

## CWU LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

**Tony Aronica**

### (Transcription of Tape 1, Side 1)

KB: February 15, 2006. I'm Karen Blair, and I'm about to interview Tony Aronica. He's President of the student body, he's a History major, and he's also a member of Douglas Honors College. About student perspective at Central with special emphasis on club life and social life. Just for starters, about why you came to Central, and when you came.

TA: Absolutely. Um, just to start out – Anthony S. Aronica. I prefer Tony. Second year senior – History – BA in History, BS in Anthropology, endorsement in the Honors College. I started at Central sort of in a precarious situation. I was a sophomore in high school. I'm a native of the Ellensburg valley, so my first year on campus was the 2000-2001 academic year. Uh, I was a sophomore in high school, and I attended Central for three years, garnishing about 100 credits as a Running Start student – high school student. So I have a little bit of a different starting story.

Like I said, I'm a native of Central, my mother was a graduate, my oldest sister is an undergraduate, or was an undergraduate, as well as attempting to obtain a Master's from the Education Department. I chose to come to Central for a few reasons. The key was purely economic. There was a lot of additional expenses involved with college, and the ability to not pay housing at another university was enough to keep me here, pretty much, regardless. However, should that not have been the main factor, the 100 credits already obtained at Central was a large incentive to make me stay, because I wouldn't have to deal with transfer complications. And then the third primary reason is that I love this valley, and I wasn't one of those students who needed to leave for a semester to realize that I really liked home, and where I came from.

So the beautiful campus, the nice atmosphere, small class sizes – these are things that make this institution feel like a private institution at a public price. So that was all part of why I stayed, and am very active on this campus. Central is definitely a milestone in my life, and I bleed crimson and red – black – definitely.

KB: Would you start with Running Start and tell our listeners what that is, and what you took?

TA: Okay, well I had poor counseling in Running Start so I took classes across the board, from Theatre, to Dance, To History and Economics. Uh, like I said, I had a [laughs] collection of about 100 credits from the 100 to 200 level courses. It was a little bit awkward as a Running Start student, because I was 15 when I started, and 18 when I ended, so I was virtually the youngest person in every group that I – I was in, either academically or socially. I often, though, wasn't really spotted – I wasn't identified as a Running Start student. Um – almost all the time professors would not realize that I was distinguished from any other student in the class unless I somehow made that known or indicated that. So, uh – I was treated, most of the time, much like a regular student. In fact, the only – the only awkward situations occurred at my high school end, as opposed to the Central end. Just transportation, class times don't always line up, so I was late for virtually every class in high school, but –

KB: So you did take classes in high school every day, too?

TA: I did – uh – through the 2001-2002 year, and then the 2002-2003 year my average quarter consisted of 15-18 credits at Central, and 2-4 high school classes. So there was – timing conflicts.

KB: Were there lots of students from Ellensburg High School who came over with Running Start?

TA: Uh, the numbers increasing as – it was a fairly new program, only four or five years old when I started, and at that time about half of the high school senior class was in Running Start, so about ninety students. Um –

KB: So some of them were in your classes here.

TA: Yes, yes. It was almost like an underground union or something – we would recognize each other and make eye contact as we entered the room, and just sit down and act like – like normal – normal college students.

KB: What was the attraction for you? What was different about the college classroom?

TA: Well, again, the economic incentive of getting two free years of education was tremendously attractive. Then, I mean, high school is a – mmmm – juvenile atmosphere? Uh, I'm not going to say that there weren't – there isn't a lot of adolescent behavior at the University, because that's not true, and I mean, even – even some of the stories that would be considered bad press are things that I will look back on and fondly remember. But it – it – there's still a sense of higher achievement at the University, of course, and although clearly I think the – the rampant procrastination is still – still a trademark among students, I'd like to say that I think we're *better* at procrastination now than we were in high school. [Laughs]

So it's – I have loved my college experience ever since I started, and this – this is something that I will reminisce about for the rest of my life, absolutely. Just from – I know amongst the Running Start students the big – the big thing that we were trying to do is set up some sort of book exchange amongst ourselves. Because in high school, spending \$200-400 a quarter on books was a big – that was a big deal for us. Especially since we hadn't seen the tuition bills, and couldn't put it into context. Textbooks were really expensive for us, so that was our – um – I guess it was like a transition from public education, where everything's paid for, to the – absorbing the responsibility of higher ed, and the Running Start students got a sneak peek – sneak preview of that by having to buy their own textbooks.

KB: Were there any other fees?

TA: I don't believe at that time there were other fees, although current Running Start students might begin to have a different story with the Student Union Recreation Center, because I don't think the State would cover that. But uh, I don't think there were any fees. The only thing I remember paying for was textbooks. So – we're not – again, we – we had a lot of fun, and that was sort of our – our cause in Running Start, was getting an inter-Running Start student book exchange going because we – since we were isolated to the 100 and 200 level courses, uh – I mean, virtually everybody at some point passed through 101, 102 – English 101 and 102, 105, History 100 series, um – so those were just trademarks. That's pretty much what you did in Running Start.

KB: So when you graduated from high school you were also a junior at Central.

TA: Yes, that's correct. Um – I also had the – I guess the advantage or the opportunity – my senior year in high school, which would have been the 2002-2003 academic year – um – having over – uh – 45 credits – being a sophomore into junior credit status – I, I had the opportunity to run for a position on the student government. So I was actually a candidate for student government prior to graduating high school – which would have – I lost to an older student, but the experience of running was very informative. Um, I guess the – actually the thing that goaded me into running was that I was told that I couldn't run because I was a high school student, so I sort of had to take up the Running Start cause and show everybody that high school students, while younger and overall more immature, could participate in a University level with dignity and an intellectual capacity.

KB: What was the position, and what did you learn from the experience?

TA: Uh, I ran for Vice President of Clubs and Organizations, which is one of the seven elected members of the board. The – I was – that was really the only one I was available, or I guess qualified to run for. At the time I participated in eleven of thirteen clubs regularly. Some of them – I founded the Chess Club, was involved in the leadership of the Agape Club – it's a Christian fellowship club – we were working on founding a Running Start Club, and then also in the leadership of the Fencing Club, which was sort of small at that time. It's since grown to be quite a bit larger. Also was a participant in – um – the American Indian Science and Engineering Association – ASES – the History Club was still going at that time, the Anthropology Student Association was doing some things – um – and then some of the other clubs that I participated in on more of a minimal basis was the Swing Cats, a social dance club, and the Bowling Club. Anyway, I had a fair amount of club foundation and support so it made some sense that I'd run for that constituency base.

