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David Lord

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Interview with Mr. David Lord
Rollins Alumnus and Member of the Board of Trustees

Thursday, June 3, 2010

Wenxian Zhang, Alia Alli & Jennifer Ritter
Rollins College Archives

[This interview was conducted via speaker phone, and as a result there is phone static in the background throughout the recording.]

WZ: Good afternoon. My name is Wenxian Zhang, Head of Archives Special Collections, today is Thursday, June 3, 2010. With me are two Rollins students: Jennifer Ritter and Alia Alli. We are going to interview Mr. David Lord, a Rollins graduate and also current member of the Board of Trustees. So, David, could you tell us about your childhood, where you grew up?

DL: Okay, I grew up in the Detroit, Michigan area. That's where I was born and raised.

WZ: Okay, tell us about your education: your childhood, where you went to school, where you went to high school?

DL: Good, yes I prior to Rollins I went to a secondary prep school called the Lawrenceville School, and I was there from the ninth grade on and that is in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, which is just down the road from Princeton and at the time it was an all male-boys' school.

WZ: Was your family associated with the auto industry? You said the Detroit area?

DL: Yes, my family was _____ (??) (00:01:26). My dad was in the Detroit area, was a wholesale grocer, which means he provided it, at that point you didn't have the large chain, he provided groceries to different trade store outlets. So his primary was in the wholesale food. My mother did not work but she came from the Newberry family which was a prominent Detroit family.

WZ: So, you're not the first one in your family to go to college, are you?

DL: I'm not, I actually was the first one to graduate. My dad had gone to Princeton and he had never graduated from Princeton, and my older brother at the time had gone to Princeton and didn't graduate and had gone into the Armed Services. So, of my family I was the first to complete my college degree.

WZ: That's wonderful. What made you decide to come to Rollins?

DL: Well that's interesting. By going to the Lawrenceville School—what was really supposed to have happened at the time, if you went to the Lawrenceville School then you were supposed to go on to Princeton, and I wasn't the greatest of students and also in 1965—which was when I was applying to college—there was great demand, it was becoming pretty difficult to get into colleges. So for me, I didn't have the academic background to get into to a school like Princeton, so I began looking into good small

schools, I'd looked at Lake Forest in the Chicago area and our family used to come down to the west coast of Florida for vacation, so I actually—in March—came over to visit Rollins. I had never been to it, walked on the campus, did the admissions and immediately fell in love with Rollins from the first time I saw it. I just thought it was a simply beautiful school and would be a wonderful place to go and that's where I ended up applying and getting admitted.

WZ: That's great. What is your first impression when you first get here on campus and become a student?

DL: Well, there were sort of two impressions at the time that may—of course—the campus is just—was Mediterranean buildings and overlooking a lake, it's just sort of a small, charming school. The other part that I was very, very interested in, I liked the idea of a small school where you could get to know your professors, get to know your faculty. It had sort of an intimate feel to it, and you could be an individual and that was something that appealed greatly to me.

WZ: Well, who are some of the faculty members you still remember?

DL: Well, some that are still around are Jack Lane, he was teaching history at the time. Um, and I should remember the last name, a professor that meant a great deal to me in political science was Paul Philips? I'm trying to remember what his last name was, he was—ran the Center for creative Leadership but it was—he was a political science—

WZ: (at the same time) That might be Paul Douglass.

DL: —professor. Paul Douglass, Paul Douglass actually, um—I got involved with him and got very much involved with his projects. Another professor that was a lot was Ray Smith who taught history kind of thing. A professor that came in my late stages was Hoyt Edge—who's still there—and I've always had high regard for Hoyt. I always really appreciate his conversation and thoughtfulness around values and ethics, which he did a very nice job of bring into his teaching and conversations. Probably the most influential person on my—I was very involved with athletics. I was the manager for all of the basketball, baseball, and soccer teams, and I got to know Boyd Coffie at the time when I was a freshman he was the basketball coach and he was also the baseball coach, and Boyd became the most meaningful person in my—I had lost my dad at the age of fifteen. And Boyd had become a great mentor for me throughout my days at Rollins. Then when I came back and worked at Rollins in the eighties, Boyd was a close friend and he and he and I often— because one of the things he was into was fitness and taking care of yourself. Boyd probably saved my life because he got me into a fitness regime and caused me to lose a lot of weight, and his whole philosophy about life was something I carried on throughout my life.

