

This transcript has been approved by the narrator as of 4/21/22.

SCHEDLER HONORS COLLEGE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Kelly Phillips Oral History Interview Transcription

Narrator Name: Phillips, Kelly

Interviewer Name: El-Houri, Noor

Date of Interview: 03/21/2022

Location of Interview: Remote Interview - Zoom Recording

Acronyms:

UCA = University of Central Arkansas

ACT = American College Test

UALR = University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Interview Summary

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Kelly Phillips conducted by Noor El-Houri on March 21, 2022. This interview is part of the Schedler Honors College Oral History Project.

Readers are asked to bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose. The following transcript has been reviewed, edited, and approved by the narrator.

Speaker 1 [00:00:02] All right, hello. I am Noor El-Houri with the Schedler Honors College oral history project. Today is March 21st, 2022 and I am interviewing Kelly Phillips today

through Zoom. We will be talking about her experiences leading up to and during her time at the Honors College. Would you please go ahead and state your name for me?

Speaker 2 [00:00:27] It is Kelly Phillips.

Speaker 1 [00:00:27] All right, so welcome. So this first set of questions that I am going to go through with you today are basically just going to help us get to know you a little bit better. Okay, so your pronouns are she and her correct?

Speaker 2 Yes.

Speaker 1 All right. So where are you from?

Speaker 2 [00:00:48] I am from a little town called Pickens, Arkansas, which is outside of Dumas, Arkansas.

Speaker 1 Where is Dumas?

Speaker 2 It is in the extreme southeast Arkansas corner. It is Dumas, McGehee, Lake Village, and then you are in Mississippi.

Speaker 1 [00:01:07] Okay, so did you grow up there?

Speaker 2 [00:01:12] I was born in McGehee, in the same hospital and delivered by the same doctor that my mother was delivered by. And my dad got a job at Pickens, which was a farming operation, and he was an accountant and a partner in the farm there until after I was in college. I grew up in this town. There were probably like two hundred and fifty people, maybe there. And then Dumas was about twenty five hundred people and it was about two and a half miles away. But that is where I went to school and like, that is where the grocery store and all that kind of stuff was.

Speaker 1 [00:01:48] Wow. So, would you say it was like a conservative town?

Speaker 2 [00:01:55] Not really. I would not say that it was necessarily, especially because it is nothing like the political climate like we live in now. Back then, Bill Clinton was the governor. That was not always something that I paid attention to, but I do not feel like it was- it was not something that people really talked about.

Speaker 1 [00:02:28] Did you like the town that you grew up in?

Speaker 2 [00:02:31] When I was growing up there, not really, because it was small. It was a tiny town, our next biggest big town, you either had to go to Greenville or you had to go to Pine Bluff. And I mean, it was a trip to Little Rock, over two hours. So that was far away for us. You could not go to the movies there. There was no other store other than Wal-Mart. There were like three grocery stores and a couple of banks. I vividly remember whenever McDonald's came to town and we got to go to McDonald's without having to drive somewhere to get there.

Speaker 1 [00:03:12] Was that a big deal, when McDonald's came to town?

Speaker 2 [00:03:15] Yes, I mean, for us, it was probably like in the, I do not know, the late eighties, I guess, but there were no fast food places there. Maybe there was a sonic at that

point, but there was not-it is not like today where, if my kids are hungry for pizza or whatever, we just go get it. You could not do that because there was not a place for you to go do that because it was just so little.

Speaker 1 [00:03:42] Everyone knew each other?

Speaker 2 [00:03:44] Yes, and they all knew what you were doing. Even if you were not doing something and it seemed like something you might do, you probably got blamed for it. You know, I went to school, I moved there to that community whenever I was in the first grade, and I continued to go to school in McGehee until I was in the fourth grade and started in fifth grade and Dumas. And the majority of the kids that I started school with in the fifth grade, I graduated with. There was not a whole lot of in and out and moving around, but in my graduating class, there were only one hundred and thirty six kids.

Speaker 1 [00:04:25] So what were the closest universities to you?

Speaker 2 [00:04:29] there was UAM, which was in Monticello, which we affectionately called "You ain't much". That is what UAM stood for. UAM was really the closest place that you could go. After that Pine Bluff had UAPB, and then there was Little Rock. I was familiar with UALR because in the summertime they hosted a program for gifted and talented students called Summer Laureate, and my parents and several other people in our community would take turns carpooling us up there for like two weeks or something. We would go to these enrichment classes all afternoon at UALR. It was a big deal for us to, every day, have to drive to Little Rock and drive back.

Speaker 1 [00:05:22] Yes. How far was the drive? You said over-

Speaker 2 [00:05:24] A little over two hours, yes.

Speaker 1 [00:05:27] So who introduced you, or how did you get familiar with UCA?