And the things that I learned from the campaign were – nothing specifically, but all general. I mean, when you're running and you're going to these candidate forums, and you're interacting with people that are not just running for your position, but running for all seven positions on the Board of Directors in the Student Government, you begin to learn things about the entire – the entire campus. I mean, at that time the Student Union and Recreation project had not broken ground yet, but it was becoming – it was very close. Most of the work was focusing on Architectural design. And I'm ashamed to say, I'd been on campus as a regular student for nearly two years, and didn't know anything about the building, and then as I'm running, I'm realizing that this building is maybe a big deal to this campus. So it was things like that. I didn't – I didn't have an understanding of the Student and Activities Fee Committee, where students pay \$35 a quarter into this pot that this committee distributes. I didn't have a concept of, really, any of the 32 committees – currently 33 committees that are appointed. I didn't – um – have a concept of really any impact that our student government made. And now, looking back, I realize that I was fairly oblivious as a student [Laughs] and so this election process, if nothing else, on a general basis, just sort of taught me to take interest in my surroundings.

KB: And how is student turnout on those elections?

TA: Uh, Central student turnout is above average in the nation, however poor it may seem. It's actually averaging about 12.5 percent turnout on the daily. The 2000 – the 2003 elections had a particularly high turnout because that season – that quarter swimming and wrestling were cut, and that was a particularly important issue to the students. Our swimming team, our wrestling team were both cut because they were the – the least impact of all the sports, and our Athletic Department had to essentially reorganize to maintain a budget that wasn't running in the red. Um – now the students – the – both members of the swimming and wrestling team promoted a lot of awareness amongst the – uh, amongst the students, and there was a referendum on the ballot for a general student movement to pay more money to support these sports. There was a 13.9% turnout that – uh, that election period, which is a little bit higher than – like I said – the 12.5 average. Um, but for the most part we're right around – we're 12 to 13% range.

KB: And what were the results of that election? Support?

TA: Well, the – there was three options. Like, monetary incremental supports of \$5, \$10, and \$15, and there was various stipulations appointed to each one. The one that I believe passed was not – not \$10 to support Athletics. That failed. But \$15 to support exclusively swimming and wrestling passed by the Student Body. Now this fee was actually rejected by the Board of Trustees because:

A) The poor precedent. It's a bad precedent to start assigning fees to sports. That would be destructive because we have lots of sports, and essentially we could start paying a lot of fees by doing a fee specifically for a sport.

B) The money raised from that fee wouldn't actually support both sports, and

C) We were one of the last schools in the Conference to cut these sports, so it's – it's essentially appropriating money to a cause that – that's not the solution. The problem was, we didn't have people to compete with, and these sports are not popular in inter-collegiate competition, so there was just a – there was a larger trend that students were trying to fight.

So the fees were passed by the students, rejected by the trustees, and now we have two very effective swimming – well, a swimming and a wrestling club that are supported at an intramural level, and are very active and prominent on our campus.

KB: Well, I know – we'll need to talk about Academics, but maybe we should stick with Student Government for now. Would you like to continue?

TA: Certainly. Um, I – I know you're looking – I – I don't know what you're looking for. Do you want me to talk about the operations?

KB: Sure. Teach us about what Student Government does, and you said there are seven elected positions – what are those? Does it hurt that you are not in a dorm, with support for platform when you run?

TA: Oh, absolute – Okay – let me – just for record's sake, I guess I'll give a – my interpretation of the student government in ten minutes. I want to preface this with the fact that I've talked with student government, and representatives of student governments from across the nation, east to west coast, and I think that Central has one – it definitely has a very unique system, but it also has one of the most consolidated and effective student governments I've ever run into. The student government within our University is given far more responsibility and authority than nearly any other student government that I've talked to, and that – that is a result of a mind-set of the Administration, that they're willing to incorporate student input at such – and give student input so much value. Many student governments are very marginalized within their University, and *especially* within their community. If you talked – if – when I talked to student governments, let's say, from the East Coast – student governments in a state like New York – they – there's 100% disconnect between the student government and the community, whereas at Central in Ellensburg there's a lot of discussion that takes place between students and community members, and [inaudible].

So I just want to preface that our student government is very effective because of its structure, because of the mindset of the Administration, and because of those who are in it. I guess because the concept that our student government is so consolidated and effective is a double-edged sword. It has the opportunity to do a lot of good things, and produce a lot of valuable attributes from the Student Association, but if the electorate is less than ethical, um, it has opportunity to be terribly abused. And that's happened a lot. I mean, it's – it's a by-product of our system. It can be either really fantastic, or quite prohibitive to student progress.

KB: I can't wait for the examples.

TA: [Laughs] Um, the structure itself is set up of seven elected officials, starting with the President and the Executive Vice President – and then this is in order of rank, so to speak – your Vice President of Clubs and Organizations, your Vice President of Academic Affairs, your Vice President of Student Life and Facilities, your Vice President of Community and Equity Services, and your Vice President of Political Affairs. Four out of these seven are required to have quorum and conduct any meetings. The – that's how they're listed in rank. Each are appropriated responsibilities of constituencies that would be reflected in the title, and as far as it comes down to, these seven constitute what we call the Board of Directors, and each have one vote on this. Now this Board is the official government of students, and seeing that each member has one vote, even though they're ranked, there really is no separation in, I guess, the authority of any – any member. This body – the student government – on precedent works very hard to maintain autonomy. The creation and the concept is that the President of the Student Association would approach and discuss with

Dr. McIntyre or the President of the University on sort of an even playing field, or equal par. That's kind of the idea behind the student government structure.

Essentially we are held accountable by the student constituency, or by the Board of Trustees. Those are the two entities that can bring real ramifications on us, based on our job performance. We've several times – it comes up nearly every year – rejected opportunities to get credit for some of the work we do, just because that would put us at – that would put student government at a disadvantage, say, if they had to maybe address an issue within a certain college or an academic area that would put them at a point that they were sort of subjugated or held by a grade that they could then be influenced by. So again, the concept is that it's consolidated, and it's effective, which can be very good if people in the offices – if – if the general student populace acts with ration – er – rational decisions, then you'll have ethical leaders, and it's a very effective situation. Um –

KB: If you don't get credits, what *are* the rewards?