WZ: That's great. Now, another good friend just walked in, Dr. Thad Seymour (door closes) you must know him well. You used to—

DL: Oh, I know Thad!

TS: Hello, David.

DL: I'm so excited.

TS: My good friend, I'm down here doing some research for a project I'm interested in on the Hamilton Holt house. But I knew from—

DL: (at the same time) Oh!

TS: —my friends here, you were going to be on the phone today. So when I saw everybody in here, I presumed to come in just to say hello.

DL: Well, one of the things I have to say in the conversation, I had a period where I worked at Rollins from '81 'til '87 and (audio cuts out) who got me to come back and work and help in the business office and in housing was Thad, and he was a great president to work for and another person that has meant a great deal in my life and my career.

TS: Well, David you're nice to say that but let me do turnabout because I worked for you for a while. When I first came, you were an alumni trustee.

DL: That's correct.

TS: And you were, forgive me, but one of the few voices (laughs) that I could count on for balanced and reasonable perspective on things. There were a few other trustees who had somewhat shorter fuses, if that's not too improper (Lord laughs) a way to say it. (Lord laughs) And I was always so grateful to have you around that table. You helped me get off to the start that I hoped for.

DL: Well, one of my things as most fond memory of our time together was where you and I would sit down on different subjects—this was when I was working there—and have those sort of conversations on the different benches around campus under a tree.

TS: Right.

DL: And you may have remembered one of the biggest things that was going on that I was involved in and had a lot of emotion, and you always brought your thoughtfulness to was around different issues around athletics.

TS: Absolutely.

DL: And a lot of other—

TS: (at the same time)—and our new short term athletic director.

DL: Director?

TS: (laughs)

DL: And one side thing that—I don't know if Thad's staying there—but if you're to ask me one of my proudest moments at Rollins, and I'm sure you talked to Thad—was where we actually got the funding from the Olin Foundation and moved forward to building the Olin library. That was such an important part of our centennial and carrying Rollins to the future, and I know how hard Thad worked, and I couldn't have been more delighted to have been the one to help carry out, making it happen and get the furniture. And then the grand moment was the centennial evening when we shot off the fireworks and celebrated Rollins hundredth anniversary.

TS: Well, I'm still here. I'm going to leave you all alone, sorry to interrupt. But one of the great thrills for me on those fireworks was I got to know the fellow in charge of the fireworks and I said, "I would love to count these down. Can we work together?" And he said, "Yes, but I have to light the fuse three seconds before they go off." So, he wanted me to count and make sure that I didn't stop too soon. And we coordinated it perfectly and one of the great thrills of my life was going, "Ten! Nine!" I felt that I was right over at NASA sending off a rocket to the moon. But Dave, I'm thinking of getting the grant. You may have been around the table. We were having a meeting in my office and Connie—I heard the phone ring—Connie came to the door and said, "It's Mr. Milas." And I said, "I'm not going to take this in my office with all these guys sitting around. (laughs) I don't want to see them—I don't want them to see me burst into tears." So I went out into her office and got the wonderful news that they had approved our request, and after about ten minutes with him, came back and we all cheered. And that—

DL: (at the same time) Yeah.

TS: —was really—as you properly pointed out—I think that moment was the fulcrum for Rollins and where it has gone since then, getting that library. If we had not gotten it, I don't know where we could have got the hundred thousand dollars to refurbish Mills. So I'm glad we were there together for that. Now I'll let you all get back—

DL: (at the same time) Thanks Thad.

TS: —to work.

DL: Okay, good to talk to you Thad.

TS: I told Polly that I might be here while you were being interviewed, she sends her love and she has never forgotten your—your collaboration, yours and hers—on picking out the art for the Olin library.

DL: Right, well—

TS: (at the same time) See you later.

DL: –that was her–yup, thanks Thad!

TS: Thank you, bye-bye.

JR: Now, Mr. Lord, Thad had been telling us that there was (door closes) something, something different that happened with the furniture delivery for the library. Can you tell us that story?

