

TRANSCRIPTION RE:

**CSUMB Founding Faculty
Oral History Project 1995-98
Rina Benmayor, Project Director**

**Interview with Josina Makau, Professor Emerita,
Philosophy and Communication
School of Humanities and Communication
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences**

**Interviewer, Rina Benmayor,
Oral History, Literature, and Latina Studies,
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Narrator: Josina Makau
Interviewer: Rina Benmayor

1 **Benmayor:** *Today is September 2, 2015 and this is Rina Benmayor and I am here interviewing Josina*
2 *Makau in her home in Monterey, California. I'd like to thank you, Josina for participating in our Founding*
3 *Faculty Oral History Project at CSU Monterey Bay. To start out with, Josina, could you please state your*
4 *name and then pause a little bit and then tell me if we have permission to use this recording.*

5 **Makau:** My name is Josina Makau and I'd like to thank you as well for making this possible and
6 providing your leadership on this project. Thank you so much for the opportunity. And you definitely have
7 my permission.

8 **Benmayor:** *Okay, great. So, Josina, to start out with, I'd like to ask you if you could briefly just give us a*
9 *little background about yourself.*

10 **Makau:** Well, I could spend four hours on it or two minutes. I'm not sure – briefly being the key word,
11 right?

12 **Benmayor:** *[Chuckles] Briefly. Right.*

13 **Makau:** My background. Academic principally?

14 **Benmayor:** *No. Your life story background.*

15 **Makau:** Oh, okay. Very quickly, born in the Netherlands. Moved to the United States and Los Angeles in
16 particular when I was six years old, with my family. And then spent my childhood from that point on in
17 Los Angeles. And then went to CSU Northridge first, so I really have a CSU experience there, I received
18 my B.A. in Philosophy with a minor in Speech Communication. Went on to my first M.A. at UCLA and
19 that was in Philosophy. And went from there to UC Berkeley where I received my Ph.D. in Rhetoric. And
20 they required three areas of study, three expertise areas. And so I studied philosophy, law and rhetoric. And

21 then went from there and spent fifteen years as a faculty member on the Ohio State University faculty. And
22 then finally had the great joy of being able to come to the CSU Monterey Bay, as yet not campus, [laugh] to
23 serve as one of the founding faculty.

24 **Benmayor:** *Oh, that's lovely. I'm just curious, this is a personal curiosity but do you remember much of*
25 *the Netherlands?*

26 **Makau:** Oh, I do. My capacity for childhood memory is very weak. It's something I share with my
27 brother. He and I lament that, because we wish we remembered more. Having said that I have returned
28 enough times and spent enough time with cousins and aunts and uncles and so on to really have them assist
29 me in remembering. And my brother and I have traveled back several times together. And we've recouped
30 some of our memories that way.

31 **[3:12] Benmayor:** *Great. So let's move to the topic at hand. I'd like to ask you when was it or how did*
32 *you find out about this job or this university being planned at Monterey Bay?*

33 **Makau:** I was looking through the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and it was a time when I was ready to
34 consider options. I had identified one option and only one other option, but really that was all. So I was just
35 looking and then I saw this *unbelievable* ad. From my perspective. And I know that I'm not alone because
36 there were 6,000 applications! [Laughs] So I don't think I am being hyperbolic when I say unbelievable.

37 **Benmayor:** *In what way was it unbelievable?*

38 **Makau:** Oh, my goodness. Well, first of all, to be a part of the founding of an institution, any institution,
39 that's remarkable enough. But to be a part of an institution that self-defines in the terms that are articulated
40 in the campus Vision is rather a dream come true. Really that's the best way I could frame it. And again, I
41 know that I'm not alone since there were so many other applicants. It was distinctive in *so many ways*. In
42 1994 I guess it was, when I saw the ad, at that time the prospect of having a university entirely committed
43 to learning sounds really silly to say that that would be such an anomaly but to be frank with you that's
44 really quite extraordinary. To have a campus completely dedicated to serving the needs of all students but

45 especially to pay close attention, especially, to historically underserved students in service to the
46 community at large was rather stunning. It had been my purpose in many ways all my life but I had always
47 been working against the grain. [Chuckles] And to imagine that one could come to a place where everyone
48 embraced my values was... well, it was deeply inspirational. Imagine. Just to come to a place, for example,
49 where people embrace diversity as an asset, where it's not something you over come. It's something you
50 say, "Oh, how fortunate are we to have this extraordinary resource where people come with different
51 experiences and ideas and principles and norms and ways of being, knowing and valuing so that together
52 we can make informed and reasoned decisions that work for the community, for the common wealth. A
53 place where we don't celebrate individualism or materialism but community. A place where we embrace
54 ethnic and gender studies and equity studies. Where we embrace multiculturalism. A place that actually
55 says, "You know, ethical reflection and practice matter deeply. Core values matter. A place where people
56 are encouraged to collaborate. Where it isn't dangerous, it's actually a blessing." [Laughs] And those are
57 just a few. And a place that recognizes that in the 21st century the only way we are going to be able to
58 identify and solve problems is if we work across disciplines, across cultural boundaries and embrace
59 interdisciplinarity.