TA: There's – the students pay us out of the student – the S&A, the Student Activities fee. We're the – I like to say that the student government at Central is the most underpaid, and most effective student government in the State. We – other student governments – like Washington State, for example, is actually the highest paid student government in the nation at, um, approximately \$25,000 per academic year for the President. It's the tuition of Washington State plus ten percent in salary. Our – our pay scale is designed to roughly cover – uh – tuition expenses. So the Vice President would get about \$6,000 in an academic year, and the President would get approximately \$7200 in an academic year – compensation.

KB: So all seven are paid?

TA: All seven members are paid. That's really the incentive, tangibly. The intangible incentive is that you get a tremendous opportunity to impact your school, and really participate in shaping the University. Um – the role of each one, like I said, is sort of different, but – the President's role is – well, outlined in the Constitution to act as the spokesperson, represent the Student Association, speak on behalf of the Student Association, but also coordinate the efforts of all six Vice Presidents. So you have six offices that are being very effective in being coordinated into one, continuous – one continuous effort to advocate for students. That's really the job of the whole Board, is to advocate for student's interests.

Then each of the Vice Presidents have different roles, including the Executive Vice President, whose primary responsibilities include appointing all 33 committees – there's about 100 student spots to serve on committees – anywhere from a parking fee violation committee to a campus judicial committee that evaluates off-campus conduct of other students, to the S&A fee committee that appropriates the \$3.2 million pot – fees collected from students. So it's students supporting their own events, and being appropriated by other students. So it's a very student-driven system.

Other responsibilities of the Executive Vice President are to – well, he appoints all the committees, and sits – he or she – sits on the S&A committee as an ex officio member, and then, that position's responsible to oversee the budget of the Board of Directors. Currently S&A funds us at approximately \$80,000, so salaries for the whole office, including all supportive staff, utilities, phone, office supplies, any programmatic or developmental needs, and then – that covers most of the budget. So he oversees that – he or she does – the position oversees that.

The next position would be Clubs and Organizations. This position chairs the Club Senate at approximately 130 clubs. This body, the Club Senate, is – has the power of referendum so they can pass – they can pass motions of support, or disapproval for anything on campus, and the Board of Directors is constitutionally required to – um – take business on those motions. It's really – the Club Senate has two purposes. One, it's to be sort of the student pulse that's always feeding – giving feedback to the student government that – this is how the student government maintains its connection with the students. With 130 clubs, each club sends a representative to the Club Senate and those – that body of 130 individuals is

representative of approximately 3500 club participants from the student body. So chairing this organization is of great importance to the Board of Directors. The Club Senate also, within itself, redistributes about \$64,000 – currently \$64,000 – to augment student experiences on campus. So – um – members of the History Club got money to go to Gettysburg one year. Members of the Economics Club got money to go to a professional developmental conference one year. Some religious clubs have gotten support to go do humanitarian efforts, like build houses in Mexico, or clean up state parks in Northern California. This body redistributes within itself, and it's a way of augmenting the student experience on campus.

Then you've got Academic Affairs, which is primarily responsible for relating to – well, primarily the Provost and staying involved in all the academic development, and committees representative – acting as a representative to the Faculty Senate. So some of the things that the current – um – Academic Affairs Vice President would be working on is the development of an American Indian Studies minor, potentially moving to get teacher evaluations, so they're more accessible to other students – so students could choose classes based on teaching styles. That's something that I know the student body is really into that. Who wouldn't like to see – um – things that they've worked on in previous years, or the Z grade, or the academic transition policy for veterans coming back – so that's the Academic Affairs role.

Student Life and Facilities is primarily focused at – on campus student facilities. It's our connection to the Residence Hall Association, which is another way to keep us in tune with the student needs. This position is involved in anything that relates to student life and facilities, so it's very broad. Through the last six years, this position's primary responsibility has been the Student Union building and the Recreation Center – it being the newest building on campus, as well as the student building. It's been the primary concern of this position.

Following that is Equity and Community Services. This person chairs the ES – chairs the Equity Services Council, which consists of eleven groups – primarily minority-based groups like MECHA, the Black Student Union, American Indian Science and Engineering Society, as well as ABLE, SAFE – so there's eleven organizations represented at this.

KB: They are not represented in the Student Club Organization?

TA: No, they're on a different status. It's – it's a similar path, but a little bit different status. Again, this body acts as – um – sort of a referendum body for us to keep in touch with students, as well as it redistributes money within itself to support student activities. And the Vice President for Equity and Community Services chairs that. Um – this body also takes on a lot of educational roles. For example, it's involved in virtually anything from Black Student Union's Night at the Apollo, to all of their activities in Black History Month, to more of a – just a civically-minded event like Warm Up Ellensburg, where students are making blankets to give to people who might need them within the local community.

KB: And what's the relationship with the Diversity Center that the Administration supports?

TA: Very strong. The Administration doesn't actually support the Diversity Center. That's also supported by student monies from the S & A committee. But that relationship is very strong, and the Director of the Diversity Center – currently Leslie Webb – is the advisor to the ESC Council, so there's a direct link there, and the – the programs that come out of the Diversity Center are augmented in attendance by the ESC Council, and the programs that come out of ESC are augmented in programming support from the Diversity Center, so that relationship is absolutely crucial to a successful and productive year.

And then finally, we have our Vice President of Political Affairs. That position is responsible – in the Constitution it's sort of vague. It says, "for promoting political awareness on campus." This year there's a lot of effort to make that happen.

**(Transcription of Tape 1, Side 2)**

TA: Okay, I'll kind of just pick up. At all three levels of government. Usually this position focuses at a State level. That's the primary focus. This position, in correlation with the President's office – the Student Body President's office – hires a lobbyist – a student – to go live in Olympia over winter quarter, during the legislative session, and lobby legislators for student interests. This position is – um – the chair of the Washington Student Lobby, Central Chapter. It's the connection to our statewide student association that continually lobbies for student advocacy at a state legislative level. This position also has the opportunity to communicate with local governments by, say, hosting city council election forums on campus. This position has opportunity to act at a Federal level by interacting with the National Student Association and affecting the congressional representatives, lobbying for interests. Some of the things that this position will do is things like Lobby Day, where it takes students from Central's campus to Olympia to be a presence there and show the legislators that we're concerned about appropriating money to higher education. This position could even go so far as to send representatives to Washington DC to make the congressional representatives know that we're – students want more money appropriated to higher education. Um, and that's something that can be very effective if we work with the Administration on, because oftentimes what the Administration wants is advantageous to the students. So it's – that's a good relationship to build on.

KB: Well that's a neat summary.

TA: I think it lasted more than ten minutes.

KB: Did you work your way up to the Presidency by holding offices prior to this year?

