the costs of doing it that way with people we get that way with. If that makes sense. The course was so bad at one time, the students were so [indecipherable] at one time that they were going to end up either with a course in biochemistry, but they got absolutely nothing out of it. We actually held a meeting with John Lindower and myself and I forget who else was involved now and we thought seriously about the prospect of re-teaching the course and which of us, who were not in the department, would teach it. I had taught biochemistry in the past, Lindower the pharmacologist with a background in biochemistry, and we thought we could find several people who might be able to put together a review course at any rate to redo or undo or make do with what had not worked.</p>
JSP	<p>So what did you finally end up doing?</p>
RS	<p>Well we stopped panicking and realized that the students would learn despite ourselves and despite the Department of biochemistry. And they did. Their scores on the national board for biochemistry weren't out of line really. The students tend to be very resourceful. The course while it certainly wasn't the course it should be by any means, at least provided a guide for what students had to achieve if not by virtue of the efforts of the faculty by the efforts of the students themselves could put out and they did.</p>
JSP	<p>Dr. John Halki</p>
RS	<p>I like Jack a great deal he's very impressive individual. I remember Jack when he used to come to the Dean staff meetings with his uniform on as commander of a hospital at Wright Patt. I was always impressed by the presentations he would make to the Dean, very crisp, very direct, to the point, contextual, concise, never wasted words. I often wished I could speak like that. Right to the point I thought how very effective he must be, a very effective leader. I was sort of hoping when he was hired by the school of medicine that he would eventually find his way to the Dean's office in some capacity. But I'm really glad that he was at least appointed chairman of the OB/GYN.</p>
JSP	<p>Dr. Robert Jewett</p>
RS	<p>Bob is a good associate dean for Dr. Belgium. I think he was able to do those things which had to be done as an academic associate dean of the type of Dean and leader that Dr. Belgium was. Jewett was the type that, the very meticulous type that, could really tend to detail bring order sometimes out of chaos. Never got flustered over anything. A very quiet type of individual who never appears beyond the surface, was always by himself. It was a pleasure working with him really, I really liked him. I miss him now.</p>
JSP	<p>Dr. Robert Kegerreis</p>
RS	<p>Associate Dean's role and the president is rather remote. It's always nice to keep it that way. One fear I had when I came here as Dean for admissions would be meddling by the president into the admission process as friends relatives and neighbors governors</p>

	<p>had their relatives who would be applying for medical school and that the president's seeing constituencies out there would want to respond and would therefore meddle in our process and put undue influence on us. That never materialized, Kegerreis has been absolutely perfect as president. Has never interfered with the admissions process. So I have absolutely no complaints with his function with us. I think he is The right distance as far as I'm concerned.</p>
JSP	Dr. John Lindower
RS	<p>John is a type of individual that you would almost call saintly. He's very nice. I can't picture him doing anything wrong. He's almost so saintly I almost feel like he's going to go up and I'm going to go down. Because how can one compare with him? He's too good as a person. His very goodness sometimes gets in the way because he can see no evil and therefore it's hard for him sometimes to take a strong stand that almost has to be taken administratively. So goodness in a way was a curse that he has to live with. I think with time he's tried to maybe adapt and become a little less good but I haven't seen it. Some people would say that maybe sometimes he's less decisive because he labors over the decision-making. I think that's part of the problem of a personality like he has where he sees good in people, he doesn't want to hurt anybody, he wants to protect everybody, it's hard to make a decision that way. And so he struggles before he finally does make a decision. I often go to him for advice and often find the advice I get from him is worthwhile.</p>
JSP	Dr. Samuel Coleman
RS	<p>Sam Coleman, the member of the loyal opposition so to speak. Sam's main significant contribution which I think is very significant was always to question and challenge and I think every institution needs somebody like that. Sam was often a thorn in my side because he never hesitated to argue and fuss over something, but when it came right down to action, support, he was always there. If I needed help, I knew that I could turn to Sam. If I needed his guidance I knew that he would always provide it. But his style was always in finding an opposing view and championing that opposing view and sometimes that would get into a great deal of difficulty and sometimes that can be rather irritating.</p>
JSP	Dr. Edward Spanier
RS	<p>Ed is probably the most analytical person I have ever met. Whenever I wanted any understanding of something, any analysis of a problem I would go see Ed. Ed would take it apart, look at it upside down and sideways frontwards backwards he would give me 50 reasons why something wouldn't work. I don't know that I've ever met anyone that can see into something so early as Ed Spanier. For a chemist I never understood how he learned as much as he did about financial management. But his knowledge and insight was always-always astounded me. He was one associate dean and never hesitated to stand up to John Beljan and would get away with it. And he would always have good reasons for doing so.</p>