60 [7:45] [pause for external noise]

61 **Benmayor:** *[There's a plane going overhead so we're pausing here. It's amazing how much this picks up.*
62 *Come on, go away. Okay, so let's pick up again]. You were talking about how remarkable the job*
63 *announcement was and how it matched your values so closely. And I think yes, all of us did have that*
64 *moment of recognition when we saw it. But why were you ready to move on?*

65 **Makau:** Several reasons. I had been at Ohio State University for 15 years and it was an experience that
66 was rich with opportunities for learning and growth. And so I want to be very clear that I'm not lamenting
67 or speaking ill of that. I'm grateful to have had it. To come straight out of graduate school to an opportunity
68 like that was really a blessing. And so don't mishear me. Having said that however I think I already

69 mentioned that there was quite a mismatch between what I perceived and experienced to be the core values
70 of that very traditional academic mainstream institution of higher learning, on the one hand, and my own
71 core values. And so while I celebrate that I had many opportunities for success because I was able to work
72 with pockets of others who shared my values and was able to start many programs. I started the pre-law
73 program at Ohio State University. I developed, with the help of many others, do not mishear me, it's never
74 alone that one achieves goals of this type, so with wonderful, wonderful colleagues I was able to work
75 together with them to develop a general education program that to this day is still part of the curriculum.
76 And to develop programs for, this was a graduate program at Ohio State, a doctoral program. So I was able
77 to develop professional development programming for graduate assistants that, to this day, is basically
78 funding much of the lower educational programming. So it's very exciting and I still have testimonials
79 coming in from people who were in that program. And that's lovely. But the Communication Department
80 at that time was in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Had we been in the Humanities things
81 would have been quite different for us. At the point that we're discussing now, at that point the college got
82 a new dean. And this new dean had a vision that was quite antithetical to everything we embraced in our ...
83 well, I'll give you one tiny little example.

84 **[11:13]** It's unusual to picture at a land grant, publicly funded, state institution a dean coming to faculty to
85 reprimand them for their commitment to undergraduate education. It's an oddity. And that kind of
86 summarizes, I think, in a nice way, it's an anecdote that perhaps is representative of the issue. I also have to
87 confess that while there are so many things to cherish in Columbus, Ohio when I moved from Berkeley to
88 Columbus – and you're laughing because you understand what I am about to say – I discovered very, very
89 quickly because it felt like a foreign land to me, that it was more different from the Netherlands. Columbus,
90 Ohio is profoundly different from Berkeley in general. The atmosphere and the values that are shared by so
91 many in that community are, at that time in particular, and I think it might not be quite so stark now but at
92 that time, well let's just say I didn't feel at home in fifteen years. And at a certain point you think, "Golly. I

93 think I'm ready to go back home." And home for me is a place where the values that I cherish so deeply
94 align well with my own. California. Not certain pockets of California, of course. I mean I don't want to do
95 this grand sweep. But certainly the Central Coast held a lot of promise. Northern California in particular.
96 The Berkeley-Bay Area and so on. So I was ready. Now my partner, Carole, Carole was really wedded ... I
97 should probably tell you a funny story. Carole was deeply, deeply wedded to staying in Columbus and that
98 was one of the things that ... well, honestly, it was a principle thing that kept me from looking before 1995.
99 But when we had the new dean who basically made it clear that he was going to integrate our department
100 with another and essentially eliminate all of those of us committed to the Humanities. He wasn't going to
101 get rid of our lines, we were tenured and so on. But you can suffocate. You can suffocate a group and he
102 didn't hide this. This was not...we had open and candid discussions about his intentions. So I was clear
103 what was going to happen to those of us committed to a particular view of humanity, of research, of
104 research methodology, certainly multiculturalism, interdisciplinarity, ethnic studies, gender studies, oh my
105 goodness. There was not going to be room for what I had been doing all those years, in any meaningful
106 way.

107 **[14:33]** And I saw the ad ... before then Carole had been really ... her position had been really clear, let's
108 just say that. "I'm not ready to move. I'm certainly not going to move someplace that far from my family!"
109 which is in Pittsburgh. Then I showed her the ad. She was downstairs painting, I recall. And I showed her
110 the ad and she read the ad and she knows enough about my commitments and my passions and my life's
111 struggles and also great causes for celebration, to understand. And then when she read that it was in
112 Monterey, in Seaside, California which I have not shared with you yet, but when I was at Berkeley I
113 decided that that's where I actually wanted to go. When I was at Berkeley as a graduate student I thought to
114 myself, "I might even be willing to go to a community college if needed to live someday in Monterey,
115 California because it is where my heart soars most profoundly." Now imagine an ad with every core value

116 I've ever embraced in my whole life, not just academia, in a place that I've always dreamed of living and

117 Carole's response – are we allowed to use profanity in this? Carol's response to the ad was, "Oh, fuck."

118 **Benmayor:** *[Laughs]*

119 **Makau:** [Laughs]

120 **Benmayor:** *And little did she know that she would be ending up here.*

121 **Makau:** No, actually she knew that moment.

122 **Benmayor:** *She knew it. Um hmm.*

123 **Makau:** Because ... it's just too dramatic. The alignment is just too dramatic. Maybe if it had been in
124 Timbuktu I still would have applied, don't get me wrong, and would have gone with great joy if they had
125 allowed me, but Monterey? Are you kidding? [Chuckles] My goodness.

126 **Benmayor:** *Well, I didn't know that about you.*

127 **Makau:** No, I don't think I've ever shared that with people. It's funny because my life has taken such
128 extraordinary turns and I have always followed my own bliss. I don't mean that in the way it sounds.
129 Certainly very aware and cognizant of consequences to others so don't mishear me. But for example, a
130 short story is appropriate at this juncture? It's kind of off point, but

131 **[17:09]** As a student going to graduate school when I went into the Philosophy Department for my
132 master's degree that was at a time when there were absolutely no jobs in philosophy. Not that it's changed
133 that much but it's better now than it was then. And we actually received a letter, all the candidates received
134 a letter from the university indicating that there would likely be no jobs and did we still want – I mean even
135 the handful of us selected for admission received that letter. Nevertheless I said, "Well, I've been a
136 waitress, I've taken care of myself, I've cleaned houses, I can do many things. I've been a playground
137 director. I've been a supervisor at dance and music in the Los Angeles city schools. I can find jobs. So this
138 isn't about finding a job. This is about following my quest to learn what matters to me most deeply so I'll
139 just do it. I had been a social worker as well. So I entered the program. It's a long story and I'm only going