DL: Yeah, a very interesting, of course at the time I was working as the business manager and one of my responsibilities was for purchasing. So I was responsible and when the truck backed in for all the furniture for the Olin library, and they opened up the back door and I looked in and it was all the wood end panels, the tables, the chairs. The wood was the wrong finish color. Uh, they had painted it of course, my first thought was I had made a mistake. Because when you order furniture, there's kinds of codes and numbers you put in for paint finishes, and so the sweat began pouring off my brow—because you know—here's two hundred or three hundred thousand dollars of furniture right close to the dedication, it's all the wrong color. And I went back to my office and checked and found that no, it was the company's error; and then of course we negotiated with the company to get a discount and did get the problem corrected. But I think as you heard, from Thad's comments getting the library finished and for the centennial and really in his presidency of capital projects was such a focal point, so much effort had been put into it, so much excitement had been generated and then to get two to three weeks before you're going to dedicate the building with a big ceremony, and find out all the furniture is the wrong color was a very scary one. But we made it through, and of course I'm always delighted when I come back and see the wonderful building.

WZ: Okay, I want to go back to your student life here at Rollins in the sixties.

DL: Great.

WZ: What was your major and what are some of the courses you still remember?

DL: I was a political science major as an undergraduate, and probably the thing that I appreciated most about my major, Paul Douglass did an awful lot of where we would go and try to look at different communities. Two that I remember we spent quite a bit of time was—at the time—Ybor City down in Tampa, which was a real revitalization of a community; and then we actually took a trip up to Columbia, Maryland which at the time was going to be an attempt to create an ideal community, and what were the elements if you were going to make a perfect community. So probably for me, interestingly enough, my political science courses in reality that Paul put me through were interesting, so I ended up being a political science major. But you know what becomes interesting, I think often when you're an undergraduate especially back in those days, you really don't know what you want to do with your life. And part of what happened to me was in my

senior year I had been also working a lot at Rollins in the Dean of Students office, and was an RA in the dorms, and was very involved and it was also the period of the Vietnam war. So I made the decision, I didn't go into three two but after Rollins to go to Crummer School and—where I could become director of men's housing and go to Crummer School. So I did go one and get my MBA and then use my MBA to go on into higher education administration. But I constantly, now in reflection forty years later, go back and say how important my political science background was and what I learned from Paul Douglass, because no matter what you're doing it's always about process. And if you're trying to get things done in the business world or in the real estate development world, how do you go through the process of working with government agencies and different people and the approval? So although at the time at Rollins the political science courses I just would take them because I was going through the motions. Forty years later I'm very, very thankful and probably have found my political science undergraduate days to be more important to my professional life than my MBA and business background was.

WZ: Okay, you mentioned the Vietnam War. Very interesting because last week I received a phone call from Channel 6 here—local media—they asking whether we have any documents of a student group here on campus in connection with Walter Cronkite that tried to organize a student demonstration. They recently released FBI files on him. So what is your some memory of student organizations during that era?

DL: I do remember, you know Rollins was not the most socially active place on activist issues. But I actually do remember whether it was sixty-nine or seventy, but that we had a protest on the corner of Park Avenue and Fairbanks about the Vietnam War. And we were out there with signs and posters, and you know like everybody else, there was serious concern by college students around the Vietnam War, it was a very real thing that was faced by everybody. So like other places we did have our protests. I don't think they were to the degree of many, many other colleges and universities, but we did have one.

WZ: Okay, that's good. Tell us about your involvement with fraternities. I understand you were also president of Sigma Nu here.

DL: Yes, I was president of the Sigma Nu fraternity. Um, and was a member of that for four years. Sort of two things that I would say, I was also president of the Inter-fraternity Council. When in the sixties, fraternity life was extremely important at Rollins, I would say probably 60-70 percent of students belonged to the Greeks. I think there were six fraternities and six sororities. So, it was—you know—a very, very important part, we actually went through rush the first week we were in school. And so we got involved with our fraternity right off in our freshman year. If I again go back and look at my Sigma Nu and fraternity experience, I enjoyed my fraternity experience, enjoyed part of Sigma Nu. My fraternity classes are still close friends—it's interesting—if you go back and look at reunion pictures, there were twelve or thirteen of us that were in the pledge class, I think we have all stayed active, all gone on and had very successful careers. So the fraternity gave us that opportunity to come together and get to know each other and do

friendships. On the other side of it—again having gone on and become a college administrator—I think a lot of our behavior and things that we did: hazing and drinking, really would be very unacceptable in today’s world.

WZ: Also, I understand you were a member of four-Os [Omnipotent Order of Osceola], a secret society—

DL: (at the same time) I-

WZ: —not too many people know about. Tell us about—

DL: (at the same time) Yeah—

WZ: —your involvement with that organization.

