

Art Costantino  
Interviewed by Marla Elliott  
The Evergreen State College oral history project  
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FINAL

**Elliott:** Hi, it's August 14, 2020. I am Marla Beth Elliott. I'm a faculty member at Evergreen. I am interviewing Art Costantino, who is retired after a number of years as an administrator at Evergreen.

Good afternoon, Art. One usually starts these interviews with some personal information, like where and when were you born, and what was your life like growing up.

**Costantino:** Okay. I was born in Albany, New York, in 1947. I spent some early years in Albany, living in a section of town that was predominantly Italian-American, a lot of brownstone neighborhoods. Then my dad started getting promoted in his work and we wound up moving and living in a number of places—Toledo, Ohio; Buffalo, New York; back to Albany.

I spent my high school years on Long Island in Manhasset on the north shore of Long Island, a great place to grow up because you have access to the city and also we had access to these great beaches out at the end of Long Island. I don't think people in the Northwest really know how great the beaches are at the end of Long Island, but they really are super. That was really attractive to me and I spent a lot of time on those beaches.

I went to college at Michigan State University. There's kind of a funny story about that. I was running track in high school and the track coach from Michigan State called me and he started saying, "MSU this, MSU that. Big Ten champs." All of these things should have been a clue to me about what he was talking about—being a first-generation student, living on the East Coast. Anyway, it wasn't on my radar screen.

At some point, he said, "What do you think? Do you want to come out and visit?" I said, "Sure, Coach, I've always wanted to see Texas." I must have had MSU and SMU confused. Anyway, I was embarrassed. I went out to look at the place, partly because I was embarrassed. I felt I owed him something. But I liked it, and that's where I went to school.

It speaks, in part, to the fact that I was a first-generation college student, that sense of what it's like to be first generation when you don't have family members who have been in college. In fact, you've had very bright family members like my aunt, who I love dearly, stymied in her aspirations because there wasn't money and the time wasn't right for her.

That feeling of valuing access and what an education can do is very much a part of who I am, and what I thought was important to keep in mind in working in college. Part of what made Evergreen attractive to me because, you know, Evergreen really is an institution where folks can come and succeed and find their voices who might not have otherwise found a good fit elsewhere.

I spent four years as an undergraduate at Michigan State studying anthropology and social sciences. I then entered a master's program there in cross-cultural sociology. I left there with a master's degree in 1971. I then went to Penn State in 1971. A year or so after arriving, I began my PhD program. I completed a PhD in environmental sociology and the sociology of religion. That's my educational experience.

**Elliott:** Penn State is where you met Magda, isn't it?

**Costantino:** That's correct. She likes to say we met in the rare-books room of the library, but actually we met at a discotheque in town. There's a story with that, but anyway, that's where we met. We have two children who each have two kids. We have four grandchildren. We consider ourselves really blessed to have two children who moved to Olympia. One is a local physician—a dermatologist—and the other is an attorney in town.

They know if they're going to score points with their mom and dad they have to be involved in the community and do things for folks, and they both have. Lauren had been on the board of the Children's Museum and has done other things in the community. Sasha has been involved in providing educational opportunities and medical services to kids in Peru. She's worked in her professional practice with folks who are trying to make transitions in their lives and need to have gang insignia removed from their faces, things like that. So, I think they're both imbued with some sense of duty that comes from who they are, and I'd like to believe also from Magda's influence and maybe from mine, too.

**Elliott:** I think you get to take credit for that.

**Costantino:** That's a little bit of family stuff. I have wide-ranging interests. I have so many hobbies it would take a good portion of time to list them, but among them are scuba diving and running and fly-fishing and saltwater aquariums and some other things.

**Elliott:** Cool. How did you get from Penn State to Evergreen? Is that the next part of the story?

**Costantino:** A couple things that might have been influences there. I spent a year in the Penn State system—Penn State has 21 campuses—as Dean of Students at Penn State Behrend College in Erie. The Behrend College is a four-year public liberal arts college in the Penn State system. At the time, it had about 4,000 students.

**Elliott:** So, you got hired by Penn State as an administrator when you finished your PhD?

**Costantino:** Yeah, I did. Actually, I was working on my PhD and doing administrative work almost from the start at Penn State, and teaching, initially, in the Department of Sociology as an instructor. I then taught a number of higher-education administrative courses. But my major work was administrative and trying to keep that going, and teaching. It was kind of a busy time professionally.

I started off working in a residence hall. I then went over to the Student Activities Office. At some point, a great job was created for me. It was a new position. I served as Director of Student Involvement and Leadership. We taught leadership to students, but we also branched out and were doing consulting work. We tried to apply some of the best theories in leadership education and make it available to others in the way of workshops and consultations, primarily for students, but not always.

I also formed with others a consulting group that did diversity training. We got to a point where the Human Rights Commission in Pennsylvania would call upon us to be the punishment for organizations that had screwed up in the areas of inclusion and hostile environments and so on. That kept us pretty busy as well because there were a lot of screw-ups in that area. Some of those relationships and some of the friendships and some of the people with whom I did that have been and remain some of my closest friends.

At one point, that combination of the work I was doing at the college, which included lots of diversity training, at some point, one of the members of that consulting group and I, both of whom were working at Penn State, were asked by the Human Resources Department to do diversity training at the college as part of HR's offerings.

That was a pretty interesting trip, because here we are, folks in our twenties teaching and providing this training to, in some cases, senior staff—crusty deans. Who are these young whipper-snappers telling me how I should think about my work? There was a lot of learning associated with that.

Toward the latter time I spent at Penn State, I was also asked by one of the professional associations to visit campuses to develop a model for promoting inclusion and appreciation for diversity on college campuses. By the time we were done with that, we had either directly visited the campus or had gone on to regional gatherings of over 200 campuses.

By the time I came to Evergreen, I had a pretty clear set of ideas about what it should look like when a campus is committed to inclusion and diversity. How do you assess that? How do you move that forward? Because that had been a really big part of my work for all of those years.

**Elliott:** Approximately when was this that you were doing this work?

**Costantino:** I was doing that work at Penn State through the time I left there. From about 1971 to 1991, I worked at Penn State in a variety of jobs. I left there in 1991. I continued doing the consulting work.

My next stop was at the University of Toledo for a couple years. While at the University of Toledo, I served as an Associate Vice President and then as Interim Vice President. It's a school of about 25,000. I was interested in a little bit different experience from Penn State. Because I came both from having studied and worked a little bit at Michigan State and Penn State, I came to feel that, okay, I understand what these large, land-grant colleges are like, these 50,000-60,000-student institutions, and the University of Toledo was an urban university.