TA: I did. As I said, I ran for the Vice President of Clubs and Organizations in my Senior year of high school, so in the spring of 2003. I lost to my competitor, Mike Julian, and then he became chair of the Club Senate, Vice President for Clubs and Organizations. That office is supported by two student staff. There's a Club Senate Treasurer, and a Club Senate Administrative Assistant, and they're – the three of them form the Executive Board of the Senate. Just so those 130 clubs have sort of support staff for – uh – well, there's a lot of paperwork involved with it. You have to process the recognition forms for all these clubs, all the monetary requests that they put in – like I said, that office controls a budget of about \$64,000. At the time, they were – those two positions were elected from within the Senate body, and the Treasurer that they elected managed to get himself expelled over the summer. So when we came back in September, the Club Senate didn't have a Treasurer, who is constitutionally sort of like the right-hand man to the Vice President, and if the Vice President of Clubs and Organizations should be absent, his position would be assumed by the Senate Treasurer. With that availability I actually ran in the Fall and got the position as Treasurer, so I was working directly under the individual who I ran against the previous year. But it was good, because I had already developed a large base of knowledge about the position by running for it, so I could act effectively. Um – so I served 2003 to 2004 as Treasurer. The 2004 election season I ran again for Clubs and Organizations, this time unopposed, and having served in that office for a year already I was qualified to take it.

KB: It didn't hurt you that you were living off-campus?

TA: No. And actually that's a question you mentioned but – and I didn't address. The – the first year I ran and lost, I was impacted very largely by the fact that I didn't live in the residence halls. Having – on-campus students are more participatory than off-campus students. Uh, the – out of the 22 residence halls, that support approximately 3000, 3200 students – they're sort of captive on campus, so they're more likely to, say, vote. So having residence hall support is something that is important to candidates as they run. Another thing that I learned after the fact of losing that election. But the second year I – I was more active. As opposed to just participating in the 11-13 clubs, I actually served all 130 clubs. So I was – I was a very qualified candidate, and it didn't hurt me not living in the residence halls. So 2004-2005 I served as the Vice President for Clubs and Organizations, and then in the election season of 2005 I ran for President and won, and then currently, 2005-2006 I'm serving as the Student Government President. So I sort of have stair-stepped my way.

KB: And what does a campaign look like? Is there funding available to launch a campaign?

TA: There's a funding cap. Candidates running for any position can only spend \$250. That's personal money. There's no funding available to candidates. Uh, the \$250 is stuff that they would register as expenses on – uh – say, fliers to hang up, any type of advertisement, promotionals, if you bring a band on to – on campus to do a sort of an event for yourself, if you purchase things like candy, or soda, or water, or Top Ramen (which have all been done) to give away to students with little stickers with your name on it, that's something that would be logged in that. Anything that you spend during the election season, which is traditionally the second week in April to the first week in May – anything that you spend on the election during election that directly promotes your campaign should be logged, and that cap has to stay under \$250.

KB: And are there forums in the dorms? How do the students find out what you stand for?

TA: Oh, what you stand – well, it's kind of – it's kind of your job as a candidate to make students aware – make students know what you stand for. There is a series of sort of campaign events that are organized by an election commission. It's a student commission that coordinate, traditionally, a candidate forum at Club Senate, a candidate forum at RH – at the Residence Hall Association, a candidate forum at the Equity Services Council, and then a general candidate forum just in Club Central that's advertised. So there's – there's minimum four candidate forums that are provided for all candidates to come to. Then it's sort of within the candidate's own initiative to, say, approach clubs and ask for support, and tell them about themselves, and to check out a table in the Sub and just stand there and essentially solicit votes. Uh, it's – it's the candidate's own initiative.

One thing that's become incredibly popular recently has been couching. This was sort of started by Lucas Westcote in the '04 election season. He was a Presidential – he was the winning – victorious Presidential candidate, and what he did is he'd bring couches out in the Spring, and just sort of line the pedestrian boulevards with couches, and then have a bunch of his supporters either out there eating lunch, or people could just stop and sit on a couch that he – he brought out. He also was a DJ, so he had a personal system that he brought out and had large speakers. I mean, this is clearly an advantage that only he could – uh – utilize, being – being the fact that he was a – he owned a DJ service. But the music was incredibly loud. You could hear it from the Student Union Building all the way up to Farrell Hall. And since then couching has been an incredibly popular way to sort of solicit votes. Much more than sitting inside the tub – Sub – at a table around the pit and uh – handing out fliers about yourself.

KB: So how did you build your platform?

TA: Uh – Well, I built my platform through experience. Like I said, when I ran for – well, when I ran the first time, and lost, I didn't have a very good platform. I pretty much had a lot of passion and a – uh – willingness to learn. When I ran in '04 and won, I had already worked in the office of Clubs and Organizations, so my platform essentially was things that I saw could be improved on. Um, promoting more advisor involvement within the clubs, because clubs – historically clubs are strong and active involved – actively involved advisors are more successful.

One of the other things that I wanted to support was a resource center, so clubs would always have access to their own resource center that contained, like, video cameras, and our Culture Club could take a video camera, record an ethnic event like a Native American dance, or a Quinciniera, and then bring the video camera back, but maintain a video library for their own uses of cultural events. Other things that would be in this would be, say, walkie-talkies for clubs that take – rent – several motor-pool vehicles and then go on a long road trip, either in state or out of state to a conference, or an event, or a competition. So a resource center that included everything from potentially a laptop, to high-powered walkie-talkies, digital cameras, video cameras – um – and even a TV that they could use for club meetings. That was one thing that I wanted to see happen.

Another thing that I was a large proponent of is getting more club awareness by having a sort of a centralized promotional aspect. Instead of making clubs responsible for promoting themselves – um – the office that sort of coordinates the clubs, the Chair of the Senate, should take more of an active role in promoting the clubs. Clubs do amazing things. Our Accounting Club outwits Ivy League schools from the East Coast in competition almost every year. Our Construction Management Club is multiple times ranked the best – the best club – equating to the best construction management program on the West Coast – um – nine times out of ten. Our Electric and Engineering Club has just great representation in regional competitions. These things should be more advertised by the Chair of the Senate, as opposed to making the clubs brag about themselves. And in turn, students will want to become more active in these clubs when they see what the clubs can do. So more, I guess, celebratory events like Clubs of the Month, Club of the Quarter, Clubs of the Year. Let's brag about what we do, 'cause our clubs replace – we have an incredibly strong club system – 130 clubs. Comparatively, Western Washington University has approximately 35 clubs.