140 to give the punchline that as wonderful an experience as it was, it didn't actually address the question I
141 most cared about, which is how does one live a good life. You'd think a philosophy program would do that
142 but at that time it was Western Analytic Philosophy. I don't have to say more. At this point in history even
143 philosophers understand why Western Analytic Philosophy by itself is inadequate to address the question,
144 "What's a good life? How do we make good decisions? How do we live and do well?" Then I moved to
145 UC Berkeley. You know that already. But when I was choosing what to study at UC Berkeley I studied an
146 area where there are absolutely no jobs, Judicial Argumentation. Everybody said, "You know, a Ph.D. in
147 Rhetoric can get you really great jobs. Lots of money and esteem. Judicial argumentation, not so much.
148 There are *no* jobs." Everyone told me that and I said the same thing, "It's all right, not a problem." Don't
149 you know, as soon as I am on the cusp of finishing my Ph.D., Ohio State University advertises for a
150 position in Judicial Argumentation. That's why I tell students follow your heart. Follow your heart.
151 Because inside us is way more insight than any of us can imagine or know. We know things. We know
152 them. I don't know why or how but I know we know them. And if we just listen to the *authentic* voice
153 inside us we will discover things that we can't possibly understand at that moment. But if we trust it, trust
154 that voice, unless of course you are a sociopath, don't trust your voice. [Laughter]

155 **Benmayor:** *So now that we're at that point I'd like to ask you how was the interview process? How did*
156 *you apply? The whole application process. How was that for you? And then tell me about when you first*
157 *arrived here.*

158 **[20:40] Makau:** At that time because I was applying for a founding faculty position there were ten lines.
159 They were published as ten lines. And I say ten lines as if that's a meaningful construct. It really isn't
160 because they weren't asking for particulars at all. They were asking for ten people of any disciplines, of any
161 backgrounds, who had the expertise to foster development of a new campus committed to the Vision.
162 That's really I think the best way to frame it. So I don't recall it saying we want three of this and two of
163 that. I don't recall that. So lines is not the right word. Ten positions, open ended positions. I applied for one

164 of those slots, I guess is the best way to put it. Long, long story short the interview involved, there were
165 about 100 of us on the facility at the time and they had us in groups of ten or so on buses for tours and so
166 on. And then each of us got an individual – so you actually saw some of the others who were applying for
167 the very same position as you shared buses and shuttles and so on. It was a very interesting experience in
168 and of itself. You listened real carefully, especially to those who had already been interviewed. Then each
169 one of us was interviewed. My recollection is it was quite a large committee. It had community members. It
170 had artists and historians and scientists – I don't remember fully. And of course it also had the Provost.
171 Steve Arvizu was on that committee. So it was a highly representative committee from. . . I think they
172 selected from among people who wrote the vision and were deeply committed to it and community partners
173 for the future and so on. So I had the interview which I just... I was so excited by the interview. It was so
174 beautiful. Well, again, it was an interview with people deeply committed to everything I'd ever been
175 committed to. And it just so happened, I'm telling you, fate is so kind sometimes and in this instance, it just
176 so happened I had just won Ohio State University's Distinguished Teaching Award and was on the front
177 page of the *Columbus Dispatch*. So I could send that little article. [Laughs] And that was really lovely. And
178 everything in my background, *everything* in my background from my supervising of the L.A. City Schools
179 Music and Dance Program, to my social work, to my being the Affirmative Action Liaison for our college
180 for fifteen years, to all of my work in embracing diversity, even my publications and my scholarship, to of
181 course my interdisciplinary exploration of what does it mean to give a good life, everything aligned with
182 what they were asking. I mean it was magical. It was a magical experience. I could feel the magic in the
183 room and I was so grateful, so deeply, deeply grateful.

184 **Benmayor:** *And so what time of year did you have this interview and how long did it take to hire you?*

185 **[23:58] Makau:** Oh, wow. Golly. I don't remember precisely the time of year. I do remember however it
186 was very, very long before I heard anything and to the point where I actually assumed I was out of the
187 running. I think I was interviewed perhaps in the late summer but I'm not sure. It could have been June or

188 July, I'm not sure. And I heard nothing. Usually you hear *something*. Something that tells you well, not so
189 much or golly, you're still in the running, there are eight others with whom you are competing for this one
190 slot. Something. I heard nothing so I thought "Oh, well, what a bummer. It would have been so lovely."
191 Okay, meanwhile I'm still ready to look at options and so I looked for, and I'm going to get to the timeline.
192 So I checked the *Chronicle*. I saw nothing. I was not going to move unless it was perfect, frankly. I don't
193 believe, by the way, in just applying for jobs, it's never been my thing. So I didn't apply to anything else
194 until I saw, I think it was in late October perhaps, I saw this rather remarkable position. Not quite as
195 remarkable as CSU Monterey Bay potentially but very close. Committed to similar values. And on the
196 cutting edge, really. They were looking for a Chair in the Department of Communication at the University
197 of Maryland. And it was the only other position I applied for. And I sent in my application. They
198 immediately called me for an interview. Again, no doubt because my background is anomalous, it's weird
199 but it aligned perfectly with their cutting edge vision and so how fortunate was that. So I was going to
200 interview and I was going to be interviewed the Monday after Thanksgiving. Okay? I get a letter the day
201 before Thanksgiving, out of the clear blue, from CSU Monterey Bay with a contract. That's a rather odd
202 phenomena. It ordinarily doesn't happen quite that way. As you well know. Having been on nineteen
203 search committees I know that's anomalous. But oh, my goodness. Now there's no way, there is no way
204 that I'm going to go interview at Maryland. That would be wrong. I know what it takes to interview people.
205 I knew then because I had been on so many ... I had chaired search committees. Oh, my gosh, the work
206 involved. And so I called and said, "Oh, wow. I just received this offer." And ordinarily when people
207 receive an offer, you know, then they want to negotiate. And so very understandably they said, "Oh please,
208 come. Definitely come. Let us compete." And I knew that that would be wrong because when you know
209 what you ... there is nothing I wanted more than this extraordinary opportunity. And so I was very honest
210 and forthright. They were really kind of cranky with me but I tried to convey to the best of my ability how
211 deeply grateful I was, so grateful, but it would be wrong for me to take everyone's time and mislead them