DL: Well, four-Os was a—you know again—a secretive fraternity, but it was a fraternity of people who were great leaders at Rollins, you know, who were active and involved in different organizations, both faculty and undergraduates. And again I was very, very honored to be a part of that. Part of our role, even though we were secretive we were sort of the underground leadership that was there trying to help give Rollins direction or be helpful—sort of be a rational side. So I again very much enjoyed it. Back then some of the stuff that we did around hazing and other things for four-Os was acceptable in the sixties, would be very unacceptable today.

WZ: Okay. Other involvement when you were here? I understand you were assistant to the Dean of Students and also assistant editor of *The Sandspur*.

DL: Yes, *Sandspur*. I’ll take first because one of the things that the Sigma Nu fraternity was very involved with it, and I was very active in different organizations and do remember working on *The Sandspur*. Probably one of my more active things that I got involved with *The Sandspur* at the time I was there, the Enyart-Alumni Field House did not exist. Rollins had no indoor facilities for athletics, they used to actually go down to practice at what I think now is Winter Park Junior High School, which is down near Harper Shepherd. Harper Shepherd were the only locker rooms, our games were played at community colleges, so we had no home organization or gym kind of thing. And I became very active, and got *The Sandspur* very active in editorializing the need for Rollins to build a gym and field house facility, which they did do while I was there and once they did it, it proved to be a great helping to turn around the athletic program, especially for basketball at the time, and really giving us an on campus place where students could come to games and rally around it. So, I enjoyed my *Sandspur* experience. My assistant dean’s experience was where—again you know—it was working in the residence halls and then going on and becoming—in a way—director of men’s housing, and I worked a little bit for Fred Hicks, but probably the person who again meant the most to me was Ron Pease who was the Dean of Students. And I was doing that during Crummer and really working eight hours, you know, a full time job in the Dean of Students office and then going to Crummer. And Ron Pease was the person who

was very thoughtful, and he was the one who encouraged me to go on into my career in higher education.

WZ: So, how do you become a business manager for the sports program while still a student at Rollins? Was that a part-time position?

DL: Uh well, when I wasn't really the business manager. The athletic teams used to have sort of a student manager. Student manager would be the person who would help take care of the equipment at games—you know—getting all the equipment to games, would help—at the time we didn't have anybody working in athletics, so we ended up having to clean all the laundry everyday—you know—clean the practice equipment, clean the uniforms, get the uniforms packed up and ready to go so that they were there for the games, keeping the statistics the books and sports things, calling into the newspapers, helping the coaches with—you know—at that time we used to drive in station wagons and cars. We didn't have any buses. Sometimes as a manager you drove one of the vehicles to the games, you handed out team money, you really were the coach's right hand person. Again, in the sixties there really weren't assistant coaches, it was the head coach and the manager and you took care of everything. And I did it on a voluntary basis.

WZ: That's good. Tell us about the years after you graduated from Rollins, after you receive your MBA degree I understand you went to work for Ithaca College.

DL: Yes, I left Rollins my first stop was at Ithaca College where I went to become director of housing operations, which really was dealing with the room assignments, the business aspects. Ithaca at the time had about forty-five hundred students living on campus. I still remember arriving there in July and they didn't have housing places to put about eight hundred students because they were badly over enrolled. So the first couple of years trying to get the housing program organized and getting it so you weren't putting everybody in triples, and putting some business techniques in place, were interesting. Then I began working uh, in doing residence hall renovations, and then I actually had an opportunity after about five years there to go over and become director of purchasing for Ithaca College, which is where I left student life and moved to the business and finance area which is where I continued. And then again got promoted to become director of auxiliary services at Ithaca College. And then, when Dr. Seymour came on board he was looking to shore up the business area. He had brought in some new people and he offered me the job to come down as business manager. At the same time, he was having a lot of problems with student housing—I still remember it—and he said, "David would you become—" because he knew of my housing background—"director of housing along with being business manager at Rollins? And I just want you to do it for a couple of months while we try to get the housing program straightened out." And I ended up becoming director of housing for three and a half years along with business manager. And then after—in '87 I left Rollins to come out to Colorado College where I became the business manager and held that position for nineteen years at Colorado College.

JR: I understand that for—when you were at Rollins a little while after you were business manager you were appointed to a position called comptroller. I'm not familiar with that. Can you tell us—

DL: (at the same time) Yeah.

JR: —what that's about?