Speaker 2 [00:05:33] My mother had actually started school there. She was a teacher in the school district in McGehee, but that is where she started her academic career and she finished at UAM, but whenever it came time to decide where you wanted your ACT scores sent to, I had to pick some places, and I had not been to the UCA campus. Honestly, I was just bound and determined that I did not want to stay in Arkansas. I sent, you know, they have that huge list. Back then, it was a big newspaper print booklet, and you went through there and put the codes in of all the schools that you wanted your score sent to, I think I picked UALR and I picked UCA and I sent some to some schools in Mississippi. So, based off of my ACT scores, whenever they sent out invitations like, "come to UCA and see what's going on", that was really the first time that I had been on the campus.

Speaker 1 [00:06:49] Okay, so you were on campus before you started though?

Speaker 2 [00:06:53] Yes, we came in and did whatever the day was where they introduced high school seniors to the different colleges and stuff. Actually, that is when Norb came in and talked about the Honors College. That was the first I knew of it, and I can remember my dad as we were leaving campus saying, "I think that might be a good idea for you. It sounds like something that you would enjoy, and we need to look into it and see", because they just gave you a little pamphlet to apply. It was like-you did not go online, there was not some big, huge thing, so that was the first I had been on campus and the first I had heard about it.

Speaker 1 [00:07:36] So your parents, did they have an influence on your education?

Speaker 2 [00:07:43] It was extremely important to them that I go to college and I finish college, and both of them did that. My dad had a college degree in accounting, but he had never set for the CPA exam, and my mother was a teacher. You know, even now for teachers, mainly they want you to have a master's degree. So she had done that over at UAM, but it was always an expectation. There was never a time I can remember where it was not expected that I was going to do well in school, or for some reason, would not go on to do some higher education. They were not super-they did not influence what they wanted me to do once I went there. That was not part of it. It was just understood that was something that was going to happen.

Speaker 1 [00:08:40] So, you applied to UCA, or did you apply to the Honors program?

Speaker 2 [00:08:46] I applied to both. So once you sent in your application to UCA, there was a separate application for the Honors College, and you had to include a piece of writing. I had an AP English teacher that I super duper loved, Miss Murphy. She and I went through some of the pieces of writing that I had done that year and took one of them, and polished it up, and sent it in with my application after I had already sent my application in to UCA. It was a story about how whenever I was maybe like, I do not know, I must have been like five or six. My mother left me in the car at my-we had a guy that we called Uncle Tim, but he was really not of any relation to us. He was our southern uncle, Tim. And he had a flower shop and my mother left me in the car with my little brother, and I got up in the front seat, put the car in gear, and backed out into the street. That was the story that I submitted with my Honors College application.

Speaker 1 [00:09:54] Wow. So, did you all have our I-squared day?

Speaker 2 No.

Speaker 1 So how was the application process? Was there an interview process?

Speaker 2 [00:10:05] Yes, there was an interview. So you sent that in, and then you got a letter that said we would like to interview you on such and such day. Rick had been on sabbatical, so he was not even there. So you got this letter and it said, "bring your parents", or whatever. So me and my parents strike off up there one day, and my parents had also told me that if I got a scholarship to college that they would buy me a car. So we strike off up there. We show up and it is me, my mom, and dad, a guy named Brent, and his parents, and then another girl, who I do not-I remember who it was, but I am not really sure. And we were all crammed into Norb's office with all these bookshelves all over the place. We had those huge bulletin boards with all this stuff, all over it. We were in there for like an hour and a half or so. At the end of it, he says, "Well, I mean, you are already accepted. This part is just a formality." It was not even-it was not like there was a quiz or something, but those years-there were probably like three years where they really, I do not know how many kids they accept right now, but then they were really trying to grow a whole bunch. Instead of accepting like 20 or 30 kids, they were accepting like a hundred and something kids. I do not know if it was everybody who met their minimum criteria, they called them in for an interview and were like, "Hey, you are in", but it was not-to me, it did not seem like it was a competitive thing. It was not like we had this interview and then they went off and discussed, "Well, you know, this person seemed like a complete idiot in my office, and there is no way we can have them here." It was like they had already sort of

decided that we were going to—we could do it if we wanted to. So it was not super long either. What I would say is that it was not much longer than an hour and a half or so, and then we drove back to Little Rock, and my parents bought me a car. So I drove a new car home after we had gone to my Honors College interview.

Speaker 1 [00:12:30] Was it kind of like a congratulations present?

Speaker 2 [00:12:35] I mean, they had told me that they would do that if I got a full scholarship somewhere, which I did. I mean, we were up there and they said I was in. I said, “I would like to do that.” I had looked at this car a few weeks before. I was in Little Rock for some other reason. We just stopped at the place and it was on the showroom floor. And I drove it out of the showroom. They opened up the big glass doors, and I drove it out and drove home. So I got into the Honors College and got a new car on the same day.

Speaker 1 What kind of car was it?

Speaker 2 It was a teal green Pontiac Grand Prix, and it was super fancy compared to, you know, the little tan blazer I had been driving around at home.