It prided itself on its relationship with the town of Toledo. It believed that it could change the quality of life in Toledo. It provided free admission to any student who graduated from a high school in Toledo. It had this partnership with the town. If Boston University decides it's going to change the quality of life in Boston, well, that's possible, but the scale of things is such that that would be challenging, not so much when you're a school of 25,000 in a city the size of Toledo with that particular open-admission, service-to-the-community mindset. When they hired faculty, they were interested in trying to hire faculty who could address regional problems or issues. It's kind of a neat mission.

Unfortunately, shortly after I got there, the President of the school decided he wanted the university to go in a different direction. He wanted it to be in the city, but not of the city. That was less attractive to me, plus I really didn't like living in Ohio and I started to look around.

**Elliott:** By that time, you are definitely a career administrator.

**Costantino:** Oh, absolutely. I was still teaching there, in the higher-education department, maybe a course every quarter, but I had clearly chosen that as my primary career track. That was kind of set in place during my last years at Penn State, where I decided, do I really want to go the route of this tenure-track business—which was the model I understood from Penn State—go down that route, or do I want to continue with my administrative work? I chose the latter.

At the University of Toledo, I continued to do a lot of diversity training and work. I chaired the Hispanic Advisory Committee, Town and Gown Diversity Committee. I worked at length with one of the deans of the largest colleges at the university to try to create a more supportive environment for women in his college, which had about 6,000 students in it. I just continued that work. I consulted for a local high school that was experiencing racial conflicts.

Then I started to look around. I didn't so much like living in northwest Ohio. Also, I was disappointed by the change in direction that the college was undertaking. There was a lot of tension

between the community of Toledo and the President because of what they viewed as his abandonment of this partnership. [laughing] He was a funny guy. You know, when you're a Vice President, a big part of your life is who the President is.

I can remember one time he called me into his office and said, "Hey, we've got to change that mascot. It just doesn't look like the kind of mascot we ought to have." If you know anything about those kinds of things, you never mess with the mascot of an institution. After all the other things he had done to alienate the town, I said, "Oh please. Please don't ask me to do that." Anyway, he was just kind of out of touch.

I had had that experience at the Behrend College. I liked the size, I liked the public liberal arts college mission. My PhD work was kind of interdisciplinary, even though the home department was Sociology. I had visited the Pacific Northwest. All of those things were on my mind when the position opened up at Evergreen. At that time, I was also a finalist at Washington State University, their VP job. I decided on Evergreen.

Part of it for me, it was the part of the country I wanted to live in; I liked the mission of the public liberal arts college; the size of the institution; the focus on undergraduate education. But also, I had a pretty strong idea about what a school should look like if it were committed to diversity, and I was impressed with Evergreen, in particular, the inclusive curriculum. Often, in my previous work, the curriculum was one of the hardest nuts to crack in terms of getting colleges and universities to really embrace diversity and inclusion. As you know, Evergreen for a long time has tried to incorporate different voices into the curriculum, into what's offered to the students. I was impressed by that. That was an attraction as well.

**Elliott:** What was your first job at Evergreen and when did you start it?

**Costantino:** I essentially held primarily the same job at Evergreen, starting in 1992, Vice President of Student Affairs. I came straight into the Vice President's job and left as Vice President of Student Affairs. I think I've mentioned to you in the past, during that 20-year period, I also served as Vice President for College Advancement while serving as Vice President of Student Affairs. I also served a stint for a year as Vice President of Finance and Administration.

In some ways, I served as a bit of utility infielder. If there were some challenges or some transition playing out in those other divisions, Jane Jervis and subsequently Les Purce would ask me to come over from Student Affairs and try to stabilize or set those divisions up for a change of leadership and success.

That experience gave me a pretty good set of relationships from which to operate. I've worked

with three of the four divisions of the college. If you include a little bit of teaching that I did—as you know, I taught with you and Helena Meyer-Knapp—I’d had some experiences with every division. I felt like I had relationships built almost everywhere, and I think that was helpful to both my perspective of the college and also just relationships. You kind of know who you can call upon, and who can be counted on for certain things, and where points of resistance might be. I felt like those were good experiences.

One of the things that was really great about the Student Affairs’ vice presidency was its breadth. I really don’t know of a vice president’s job in student affairs that had all that existed in the Student Affairs Division at Evergreen. We had many of the traditional student affairs areas, like residence halls and student activities. But the position also included athletics, which is not always the case in many administrative structures; enrollment services including admissions, which does not always exist in many administrative structures; police services, which does not always exist in many administrative units. It was a treat. It was absolutely wonderful.

For me, when you’re thinking about out-of-classroom lives of students, you have to have, sitting around the table, the people whose work affects students in an interactive, connected way. When students are having problems with the police and they’re in the residence halls, you might need a close partnership between Police Services and the residence halls, and maybe the folks at Academic Advising or the Counseling Center. To have all those people coming together, being able to look together at what an individual student might need, is a powerful model, unfortunately, one that has since been changed dramatically, and now many of those functions rest in other areas of Evergreen. There may be some advantage to that. I wasn’t around when that decision was made, but I believe that something would probably have been lost.

That was one of the things that I appreciated. When I first came to Evergreen, Police Services did not report to Student Affairs. There were some conflicts between Police Services and the Vice President to whom they reported at the time. There was an attempt to fire one of the police officers. It was not a successful attempt. It created lots of bad feelings.

On top of that, I had done a lot of diversity training with police. It was a big part of my previous experience. So, it was seen as a valuable notion to bring Police Services into Student Affairs. I think that’s a good place for it because I think police should view their work as a service largely, and to have it be in that kind of context of other units in Student Affairs, who were thinking of supporting students, I think it was a helpful thing. Police Services reported to me until I left.

**Elliott:** How did that decision get made to move Police Services into Student Affairs?

**Costantino:** If I recall it correctly, the Senior Vice President for Administration at the time was Les Purce. There was a tension between Les and the Police Department as a result of some disciplinary actions that he felt needed to be undertaken—and probably did need to be undertaken—but which were not successful in terms of that they were successfully appealed outside of the institution. I talked to him almost from day one when I came to the college. I came to the college when Les was finishing his tenure as interim President. Jane Jervis had just been hired.

**Elliott:** Was that after Joe Olander left?

**Costantino:** It was a year or so after the Joe Olander time. In fact, Les interviewed me, but I met separately with Jane so that she could see who this person was that Les was recommending might be Vice President. It turned out Jane and I had a mutual friend who she knew who said good things about his working relationship with me.

In direct answer to your question, Les thought a change needed to be made there, and he was wise enough to think this might not work out having them continue to report in Finance and Administration. He knew of my past work—he may have asked me to do a project when I first got there having to do with Police Services—and said, “I think that’s where the unit ought to go.”