We have an incredibly strong club system that replaces, or fills the void of our – our Greek system. We don't have one, but clubs fill that with – between the 130 clubs, we have about three – 3500 student constituents. You – you've got huge clubs like Salt, which is a religious fellowship club that boasts 300 – 300 people a week, every single week. I mean, even in the summer there's about 80 people in participation of Salt. And then you have clubs like the Rodeo Club, which would be mediocre in size, with weekly meeting turnouts of about 40 students, but they do just tremendous things like generate about \$32,000 a year in fund raising, and host one of the only free college rodeos in the Northwest. So – and that rodeo turns out about 10,000 in participation every single year. So those were just some of the things that I wanted to do as Vice President, is really empower the clubs to just keep what they're – doing what they're doing, because our clubs are awesome. I mean, there is – there is a club for any interest on campus, and this is a bet that I've made hundreds of students – you tell me one thing that you're interested in, and I'll find a club for you to be in – to be at. So –

KB: How do you become a club? What are the basic regulations?

TA: It's – it's pretty easy. So far I've never lost that bet. I've been able to find something that – for anybody, regardless of their interest. But should you find a club that – or should you not find a club that appeals to your interest, uh, it's incredibly easy to start one. You need – um – a base of five students to start with, and that essentially completes your officer corps. So a traditional club would have President and Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Senator. Senator is mandatory for everyone. That core could change, depending on the club. Each club develops its own constitution, so maybe – maybe the President and Senator are the same position, and, uh, there's a Public Relations Director as a fifth member. I mean, these clubs are incredibly autonomous. They – so you get – you have your core of five students, you develop your own constitution and by-laws so you – you can operate as a club, and then there's about a seven-page packet that they have to pick up – um – well they have to – they have to get an advisor who's – who's affiliated with the University. So after you have your five students, your constitution and by-laws, and your advisor, you fill out a seven-page packet, which is incredibly easy. It's pretty much your name, contact numbers, a couple of signatures of the advisor, attach your constitution with a little description about what your club wants to do, and then you get recognized by the Board of Directors. The student government. So it's – it's very easy. The process takes, at max, seven days.

KB: And can you characterize the clubs? Would you say that certain things are popular, or not popular in this campus?

TA: I characterize the clubs into sort of three – no, four categories. You have – uh – sports clubs, which are becoming more and more popular every year, to a point where they're almost a separate group of clubs. They have a lot of support through the intramural office, and these clubs – there was nine of them a couple of years ago, and they have a lot of participation, and you have everything from men's and women's soccer, to fencing, rodeo, swimming, wrestling, bowling, dancing – these clubs are very popular, and as their participation increases, they're getting more and more funding through the S & A Committee, and they're also getting a lot more support from our Director of Intramurals and Student Athletics. So – and

especially with the new Recreation Center opening they're having a lot more space to practice, perform – these clubs are expanding exponentially.

Then you have sort of your standard, which – the rest of these groups have sort of found an equilibrium. You have Christian Fellowship Clubs – there's about 11-13 of these on campus. Everything from – we have a number of denominations, Salt, Campus Crusade for Christ, Campus Ambassadors, Baptist Student Ministries, Latter Day Student Saints Student Association, or Latter Day Saints Student Association, Jewish Student Organization, Catholic Campus Ministries – uh, you even have a Pagan Society on record. So the – these clubs are pretty active. Um, again, our largest club, Salt, is one of these campus fellowship organizations.

Then you have sort of clubs that are associated with Academics, and virtually every department on campus has a club that's associated with it, so you have History Department, there's a History Club, there's an Anthropology Club, there's an Accounting Club, an Economics Club, pretty much any department has a club affiliated with that. So there's about 60 of these. These clubs offer tremendous incentive to students, because they can – through the – through the money allocation process of the Senate they can help students go to developmental and professional conferences, they put you in contact with other students and professors within your intended major, and then they provide sort of a non-rigorous academic environment for students. I mean, the History Club is naturally going to joke, and laugh, and have a good time about History, and so it's – it's a social way to get more involved with what you're academically and professionally interested in.

And then finally you just have hobby clubs, and there's about 30 or so of these. And these would be things that just students like to do recreational. So you have a Frisbee/Golf Club, and a Chess Club, and um, a Game Board Club, and a Video Game Club, and – these clubs are the ones that come and go the quickest. They're the least stable, because you have a bunch of people on campus one year that really like skateboarding, and then you have a skateboarding club, and then maybe the next year that's not as much of an interest, but, um, it still provides a venue for students to just recreationally socialize. So –

KB: And your feeling is that we have so many more clubs than Western because the fraternities and sororities siphon off the social –

TA: Um, you know, I can't – I don't actually know if Western has fraternities or not. But I know we don't, and sort of the response to not having fraternities and sororities is to give a lot of support to our club system. And so on our campus I particularly think that our club system is so big and so strong just because that naturally fills the void. And when I say support – the students support the clubs by the S & A fee – again, \$35 per student per quarter. Sixty four thousand dollars of that is appropriated every year to clubs, just to support their travels to those academic conferences, and their hobbies, and their humane efforts. So, I mean, \$64,000 is a lot of support. Again, these clubs have their own office, with a Vice President on the Board of Directors, so there's a lot of administrative support – um – they have their own club accounts so they can fund raise, and again, that's – that's supported by an administrative staff. And then – the clubs just do so much good within the community. A lot of these clubs – there are clubs that are based specifically around doing community service, and being involved, so the clubs are really received well. They're supported a lot from local downtown businesses, um, through donations or discounts. They're supported on campus, because generally, overall, they're very positive, both for the students, and for the community and campus that they're impacting.

KB: Now how does the new Sub Rec building change the picture?

TA: The Recreation Center provides increased support to the sports clubs by providing – just a ton more availability and space to recreate in. Um – that's – that's probably the most evident, tangible support increase. Uh, the Student Union Building is just – I mean, the Student Union Building doesn't really bias – I mean, an individual student who is not involved in any clubs is just – is going to be as – receive as much advantage from the Student Union Building as a – as a club is. The impact of these two buildings on our

campus is just going to be monumental to the student body, any way you look at it. The – the level of upgrade, the increased venues of dining, the increased venues of recreation – I mean, our – our ballroom is much bigger so, like more clubs could utilize that space – um – overall just – this Center is impacting the students in such a phenomenal way because it's – it's a grandiose building. So that – the clubs are very healthy before that, and I think they're going to be equally as healthy after.

KB: What about the increased expense in student fees, though? Is that not an issue?