Speaker 1 [00:13:28] That is right. So what was the criteria? You said it was not as-

Speaker 2 [00:13:33] I honestly, I cannot remember. I am sure that there was some type of minimum ACT score and or a minimum grade point average. Both of which back then I would have met because I mean, I was the valedictorian. My grade point was over 4.0. And part of what Norb talked about was like, “I see where you are from here and I see that you are coming from this class of like one hundred and thirty six kids and you are going to be in this way bigger pond of people. And that might be a culture shock to you. It might—you might find that difficult. You have always been sort of the top of the class and here you may not be.” It was not necessarily something where they said an application like “do not apply if you do not meet this minimum requirement”, but whenever we went to whatever the day was, whenever we went around UCA. Whenever they were handed these out, they were saying, “if we invited you here for this more than likely, you are eligible to do the Honors College

Speaker 1 [00:14:51] Wow. So how many people do you know, roughly how many people were in your Honors cohort?

Speaker 2 [00:14:57] To begin with, there were probably like a hundred and fifty of us.

Speaker 1 [00:15:01] And to end with? Did people drop?

Speaker 2 [00:15:05] Yes, there were some people—you know, there are always some people by the first year who are just not—college is not for them. We lost some there. Then, whenever you got to your sophomore year and you had to do your sophomore lecture, there were some people who probably didn't have the grade point for that, but we kept a bunch of them. I have a picture at my office that is—I do not know if y'all do this anymore, but right before you graduate, they take they took a picture of all of us who were in that graduating class on the steps of, I guess, it was the library or Old Main, I cannot remember, and there is probably about 130 or so of us.

Speaker 1 [00:15:51] Wow. No, I do not know if we do that anymore. But that is interesting.

So you said that you were your major BBA.

Speaker 2 [00:16:02] I was, and that is sort of odd for the account for Honors College . They do not have a lot of business majors. Most people are there for biology and they are going to be doctors, or there were some PT kids. A lot of them are fine arts majors to some degree: music, history, English, things like that. There were not very many of us who were business majors, but that is what UCA has, is a Bachelors of Business Administration with a concentration in whatever your major is in, and mine was accounting.

Speaker 1 [00:16:43] So what made you choose business?

Speaker 2 [00:16:47] I-whenver somebody asked me what I wanted to be whenever I was a kid, it was-I was always going to be a lawyer. I have no idea why,but that is what I always said. Whenever I got to high school, we switched to block scheduling, which is, you take four classes for a semester or whatever. That was a huge new thing back then because before that, we had taken seven a day. So we went to this block schedule, and sometimes they didn't have a place for you because it was just a weird schedule. I got put in an accounting class. We had a lady who-there were like 10 or 12 of us in this accounting class, and I super enjoyed it. My dad was an accountant, my aunt, my mother's sister, she was an accountant and she was not married. She was very self-sufficient. Something about the order of it just appealed to me. I was good at math. I was good with numbers, I didn't want to be a math major. I didn't want to be a teacher. I thought, "Let's try this", and I didn't change. You know, there was not a time where I was like, "Oh, why did I take this?" I always enjoyed it.

Speaker 1 [00:18:14] Wow. So you said you get a business major, and then you have a concentration in something?

Speaker 2 [00:18:21] That is what they call it. It is just a Bachelors of Business Administration, and then you pick whatever your major is based off-

Speaker 1 [00:18:34] an emphasis in a certain area. It is kind of like art majors too. We kind of have something like that.

Speaker 2 [00:18:39] Yes, so then based off of whatever that is, that is your curriculum. If you are a finance major, then you have separate finance classes, but most business majors have to take at least a couple of accounting classes anyway. So, lots of them had a little bit of accounting stuff, whether they were a marketing major or finance or whatever.

Speaker 1 [00:19:10] So did you have any minors besides the Honors minor?

Speaker 2 [00:19:15] No, I did not. There was not-in the school of business, that was not really something that they did. For my degree, you almost have to get some type of postgraduate something. You either have to do a master's, or you have to take classes because in order to sit for the CPA exam, you have to have one hundred and fifty hours of coursework. Whenever I graduated, the program doesn't offer that many. I didn't see any point in getting extra for a minor when I knew already I was going to have to do graduate work.

Speaker 1 [00:20:04] Yes. So you stayed on campus.

Speaker 2 [00:20:09] Yes, I did that year that we started, was the first year that Short Denny was open. The Short side was boys, and the Denny side was girls. My mother had actually lived in there whenever she had gone to school, but of course it was double occupancy on both sides of the bathrooms. They had gotten money to redo the inside of that. My dad was in Little Rock one day during the summer and went up there, and actually they were still working on the rooms. They let him in to measure the floor to see what size piece of carpet I needed to get. So, it was the very first year that it was open and everything in it was as new as it could possibly have been. It had just been redone. I mean, the walls were the walls, but it was very unusual because that was one of the first years where UCA was already having a housing issue, where they didn't have enough rooms for the people who showed up, but somehow they managed to keep all of those rooms single occupancy with that shared bathroom. I lived in there for two years, and then Baridon, which was directly behind it, opened up as the upperclassmen Honors dorm, and we lived in there for the other two years. I lived on campus the entire time.

Speaker 1 [00:21:43] So was Short Denny Honor's housing?

Speaker 2 [00:21:49] Yes, it was only Honors housing, and there was a classroom in the bottom of Short. We had some of our Honors classes that were actually down in that classroom.