212 when I knew already that this was where my heart would most soar. Although I could see myself very
213 happy there, I really could. I had been to a conference where the students and faculty had a gathering and
214 they invited me to come and it was a beautiful fit. So I would have been very happy. But are you kidding?
215 This was ... this was just too dramatic.

216 **[28:00] Benmayor:** *So when you came for your interview what did you see? What was there?*

217 **Makau:** [Laughs] Well, we were housed in a motel in Carmel. Or I was.

218 **Benmayor:** *One hundred people?*

219 **Makau:** No. I don't think all of us were but I happened to be. It's so funny because it's the same motel
220 where I was housed right after the flood. But anyway, the hotel. And so then we were taken on shuttles to
221 the campus. Well, I shouldn't say campus, to the base. To the army base. And wow! You know, an army
222 base is an army base and Fort Ord was just that. So, oh, my goodness. Barbed wire. [Laughs]. Concrete.
223 Pretty... signs on buildings that were not exactly aligned with my core values, but it was quite remarkable
224 to imagine how we could transform! Not "we" but anyone who had the privilege of serving as founding
225 faculty could contribute to the transformation would be quite remarkable. But it was stark. They didn't
226 exactly take us on tours to say isn't this lovely? But rather, think of the promise. It was more like that. And
227 then they showed us surrounding areas and that was lovely. That was lovely.

228 **Benmayor:** *So when did you actually move and come here?*

229 **Makau:** I moved ... remember, I got the letter the day before Thanksgiving and I was on duty at Ohio
230 State. I had no reason to believe I would not be on duty. So that was already rather challenging. I mean,
231 we're talking mid-year. And to leave a campus where you have commitments to your colleagues and to
232 friends and to your students, it's potentially quite challenging. My colleagues, the Chair of the department,
233 the students, were all so incredibly supportive. They knew all the facts about what was happening to our
234 department, in particular to the humanists in the department. And they recognized that this was an
235 extraordinary opportunity to serve the very core values that we all, those of us who cared for one another

236 embraced. So I was able to ... actually, I think I was one of the only people who did this, but I don't believe
237 in taking leave if you have no intention of coming back. It doesn't feel right to me. It blocks your
238 colleagues from hiring other people, from filling the position, from knowing the future. I believe most
239 Founding Faculty did. But in fairness to them they probably didn't have as much certainty as I did. Because
240 I would have been a waitress or whatever I needed to be if this didn't work out. Or found another job in
241 academia, I had complete faith, if you will, that it would be all right. So others very understandably maybe
242 didn't feel quite the same as I, took leaves. But I didn't. I consulted with the Chair. He worked it through.
243 You can imagine that this particular Dean, he and I had been...well, we had had a number of public
244 conversations and a large majority of faculty were embracing my perspective. So he was not cranky to see
245 me leave and signed within two hours! [Laughs] I think it's very funny. My colleagues filled in. I did stay
246 on the committees, the doctoral committees, of course, of my advisees. And I returned, took trips for their
247 exams and worked online with them and on the phone and made sure that all of their needs were met
248 because it would have been unconscionable not to attend to those. But at the undergraduate level others
249 could cover. At that point we had a number of well trained people because I had that professional
250 development program that had been working for more than ten years, enabling people to fill in for me in
251 my absence. So that was so lovely. So that was a long answer but it seemed important to give you the
252 context.

253 **[32:45] Benmayor:** *Well, you mentioned something a little while ago in relation to Ohio State that*
254 *resonated with me because I heard something similar when I arrived, and I arrived six months later, was*
255 *that there had been no plan at Monterey Bay for any curriculum or anything in the Humanities. Is that*
256 *true?*

257 **Makau:** [Chuckles] It's so true that – representative anecdote. When I flew back for one of my advisee's
258 dissertation oral exam upon my leaving our one and only Humanities major, Human Communication,

259 Humanities and Communication, that major was taken off the books. And Marsha, my dear friend and
260 colleague alerted me.

261 **Benmayor:** *Marsha...*

262 **Makau:** Marsha Moroh, who has been the Dean in Science and Technology for all these years and was
263 just an extraordinary colleague, Founding Faculty colleague. Brilliant woman. Great resource. Great friend.
264 Great colleague. Great ally to the core values. She alerted me. She let me know right away. “Oh, Josina,
265 they are taking the major off the books!” And so I intervened online and on the phone and we got it back
266 on the books. But the reason I was given was, “Why would we need a major in the Humanities? Which I’ll
267 be frank, I found stunning particularly in light of the core values which seemed to suggest to me at least one
268 if not several, interdisciplinary humanities and communication programs. We did end up with more than
269 one, because we do have a World Languages and Cultures which obviously also beautifully serves the
270 Humanities. But golly, to be told that the reason we are going to eliminate this major if you are not here to
271 defend it or to advocate on its behalf for this one weekend that you are over there, golly that was a shock. It
272 was an eye opener.