DL: Well, I laughed. In my period at Rollins, I felt like I wore more hats than normal. I—the way it had originally come to Rollins there was the vice president of business, and reporting to them was the business manager who was sort of the operations side of the house: food service, mail, purchasing, and then there was a comptroller who really handled the accounting, bursar, and financial. Well, Bill Gailey who was our comptroller had an opportunity to leave, to go become president at a small business school, so I got made acting comptroller at the same time business manager, I became acting comptroller for a period of time. So, I had that and I also had a period besides the housing where I was acting director of human resources. So, I carried a number of hats. The good news is, our comptroller who had left, his term, his presidency, didn't work out and after about a year he came back. And I went, they then promoted me to the associate vice president of business at Rollins. So I did a lot of things at Rollins over the period of time, and again I think partly what was really important, when Thad became president, Rollins was really having some difficult financial things and I would say was not highly sophisticated in its business operations. They weren't doing a good job of collecting from students, they weren't really on top of knowing where their budget was. I think under Dr. Seymour, and at that point Jesse Morgan who became vice president—if they hadn't done some things I'm not sure Rollins would be there today—I mean we were in that much trouble financially.

WZ: What are some other challenges that you face while you were business manager and comptroller, besides the financial difficulties?

DL: Well, one was—you know—when you don't collect the money the other part was that we had to do a lot with what I call cash management. So colleges work where they hopefully collect all the tuition at the beginning and then you go and invest that and it begins to also take off. So again part of our work was, collecting from students and then doing investment. But the other part is, they really had not done anything (interference) to look at how you could properly do purchasing. And you can save a lot of money by how you contract for services and you do it in a consolidated way. Another area that I was brought in—Rollins was possibly going to be in a position where the residence hall custodian and maintenance staff was talking about unionizing. Um, because they had been getting poor supervision and were quite unhappy. And part of my job in housing was to try and—help make the housekeeping staff, so they were productive and doing a good job but doing a good job with employee relations, which we were able to do and thus avoid unionization. The bookstore had not—you know—things like bookstore and food service should be areas that bring in decent revenue, and I was very proud to help do a great deal, to redo our food service and make it so it was doing well. The bookstore—we

made it a very successful operation. Rollins wasn't doing anything in the summer to rent out facilities. We put in a very active summer conference program, utilized the facilities in the summer and brought revenue in. So, there were a lot of opportunities to bring good business operations, background to Rollins.

AA: I understand that you also would select fifteen students from campus to have lunch with you and dining services. Can you tell us about that experience?

DL: Yes, I used to call them director's dinners. And again, one of the things when I was coming on board, Rollins had just at that point, which was somewhat innovative, had gone to a la carte point system for dining, which means students would go through and whatever they bought took X-number of dollars off their card. And at the time, in dining that was a brand new system. Because the way college food service used to work is you used to go through a cafeteria line, and they'd have like three entrees and it was all you could eat, and somebody just sort of put the food on your plate and you either took it or left it. And the change we were making was begun saying: if you do good food and you serve the (interference) food that students want, you'll find they'll come and eat it. And we also had—which was somewhat innovative at the time—if students didn't eat up all their dollars they got a refund of their dollars, which means, there was really an incentive for food service. So director's dinners were a great chance for me to visit with students about food service, about residence halls—one of the issues that I remember at the time was Rollins didn't used to have—again times have changed—telephones in student rooms. The telephones when I got there were all in the hallways, and if they wanted to try to call a student they would ring the phone and everybody in the hallway—but one of the things that was really important to students that came out of the director's dinners was: we would really like to have phones in our rooms. And again, in the period when I was there in the eighties, we were able to put phones in the student rooms because you would make commissions and fees off of long distance. It basically re-paid for the telephone system. So we were able to generate enough revenue to pay for it. So there were a lot of—I guess—services that I was involved in providing, and I was a strong believer that you needed to listen to the customer and find out what they want; and I cannot tell you how many good ideas came out of these dinners. A chance to hear what we were doing well, a chance to hear what we weren't doing well, and to have very frank—and I actually continued to do director's dinners for all of my years in higher education. It was a great way to hear your client.

WZ: Who are some other people you get a chance to work with? You mentioned Seymour and Morgan.