Speaker 1 [00:22:02] In Short Denny?

Speaker 2 Yes.

Speaker 1 Did you have any classes in Baridon?

Speaker 2 [00:22:07] No, Baridon didn't have classrooms at that point. I do not know if they do now, but it was just a regular-because it had just been an upperclassman dorm before, and somehow they talked the school into letting it be honor students in that. At this point, they had had like three years of classes where they had admitted over a hundred students. They were running out of places to put them because there was not another place to go. So, they talked the administration into letting them have that. At first, I think it was the third floor. We only got the third floor and up there on the third floor, there was an apartment that they kept for people visiting. So maybe somebody really wanted to come to school. They are coming from out of state or whatever. They had this little apartment in there, and it was a bedroom, a bathroom, and a walk-in closet. It had a little kitchenette and it had a stove and a refrigerator and a little pantry. Somehow, Glenda got the school to let me and two of my friends live in that apartment. The first year we lived in Baridon, and the school did not take any of the appliances out. We had a full size refrigerator and a stove and oven in there. Now, the three of us had to share bedrooms, so we had bunk beds for one person and then another bed for another person, but the three of us got to live in there for a whole year. We got there and we expected the kitchen to be empty, like they take this stuff out. It was all in there. It was crazy.

Speaker 1 [00:23:56] What? How did they build them originally? With appliances and then take them?

Speaker 2 [00:24:02] Just that one apartment was in there, and it was made for people who were visiting or something. It was not the residence hall director's apartment. There was just this random short term apartment on the third floor that they had in case

somebody was coming from out of town to see the school or I do not know why they originally put it in there, but somehow Glenda got that spot. We lived in there for a year.

Speaker 1 [00:24:35] So who was Glenda?

Speaker 2 [00:24:39] Glenda is-Glenda Middle..? I can't think of her last name off the top of my head, but anyway, she was the-She was not the secretary because Glenda was not a secretary, but she was like the fixer. If you needed to get into-if your schedule was all sort of screwed up and there was only one class you could really take for your Honors that year, you got Glenda. If you didn't know what to do or where to go or who to ask, you called Glenda, and Glenda knew who or how to fix it, and she was like Patricia, who's the director right now. She didn't take Glenda's job directly from Glenda, I do not think, but at one point, she was Glenda.

Speaker 1 [00:25:37] I was going to say, Trish, is our Glenda.

Speaker 2 [00:25:40] Yes, but before she was the dean, she was in that role. Everyone knew who she was. She is still alive. She's super nice. She actually had a cousin that was in-that was from McGehee, that was also a teacher, that was real close friends with my mom. Glenda Middleton, that is what her last name was.

Speaker 1 [00:26:06] I feel like I have heard that name.

Speaker 2 [00:26:07] Yes, she was the fixer. If you needed something, Glenda knew how to get it done normally, and she was an equal opportunity fixer she did not have-I am sure she did have favorites, but nobody knew who they were because she did for everyone.

Speaker 1 [00:26:25] Wow, that is lovely. So how did the infrastructure change throughout your course in the Honors College ?

Speaker 2 [00:26:33] So whenever we first got there, of course, Rick was not there. He was on sabbatical, so we did not meet him until our second year. The first year it was Honors core, just like I am sure you all do now. Then you had small groups, and my first small group leader was Norb, so that was odd. Then, we had whatever Honors Core II was, and I had another one on towards the end that I could not-because for some reason, whatever the thesis class it was, I could not take it. I basically completed my thesis outside of the thesis class and I took another Honors class instead that they let take the place of that. We had Honors Core one, two, three and four and then you had whatever the-

Speaker 1 Oxford.

Speaker 2 Yes, it was whatever things sort of you wanted to do, basically. I did a musical theater one.

Speaker 1 [00:27:47] Seminars?

Speaker 2 [00:27:51] Yes, in the seminars. So we did a musical theater one where we actually created and put on a musical called Going Down About Bill Clinton. And I was Monica Lewinsky climbing out from underneath a desk. It was crazy. One of my friends still-they still have the video of it. It is somewhere in the archives. I am sure they have it, but it was quite spectacular. Then, we did all the sets. We drew all the-we wrote the whole

thing. One of the guys there was very musical-he wrote several original pieces of music for it. It was just crazy. So anyway, we did that. Donna Bowman did a class on death and dying over the summer. I took that. To begin with, there were not a whole lot of Honors professors because it was not a distinct department. There were no tenure tracks. I mean, Norb and Rick were the only people and Rick was still technically under the sociology department and Norb was still technically under the philosophy department. Honors College was not a separate college like business or the college of whatever. It was not that, because it didn't exist yet, technically as a separate entity. So they had people who came in and were the small group leaders. We had Don. I think Donna was really probably one of the very first people who was technically on staff-on faculty as strictly Honors College. There had been Philip Melton, and he had actually been an Honors College student. He was a lawyer and he led small groups, and he had been there for a long time, but I really think that towards the end, like whenever I was a senior is really when they started trying to make that move to it being an independent, actual college itself, which meant they had to offer-they had to fund their own kind of teaching stuff because they didn't fall under somebody else.