TA: Um, you know, it is an issue, but it's a Student Union building. The students implemented it on themselves. The – the fee for the Student Union building never actually went to a vote in student elections, which at first glance would accrue a furrow of the brow – um – but when you look at about 12% turnout at student elections, that's approximately 1000 students giving input on this – this fee. Student government at the time – in probably 2000, I think – decided it would be far more impacting to – they – they had about forty focus groups. They took it to – they took it, in the form of referendums, to the Residence Hall Association, the Student Senate, the Equity Services Council, the Student Government, they also filled out about – or they *had* about 1400 surveys filled out. So in total, you have the direct input of probably 2500 student, and the collective representation of virtually the rest of the student body giving input on this – this process of implementing student fees on ourselves, which is far more input than the 1000 students that would turn out to vote. So, um – but again that's – that's something that I've heard very little complaining about because:

A) Students are putting it on themselves, because this building is fantastic. It's 225,228 square feet, or something like that. It's gargantuan. Our rec center is just phenomenal, serving, currently, about 2000 students a day, so essentially 25% of the student body, and that's not repetitive. That's – like one student isn't counting for five because he goes in and out all the time. But – about 25% of the student body enters and exits this building every single day.

And the new Student Union building is also going to be of tremendous impact. Now, the number – like – the numbers of new services in this building are not – are not exceedingly great, but the number of current services that are going to receive tremendous upgrades because of the increased space and the increased work room are virtually across the board, incorporating dining – they're going to have like nine new food venues. It's – it's – that's really going to be great. I'm really excited to see this new dining venue replace the old Homes East and West.

Um – again, our Sub ballroom is huge, comparatively to our current Sub ballroom. We're going to actually have a real theater to, say, host the programs like the foreign film festivals every Tuesday night. It'll actually be a theater, with graded seating, and stuff. Um – I mean, your student government offices are receiving huge upgrades.

Your Equity Services Council is probably going to be the most impacted out of student organizations, because the – the organizations, like Black Student Union, ASIS and GALA all have, like, office space in the student government. Well now they're receiving more office space, because the student government has more room. So they, more so than the clubs, will be impacted by this. Um, but just overall, across the board, this building is great. The – the radio station has got a lot more room as well, so – um –

KB: Can we go back to the question of diversity? When I look at the 1970s yearbooks, before they got rid of yearbooks, it seemed like there were African American clubs, there was a Hawaiian Club, there were minority groups of all kinds that had groups of their own that don't seem to exist any more.

TA: Well, I – I don't think it's not that they don't exist. This topic is something that's incredibly pertinent to the campus right now. I mean, if you look at our – our student body statistics, Central's incredibly diverse in comparison with the rest of the state. I think overall, um, we have probably like a 17% diversity level, which is much higher percentage wise, uh, than some of our sister institutions. Now that – I mean, leading the state in diversity statistically is fantastic, but we should. We're at the crossroads

of three Native American reservations, and we have a huge migrant population. Um, so I think there's a lot of room to grow. You don't have to be sick to get better, and this is something that Central needs to keep working on, is developing this – uh – this *community* of diversity.

And we – we don't have – we – like we don't have a – a Diversity Center, or a Native American Heritage Center on campus, and that's – that's a conscious choice made by the Administration. The goal is not to say, ghettoize a minority group by giving them a building at North campus where they can all gather, and – the – the goal is to get – is to merge these diverse groups within the student population. The advantage of having – um, say American Indians in the campus population is because that's going to enhance the academic experience of every student on campus, and it – that doesn't work if – if Native Americans aren't being vocal, and participatory through every segment of the campus. And it's equal for the Black Student Union and Mecha. So the – that is sort of the mindset that we're trying to create – is that diversity is good, but we don't want to divide. We essentially want to take – take this diversity, and it sounds cheesy, but make it *University*, if you look at the word structure. We don't want to divide. We want minority representation and cultural expansion and representation within the – within the student body as a whole. So that's something that can always be worked on, and always increased.

Now the – um – the other thing is that probably the area that we're lacking in is that I know personally that a lot of these groups don't feel like the community within themselves is being created. Now I – I know a lot of – lot of friends have decided to go to, like, Portland State University over Central because Portland State has an incredible Native American Cultural Center. They feel like that provides community for them, and that provides support. I know a lot of people have said that they – they come from high school, and they join Central thinking that there's going to be a lot of Mechistas here to celebrate Hispanic culture, and there – the Mechista community is not as big as they wanted it. And this – so this sort of happens across the board. But again, I mean, we are leading the state. We need to keep developing this diversity, we need to keep encouraging this diversity, and we need to find a way to develop the community within the minority groups while still not isolating them from the rest of the population. I mean, the point is for our student body to interact with each other, not to come and become segregated. But on the whole, I mean –

**(Transcription of Tape 2, Side 1)**

KB: The February 15, 2006 interview with Tony Aronica.

TA: Okay, back to the diversity. Yeah, we serve – I think we serve our populations well. Like I said, the American Indian minor is emerging soon. That'll be a good academic augmentation to our diversity. It should be followed with a strengthening in the curriculum of – um – Ethnic Studies minor, and I don't think this University would be hurt by the addition of maybe a Hispanic Studies minor, African American Studies minor. These are things that should emerge as we support our minority groups through the programming. Like I said, the Equity and Services Council has approximately \$40,000 to distribute within itself to support diversity endeavors and celebrations and cultural events. The Diversity Center, that's got a supportive staff and programmatic funding, receives about \$130,000 student dollars to operate every year. So we have a lot of support, and that can – that can always increase. But I think we do a good job.

KB: Women are more than 50% of the student body on this campus. How do they figure in student government?

TA: Um, this year [laughs] we actually have six men and one – one female. Last year we had five men and two females. Um, sometimes – we – we haven't had a female President for five years. The last one was Marin Oats, in 2000-2001, I believe. Um, but it's – women are – I mean, incredibly active. I – I guess I personally don't often register them as a minority because – uh – well, I mean, it's – the current President [Dr. Jerilyn McIntyre] is an incredibly intelligent, and effective, and engaging female. Two of her – two of her five members of Senior level administration are incredibly caring and compassionate women that have advocated for me, and helped me along my way. Multiple times, Dr. Charlotte Tullos has done wonders for this institution, and is really – um – a cornerstone to the way that Student Affairs is approached. So

within the administration there's a lot of female representation and prominent involvement. Within student government, statistically it's lower, but um, that changes from year to year, and I would not say it's because of any bias in the student electorate. Um, yeah – I – I'm definitely biased in my opinion just because I'm male, so I haven't had that perspective, but um, I would definitely say there's no – no double standard or anything. I've never, ever gotten the feeling that someone felt that I could do something better because I was a man. So.