He was moving toward having a commissioned police force. As I said to him, “Les, that’s fine. I get it. I get that you want a fully trained police force, but that will raise a question about the police being armed. You go to police academies, you embed our officers in that culture and in that environment, and you will hear pretty quickly, ‘We need to be armed. We need all the tools to do the job.’” That proved to be the case as you know over the years, how the police ought to be armed and so forth.

**Elliott:** Evergreen Police prior to that did not go the Police Academy and were not armed?

**Costantino:** They were not armed, and they were not commissioned by the State Police Department. They were more like a security department, but they were not fully commissioned officers.

**Elliott:** Do you want to say some more about that transition? That sounds like an interesting transition, and what was your role in that?

**Costantino:** I was the Vice President at this point to whom Police Services reported. They were raising questions about being armed and having all of the tools. I thought it was a legitimate issue to raise because Thurston County was not able to get to the campus in certain situations quickly, and Evergreen does not train Thurston County Police Department. I felt like there was some merit in thinking about the pros and cons of taking on that fuller role of our own policing, and providing them with firearms so that they can deal, should it be necessary, with more violent situations and interactions.

As you know, this was a controversial question to even raise. We did a lot of surveying, did a lot of checking out other institutions. I spent a lot of time talking to local police departments. We went through a lot of discussions, forums. I believe we put together a task force to look at that issue. I ultimately concluded, yeah, they ought to have pistols. Part of my feeling is, if you're going to have police coming to the campus—which we were—when our police needed help because they didn't have firearms or they didn't want to enter into a situation that they felt was unsafe, they were calling on Thurston County. I believed then and still believe if there are going to be police with firearms on our campus, I'd rather have them be people we hire, train, and ultimately can dismiss if necessary.

I supported that. I took it to the Board of Trustees. The President at the time, Jane Jervis, supported that decision, but I think it was a difficult decision for the Board. I think people on campus raised good concerns about what it means to have an armed police force, and is it necessary?

Years later, that situation repeated itself because the police started to press not only for handguns, but for long rifles. Again, another round of deliberations.

**Elliott:** When was this?

**Costantino:** I may not be able to remember exactly. Don't hold me to this, but 2004-2005, sometime in that period of time. Somewhere between 2002 and 2008. I ultimately decided no, I didn't think that was necessary. Again, not a popular decision with the police. As you know, after I left, within a year or two, the police were afforded access to long rifles.

I could say a lot about the pros and cons of those decisions. I think there was at the time a sense that police on a number of campuses were responding to active shooter scenarios, and can they respond quickly enough to active shooters if our officers don't have rifles? It's a legitimate question to raise because if you have an active shooter who has a rifle or shotgun or something and you have a handgun, that's a mismatch. But there were other considerations, and from my perspective, we could still count on Thurston County and other departments if we needed an active-shooter response. To me, it was a little different scenario than the handgun situation. I think on a regular basis, police might be confronting someone who is violent, might have a knife or something like that and to not provide them with a handgun—if nothing else, to protect themselves—it felt like a different decision than taking out an active shooter.

That's what I decided. I had no doubt that that decision would be revisited for a lot of reasons—a continuing existence of active-shooter situations in society—so now, police at Evergreen have long rifles.

**Elliott:** We're back with Art Costantino. What did you want to talk about next, Art?



**Costantino:** There are a number of things we could talk about. It might be valuable to talk about sports a bit. When I came to Evergreen, I believe that Evergreen had a soccer team and a swim team, men's and women's in both those sports. There may have been another sport.

The Director of Athletics at that time wanted us to consider the addition of other sports, in particular, basketball, so he put together a DTF (Disappearing Task Force) to consider where we were with intercollegiate athletics and where we might want to be. We did wind up adding men's and women's basketball. I think we added track and field on a very limited basis, and maybe tennis. Since that time, the college stopped being involved in tennis.

I thought basketball was a valuable addition because it's a spectator sport. It's attractive to a wide range of people, but it has a pretty strong tradition among Native Americans. In fact, right now the basketball team has a number of Native American women on the women's team.

It was interesting to me that when we did a survey of the campus, there were more students who were supportive of adding sports than were opposed. Curiously, there's a gentleman in Admissions who has done a calculation, and he recently told me that, based on his calculations, we have a higher percentage of students involved in intercollegiate sports at Evergreen than are involved in intercollegiate sports at the University of Washington. We don't think about things in those terms, it speaks to the specialization of sports at big schools.

Of course, there are always concerns about the abuses that exist in intercollegiate sports, and believe me—having gone to Michigan State and Penn State, and I've been there when Joe Paterno was the coach for a number of years, knowing frontstage and backstage what that was like—I understand the concerns. Yet, I also saw possibilities, especially when I looked at Division III liberal arts colleges across the country and how they approached intercollegiate sports and their values around it. I think it's proven to be a good addition.

Unfortunately, we haven't had a winning tradition in men's and women's basketball. Initially we did and we had crowds. We had a few hundred people at a basketball game. I think we may have that again in the near future, particularly in women's basketball. A close friend of ours—almost a family member, Jackie Robinson—is now coaching that team. I am absolutely convinced that, within a year, that program will be successful. Really, people are interested in teams often when they are successful. That's when you start getting the crowds coming in.

Anyway, the program has gone through some iterations. When I got there, it offered tuition waivers, our version of scholarships. I thought I really wanted us to be affiliated with Division III schools. Those are the liberal arts colleges. At the surface, they don't give scholarships, and maybe that's how

we ought to think about moving forward. We did that and then we moved back to offering waivers again. That's a long story, which I can fill you in on if you're interested.

The point is there have been some changes, and I personally have been disappointed in that, especially in men's and women's basketball, we haven't been more competitive. I think I know why, but I think we certainly will be again with women's basketball, and I think that's a good thing.

Especially now, with some of the enrollment challenges, I think it would be a mistake to drop sports, especially men's and women's basketball. There are some people who will come to a school because of their interest in both the school and in playing sports that might not otherwise consider the school. Our programs don't cost very much. We have part-time coaches, so, from a cost-benefit point of view it makes sense to have sports. It helps with recruiting some people who might not be as interested in the institution. So, that's a little bit on sports.

**Elliott:** Sports is such an important focus of campus life at so many colleges. Do you think it should be more important at Evergreen, or do you think we've managed to put it in the right place in terms of how the college works and presents itself?

**Costantino:** I think it is largely in the right place. I would not be opposed to even more resources going into sports. I think there are values to being a member of a team and the cooperative efforts that play out when you're on a team. I have felt for a long time that Evergreen benefits from having more things that students can do on a weeknight or a weekend—so, to go to a basketball game and cheer on a team, have a lighthearted mascot like the geoduck prancing around, I think it's fun.