Speaker 1 [00:30:12] Yes, wow. So how was your experience with Norb? I am very interested in that.

Speaker 2 [00:30:19] He to me-he was not like some mythical figure who you could not talk to or whatever. I can remember I was-It must have been like the second week of school or something, and I got sick. I had a kidney infection, which I had never had before. I didn't even know what was happening. I am sitting in his office in small group, and I was like, "I am about to die", and he's like, "Are you okay?" He even recognized there was something wrong with me. So if he saw me out somewhere, he would know who I was. I actually saw him, probably about a year before he died at production at Reynolds and took a picture with him, and he recognized who I was there. I mean, he probably had not seen me in 15 years. It was a very intimate group of people, even though there were 100 of us. You felt like he knew who you were, and that you being there was important to him, and that if there was something that he could do for you, he would do it.

Speaker 1 [00:31:50] Wow. yes, I heard Norm has a very-or someone previously told me that he had a very nice aura.

Speaker 2 Yes.

Speaker 1 Did you guys have a freshman retreat?

Speaker 2 [00:32:03] We did. It was the first year that they went to the Heifer Project Place in Perryville. The Heifer project didn't have the place down in Little Rock. That was it. They had the place in Perryville, and we went up there about-it was almost a month after school had started. It was not right away it was. It was several weeks in because I actually had obligations and I had to go home almost every weekend. One from when I started school, like two or three weeks in a row, I had to go home for some reason, and that weekend was one of the first weekends that I would-that I didn't go home, and we went to Perryville and were there all weekend.

Speaker 1 [00:32:56] So what did you guys do on the retreat?

Speaker 2 [00:32:59] There was-I think the book was called, *How Much is Enough?* It was an environmental book. We had read the book, and we did some stuff about that-They

always do this thing where whoever can remember the most people's names wins a prize. That is totally not my deal. I am terrible at names, so they-when they get up in front of everybody and try to name as many people's names they possibly can and whoever can name the most is the winner. There were several talks, but the thing I remember that was the most sort of fun is there was this thing called the Heffer Hilton, which is basically a barn that some of the kids were assigned to. That was their living quarters, and I had gotten in this loggy kind of space, and it was just me and two or three other people. Those two or three other people were sort-they already were a crew. They sort of knew each other. They felt like they got along, and it just was not like my crew of people. I just was like, "okay, I want to stay in Heffer Hilton instead." So I just got my stuff out and moved over there, and I can remember getting in the shower in that thing, and it was so cold it took your breath away. It was freezing, but they had some kind of village deal where you could go up there and spend the night in. They assigned you to these random things that were like a hut in South Africa and whatever and-

Speaker 1 [00:34:51] Aren't they outside, with no air conditioning or insulation?

Speaker 2 yes.

Speaker 1 I have been to the Heifer Ranch, so I know, yes.

Speaker 2 [00:35:00] That was one of the things. They took us around and showed us that and we were like, "That sounds sort of like...", but we never actually went back up there and did it. One of the things that they did talk about is, how you buy animals through them or whatever, and that an ark was five thousand dollars and it was however many animals it was. We decided that as a class, that was something that we wanted to raise funds for and buy an ark. We did fundraisers for several years to fund that project and actually purchased an ark. Probably-I do not know if we were at the end of our sophomore year, or if it was our junior year, but we did finally raise enough money to do it.

Speaker 1 [00:35:51] Wow. So Core one is search for self, was it still like that?

Speaker 2 [00:35:58] Yes, if that is the philosopher one where it is all Plato and Aristotle and whatever, then yes, that is what Core I was. Core II, there was something about the death penalty. I had-my small group leader name was Dawn, and that man deserves all the accolades for putting up with me and my nonsense. I was pro-death penalty. It was ridiculous. He should have kicked me. That was Core II. Then Core III-I do not remember what three and four were, but-

Speaker 1 [00:36:41] There search for self, search like community.

Speaker 2 [00:36:49] Search for community, I think, is the one where we go off on the death penalty.

Speaker 1 [00:36:52] See, I probably should know the other two since I am in the Honors College but-

Speaker 2 [00:36:59] One of them, I did not think I could do, and that is why I did the musical theater, one that would have had to have been my sophomore year because I can remember my boyfriend who became my husband, actually helping us do a bunch of the stuff. He went to graduate school after that, so he graduated after I was a sophomore.

Speaker 1 [00:37:24] I was going to say, Phillips is your married name? Then Hardin is your maiden name?

Speaker 2 Yes.

Speaker 1 So you met your husband in-Was he in the Honors College?

Speaker 2 [00:37:38] He had been in-He started out in the Honors College. He was from North Little Rock and Hot Springs, and he had started out in the Honors College. This probably should not be in the archives, but he smoked a lot of pot, lost his scholarships, and goofed off. So I mean, kids go to school to do dumb stuff. He did dumb stuff. So his dad was paying for him to continue to go to school. One of the things that he did was he became a resident assistant. So he worked on the Short side for the two years that we went to school there, while we were there at the same time. Then after that, he graduated and went to Birmingham to get his doctorate. He was always-he was integrated into the Honors College because he was always there, and he stayed friends with everybody. I mean, he was the guy who remembered the most names at their freshmen retreat. That is totally Tim. He didn't continue in the Honors College, but he was an honorary member at that point because he had been around everybody for so long.