273 **[35:08]** The second anecdote is that there were thirty five lines that were going to be filled. We had
274 allocation from the State of California, from the CSU system, for thirty five lines. They were as yet
275 unnamed, of course. Guess how many lines were allocated to the Humanities out of those thirty five lines?
276 One. One line in the Humanities. And remember, we were to cover Humanities and Communication
277 Studies, all of that corpus, all of that learning. We were given one line in the thirty five lines. And
278 remember this, I was the only person hired in the Humanities among the Founding Faculty.

279 **Benmayor:** *Wow.*

280 **Makau:** It is rather stunning. But having said that, really great things happened. For example, this
281 remarkable person named Rina Benmayor came to me and said, “Hey, this is looking like, this HCOM, this
282 new major looks a lot like something I would feel very comfortable serving in and being a part of.” I said,

283 “Come aboard,” and you did because at that time there weren’t constraints like there are now. There was a
284 lot of – and I appreciated that so much – the fluidity and the flexibility. Tomas Kalmar. He said, “Ooh, this
285 is looking really like something I could serve well.” “Come onboard.”

286 **Benmayor:** *And he was hired to do Teacher Education and Math.*

287 **Makau:** And math! That’s right. And he also embraced music. Music. He was a very good musician.
288 “Come onboard.” Because he had so much to offer us as well. So now we’re up to three lines. You, me and
289 Tomas. .

290 **Benmayor:** *I thought there were –*

291 **Makau:** I’m going to get to that. .

292 **Benmayor:** *Oh, okay. I thought there were two lines that you hired.*

293 **Makau:** No, we *did* hire because we argued and argued. But what we argued is that we desperately
294 needed, if nothing else we most certainly needed a historian. And so we did secure a line for a historian.
295 And we desperately needed and did secure an original line for Ethnic Studies and Literature, intertwining
296 those two into Ethnic Studies and Literature. And then I made a passionate plea which the rest of the
297 faculty strongly supported that goodness, gracious, on a campus that is a comprehensive state university
298 that is supposed to serve the demographic that we’ve identified, we need someone who has a commitment
299 to serving a writing program. And so we were able to secure that position. As a *writ large*. Not for our
300 major but a *writ large* position. So that added to the corpus of lines. And then slowly but surely people
301 became allies.

302 Now, I’ll tell you candidly that we didn’t secure many additional lines until, and this will be very
303 controversial and I understand that, I really get it, but until Dell Felder came. In her first week I went to her
304 office and I just showed her the facts.

305 **Benmayor:** *She was...*

306 **Makau:** She was hired to be the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs which at that time I
307 believe was...[unintelligible]. I don't remember. In any case, the Provost. She was somebody who was
308 really interested in facts. I appreciated that very, very much. So I didn't have to say anything. All I did was
309 show her the facts. This many lines to cover this curriculum. That many lines to cover that curriculum and
310 so on. That's all I did, just show her the facts. And she had a response something like, "Oh, my God." That
311 was all I had to say and we started getting our lines. And that's how we got essentially almost all of the
312 lines.

313 **Benmayor:** *I think we got the line for Creative Writing in the very first year, if I remember.*

314 **Makau:** We did. That was because of the allies. Because of allies on the founding faculty who recognized
315 the critical importance of a program in creative writing and social justice, one that really aligned with our
316 vision. You have to have that element if you are going to have a program in Humanities and
317 Communication.

318 **Benmayor:** *By that time you were in interim Dean.*

319 [39:42] **Makau:** I was. Oh, my goodness!

320 **Benmayor:** *I have so many questions but backing up a little bit to before I came, because I came in the
321 Summer of '95. So the ten founding faculty were huddled together doing what during those months?*

322 **Benmayor:** Oh, golly. It was -

323 **Benmayor:** *Because you came in January?*

324 **Makau:** That's correct. Most of us came in January. I think Christie [Sleeter] may have come a month or
325 two later. I don't remember, really. But the vast majority of us were there in January. Oh, wow! It was so
326 beautiful. I remember especially an inspirational meeting at Teatro Campesino. Oh, it was so glorious.
327 Where we could just share from our hearts our commitment to the Vision. And our determination. We
328 asked questions like this: What if the purpose of the university were learning? What if we had a university
329 committed to learning? Learning-centered institution that embraced the core values embodied in the

330 published Vision? It was extraordinary. So we had, in some sense, an absurd job because we had six
331 months to develop a university campus that ordinarily would require and most campuses have four to five
332 years. So we had a very sparse circumstance. Honestly, I think most people perceived it as untenable and
333 undoable which is frankly why I think a lot of people took a leave. Because in fairness it's an absurd
334 assignment. Imagine, just to be clear, we were told there would be 600 students showing up in September
335 and okay, if they were all first year or second year or third year or fourth year we might be able to...it
336 would still be ridiculous, but okay. But no! They were coming at all four levels, in as yet unnamed majors,
337 to be taught by as yet unidentified faculty. And by the way, we had to make sure that we developed this
338 curricular programming in a cutting edge way that was completely compatible, aligned with the CSU
339 policies regarding higher education.