I think it's good for the campus and I wouldn't be opposed to the addition of other sports if they're a good fit for Evergreen. One of the issues always for me, when I was thinking about the addition of sports, how much time will the athletes in this sport have to spend away from the campus? How does that impact with academic programs that require people to be there and present physically? That's a consideration.

I think it takes vigilance on the part of the Vice President. There are values in intercollegiate sports that have to be monitored. I have been concerned a couple times over the years that athletes were looking for academic programs based on not having to be physically present in the program. I saw certain patterns of which programs students were enrolling in that I didn't necessarily think were good signs. I challenged the athletic directors and had some falling out. Not every athletic director who worked at Evergreen is still working at Evergreen.

I do think it takes vigilance in a number of ways on the part of the people to whom intercollegiate sports are reporting to monitor some of those values, which are really about placing the student first if there is a student-athlete, making sure that the priority is on the student.

**Elliott:** What next?

**Costantino:** I'd like to talk about veterans. I'm not sure who else would talk about that. It's a rather remarkable story in some ways. Sometime in the time period 2004-2005, I noticed, hey, we have veterans at Evergreen, and I wonder what their experience is like?

Paul Gallegos, who was the Affirmative Action Officer, as I am—a special assistant to the President—was doing a fair amount of affirmative-action work. He was also a veteran, and I said, “Hey, Paul, let's send out a survey to the veterans and ask them what their experiences are at Evergreen and what would they like to see.”

I have never been so blown away with the results of asking a question in my life. We got back these powerful, powerful stories from these veterans about what their struggles were, about what they valued about Evergreen, what they wished could be there for them. Some of these stories were heart-wrenching.

**Elliott:** Heart-wrenching in what way?

**Costantino:** The struggles that some of them were having—PTSD, finding their footing back in education. One of the reasons why Evergreen works for veterans—and I think it does—is they're adults. In many cases, they know what they want to learn, and being in a place where the curriculum is more prescriptive and you can't necessarily move more quickly to your interest doesn't work, but Evergreen does. But I do think there are problems. The retention rate of veterans at most institutions is well below the retention rate for students at large. The retention rate at Evergreen for veterans, when I left, was equal to or greater than the retention rate for other students. That's an impressive, often untold story about Evergreen.

In asking the veterans what they wanted, we got a sense of things. I put together a group that had a number of veterans, and a number of recommendations came forward. We really think we ought to recognize Veteran's Day. We weren't at the college. We weren't taking that day off. We ought to have something that welcomes the veterans to the campus. Is it possible we might have something like a Veteran's Center, a place where veterans could go and be with other veterans?

All of these things were absolutely no-brainers to me, and we did all of those things. We put together kind of a challenge coin. There's a military tradition around receiving a challenge coin, so that when veterans came to the campus, there was a special reception for them, and they received a

welcoming challenge coin. We did more training on campus for faculty about there are veterans in your programs. Here are some of the ways maybe they think about their education. We communicated more regularly with them. Then I worked for a number of years to see to it that we actually have a Veterans Center, which there is now a Veterans Center, which I think maybe opened a few months after I left the college. It took a while to get people to realize that that would be an important thing to build one.

At one point, Evergreen was identified by *Military Times*—this is a magazine which serves veterans—as one of the top 10 schools to go to in the country if you’re a veteran. Isn’t that cool? It’s such a myth-breaker about Evergreen. A great place for veterans? Would many members of the community think about that? It is a great place.

**Elliott:** It’s counterintuitive to the ideas about political polarization.

**Costantino:** Absolutely. I think that was important work to be done at the institution. I hope it’s continuing. I hope the retention rate for veterans is still strong and right up there with the retention rate for everybody else. That was a part of my work that I remember with some fondness and maybe a little pride.

Some other things that I might talk about—the CAB renovation.

**Elliott:** Yeah, talk about the CAB (College Activities Building) renovation.

**Costantino:** I really felt from the start, having had a background at schools that had nice student union buildings that became the center of the campus, maybe even the living room of the campus, that work could be done on the CAB to realize that. We posed the question, I think we had a DTF, we looked at some things, and we decided we’d go to the students to see whether they would be willing to be taxed at a pretty high rate—I think it was hundreds of dollars that they would have to pay a year—to fund a major renovation of the CAB.

The issue is that at state institutions, if the students want things like enhanced recreation facilities or a student union building, they have to tax themselves. They’re not academic buildings, strictly speaking, so they have to agree to tax themselves. That was a pretty interesting set of discussions during the year— bringing architects in, showing folks what it might look like, working with student groups to say, “What would you envision in a renovated CAB?”

Two cohorts were very much behind this idea of an expanded CAB. One was the student clubs and organizations and student activities. They were running out of space. They felt squeezed. They saw real benefits in an expanded area for student activities.

Then the students who had always been there—they'd been in housing and elsewhere—wanted to provide a student-operated food service. Those students kind of glommed onto the idea that they might have space, which they were given, which subsequently became The Flaming Eggplant.

But as you probably know, when you're working with students and you're asking them to pay for something, it's always going to be WIIFM, what's in it for me. I think the presence of some student groups who really became attracted to the vision of an expanded CAB really helped articulate that to other students on campus.

Again, it was a controversial decision. Many students didn't feel like it was a good thing. Students perceived that I was an advocate for this, and I had my fair share of criticism, which comes with the territory. Then we had a campus-wide poll. Students ultimately supported taxing themselves and we had the expansion of the CAB.

That's a big deal. A couple years after I left, a similar question was raised to students about expanded facilities in the Recreation Center and they didn't buy it. They voted it down. Again, I think they needed to see what could be added, and how it might speak to their interests or their needs. You can't ask people to tax themselves unless they get excited about what the possibilities might be. I just don't think that was ever done. There were not enough students who came into the mix to say, "Well, if we had an expanded Recreation Center, here's how life might be different for me."

The CAB renovation, it is worth noting, is a really nice facility now. The food service, when I left, I thought was greatly improved. The whole package—The Flaming Eggplant, more room for student activities, more space for programs—

**Elliott:** There's space for the radio station too.

**Costantino:** The radio station moved, all of those things were enhanced. Hopefully, it does feel a little bit like a living room to the campus now than what we had in the past.

I'm looking down the list. I think maybe an interesting thing that people don't know about, even though it wasn't a major focus of the campus, was the renaming of Evergreen's beach. At one point, at maybe 2007-2008, the senior staff was sitting around and we were looking at some maps of the college and noted—these are maps from the U.S. Geological Survey, I think is the group—other maps, state maps and so on—and there on our beach, it was described as Squaw Point. Imagine, Evergreen has a beach and the beach is designated officially as Squaw Point. Hello? Does that make sense?