DL: At the time, one of the people that I worked very closely with was Tom Wells, who is the director of facilities services. He was somebody that I enjoyed very, very much. Let me get my—you know when you get old, you get a little more senile—Dan DeNicola was the academic dean, so we had an opportunity to work with him. The athletic department was going through a lot of changes—you know—during that time, so you worked with different athletic directors. So I had a chance at—another group that I actually worked with a bit was (audio cuts out) _____ (??) (00:36:23). One of the things

that was highly controversial when I was there was um, still somewhat strong, was who got to use the small houses on campus, who was going to get the right to them. There were other groups than fraternities. So one of the areas that I got involved with when I was there setting up what was called the Housing Review Board. And that Housing Review Board figured out which of the Greek groups got houses and which other groups didn't; and some of the controversial decisions that I guess I'm somewhat along with Dr. Seymour is, if a Greek organization was not properly living up to the standards of the Housing Review Board, they could lose their house. So one of the groups that lost their house while we were there was the KAs. Many others were put under a great deal because, again I think one of the things that Dr. Seymour—because his background was in student life—was trying to change the way its student life and begin to get a little more of a serious academic atmosphere, and some of the behavior of the Greek groups he felt was on—was not good for the school. So it's interesting now, when I go to alumni functions and things (laughs) people will talk to me and say, oh, you're the one that threw our fraternity off campus. And—again—worked with a lot of faculty who had a lot of concerns at the time about the behavior around the Greek organizations. I would say the other thing that, as I recollect on my time at Rollins, the faculty didn't really understand what a director of housing did. I think they just thought a director of housing handed out keys to the rooms, and they didn't understand all the counseling, the discipline, and what goes on in residence hall life. They just wanted the dorms to become more academic, behavior to become better, and they felt my only job was to hand out the keys. And so, probably one of the disappointments when I was there—which is one of the reasons it took them so long to fill the housing position—Rollins didn't understand all that goes on in the residence halls and the importance of a good director (audio cuts out).

WZ: Okay, I understand that you joined the alumni board in 1976. Could you tell us about that experience?

DL: Yes, that happened right after I graduated—of course was relatively young—was quite honored to become an alumni trustee in the seventies, and of course at the time I was in my twenties. I think I may have been at the time and still may be one of the youngest alumni trustees that ever came on the board. And for me that was just a real honor to get involved with the board in that period. Bring my great (interference) love to it. In many cases, because it was so long ago, I don't remember that much about the specifics.

WZ: Okay, but in 1993 that you joined the Board of Trustees.

DL: Yes, I became a full-time trustee and have done that, since that time and I very much have enjoyed being on the Board of Trustees and having had the privilege to work under both Rita and Lewis. It's been a great honor and have been very—I guess I could say—a pretty active trustee.

WZ: So, what are some of the projects you get a chance to get involved?

DL: Well, the first thing probably in the nineties (interference) when Rita was there, we were in a capital campaign so we were trying to raise money for the Cornell Center, for

the Alford Field House, for redoing the baseball stadium. Rita was very gifted of telling the Rollins' story, we were very fortunate the George Cornell was on the board and always stepped up and became a leader. The Alford family was very much involved. We also—in that period—were doing a lot of sort of strategic planning, you know, it was like every president comes on, tries to put together a strategic plan, and Rita was doing a lot of visioning of where was Rollins going to go. I remember Charlie Edmondson, who was at the time was the academic dean, he was doing a lot—which I give him a lot of credit—of very thoughtfully looking at enrollments and courses to find out. You know, did we have teachers that we teaching courses that maybe times had gone by and passed them by and where were the enrollments going and beginning to look at how did we move our curriculum to make it current for the new century that we were going into. So those were some of the things with Dr. Bornstein, and the initial was doing the planning. Of course, the wonderful thing in those latter years was seeing a lot of those things becoming realities.

WZ: Could you tell us about the David Lord Purchase Award? We have quite a few art pieces hanging here in the Olin library, very impressive.

DL: You know, one of the things that I had the privilege of doing when I worked at Rollins in the eighties—you know—I had the privilege of working with (interference) Polly Seymour on what was then called the Winter Park Autumn Art Festival, which used to be held on the Rollins campus in the fall; and one of the things I got involved with there was obviously planning it and doing all the coordination, but there was a time where obviously, initially there I worked with, because Polly always felt as we did buildings that we needed artwork in them to make them attractive. She really gave me the appreciation that artwork just adds so much to the interior of buildings. So, my initial thing was to get involved with her each year buying some pieces, which I would donate the money to from the Winter Park Art Festival to do it. Then we had a period where we went and saw the student art work—you know—that would be put on, we used to have trustee meetings in the Cornell Museum in the spring. So there was also a period of time where I would support a purchase prize of buying student art work that could be put up. So really what I got the appreciation of from Polly was, we needed to put art work up in buildings. And of course Olin library was one of the ones we did. You would get a kick out of, because I think one of the things she did such a—Rollins had an archive of art work, but we in many cases didn't know what it was. It was sort of kept in closets. And again, Polly—I think—did a great job of working with that and the Cornell Museum, of taking art work that Rollins owned and appropriately putting it around campus so we could all enjoy it. So I'm very proud of that, and again that is something that Polly has given me that I have carried on an appreciation for art work, and now actually in my latter career would try to budget a percent of the furniture budget for (audio cuts out) I did for art work.