KB: Any last things you want to say about extra curricular activities before we move on to the academic scene?

TA: Um, I'm sure it will come up later if I'm reminded of anything.

KB: Okay, well tell us about what you've decided to major in. I guess you tasted quite a lot of different classes while you were a Running Start student.

TA: I – I did taste – I've had a class from virtually every department on campus. I think I'm missing five or six, but I've sampled quite a few. Um, I – I've always been passionate about History. That's something that was developed young, so History is a natural choice for me. And then Anthropology – I – I've incorporated because I'm more focused on Archeology, and really that's a way for me to physically interact with History. So I – I think the two go hand in hand quite nicely. And then the Honors College just assists in an amazing strong Liberal Arts degree. Um – that is probably one of the best academic choices I've made here at Central – just – with the curriculum, um, it's really done wonderful things for me personally. Um, so I – I've really enjoyed my coursework so far, and am excited to continue.

KB: The Douglas Honors College is undergoing some change, is it not? Or does that not affect you?

TA: Well it – it does affect me. I – I don't know how much it'll affect me, because I'm a Junior already and usually – I mean, you can't change your – your curriculum requirements in – in progress of your degree. Um, I mean, speaking flatly, the honors program at Central needs a lot of work. It needs a lot of improvement. Honors programs typically are designed to address about 10% of the student population – the top 10% - which – um – in our – at our University that would equate to about 140 students, say, this year, whereas our Freshman enrollment this year was about 100 – er, it was about 14. So the target should be 10%, the achievement is 1%. Our retention rates within the college are very poor. About 30% drop out throughout the four-year curriculum. So the Honors College, from an administrative perspective, needs a lot of work.

From a student perspective, my first year in the Honors College was the – was also the first year of the current Director, Sura Rath. His lecture style and colloquium moderation is the reason I stayed in the course. The coursework for me, personally, has been fantastic. It's a lot of extra work at about three credits a quarter, with an additional, say, ten books to read each quarter. Um, but these – these are the type of books that everybody who has any academic aspiration at all says that they would love to read, and never prioritize the time *to* read it. I think my extra curricular activity on campus has been augmented by this, simply – I mean, you – back to the student government – ethics is the key component of a candidate who's going to succeed. Well you spend several quarters reading about Greek ethics, and the ethics of the Elizabethan era, and Roman ethics, and – I mean, everything from Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, to the writings of Marcus Aurelius. I mean you – personally, the development within the Honors College has been phenomenal for me. I – I appreciate the curriculum, and whatever – whatever needs to change from an administrative side, um, I appreciate what they've done for me so far. Um – again, as a student, they've done a lot.

There's a lot of things that they do that I think, if they marketed, they would take care of their enrollment problem, essentially. The – the real problem is that they don't market everything they do, so with this slight tweak they could probably boost their participation quite a bit. But things like how to write a curricula – or how to make your own resume, how to make your own curriculum vitae, how to sell yourself

in an interview, how to fill out graduate school applications, how to fill out scholarship and fellowship applications, how to conduct yourself when you're at a professional conference or a national fellowship, how to write follow-up thank you letters, how to search for these fellowships in the first place. All of things are workshops that – that the Honors College will provide. Members of the Honors College have worked with me – uh – to sort of edit and proofread, revise, and redraft several fellowships.

I personally attribute two – two achievements to the Honors College: I won a national fellowship to Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. It was a leadership conference that accepted 50 students across the nation. All expenses paid to go to this conference at the Kennedy – Kennedy graduate school. Um, that – I would not have ever been able to communicate or market myself without at least a dozen revisions [laughs] that was assisted by the Honors College staff. I mean, that's something I will always be grateful for. And I was the only student to represent not only Washington, but the whole Pacific Northwest at that conference. Another national fellowship I received – the – there were twelve students selected for an undergraduate program funded by the State Department to spend a month in India, and study Islam, as well as other religious – religions within the country. Again, I was the only student selected out of the Northwest. It was a national fellowship, and there's no way that I would have A) known about it, B) been recommended for it, or C) sent in an adequate application without the multiple advice and supervision of the Director of the Honors College, and another thing – another life-changing experience that I owe to the Honors College, because really, a fantastic program.

KB: Do the students in the Honors College have a special bond?

TA: Yeah. Um, starting in the fall of '03, which was my first year, there – the residence halls, or the University housing started a program called the Honors LLC, and it was essentially all the students that are in the Honors College live in the same residence hall on the same floor. So you have all these students that come – they come as Freshmen to CWU, they're living within 50 feet proximity to each other – all their rooms are right next to each other – uh – they're taking all the same honors classes, and because they're taking the same honors classes, their other classes are usually the same, too. Um, so the first quarter these students are pretty much all you see, and then after – well not all you see, but all your classes are with these same students, you live with these students, oftentimes you'll eat with these students because your time blocks are the same, so you have to go to the same dining hall that's open, and then after that, for the rest of your first year you'll still live with these students, and you'll still maintain the honors courses even if you have different course – additional coursework. And then after that you may not live in the residence halls anymore, but you'll still have the same honors classes together.

So your Honors College cohort – um – whether you're good friends, or acquaintances, or have personality conflicts – you are connected with your Honors College cohort. You can always depend on them for support. There's always a lot of discussion – uh – the personal stances and ideologies of each member of the honors cohort is never concealed, because our curriculum consists of two hours of debate every single week. So you can't – you can't speak about religion, and mythology, and theology, and philosophy, and cultural ideologies – you can't speak about these without sort of revealing your own personal standpoint. So you become to know everyone else within your cohort very, very well, and it's – it's a great experience. I – um – and it – it sort of – it's something that – you start out as a Freshman and you don't realize, but it's going to have a significant impact on you later. I mean, myself and two – myself and three other individuals – I mean, three out of eight, so four out of eight – 50% of us in my Junior cohort have all worked together in a professional job in a publication corporation in Ellensburg, separate from the campus. But, I mean, we all have stronger – we're in preparation for a stronger Liberal Arts degree, so this individual who owns the publication company has recognized that honors students can perform better than normal students, so he tends to hire us for work within his company. So, I mean, situations like that, the honors cohort even interacts professionally outside of the campus. So it's really a great experience.

KB: How would you like to generalize about the student body in general, in terms of – um – dedication to classes versus employment? Lots of students work off campus or on campus. What kind of energy is put into organizations? What's the balance of the life of a Central student like?

TA: Um –

KB: Priorities.