I said, "Okay guys, I want to take this on. I'll put together a group, we'll look at this, and I assume we're going to want to change this name." So, I got together with some folks in the Longhouse. I put together a group of folks—faculty on campus who were interested in this issue, the issue of Native

people and these kinds of things—and brought into the mix consultation with the Squaxins. We went through this interesting process.

Previously, to change the name of any place on campus—if you want to change a map name anywhere in the state, you had to get support from a State office. I can't remember the name, but it's an office that attends to such matters. They have to work with you to make a recommendation to the U.S. Geological Survey, and then you have to go through a process of community input.

The State office had closed down during some financial hardships, so we had to make direct application to the feds. We were able to put together a no-brainer package with strong community support—we asked people on campus what they thought—and strong support from the Squaxins. The point now is called Bushoowah-ahlee, the name that we got at the recommendation of the Squaxins. I thought that was an interesting change in the landscape of the campus.

**Elliott:** Is there an English translation of that name?

**Costantino:** Actually, there is not. Not all designations have a clear translation. We've been asked that before. I'm not quite sure why the Squaxins recommended that.

**Elliott:** For the transcript, do you want to spell that name?

**Costantino:** I don't know if I could do that. You can look on a map. It's a permanent change now, which is much more appropriate than Squaw Point. It was an education for some people about why were areas designated "Squaw this" and what makes the term "Squaw" offensive, but most people got it. We had really strong support from the community, and a lot of these name changes across the country are sort of like these mascot issues. There is controversy, but it wasn't a controversy for us. It was a thing that just was a no-brainer.

**Elliott:** About how long did this take?

**Costantino:** It took about six months of work to complete the process and get community input. Then, I think partly because the State agency wasn't in place, it almost took a full year before we heard back from the feds and they said, "Yeah, we're doing it. We're changing it on all our maps." So, a year and a half, maybe. We had a nice celebration. The Longhouse had a nice celebration on the beach after that name change.

I want to talk a little bit about the Social Contract. I considered that it was a major part of my work to promote the values in the Social Contract. I would write to all incoming students, talk to them about the Social Contract. I would speak at orientations about the Social Contract. I believe to this day that having something like the Social Contract is important. As you may know, the Social Contract was developed by the founding faculty at Evergreen. They came together at a time of a lot of healthy

conflict on college campuses and they recognized that there are ways that people should probably be relating to each other while some of this conflict was playing out that could be more healthy as opposed to less healthy.

The Social Contract has a strong endorsement of non-discrimination, but it also had this strong commitment to civility. The idea being that you can disagree with people's ideas on a college campus and you can attack ideas, but you should try to avoid attacking people. I actually think that's an important value for college campuses, especially small liberal arts colleges. We were trying to create a kind of community that's unique and special.

I spent many, many years talking about that, articulating those values. For a while, there was no Conduct Code at Evergreen. It was just the Social Contract. Then, of course, being that we were a State institution, some of the values in the Social Contract had to be codified. You have the actual Conduct Code that grew out of that.

**Elliott:** Did that happen during your time at Evergreen?

**Costantino:** No, when I came to Evergreen, we did have a Conduct Code, but that actually underwent revision. One of the things we did while I was there was put together another group. It was outdated. It needed to be strengthened. We made major changes to the Conduct Code as well through another DTF. There was one in place, but after a number of years, it needed to be changed. In particular, we were trying to think through, how does our current code function as we're experiencing increased reporting of sexual assault and so on? Is it really the best tool? Can it be improved?

One of the things that I have to say I'm disappointed in is that the Social Contract has apparently waned in terms of its support and visibility on campus. When I asked some colleagues at Evergreen about that, in terms of that decision, it sounds like the administration got into the notion that students had always articulated to some degree and that the Conduct Code is just a tool to stifle free expression in controversial, and people wanting to challenge the status quo.

I never thought of the Social Contract that way. I never thought of the Social Contract as a call to people to talk to each other, like we all lived in Mister Rogers' Neighborhood or something, but it was about the notion of civility, respect for people as people, even if you're fervently disagreeing with what they're saying. I think that's a mistake. I honestly think that it's part of what has contributed to some of the conflict and developments on campus. If you can't articulate that kind of set of values as embodied in the Social Contract, I think you start to be in trouble. That's been an interesting history in the college.

Many places, for years and years, faculty talked about the Social Contract in their programs. My guess is, it's not being talked about as much, and I think that's unfortunate.

**Elliott:** When we first spoke the other day, one of the first things you said was you wanted to reflect on how students changed, what the difference is between students in the mid-'90s and when you left. When did you retire?

**Costantino:** 2012.

**Elliott:** How did the student body change in that time in your opinion?

**Costantino:** I'm not sure I can put my finger on all of the changes. I've already referred to heightening the visibility of veterans on campus and providing institution-wide recognition that veterans are with us and that they are an important voice. I think one of the other changes was that when we initially were talking a lot about diversity issues, we weren't giving as much attention to gay/Lesbian/bisexual/transgender issues. I think it may not have felt as safe a place for those students to talk about their experiences.

I don't know whether we wound up coming to the scene as a safer place for gay/Lesbian/bisexual/transgender students—maybe we have, but maybe it's just been folks who were there and now felt it was safer to talk about it. But I certainly saw those voices elevated, discussed, and given attention increasingly over the 20 years that I was there, to the point where we could have a group of transgender anarchists on campus, an actual organization of transgender anarchists. That certainly was a change.

Evergreen has become a less selective institution. Evergreen never prided itself on being highly selective. That was never the vision of the institution, but there were times when there was a considerable excess of applications to Evergreen, and to the extent that we wanted to rely on essays and other things—that might speak to FIT—we could, even though I think those essays were often underutilized. They were still there and could be called upon to help make some close decisions in terms of admissions.

Over time that selectivity—as limited as it was—became less of an option for Evergreen because as we had enrollment challenges, we pretty much had to accept everybody who applied. Maybe that's okay, but that has been a change.

I don't know if anybody has done this kind of work recently, but Evergreen had fairly high average SAT scores when compared to other State institutions, more so in the verbal area than in the quantitative skills, but still strong on the quantitative skills, and compared very favorably to the other regional institutions for sure, and even Washington State. I don't know how that has played out. Evergreen, as you know, attracts some really, really, gifted students who could go anywhere to school, and attracts some students who barely meet the State admission criteria for enrollment into college or



university. I think it was important to have both of those populations reflected in the student body at Evergreen. I think it makes for an exciting, dynamic mix. It would be interesting to see how much that's changed.

When I first came to Evergreen, I was disappointed. On one hand, I was excited to be in a community that shared my values around diversity, around social justice, around the value of social change. But I also missed some of the back-and-forth that played out in places like Penn State, between conservative students and progressive students, as an example. I'd sit in and listen to some debates and I thought I don't agree with this or that, but I enjoyed hearing that and I enjoyed having to formulate in my mind responses to that.