WZ: Okay, I understand that you also are now very actively involved in this coordinating of a community service initiative here at Rollins. Could you tell us about that?

DL: Yes, first I'll tell you where it all came from. It was interesting. When I was on the development committee—this was under Dr. Bornstein—we were having a development committee meeting at one point and Annie Kerr was the vice president of development. And we were sort of going on of, how do you get the younger generation involved with giving to their college and becoming philanthropists. I then asked the question—I think of Dr. Bornstein—I said, “Dr. Bornstein, is there any correlation between community service and giving to Rollins?” And she said, “Well you know, we don't really have much of a community service program.” At the time, it's run by the chaplain's office and was not very much of a priority.

I had gotten while I worked at Colorado College, Colorado College had a very strong community service program and it always had made a strong impression, because I'd had, as Colorado College's business manager, got a chance to work with a lot of students on issues that around community service and helping them and then we'd go to their awards thing, and was just very impressed with what community service did. So as we got going more and more, the other part that got involved, Rollins at the time under Steve Neilson was beginning to try to develop leadership skills. Because, especially in male students, they were concerned that students weren't getting involved in activities. So then I sort of asked the question twofold, I asked, “Is there any” —from my experience at Rollins the best skills that I got was from getting involved in activities, that's where I developed my leadership and management skills, and I had asked— “if there was any idea of taking the leadership program and getting people involved in community service, which would give them the real world ideas?” Again, Rollins at the time said: well, we really don't have—we could use somebody to run community service. We don't have any staffing. So at that point I went to our family (audio skips) foundation and my foundation (audio cuts out) and we originally supported Rollins getting a full-time person to run the community service program. And of course when they began to take the leadership and the community service and they began putting—Rollins students got extremely excited over it. It was terrific to see what people at Rollins, and what the students, and what the staff did to grow the program. And it was really interesting, I think it was—again, when Rollins was working on strategic planning—that the faculty were talking about their mission statement and community service was not even a part of it, and the students insisted that it become part of the mission statement of the College, and part of its goals; and, Roger Casey came on board who had a great understanding for tying community service into the academics and began to bring that and the faculty got involved.

So for me, I got to tell you I am so gratified by what Rollins has done in community service. I am happy that our family was able to give a little bit of the incentive and continue to do it, but it's really the students, the faculty, and the staff. And I now come back, there were faculty when I worked there in the eighties who I would have never imagined in a million years getting involved with community service, and now to see they make it such a part of their teaching and they're just so excited about it. And it has become certainly one of Rollins' strengths along with international. So I'm very gratified that I was able to help put an idea in place, but ideas take good people that make it happen and one of the greats about Rollins is it sometimes can take good ideas—that maybe a donor has—and they do an awful good job of making it happen and making it a reality.

WZ: You mentioned earlier about dedication of the Olin library. Any other stories or significant moment you'd like to share with us?

DL: You know, another one that's interesting is the baseball stadium. You know, again we renovated it in the eighties when we were there and made it a nice facility, and Dr. Critchfield, who had been a president prior to Thad Seymour, had at one point been involved with the Pittsburgh Pirates. So, one of the things that I remember when we dedicated the Alfond baseball stadium from its renovation was playing the Pittsburgh Pirates right there at the baseball stadium, the Rollins baseball stadium. And it was a very festive, wonderful spring day. I can't remember who won but it was another wonderful occasion.

AA: Now what about the 2006 convocation that you attended? How was it coming back to campus?

DL: I was very--again--I was surprised and honored. You know, Rollins at the time was trying to do some things to--at convocation to role model to students. And for me it came at a point, it was sort of an interesting point in life. It caused me to really go back and recollect from when I had been a freshman at Rollins, what the school had meant. So I really appreciated the opportunity to come and share as an alum Rollins had meant to me, how it affected my life, and in some way maybe be an inspiration to first year students as they think about their college career, because you know, it's interesting, you first show up at a college, you know, I think you're often trying to figure it out and you can really get some inspirations from people that can motivate you and encourage you to take full advantage of your four years there. So I really enjoyed that opportunity (interference), was very, very honored to do it.