JSP	How did he get away with it?
RS	Probably because Belgium wouldn't survive without him. Spanier handled the books. [Laughter]. Spanier handled more of the nuts and bolts of financial management of the school than Beljan did. He had the broad picture I think, but Spanier really knew the intricacies and could show Belgium the way through the intricacies. It was always a pleasure to sit down and have Spanier explain something to me because I knew I was going to get a real explanation. I didn't always agree with Spanier's conclusions weren't always consistent with what we did, but he would provide such a thorough analysis that it was nice then to go the next step on your own and to reserve judgment based upon the facts of critiquing that he provided.
JSP	Dr. Leon Sipowicz
RS	I didn't really know Leon well. I remember when he was hired I was never particularly impressed with him. I think as a clinician as a scientist he certainly has the credentials. As a professor and chairman of medicine at Wright State he was not an appropriate choice. I think the dean at that point was filling a position, impressive credentials, and thought that he could handle Leon as he had handled some of the other chairs. Leon was too strong-willed for that. And his appointment was inappropriate. To put it mildly. He shouldn't have been brought here, this was not the type of school that Leon could function effectively in. And I think looking at it- [Break in recording]
RS	As I said I don't think that Leon's appointment was a wise appointment. He should not have been appointed and I think that was apparent to many of us. At the time that Leon was being interviewed I think the dean was under pressure to have an appointment for anyone who had superb credentials on paper. Had it worked out it would have been great. But Leon was much too strong-willed to function in the style that Belgium wanted his chairmen to function in at that time.
JSP	Why did he leave?
RS	You leave when the dean tells you to leave. And the dean said that's it. Belgium was very careful in appointing chairman he differentiated between the appointment of individual as a faculty member and the appointment of the chairman. The dean can't summarily dismiss a faculty member, but it was very clear that a chairman's appointment was the appointment of administrator and was at the pleasure of the dean and when the dean was no longer pleasure that was it.
JSP	Raymond Palmer.
RS	Oh Ray Palmer. I knew about him before I came down here. Ray Palmer had been at

	<p>Harvard one time, worked for a very well-known librarian from Harvard medical library. Yet the same background as the library at Toledo. Librarians, medical librarians have a vast network that rivals the CIA so when I was looking at the Wright state the first person I turned to ticket information was the library up at Toledo who was able to tell a considerable amount about Wright state because of his network and of course having also come from Harvard I found a good deal about Ray and about the dean hearing about the philosophy of the school and the facilities and so on. Palmer I think was a very active library. He unfortunately became a librarian at a time when the state resources weren't as generous as the time when the school of Toledo was establishing its library. So he worked within greater limitations. But within those limitations he established very quickly a very good collection. I served as the chairman of the library committee when it was first established so I had a little insight into some of the problems that were going on at that time. It was, I think Wright state was very fortunate in having Ray at the time they did.</p>
JSP	Dr. Emmanuel Cowder
RS	<p>Good memories of Manny Cowder. He was an inheritance I would say of the Dayton area to the school. Appointed because of his position at Children's Hospital. Consequently pediatricians can even be in the running, but he was a good appointment for the time. A strong supporter. But a strong-willed individual. He was not one who is going to be manhandled by the dean. He was his own person. And he basically did his thing.</p>
JSP	How did he interact with Dean Beljan?
RS	As a peer. [Laughter]. And not many chairman are willing to interact as peers.
JSP	Would you say that Dr. Belgium had an equal amount of impact on his department as others?
RS	<p>Probably less so because he carried not only a department in name but a hospital. So really did what Belgium have to offer except the title? And, in many respects, what alternatives to Belgium have? There really were no alternative so Manny was pretty much in the driver seat. He was in a good position as chairman in those days.</p>
JSP	Dr. Al Roden
RS	Al Roden, he sort of like a cat. Only in respect to the fact that he has more lives than most of us
JSP	Why is that?
RS	<p>He survived more crises I think than can really effect a chairman or department. Belgian decided way back that he would not create a Department of medical education or bring people in to the dean's office who are expert medical education but rather he</p>