340 **[42:31]** Well, I should back up a little because we were given enormous wiggle room. Enormous wiggle.
341 Intentionally. Barry Munitz at the time wanted us – he was the Chancellor at that time – he made it very
342 clear: Your job is to change higher ed, to make it fit the future, to be the 21st campus for the 21st century, to
343 align curricular programming with what we know will be needed in the 21st century. For example, we know
344 that if you are going to live and do well in the 21st century you are going to have to have a reservoir of
345 cross cultural competency. That's going to have to be core to whatever curricular program you develop and
346 that's not the tradition. We're going to need majors that actually integrate and work collaboratively across
347 their differences, their boundaries, their disciplinary and cultural boundaries. Their research methodological
348 boundaries. In order to talk with one another, engage constructively in the resolution ... first of all in the
349 discovery, and then in the resolution of the kinds of problems that are likely to confront humanity in a
350 globally interdependent world where technology is becoming so advanced so quickly, where demographic
351 shifts are radically transforming the nature of the planet and the people who live on it, that's cutting edge.
352 And that's something that a traditional campus isn't in a position to adapt to very quickly. So what you
353 have to do is show us it can be done.

354 **Benmayor:** *So in other words the charge was coming from the Central Office?*

355 **Makau:** Absolutely.

356 **Benmayor:** *And from the administrators on the campus? Or?*

357 **Makau:** Well, the administrators on the campus, that's complicated. And it's so complicated I'm not even
358 comfortable going there. But having said that, definitely from the Central. And this is so beautiful in my
359 view, from WASC, the accreditation agency for the State. This is quite remarkable that they so embraced
360 ... they had a recognition early on, as did we, that if higher education was going to serve the State of
361 California and the community -- frankly it sounds so hyperbolic to say, but humanity, which I actually
362 really, really believe --, that it was going to have to transform itself, transcend traditional boundaries and
363 really adapt to the contextual framework of the day and of the future. And there were enough signs that we
364 all understood what that meant. So at those meetings we talked to about that. What's required. What's
365 required.

366 **Benmayor:** *So when... for example, when I applied, the information that was sent to me, I got this packet.*
367 *It had these concentric circles. Overlapping circles. And I think, "Okay, that's interesting. I'm not sure I*
368 *understand this." So can you talk a little bit about those, when you were huddled together as the founding*
369 *faculty how did you come up with this?*

370 **[45:48] Makau:** Well, we had some extraordinarily creative beings on the founding faculty. Let me
371 remind you, for example, that Judith Baca was one of our founding faculty. And this is an extraordinary
372 being. An artist. A visionary, the progenitor of the Great Wall. This is a remarkable person in visual and
373 public art committed to social justice who really understood our commitments and the constraints because
374 this has been her life's work and she had been extremely successful. She could envision visually what we
375 all needed to embrace. I, for example, I am a linear thinker who can't draw a circle let alone imagine how
376 to create one that captures the essence of what it was we were seeking to do. But she, a gifted artist, helped.
377 Helped us visualize, which as you know is terribly important. That's why artists become such important

378 beings in a creative developmental process. Judith's was instrumental in helping us conceptualize our work
379 visually. Luis Valdez was one of the founding faculty. Another great, creative thinker. Suzanne Lacy,
380 another great artist. So we had visual artists and in the case of Luis of course he's a visual artist but he is
381 also a playwright, a dramatist, a storyteller who understands how to craft narrative in a way people can
382 understand and hear it. So they were instrumental in helping move our project forward.

383 **Benmayor:** *So why did we have these – they were called institutes or centers. It was just a very unusual*
384 *structure.*

385 **Makau:** It's so true. It's so true. You know, I think we were ... I'll leave to others to provide better
386 answers because my memory isn't serving me as well as it ought to, but what I believe we were seeking to
387 accomplish was a structure that would invite people to be creative. Entrepreneurial is a word we used, I
388 remember then, and it's still being used today. But I don't mean entrepreneurial in a marketing or
389 corporatized way. I mean in a "break the mold, think creatively, don't get boxed into false dilemmas." We
390 humans have a very strong tendency to false dilemma. And there are lots of good reasons. Neuroscientists
391 have actually documented a lot of the good reasons. On another occasion I'll be delighted to share with
392 you. Not for today. But we humans have all kinds of challenges that we need to overcome. And among
393 those are, for example, a very strong bias, confirmation bias that is literally hard wired. And there was a
394 time historically when it served us well biologically. But today, not so much. [Laughs]

395 **[49:03]** So we have to overcome confirmation bias. We have to overcome these tendencies to embrace
396 Hobbesian individualism and materialism and that's hard when you are already in a culture that embraces
397 those values. So what you need is breakthrough minds that allow you to be entrepreneurial. Institutes are
398 not colleges in the traditional disciplinary sense. They are potentially explosive. They are potentially
399 expansive. They are invitational. They say, "Do you share some commitments to solving some of
400 humanities' great issues of the day? Come. It doesn't matter. Are you an artist or a scientist? If this is
401 your commitment... An institute has that potential. A college historically has tended to be disciplinary.

402 And has tended to have constraints that bound people, bind them up with all kinds of norms of the
403 academic culture that served well in the 20th century but that would serve as obstacles to our serving
404 humanity well in the 21st. And so I think that was the rationale but I might be wrong. I can't wait to hear
405 other's perspectives. God, I've gone on and on.

406 **Benmayor:** *No, no. This is very rich! Let's move a little bit. . . okay, you were planning this,*
407 *conceptualizing this and at the same time hiring people.*

408 **Makau:** Yes.

409 **Benmayor:** *That must have taken a lot of time.*

410 **Makau:** Oh, golly. I remember Bill Head, who was the only life scientist hired by the way which is really
411 kind of interesting in and of itself. So I represented all of Humanities and Communication and he
412 represented all of the Sciences. Not the Social Sciences but the other sciences. The natural life sciences and
413 biological sciences. And he and I would be in this room together with all these applications. It was actually
414 a comfort, I know for me, I hope for him. I can't say. But it was extraordinarily time consuming, there's no
415 question about it. But we knew the importance. There's just nothing more important. At the end of the day
416 who you hire is among the most important decisions any university ever makes. So I have always believed
417 that every moment you could spare, and there weren't too many – nights, mornings, weekends – any
418 moment you could spare to take the time to do the job well was well worth it.