JR: How had the college changed between then and the last time you had come to visit?

DL: Between convocation and the last time?

JR: Yes.

DL: Probably the easier would be for me--because I've been there pretty regularly as a trustee--probably if you asked me, probably the easier would be: how has the College changed from when I was a student to today? And very strongly it has changed significantly academically. Especially in my early years, Rollins was seen as a party school in the sunshine and the academics weren't very serious, and I would have to say that was very, very true. And then my last couple of years they began to really try to ratchet up the academic standards and make it a serious institution academically. But just every piece that's happened along the way, Rollins now is a good academic, small college with good curriculum, good teachers and it has a whole different expectation of behavior. And then, I think one of the things that's added to it even most recently has been the Cornell Scholars that have been brought in. I've heard many people say that's made the most significant change to the institution academically, in that you bring some very good academic role model students in, and it just begins to set sights higher in

classroom discussions and everything. So I think Rollins academically has done a lot. I think another that is a huge change for Rollins that was not important, has been what I call the international programs; and again, I credit Dr. Duncan, and Cornell money that Dr. Duncan was able to take the Cornell money and provide opportunities for faculty and staff to go off on the different international programs. And along with community service to see faculty become very much building international opportunities into their curriculum and their trips and to see what a difference that's made. So I think Rollins does a very good job of giving students besides what you get in the classroom from textbooks, the chance to experience their academic first hand, whether it's community service, whether it's international and certainly in the sciences, there's some great chance for one-on-one research with faculty, and he is turning out some very, very bright and gifted students.

WZ: While you were a student you received Sullivan Medallion and then later—

DL: (at the same time) Mm.

WZ: —on you receive the Alumni Service Award. So how do you view your years at Rollins, as a student, as Rollins' business manager, and then Board of Trustee member?

DL: I guess I continue to be honored that people have wanted to recognize me over the years for my leadership, whether it was an undergraduate, or leadership as an employee, or leadership as an alum, and now leadership as a Board of Trustee. I passionately love Rollins. Rollins has meant enormous things to me. It's very gratifying and I continue to be very, very dedicated to do what I can do to try to really, really make a difference; and again, I appreciate that people recognize me for the leadership—and even currently on the board it's interesting. I chair the committee on trustees, which is the committee that basically finds trustees for the College, also helps find the chairman of the Board of Trustees and really looks at the governance issues. I never realized that when I took that position—in a way—how much you can affect the college, because if you're really helping find new trustees, finding the board chair, next to the president that partnership between a Board of Trustees and a board chair it means enormous things to a college. So I am happy in my sort of quiet way can continue to play an important role in affecting change and helping Rollins face up to its future issues.

WZ: Great. Anything else you would like to share with us before we close?

DL: No, I just think we're at a very, very important—if I take today and I begin to put my hat on where we're going: the first thing is Rollins is doing well; but we continue to have our challenges, small colleges in today's environment are really going to have to be looking at finances. I think we need to continue to find ways to make the curriculum relevant. A couple of the areas that I see that are going to be—I think we're going to have to put an increases emphasis in the career services area and how do we tie that—I'm excited about the strategic plan the alumni association has got to do. We've got to do a better job of partnering with our alumni, keeping alumni engaged in the College. We certainly are going to have to look at continuing significant fundraising efforts. We're a

little bit—right now—being challenged, and I think we need to be thoughtful in the role of faculty and the Board of Trustees and a shared governance system. The faculty have asked to be on the Board of Trustees and that's not normally where faculty go, but I think it's part of having more conversations with the faculty on how do we properly work together and what are our roles and how do we all come up with the best solutions? I wish we had more chances—we get a little bit—to be hearing what the students have to say. And so, as we at the board level look at issues that we're staying focused on what students think are important. So I'm excited about our future. I think we've got a lot of challenges. I'm please that Dr. Duncan has very much engaged the board in defining strategic issues, and I think that's helped to focus him and the board on as we move forward with our different programs.

WZ: Great. Thank you so much, we really enjoyed—

DL: (at the same time) Good.

WZ: —the conversation, and I also want to thank you for all your contributions to Rollins College, and for helping us preserve history of the school. Thank you.

DL: Thank you very much, bye-bye now.

WZ: Bye-bye.