When I first came to Evergreen, I started to miss some of that. I thought the student newspaper wasn't really reflecting a continuum of political points of view. Folks whose point of view may have been pretty conservative were often strongly criticized on campus. I just felt that there was something about living in a community where people share a lot of your values. That feels good and safe, but also there can be in that disagreement, that conflict, real learning. When I have to say, okay, I don't agree with that, how am I going to respond to that in a constructive fashion? Honestly, I found some discussions boring.

Maybe faculty were surfacing more of that in their programs. I think there is a difference between what the administration sees as articulated to them around what needs to be done and the environment change and what faculty who are experiencing—not every student is going to come forward and speak up at a forum. I learned that really pretty quickly. If you ask people, say, how they feel about something like sports, if you had an open forum, you'd get one voice. Important, one impression. If you sent out a survey and students felt like they could share the results of that survey anonymously, you'd get a different set of messages, so, it's an interesting question. How do you determine the student voice?

I think that shifted a little bit, specifically with regard to the newspaper. I think they had begun to try to find ways of incorporating other voices, still not like what you would see perhaps at the University of Washington.

I think there were some changes in the student body in terms of their ability to find out-of-classroom needs met in academic programs. When I first came to Evergreen, there were a lot of year-long programs. There was the sense on the part of many faculty that we're going to have potlucks, we're going to create a community here, and students had some of the things that are often thought about as co-curricular needs met through their academic programs, things that have to do with

connection, affinity, community. This is not so much a change in students as a change in the environments that impacted students. I think that that has waned as there are more one-quarter programs, different kinds of investment in what would be traditionally co-curricular needs met in the academic program.

I noticed some of those things. Maybe others will come to me, that's some of the trends I would identify.

**Elliott:** That's pretty good. We are at almost an hour and a half now. We could keep going or we could think about winding up. How do you feel?

**Costantino:** I am mindful of the fact that there are other types of questions, like people with whom you've worked, things about challenges, strengths and weaknesses of Evergreen. Let me just see if there's something else in the history that we might want to talk about.

**Elliott:** We paused and now we're back, so talk.

**Costantino:** I wanted to say a couple more things about making Evergreen as inclusive a place as possible. One of the things that Evergreen can be proud of—I believe it's probably still the case—is our retention rate for first-generation students and students of color. It was equal to or higher than the retention rates for students at large. Very few predominantly white institutions could ever say that. I think it reflects the curriculum, the voices that have been incorporated in the curriculum, strong support services, First People's advising and so on.

That isn't to say Evergreen hasn't had to do some pretty important work here. I have been involved in some of that work. You may remember—I don't know how many—I think there were a couple of diversity DTFs that made recommendations. For about four or five years, I chaired the implementation team that was developed after those recommendations were made to try—okay, how can we make the changes that can move things forward?

I want to provide a little bit of a framework here. I think most institutions, when they approach this kind of work, they take a largely additive approach rather than a transformative approach. What do I mean by that? "We don't have a day where we recognize this. Maybe we should." "We have this academic program. Oh look, we have five or ten authors, but we don't have an African American voice. Let's add one reading." That's additive, right? That's not transformative.

Transformative change requires you to look at every aspect of what you're doing, every aspect of your practices, and consider it in the context of inclusion, and the different students that you have, and how to create a supportive environment for all of them, and how learning can be enhanced for everybody by incorporating all of those rich differences.

The implementation DTF group used research well. We made some changes. We kept bumping into faculty accountability. There are many faculty doing a great job, but we also knew, we were hearing from students who felt like faculty were not as successful as they could have been in dealing with an insensitive remark, an act of intolerance in the program, a confrontation around race, and so on. So, good work, but maybe it could be improved.

One of the notions that we kept hearing from students is, “Are faculty ever really held accountable for their work in this area?” That brought this committee to the whole question of faculty evaluation, and to what extent are faculty called upon to speak in a serious way to their work, to what they have done in these areas, creating a supportive environment for all students. We know it’s a value, but is it really embedded in the evaluation of faculty? I think there were people who concluded, “No, not really.”

When you look at faculty evaluations, it’s really not addressed as deeply as it should be, and people are going by the word of the faculty members themselves. We raised that issue. As you know, faculty, even when I was there, were trying to talk about how to provide for more attention to this in faculty evaluations. I left with it as a rather unresolved issue. I know that part of the controversies that played out after I left had to do with some of those questions of—either directly or indirectly—faculty accountability around that.

The other area that we became much better at was bias incidents. Bias incidents are going to occur on any college campus. Some of them are acts of insensitivity that are not criminal acts, but in other cases they are criminal acts. A criminal act might be an act of vandalism that includes a hate message or something like that. Then you’ve got both the criminal element as well as the element of climate and what you were trying to create by way of climate.

One of the things we found is that when there was an incident—let’s say an act of vandalism where graffiti would be written, and it would include hateful messages—we would respond, but sometimes respond slowly, not systematically. The “who” in responding would become a question. In the division, we developed this bias incident response team made up of faculty, staff and students. I chaired it. We would try to respond within 24 hours to any act of intolerance that played out on campus. We tried to think about, what are the tools? Is this a matter for the conduct system? These are not mutually exclusive categories. Is this something where the committee ought to respond in a campus-wide communication? We were often involved with the line between free expression and free speech, also remembering that we, as a committee, had an opportunity to give expression to our values as well.

**Elliott:** Did you have a model for that or were you making it up?

**Costantino:** We borrowed it from a couple other campuses. We looked at their bias incident response teams, principles that they embedded—quick response, college-wide team, clear affirmation of value, quickly and carefully thinking about involvement of other components of the college, like the Conduct Code, like the police, if there are criminal elements. We borrowed and we refined, and we became a model for many campuses. It was not unusual for me to hear a request from another campus—“Let’s see what your bias incident response team protocols are.” I assume it’s still functioning. I think it’s a good thing to have created, and I was happy to be able to have chaired that.

In retrospect, if I were to be chairing that group together, I might try to think about, how could I be mindful of the fact that we’re not done with these students? This response to these things has to be learning on the part of the perpetrators, and not all learning comes out of a punitive tone. How do you affirm a value without coming across as just being punitive?

I think about the tone of some of those campus communications. They were important principles to affirm, but the older I get, the more I think about, okay, how do students learn? How do we convey values? Is it all about coming down hard? Maybe there’s a component of that, but what else are we saying? Can we appreciate that not everybody has the same background, skill set, and so on in dealing with this?