TA: Priorities? I – I think the general Central student would agree that you're not paying – tuition is not payment for your – your academic development. Your tuition is payment for a college experience, and I think Central does a very good job of making that a holistic experience. Many students participate – I mean, well, 3500 students, that's approximately half – like, one out of every two students participates in at least one club. Twenty-five hundred students live on the residence – live on campus every year. That's 33%. That's the highest in the state. So one out of three students interacts socially within the residence halls.

You have small classrooms that are highly prone to group projects, group discussions, so there's – the classes are important, and that's why we're here, but – that's why students are here – but the ability to, or the encouragement for students to develop themselves through application, the number of students that get opportunities to do individual research and work with professors is much higher here than at other schools – um – so there's a lot of development that takes place outside of the classroom.

Uh, I think a lot of students would tell you – I don't think it would be abnormal to find a student who prioritizes obligations in the form of work first, obviously with the percentage of education that's decreasing that's being supported by the State, most all students work now. I mean, that's just a changing trend among the student population. So they have to work to support themselves, so that's important. And then I think a lot of students would prioritize, um, social organizations over classes. Classes would probably fall number three. Now whether that social organization is the Marketing Club, which probably most of those students in the Marketing Club have individual projects going on with their advisors so it's still very academic in nature, or whether it's the Off-road Club which is very *not* academic in nature, I think a lot of students would prioritize it in that fashion. I mean, classes are important, but I think the general culture is development through application. We're – our – our – I don't think our student body is real prone to lectures. Um, put us in a lab, put us in a discussion, put us in a colloquium, research project, group project, presentation, and I think Central will knock your socks off, but we might not be the best lecture students. [Laughs]

KB: What about parties? Is this a party school?

TA: Um, we have to tip our hats at Washington State University. It's widely renowned that Washington State University is the biggest party school in the state. Um, it's sort of the underground – there's not a lot of substance abuse at our school. We would attribute that to other schools in the state. Central, really, for – for party social atmospheres is mediocre. Some students would argue and say that we can really hold our own, but uh – we don't have anywhere near the type of social disruption that, say, Washington State University has. Now our – our – our off-campus population in the North Campus apartments that continually grow is – is certainly the best place to *find* a party, but um – I – I don't think that we would be classified as unruly.

KB: Now are there individual professors, or staff, or administrators that you'd like to target as being particularly sensitive or flexible to students shaping the campus?

TA: I think overall the reason the students can have such a big impact is because of faculty understanding. I mean, there are faculty who would, say, be less tolerant of students taking – taking involvement in extra curricular activities. But by and large, faculty on the whole are incredibly supportive. We have – um – we have very successful student athletes, we have very successful student participation in clubs, we have very successful student participation in student government – um – we have very successful student participation in off-campus community involvement, and all of this is possible because, by and large, our faculty are very accepting and understanding. And I think that the cultural mindset of students, that they develop as much outside the classroom as they do inside the classroom, is

perpetuated by a faculty mindset that they would rather have students working with them on a research project than have to lecture to them about the – uh – the philosophy of a research project. I mean, I guess it's the difference between a methods course that's lecture based and a methods course that's application based.

And I – my general feeling is that faculty inspire students to move out of the lecture hall into the application process, and, I mean, this is – this is seen through summer field schools, both for Geology and Anthropology students – I mean, my friends and student peers are now involved in the Wenus Mammoth Dig, and they're – they're *very* involved. I mean, they've pretty much launched their careers as undergraduates because of their level of involvement – everything from survey, to excavation, to lab analysis afterwards. Uh, and I – I would be – you'd be hard-pressed to convince me that that type of thing can just fall on students at, say, the University of Washington, whereas here, these kids were just, I mean, really active and outgoing in an Anthropology class, and now you've got a tremendous, career-changing project ahead of you that they get to take part in. So I – I – I think that's a great example of across the board in Anthropology / Psychology – um, I mean, students are encouraged to always push their own perceived limits to expand and grow and develop here.

KB: What are your goals when you're finished at Central?

TA: I am actually currently in a transitional phase. I came – my degree – my target degree of History / Anthropology in the Honors College was directed at forging a career in Archeology – um – spending a fair amount of time in the field, and then eventually falling back on a professorship where I spend time in the classroom. I am currently re-evaluating that. I'm still going to pursue higher – uh, more education in the form of Master's and most likely a PhD, but I'm becoming more interested in – uh – a profession of – um – student affairs – getting – getting involved in higher education – maintaining involvement in higher education, but more on the Administrative side, as opposed to on the faculty side. And I think – I think the student experience – at Central especially, student affairs and the student experience is equally important as – for retention as the academic experience. And I think when you do it right, this – the – the student affairs experience, or the student social experience, when done correctly, augments the academic experience, and the two, academic and social, combine to make that college experience that everybody's here to get.

KB: Isn't this a pretty quiet campus on weekends, though? Don't an awful lot of our students flee to the Puget Sound area?

TA: Uh, yes, and that would be what impacts our ability to have massive parties. [Laughs] Um, but there's – not everything happens on the weekends. There's – there's at least three events to go to on campus every single weekday. I mean, you can't attend all the events. You just – you cannot do it. Um, so, I mean, there's things to do on the weekend, but oftentimes throughout the week there's things that would appeal to any student – student member.

KB: A lot of people complain that the campus has grown administratively, bureaucratically, and that it – um – diminishes the opportunity for connections, but it sounds like that has not been a problem to you.

TA: Um, you know, I don't – I don't know how a growing administration would – would diminish your opportunity for connections. I think – um – both – both members of Administration, say in student affairs side – um – directors of Housing, directors of Dining, directors of student centers like Empowerment, Diversity, Leadership – all of these individuals, who are not faculty, have tremendous impact on students every single day. Um – they're creating part of the student experience. Likewise, the faculty see hundreds of students every single day in all of their classes, and their ability to connect with students on an academic level, and inspire students to achieve more than they originally thought they could, and sort of provoke students to find their own inner academic interests is equally as impactful, and also – I mean, that's – that's why students are – are at Central – because of that. And when you have such good faculty/student ratios, with by and large and incredibly engaging faculty, that – that's what you get. You get a student body

where students are able to succeed academically. They're able to develop and cultivate themselves socially, and they're able to take away a fantastic experience.

KB: Sounds like you picked the right school for you.

TA: I really did. You will not find a bigger proponent. I – I bleed crimson and black, definitely.

KB: Any last things you want to say before we close?

TA: Um, no. I think I've talked quite enough.

KB: Well, thanks for sharing!