Speaker 1 [00:38:57] Wow, that is cool. How was your social life in college?

Speaker 2 [00:39:02] Whenever I was there, the first semester, I-Where I grew up, I was not-I had friends because it was kids that we went to church with and kids that we grew up with. When there are only one hundred and thirty six of you, you have to get along with somebody. I had friends and there were things that we did and, but I was-I was not weird, but I was weird. I was not the person-whenver I went to college, especially that first semester and part of the second semester, I really sort of just met lots of different people and probably made some poor choices with people I hung out with and did dumb stuff just like everybody else does. However, I did not smoke pot and flunk out, but I did manage to keep-I mean, I was not really in danger of losing my scholarship, but you know, I went to class, did my stuff. Towards the end of that first year, I started hanging out with a group of-there were probably like five or six of us. Actually, that first summer-Tim and I were not boyfriend and girlfriend. I had one-I had a boyfriend and me and him and two other people went to New Orleans for like a week. We drove down there and hung out, and I did stay-I was at home all that first summer. I went back to work for the bank that I had worked at while I was in high school. Then after that, I never really went home over the summer again. I guess the second summer, my parents ran the food part of the country club that was in town, and Tim came down there that summer and worked and lived with us. Then after that, I went to Alabama in the summertime where he was. These friends that I made, we still go on a trip every year together, and have since-my middle kid is about to be 11 and the first time we did as we were adults, I was pregnant with them. So for almost 12 years. That was probably like, I do not know, 10 years after we got out of school, we saw each other occasionally, but we lived all over the country. For the past 12 years, the five of us have gone somewhere every year together, at least once.

Speaker 1 [00:42:02] Wow. So I have a question. So you said that Short Denny was girl side-

Speaker 2 [00:42:10] Denny was girl side, and short was boys.

Speaker 1 [00:42:15] So were there any mixed-did boys and girls live together at that time?

Speaker 2 [00:42:22] No, and you even had somebody who sat down at the front desk who had a little box of index cards, and you had to check in and out of the sides. If somebody was in the opposite sex ring past two o'clock in the morning, on the weekends or past midnight during the week, you could get in trouble for that. So somebody downstairs had this card and it was like, "Kelly Hardin has somebody in her room", and if that person didn't come out of there at midnight, the front desk called them were like, "Get down here." So there were some shenanigans sneaking people in and out because it is college kids. I mean, that is-if there is a rule that says, "you can't do this", somebody is going to do it anyway. It was a huge thing. You could not have- they had to know who was in your room if they were of the opposite sex, if there was-the most mixed there was was there is that core courtyard down the middle, and some people thought they didn't need to close their blinds. There was a lot of back and forth that way, sometimes where somebody would get out of the shower and like not have their blinds closed "accidentally on purpose". We also did things like had water balloon fights out the window into the courtyard. So it was fun to to all be right there together.

Speaker 1 [00:44:08] Wow. So you said you never really went back home that often, other than that one summer? So you never got homesick?

Speaker 2 [00:44:18] No, I didn't. I was glad to be away from that small town, and I felt like I had found my people. I had found my group of people that I had never had before anywhere. So that is where I wanted to be. I very rarely went home. Actually, I had a roommate one year whose family life was not fantastic. A couple of times she went home to my house without me, and I sent my laundry with her and my parents did it and send it back.

Speaker 1 [00:45:02] Wow.

Speaker 2 [00:45:04] I enjoyed being up there, I enjoyed it, and I am not an extroverted person, that is not my thing. People do wear me out, but those were my people. There was not anywhere else I really wanted to be.

Speaker 1 [00:45:26] Do your parents still live there?

Speaker 2 [00:45:28] No, my parents got divorced whenever I was a junior, maybe. My mother lives in Malvern now, and my dad actually lives like two miles down the road from me here in Sherwood.

Speaker 1 [00:45:44] That is where I grew up.

So diversity, how diverse was the Honors class, or your Honors class?

Speaker 2 [00:45:56] I would say not super diverse. We probably had, I would say 10 to 15 percent were people of color. I think it was probably fairly evenly split between boys and girls, but as far as people from foreign countries, people who were different or religious backgrounds, there really was not a whole lot of diversity. I do not know. I do not think it was like something intentional. It is just how it ended up at that point. I do not know what the diversity ratios were at UCA, but there were not a whole lot of people of color, but it was fairly evenly split between men and women, I would say.

Speaker 1 [00:46:54] So do you remember your sophomore lecture?

Speaker 2 [00:47:00] Honestly, I had no idea what I did my sophomore lecture on. Nothing. I remember my thesis and I remember some of my other classes, but I have no idea what I did my sophomore lecture on.

Speaker 1 [00:47:15] So your thesis is, says the Supreme Court past, present and future. What was that?