Sort of related, in my mind, is how the campus responded to sexual-assault allegations. This is a very difficult area for colleges. I’ve gone to national conferences on this topic on numerous occasions, just because I feel like these are challenging sets of situations. I wanted to learn what best practices across the country are.

The challenge for institutions is, one, we know that sexual assaults most often are in the form of acquaintance rapes and are common on college campuses. We have to recognize that reality and try to think about how to create a safe environment for those concerns to come forward. Secondly, many of the situations themselves revolve around consent and what constitutes consent. It’s difficult for anyone—including college folks who are investigating—to get to that issue. Sometimes it’s not, but in other cases it is, especially when you have memories, different senses of what was happening, issues of people’s memories. But also, in many cases you had drugs and alcohol in the mix. All of this stuff is often one person’s word against another. How do you provide fairness, due process, and try to get to the bottom of things? It’s a challenging area.

Colleges have made mistakes, I think, in talking to survivors in conveying that the college is going to address it, without a strong encouragement for the individual to consider criminal prosecution and

charges, because I think many campuses—and I think, in some cases, maybe even it could have been said of Evergreen early on—students might believe that they’re going to get certain things done that a college cannot do. We cannot incarcerate somebody, as an example. The most the college can do is separate somebody from the institution. So, this other option has to be included in many colleges, I think, from the start.

**Elliott:** The criminal-justice option?

**Costantino:** Yeah. They’re not mutually exclusive. Colleges can be dealing with the issue from the perspective of separation of the individual, or what should be done if you find out a person is responsible. What should be done in terms of their relationship with the college? But also, should there be a criminal component to this? Sometimes colleges work in such a way that it wasn’t clear enough to students that they should be considering both options from the start and helping them avail themselves of both options.

I think that’s an area over the years where we’ve had campus controversies where we have tried to strengthen our processes, and where we face the real dilemma which is, we can’t tell people what we’ve done. We can’t always say, “Here’s what we did in this situation,” because this is a protected part of students’ records. When we have taken disciplinary action, we can talk about what we do in situations like this, but we can’t speak as specifically as the college community might want us to.

So, that’s an interesting area. A lot of work had occurred around that. I think there were a lot of difficult conversations there as well. There’s this narrative—a belief—that you always need to believe the alleged victim. I think that makes some sense, but when you’ve been in this work as long as I have—I could give you six examples of shocking things that, on the surface, appeared to have occurred, only to have found out that they were fabrications.

I’ll give you one example, back to my days at Penn State. We had a group of women in a sorority come forward to say that some white males in a van tried to drag them into the van and were saying racist and sexist things. I was shocked. Some of my colleagues were shocked. We swung into action.

We had this kind of “you don’t speak for us” campus-wide rally, which we, as administration, pulled together. We had the football coach come in. We found out a couple months later the story was all a fabrication. These women were late for some sorority function. They needed to make up a story so they weren’t punished by their sorority sisters, and it wasn’t true.

I could give you examples, and I don’t say that with the notion that you don’t believe people, only with the notion that there is no substitute for a good investigation and good fact-finding, and that

takes time, and that there's a press to act in many of these situations. When you have seen as much as I have in college campuses around this stuff, you know that there is no substitution for careful investigative work.

I think I want to get to some of the other questions on your list even I could just touch on them.

**Elliott:** My list is your list, baby.

**Costantino:** I think this is an interesting question for me. I spent 20 years at a very traditional, large institution—Penn State—that does many things well, and then 20 years at Evergreen. What can we say about all of that? There is this question in all of this around, how do you construct a curriculum that works for students and faculty together? How do you create a curriculum that speaks to students' interests, recognizing that their interests may be ill-conceived, "I want to become an electrical engineer because I like fixing the toaster at the house"?

But you have to be mindful of student interests and we know that there are faculty interests in what they want to teach, and we know that when faculty are teaching topics that are of interest to them, they're animated, they bring a lot of excitement to the curriculum. But we also know that students may say, "Well, this isn't what I want to learn." How do you balance these things?

I think this probably winds up being a continuing issue at Evergreen. The need to struggle with that, I think, has been exacerbated by the presence of the University of Washington-Tacoma. I know the people there. They're very fierce about, "We're going to find out what students want to learn. We're going to ask them what they want to learn, and we're going to make sure the curriculum reflects it."

If you look at what most students—for most of the years that I was responsible for Evergreen—wanted to learn, coming out of high school—and that's only half of the population—were things in the health fields, they wanted to learn business or marketing, they wanted to be nurses, they wanted to be teachers, and maybe they wanted to be engineers.

What are we going to with that, Evergreen? We're not going to train engineers. We do a pretty good job in the health-related areas. But maybe by providing more offerings for students who want to learn about teaching at the undergraduate level, hey, guess what, you have to wait and enroll in a master's degree. Business—Evergreen has struggled over the years with how to provide a business curriculum. We at times have been less imaginative than we could have been because we know there are alumni who have had successful careers. My next-door neighbor, Fungi Perfecti, is an example.

We know that people go on, so green business or other ways of addressing that, entrepreneurial things. But I think that continues to be a challenge for Evergreen. How do we speak to the interests of students, what they say they want to learn and so on? If we don't at least do everything that's

reasonable for a liberal arts college to do, or at least appropriate for Evergreen to do in the context of being a liberal arts college, then we're going to continue to struggle with enrollment issues, I believe.

There's this issue around faculty autonomy, tenure, all of these things. When I was at Penn State, I would be shocked by some academic deans who would talk about how great their college was—the College of Business—because only 30 percent of their tenure-track faculty ever received tenure, and they considered that a matter of pride. “We are so rigorous. We are so demanding of our faculty that only 30 percent of them ever receive tenure.”

That's a nasty system. For one reason, it doesn't necessarily support the value of undergraduate teaching. Those tenure systems gave lip service to teaching, but really didn't value that as highly as publications and grants, stuff like that.

We have a different kind of tenure system at Evergreen. I spent a month or so at Harvard. Part of what was covered—theirs is a kind of a summer school for educators and senior staff—there were a couple of days spent talking about tenure. One of the persons there had visited Evergreen, thinking that our approach to “tenure”—

**Elliott:** The functional equivalent of tenure.

**Costantino:** Yeah. He was sort of intrigued by what came out of it, and I think was a little jaded in saying—he didn't use this language—“I don't know if there's enough real accountability in the Evergreen tenure system for me to endorse it.” Because the question—folks around the country were there—“What's the best approach?”

Somewhere between saying, “We're great because nobody gets tenured here,” and saying that if a faculty member doesn't last at Evergreen, it's a failure of the system, as opposed to the individual. I've heard that said pretty explicitly. Somewhere there is a happy medium, and I was never really convinced that Evergreen quite landed there in terms of finding that.