419 **Benmayor:** *Because I also waited for months and months and months to get a response.*

420 **Makau:** Oh, well that's something I have to say ... how do I say this?

421 **Benmayor:** *How many applications did you get?*

422 **Makau:** Oh, thousands.

423 **Benmayor:** *Really?*

424 **Makau:** Yeah. But I want to say as gracefully as possible that founding faculty had no control over what
425 happened to the applications. We could certainly ... we had a lot of say, tremendous say, oh, I'm so

426 grateful, we were given enormous autonomy and authority to spell out what we were looking for, in
427 collaboration, by the way, with community partners and other faculty, so it was a joint effort. There was
428 little intervention administratively. But when it came to actually communicating with people in a formal
429 way, oh, man, it was out of our hands. And I'll be honest, that really upset me because I had been on many
430 search – I had chaired search committees, many. And I always kept close contact, especially – well, with
431 everyone because it's just the right thing, it feels to me. People's hearts are on the line and you have to
432 think about that other person, I felt. And I always made a point of communicating with people, "Here's
433 where we are, here is what's happening. Here's the process. Here's the timeline." It took a lot of time but
434 it's just the right thing to do and quite candidly it was deeply upsetting when that wasn't happening.

435 **[53:31] Benmayor:** *Let's fast forward a little bit to the Fall of 1995 when we had classes, things were*
436 *happening and students had appeared and everybody was teaching in vaults and strange places like*
437 *elementary schools. But I remember that somewhere in that timeframe of the fall semester you got the nod*
438 *or were asked to step up into the position of Interim Dean or Dean, I'm not sure how it was.*

439 **Makau:** Yes, yes.

440 **Benmayor:** *How did you confront that opportunity or that request?*

441 **Makau:** Yes. At the time our only lower division curricular programming that we were able to really
442 develop was something called the ProSeminar. It's a long story. But I was the ProSeminar Director and
443 that's the only reason I bring it up. So it was serving in a position that had the sense of substance, a feeling
444 of substance. So the first thing I had to think about was, "Oh, golly, what's going to happen, let's find
445 someone willing and able to serve in that role." And so that was it. This happened, I believe, near the end of
446 the first semester. Maybe November or December, I don't remember. And the other thing is I understood
447 my colleagues, well, remember that I was the only person on the founding faculty in the areas of
448 Humanities and Communication so it wouldn't have been surprising that I would have been asked to be the
449 Dean of the college that served the Arts, Humanities and Communication. The artists on our faculty were, I

450 think everybody understood, were not receptive to the possibility of serving. It was certainly never an
451 aspiration, I'll be candid. It was never an aspiration which is why for four years I self-defined as Interim
452 Dean and never applied for the position because it wasn't an aspiration. But it was ... truly, I am so grateful
453 to have had the opportunity because I had such amazing colleagues. And they were so supportive. Being a
454 dean when you have extraordinarily supportive faculty is very different than being a dean in a position
455 where people are a little reticent to embrace the possibilities with you. I had colleagues ready to embrace
456 those possibilities. So I was grateful for the opportunity. It was scary, I'll be honest, it was. I had been in
457 many administrative roles. So it's not that. But I had never taken responsibility for a \$3 million budget, for
458 example. And I take responsibility seriously. So that was... and I needed to put the budget together within a
459 week of my service because things hadn't happened quite yet in the way that they were supposed to and I
460 wanted to serve our college to the very best of my ability but do it honorably as well in the service to the
461 whole community.

462 **[56:56]** It was never ... I don't believe in serving just serve one group. It's clear to me that we all serve one
463 another and that we have to collaborate and think in a community based way about what will serve our
464 campus and the vision most fully. So that was scary. It was daunting. But I had such wonderful support,
465 such fantastic support. So I was very happy to have that opportunity ultimately.

466 **Benmayor:** *I remember crying over budgets.*

467 **Makau:** Oh, you and I and Helen Yamashita are most ... oh, I was so fortunate. One of the things, one of
468 my stipulations, I will serve in this interim role but I have very few stipulations. One was if Helen
469 Yamashita moves with me. She was serving a different dean at that time. And the other dean said, "That's
470 fine." And I was so grateful for that. And she moved with me and oh, my gosh, because talk about
471 somebody who... oh, what a resource. What a resource. And what a champion and what an ally. And this is
472 a person who just knew how to serve, how to serve well. Having said that, she also had never been
473 responsible for a \$3 million budget. And she would have been with me the fiscal administrator. And the

474 three of us, you and she and I, I believe, were together crying or were you independent in your crying? I
475 don't remember.

476 **Benmayor:** *All I remember was some charge over budgets and I had no idea, no clue how to do this. And*
477 *I just remember the frustration of just not knowing.*

478 **Makau:** Sure.

479 **Benmayor:** *You know, it was like in the stratosphere or something. That's the only thing I remember*
480 *about... oh, and somebody said, "Here's an Office Depot" – or whatever it was at that time – "catalog." I*
481 *said, "What do you want me to do? Count pencils?" [Laughs]*

482 **Makau:** Well, you know, we should remind people of why you were in this position. You were in this
483 position, as I recall, because in my absence and in the absence of others in such a position you were called
484 upon to be the head of the newly forming major. Isn't that correct?

485 **[59:33] Benmayor:** *Yes.*

486 **Makau:** And so in that capacity there you are. Goodness, we all were similarly situated, that's for sure.

487 **Benmayor:** *That's right, that's right.*

488 **Makau:** But how lovely, Rina, that we could work together? How lovely.