Speaker 2 [00:47:23] So I had Business Law II. Whenever I was a senior, the lady who taught it was a lawyer for Altel. And I have actually seen her since then, in the grocery store and at the gym one time and. She gave us super hard questions for her exams, like CPA exam questions, and she didn't tell us she was going to do that, so nobody studied for that. I felt like I was interested in the law and the legal process. I knew at that point I was not going to go to law school, but I mean, seriously, what can you write about accounting for a thesis? That is not-the theory part of accounting is pretty well nailed down at this point for the past several hundred years. So it is not like you can come up with some new, but fantastic something. I had to do something. I asked her if she would be my thesis advisor and. Since I did not do the thesis class, we largely did that work independently. I didn't-there was not turning stuff in, or outlines, or whatever because I was not in that class. So I gave my thesis defense close to the end-it was right before school was out, I guess right before I graduated. I graduated in the summer, so I gave that in the summertime. It was Norb, and Rick, and Philip were there. My parents were there. Maybe another Honors College faculty person. I do not remember who that might be, but it was just on the top floor of MacAllister there in the fancy conference room. It was really about the history of the Supreme Court, and some of their landmark decisions, and how they shape the way that we interpret the constitution and laws and things like that.

Speaker 1 [00:49:51] So what kind of led you to that route of a thesis?

Speaker 2 [00:49:55] It was really just because I had to think of something, and I liked that teacher who was teaching Business Law II. She was not a traditional-She was not on faculty. She was an adjunct professor. I knew I wanted to do something where I talked about the law in some way. It just sort of developed from that interest and then asking her if she would do it and be my advisor for that.

Speaker 1 [00:50:30] So the only Honors professors really at the time were Norb, Rick, Donna-

Speaker 2 [00:50:37] Philip Melton was there. That was-Chad Terrell was also there. There was John Kennedy, he was there, but I cannot remember if he was actually being a teaching assistant or not. Then there was Don, whose last name I cannot-Don Baker. That is what his last name was. He led a small group, and then there are probably a couple other rotating facilitators for different small groups. There was a professor in the English department, there was Conrad Shoemaker. He always helped with something. One of my friends actually had him perform her marriage ceremony. She liked him so much. They were pulling from other disciplines to have small group leaders and teachers do stuff.

Speaker 1 [00:51:48] So what professor would you say had the biggest impact on you?

Speaker 2 [00:51:53] And I would say, even though I only have this person for one class over the summer, I would probably say Donna Bowman. I super duper enjoyed her. She took a novel approach to what we were talking about, and I felt like it was very interesting. She also had us over to her house on Monday nights to watch a movie because that is Donna's thing. She's into pop culture and movies and things like that. She had picked this whole series of movies that had to do with our subject matter. We went over there one night a week and watched a movie probably four or five times over the summer that had to do with our topic about death and dying. Not that-I never- Rick was not ever one of my small group leaders. He did do a class about the 70's, that time period because he was really a part of that movement in the 60's and 70's. He actually did a class about that, and we went through the whole beat generation all the way through Vietnam and all kinds of stuff. So that was really the only class I ever had with him. Then, Philip was okay and Don was okay, and I am sure I had another small group later somewhere in there. I do not remember who it was, but I super enjoyed Donna as my teacher over that summer.

Speaker 1 [00:53:45] Yes, she's awesome. So were there any major events that happened just throughout the world that really had a big effect on your college experience? Was Bill Clinton elected that year you came?

Speaker 2 [00:54:02] I think. I started school in 1996. I do not know when it was. It was close. I think he was still-He was the president from 1993 to 2001, and I knew it happened before I went to school because we had a guy in our town, Merle Petersen, who was a big time dude in the Democratic Party, and he took us up to Bill Clinton's headquarters, and we volunteered up there. I know I was not-I mean, 1996 I would have-I mean, 1993, I would have been in like the ninth or tenth grade. He took us up there. We copied checks all day one day. We answered telephones one day. So I knew it was before I'd graduated, but Bill Clinton was president the entire time. I mean, obviously one of the big things was the Monica Lewinsky scandal, because we invented an entire musical about it and did that. I do not remember anything else that was super spectacular during that time, but that was pretty much one of the bigger things that happened.

Speaker 1 [00:55:25] How long was the Honors College a thing when you were-Did you start and it was still new?

Speaker 2 [00:55:35] No, I can't-No, because it is- I started in 1996, so it started in the 80's. I mean, it was the late 80's because it is celebrating a milestone birthday next year. I want to say it is like 40 or something. So I do not think it is 30, and it is not 50. So I want to say it is 40, but it was not brand new. We were one of the first larger classes that they had done, and whatever funding they had round to help make that possible, was not around forever. I do not know how many kids y'all have whenever you start out, but I think probably like four or five years after we started, it went back down to a smaller group of people. It was not in over a hundred like it had been whenever we had started.

Speaker 1 [00:56:40] There was no limit, right? They just wanted as many people-

Speaker 2 [00:56:44] I do not know exactly what it was that precipitated them saying, "Oh, well, instead of having-" You know, when they first started out, there were like 12 kids or something or 15, I mean, it was about 20 people, they could all be upstairs in that conference room. They had gradually had the funding to grow it some, but for some reason, the year before, in 1995, 1996, 97, 98, maybe even 99, they had these larger classes because they were trying to have a bigger group of people for some reason.