I'm more in line with it's an institution responsibility to help faculty succeed, but given the nature of our evaluation system, maybe there is something to be learned further about the accountability issue in outside evaluations. Something along those lines.

**Elliott:** I was going to ask you if you want to make a more personal statement about your time at Evergreen.

**Costantino:** Yeah, that's great.

**Elliott:** Talk about yourself personally in relation to your work and your life in Olympia.

**Costantino:** Thank you. I have found my 20 years at Evergreen to be wonderfully fulfilling. I really value the interdisciplinary focus. As I mentioned, I've always thought about things from an interdisciplinary

point of view. It never made sense for me to think about some of the questions I was interested in from a purely disciplinary point of view. I just really appreciated that milieu and that environment. Interdisciplinary learning, to me, is the way many things need to be approached—from an interdisciplinary, multifaceted point of view.

I just felt at home with that way of thinking about things. I felt at home with Evergreen's serious commitment to diversity issues. I just felt, okay, we're going to struggle, we're going to have some challenges, we're not all going to be in agreement, we may not be where Art Costantino thinks we ought to be, but people take that seriously. We're giving real attention to them.

I think I made mistakes. We mentioned the students' sit-in in our office. I think the students were misguided, to be honest with you, because we had in place some steps that needed to be taken when planning a program that came out of having made some mistakes in the preparation for a large concert that resulted in an inability to deal with the riot that subsequently—

**Elliott:** Oh, yeah. Do you remember what year that was?

**Costantino:** No. [laughter] It was again in that 2000-2010 stretch there. And I had to recognize that the institution had a role. Again, I've been in enough riots on college campuses for all sorts of reasons to recognize that you can't necessarily prevent them. But I wasn't happy with our staff coverage, police services coverage, and some of the other things that would have made me feel like we did everything at our end to reduce the likelihood of something like that happening.

We put together a set of guidelines. I don't think they were terribly prescriptive or onerous. We had a DTF to do that. Then you have another group that comes along—in this case, SDS—that plans a program. They said, "We're not going to follow this stuff," and ignores it under the guidelines that student groups agree to—when they take money from the college, it was an expectation that they follow such guidelines in the laying out of a process for Student Activities to address cases where they felt that those things weren't followed. Instead, in this case, the students chose to sit in outside of my office. I'm not even sure why my office, other than that I'm the Vice President, because their beef was with Student Activities.

I think in a way, after talking to them for five or six days, really engaging in dialogue—myself, in particular, and others—we probably should have said, "You've got to leave or we're going to arrest you." They were disrupting functions—interestingly, they never had any student support. Really. They went to the student government and asked for support for their sit-in. The student government wouldn't give it to them. The student newspaper wrote an editorial saying, "Come on, you knew what the expectations were." We ended up agreeing to kind of the—the faculty got involved and they



encouraged us in Student Affairs to engage in some give-and-take negotiations with the students. I think ultimately, we should have just recognized that.

On a personal level, I always look back and think about the things I could have done better, that I could have articulated to faculty a little bit more “You know what? You need to stay out of this.”

**Elliott:** How about relationships with particular colleagues or your students?

**Costantino:** I really love my relationships with some individual students. Among the students I came to know Jackie Robinson well. He lived with us for a while, was a member of the men’s basketball team and is now the coach of the women’s team. We remain very close.

I especially loved connecting with students who were really different from me in terms of my values. I had some great relationships with students. The Student Activities office had a buddy program, and I used to say, “Match me up with somebody who’s really different from me.”

I had some really colorful characters that I was matched up with. One in particular I’ll just use as an example. The student, when he first came to my office to meet me, was led in by his girlfriend with a rhinestone collar around his neck on a chain. He sat on the floor, kind of meowing, and she was like leading him on a leash. He wound up being one of my favorite students of all time. He was trying to see what my reaction was going to be. He was trying to make a statement. His worldview was very different from mine. He was fascinating, very skilled in accessing online communities. I learned a lot from that student.

I learned a lot from many staff. Right now, I’m involved in an effort to establish a scholarship for Raquel Salinas. She was magnificent in terms of her openness, her approach to working on social change and diversity issues. She was really a big influence.

Steve Hunter and Wendy Endress were terrific staff members and folks I could count on for advice.

I’ve always valued being a member of a noon-hour running group because they are typically faculty members who are off running together. You develop relationships with the faculty who you’re running with that are sort of out of their normal roles. It gives you insights into their role. There were a number of folks.

**Elliott:** Anybody in particular? Do you want to name names?

**Costantino:** Jim Stroh was a guy who I really liked, and we would run together. He comes to mind immediately. But there were other folks, even if it was only one or two runs a week. Paul Przybylowicz and I have become friend over time. We share a passion for fishing. Over the years I have also become even closer to Russ Lidman.

I really, really liked Jane Jervis. I think she was a magnificent person, a wonderful President. We didn't get a chance to talk about the Mumia thing, but it was a perfect example of who she is and who she was, how she approached things, her principled stand on things, even if they proved controversial. Her ability to articulate and speak. She was a wonderful speaker. I felt really close to Jane. I really loved working for her. If I had to go back and say the favorite person I've ever worked for in my life—and I've worked for a lot of people—she'd be up there in the top two or three. That was an important relationship for me.

It was great to have my wife working at the college. It was kind of fun. A lot of husbands and wives don't share working in the same place, and we could, and we could give each other advice, or just be sounding boards. That was important.

I look back—again, maybe I've just spent more hours in meditation—and I think, yeah, you were harsh in some meetings, were a little less patient than you could have been.

**Elliott:** Who doesn't have regrets?

**Costantino:** Yeah, but it's a way of talking about, who do I want to be now? I don't get too hung up on the past. In fact, I was thinking today—just as I got ready to sit down—that Evergreen has always seemed pretty fascinated with its past. This process is a reflection of that. I don't know if it's fascination, but wanting to preserve, wanting to capture, wanting to hold on.

Did I always feel like Evergreen was sufficiently mindful of its present? Not always. What's facing now? What are actually the things impacting you? Who are our students?

I think there's kind of been this tension between wanting to hold on to something unique while asking the question, does what we're doing work? That's sort of an example of what I mean. Sometimes I grappled with, is this really working? It's unique. The uniqueness of things is important to hold on to, but do things work? I think sometimes I struggled with that a little bit at Evergreen. But a largely good experience, a sense that, this place feels like it's a reflection of my values.

**Elliott:** Is that a good place to end?

**Costantino:** Probably is.

**Elliott:** It's been a rare privilege to get to chat with you and hear all this, and I really want to thank you again for doing this.

**Costantino:** It has been fun. I can't imagine having somebody more fun to talk to than you, since I've both worked with you and like you very much and you made it fun and enjoyable,

**Elliott:** Oh, thank you.