	<p>created one of his own department that he could bring people in who were experts in evaluation, experts in curriculum, experts in medical education in other words, then give faculty appointment within the medical school. This was a good idea, sounded good anyway. It sounded good, and should be good, unless and until resources were limited. Roden as a pathologist assumed the chair of that position. Roden had experience in other medical schools, an articulate individual. As resources diminished however, that's a vulnerable department, but it has survived. Its arrived through John Belgian and it survived through his successor, at times when cuts would probably dictate its vulnerability. And so I say he has many lives. It's hard to understand sometimes why. I like Al though he's a very nice person. I think he's been a good asset to the school in many ways.</p>
JSP	Dr. Nicholas J. Thompson
RS	<p>Nick I have very fond memories of. Nick dealt a lot with Dayton medicine and Wright State. I remember at one time he expressed some concern over something John Belgian was doing which I don't remember what it was any longer, but he talked to me about it with such care and concern that it was obvious that this man was deeply dedicated to the school. And deeply dedicated to seeing that things went right, did not want to see the dean hurt in any way, partners of the institution hurt. I think he was a champion of the school. I know no time I had a problem with a student and I called Nick that Nick did not respond. We had a problem with one student who I remember clearly our charter class and I wanted to send him out of town to deal with some general rotation. Rarely does the department approve a core course away, and I explained it to Nick. He's on the phone immediately and called a friend of his at Harvard and made the arrangements.</p>
JSP	Was this an outstanding student?
RS	<p>Just a student. But the problem was a personal, overwhelming problem and Nick responded. And that was typical of Nick, he always responded. It was-I often thought he ought to write down the story of his life, at least how he became a physician because it was historical. He came from parents who are not physicians who were immigrants and he had to work for his education. It would have been inspiring story for many students to hear. I miss Nick great deal.</p>
JSP	Dr. Robert A. Goldenkraft
RS	Very little contact with him. I really can't comment.
JSP	Dr. Dan W. Elliott
RS	Dan's a typical surgeon. Fits the surgeons mold.
JSP	What's the surgeons mold?

RS	<p>Action oriented. When you get him alone or you get him in a party or wherever just to talk about the old days in surgery and his lectures at Ohio State. The idea that surgery is the key to the world's problems. I don't know about medical problems but at least the world's problems. Hard to change his mind about anything. Surgeons in general are that way. He and the dean in many respects were mirror images of each other. It's tough I think to be a chairman of surgery in a school that is dedicated to primary care. Dan has had to struggle with that I think. It's also being the chair of surgery in a school that's community-based and in which any faculty that you bring in may be in competition with the practicing community. Perhaps more so than the faculty of other clinical departments. So he's had a tough job. Again what I call upon him personally for assistance with student he's responded. So I'm really pleased with the relationship that I've had. There's always been a response. Never a, it's got to be this way, sort of thing. And I don't think you can ask much more of a chairman.</p>
JSP	Dr. Harvey Siegel
RS	<p>Harvey has become a good friend the last several years very down-to-earth person says one thing and the manner in which the thought is generated in his mind. There is no filtering - some people don't like that. I find it refreshing in a world that has such a thin veneer, that strip so easily. So I find Harvey to be precisely with what he is and what he is, is nice to know. His office is right next to mine so I had occasion to see him quite often. The last several years he's been chairman of the promotions committee. And in that he's been very effective. He knows how to deal with students. He's willing to compromise and reach solutions without in the process compromising standards. We've worked together I think very well as a team. I'd like to see him stay as head of the chairman of the promotions committee for a while, because I think we've made some very important developments within that role. I'm very pleased to see Harvey here.</p>
JSP	<p>Well we have unfortunately run out of time for this interview. In our next one I would like to finish the list that I have and maybe if you would like to add some more to it we can do that. Thank you very much for the time and next time we'll see you again.</p>
RS	<p>Good. Thank you very much.</p> <p>[End of recording]</p>