Speaker 1 [00:57:27] Do you think that the Honors College helped prepare you for the real world, or helped you in any way?

Speaker 2 [00:57:35] So I think that the classes themselves are probably not something that I use on a daily basis. I mean, I do not normally talk about things like the funeral industry, or the beat generation during the day to day activities, but I do think that the way that I think about things was changed by that. I think that by exposing me to all of these different people and ideas, it made me more accepting of others and less black and white about things, which is an easy trap to fall into. Whenever you are raised in a tiny town and you only see these twenty five hundred same people for most of your life. It made me see that there was a wider sphere of things to think about and see about and do and be other than just, go back home and do accounting work for those twenty five hundred people. Not that it necessarily taught me something specific that I feel like is instrumental in my life other than just the ideas and the way that we think about things. It is also an excellent place to make sure that you have a little bit of sense about what you're writing. I use that all the time. That is just because you had to write a bunch. You had to write a lot of things. Now did I always want to write those things? No. Do you all still have to do journals?

Speaker 1 [00:59:47] Yes, all the time.

Speaker 2 [00:59:50] So me and my roommate, Beth, one year, it was in Philip's class. She had a different section than I did. Of course, we had not done what we were supposed to do. I read half of it. She read half of it. I wrote just about half of it. She wrote journals about the other half of it, and then we paraphrased the half we didn't do in our journals. I'll probably get my degree rescinded over that. But you know-

Speaker 1 [01:00:19] I mean, it is too late now,

Speaker 2 [01:00:22] They can not come get it now, but that is universal-

Speaker 1 [01:00:31] We have all helped each other out. No, I am not going to incriminate myself. I am still in college. No, I have not did- have not cheated, but we have definitely helped. Everyone gets help from one another. So we are out of time, but I want to ask you one last question. What was your most memorable experience? Pinpoint one thing or feeling, or just summarize what the Honors College meant to you.

Speaker 2 [01:01:10] I really think it was just that-I felt like there was a place and these were my people that were important to me, and that while we may not be the same and we may not think about things the same way, it was this group of people who were sort of all in this together. Some of those people I may never, ever see again. If I did, I have seen a couple of people in Target and been like, "Oh, Shayna", and they still know who we are. It is such a wide network and we have people doing things all over the place, there is lots of people everywhere that if I went to Nebraska, there is probably an Honors College person up there, if I needed to know something about marine biology, there is probably an Honors College person who knows something about that. So I feel like it was this group that helped shape who I thought I wanted to be. I would have never met my husband if I hadn't gone to school there. I mean, we have five kids. It was one of the most important choices that, at the time, I didn't even realize what or how it was going to shape who I was. It was just that I went to the open house that UCA invited me to.

Speaker 1 [01:03:14] That is awesome. That is such a cool story, and then Norb came up to you and handed you a pamphlet.

Speaker 2 [01:03:21] Yes, so the things that I did find-I did not go to the office today because I had a migraine and I have a few other things up there. I have a note from Norb. You can not read it, but it says, "I am sorry that you did not get a "thank you"...", I do not know why he's using quotes, "from the Honors College for all you did for the fundraiser. This was to have been done." He underlined it, "I am sorry. Be sure that I did notice what you did, and I am deeply appreciative of all you do for Honors." That is from 1997. So I had that in my book of stuff. Do they still do this the week before finals? They have like a big white carnival kind of thing.

Speaker 1 [01:04:07] Yes. We do have-yes, we do have a carnival, but I do not know. I think so.

Speaker 2 [01:04:16] We used to-do they still serve crawfish?

Speaker 1 [01:04:20] No, I wish!

Speaker 2 [01:04:22] So they used to serve crawfish and this is me with long hair and my boyfriend, Leslie Stone, who is now a doctor in Fayetteville. And this is Rob Francis [hold up picture]. I do not know what he does now, but we had this enormous pile of crawfish in front of us, and they put us on the front of the newspaper with all these things. I have a couple of other things at the office. Where Norb wrote my dad a note whenever he gave some money or something, and Norb was writing a thank you note and said some things about me. Then, I mean, it is not normal for people to have their undergraduate degree on their wall, but I do have my UCA diploma. They did those enamel things for you to wear whenever you graduated, and it has the tree on it. I do not know if they still do that, but I have that, and then I have the picture of my class and it is all in one big frame and that is hanging at my office.

Speaker 1 [01:05:33] That is awesome. Well, if you can-

Speaker 2 I'll send those in.

Speaker 1 Yes. When you go to your office, scan them all in, and I would love to see all of them.

It has been so great!

Speaker 2 [01:05:47] Thank you. I am so glad I could do it. We only had one dog barking.

Speaker 1 [01:05:55] Some thunder, but that is okay, we made it. All right. Well, thank you so much. You have a great rest of your night.

Speaker 2 [01:06:05] You are welcome. If you need anything else, just let me know.

Speaker 1 [01:06:09] Thank you so much!