489 **Benmayor:** *Oh, it was. It was, absolutely.*

490 **Makau:** What a beautiful, beautiful ... my memory is that that was a beautiful experience.

491 **Benmayor:** *I loved it.*

492 **Makau:** Yes.

493 **Benmayor:** *Because you talk about having faculty that were responsive and like-minded, to have a Dean*
494 *that was so extraordinary and who got it and was willing to create things, that was extraordinary for me*
495 *because deans are traditionally the gatekeepers. They say no rather than yes. So it was really, truly an*
496 *extraordinary experience for me as well. So we talked a little bit about the Vision but I am wondering if*
497 *you have any particular favorite story about enacting the Vision?*

498 **Makau:** Oh, golly. That's such a good question. Well, let's harken back to those days when you and I
499 found ourselves in this position and had an opportunity to collaborate with others across our differences,
500 engage differences constructively in service to the shared commitments we have to serving the
501 demographic so artfully articulated in that Vision. To creating curricular programming that would meet the
502 demands and the needs of the 21st century. Now when you have a faculty that's ready, willing and able to
503 commit to that ... you used a very interesting word, you said gatekeeper. I actually did understand my role
504 to be gatekeeper but I have a very different understanding of accountability and transparency than perhaps
505 some might have. In my world gatekeeping is responsible when it holds itself to accountable shared norms
506 that are highly transparent and that are articulated in a meaningful way. So for example, one of the
507 definitions of gatekeeping I've noticed among some, is to administer by fiat. And in my world that's
508 actually the antithesis. That's not gatekeeping to a shared commitment, to a shared goal, to a shared set of
509 standards that hold all of us accountable to how fully are we realizing the promises we've made. That, to
510 me, is gatekeeping. Gatekeeping is not fiat by outside, external norms that don't in any way align with what
511 we've all committed ourselves to doing. That, to me, is not gatekeeping. So to me that was realizing the
512 Vision. That's a different conceptual framework for decision making. For governance. Governance is a
513 very important part of the Vision. How one governs. Governing inclusively, accountably, transparently and
514 together. That's how one governs, according to the Vision. But not necessarily according to some other
515 outside norms. I don't know if that helped.

516 **Benmayor:** *Well, certainly it – yes. It clarified. What were the biggest struggles that you had to face as*
517 *this new Interim Dean? Let me phrase it this way. Struggles and accomplishments.*

518 **Makau:** vSure. Well, thanks to the extraordinary faculty, I mean really, again I must sound hyperbolic but
519 I don't recall ever working with colleagues so committed, so deeply committed to a shared vision. Just think
520 about in the Humanities and Communication. Ordinarily at Ohio State and this is not a condemnation of
521 that institution or anything there, it's just different, quite different. Ordinarily, historically what you do is

522 you have a major in English. And then you define what's required for a major in English and the faculty
523 determine all that and they ask questions like, "What would I like to teach?" [Laughs] I mean I don't mean
524 to be mean but sometimes that's just how it happens. I understand that. Or, "What did I learn in graduate
525 school and what would I like to replicate for my students?" Very understandable. Or, "What interests me?"
526 and so on. Well, we didn't talk like that. We didn't have an English major. We had a major that asked a
527 question. What knowledge, skill, sensibilities and values would be required to live and do well in the 21st
528 century? To live a meaningful and a successful life, to serve humanity and one's self, to be civic minded
529 and live well. I guess really there's no other way to say it.

530 **[1:05:08]** So what's required for that? Well, we certainly need from the field of English much of what it
531 offers. We need from the field of History what it offers. We need Philosophy, what does it offer? To that
532 end? And so we'd sit at tables together, all of us together, all of these disciplines who historically never
533 even had conversations with one another actually building together a single major to serve well! Now that's
534 an accomplishment in my view. That people suspended ... that was my experience, I could be wrong, but...
535 and people have named me as Pollyanna sometimes and maybe there is an element of that in my memory
536 that I'm remembering that, but it seemed to me that that did actually happen. And actually I have evidence
537 it happened. We, at this campus, have an extraordinary major. Other campuses from around the country are
538 continually saying, "How did you do that? How can we do that?" because it's stunning. And that's not
539 bragging. That's a recognition that when this many people get together from different disciplines and
540 suspend their self-interest in the service of the common wealth that's the kind of thing that can happen.
541 That's described in a book called Educating Citizens by Ann Colby and Tom Ehrlich and others, an award
542 winning book. They describe our process. And they said one of the reasons is that everybody in the room in
543 every room on our campus was committed to a shared vision, to a shared set of core values. Not as
544 indoctrination, by the way, which is often misunderstood because there are a multiplicity of ways to
545 interpret the very same value. That's beautiful. We want and need that. We need that multiplicity of ways.

546 That's why we embrace the work of the scientists on our campus, for example, who think and do very
547 differently than we and who are *vital, vital*, to the service of the campus have done an extraordinary job in
548 my view. That program is another example of great success in my view for that very reason.

549 Challenges. Well, resources are always of course a challenge. And we were able over time, and we don't
550 need to go into why or how, but to secure significant resources with the help of many people who
551 recognized what we were achieving. They saw the success and they wanted to build on it. That was
552 fantastic. We had a several-year period of getting more and more resources and I'm so very deeply grateful
553 for that. But it was challenging and took a great deal of time and energy to work in support of that.
554 Sustainable assignments were very challenging. The faculty and the college were working, oh my
555 goodness, as hard as I which I knew. 70, 80 hours every week. That's just not sustainable and I knew that
556 as a Dean and it was a huge challenge to keep the morale up, keep us working together, keep us committed
557 to the Vision in that face and it seems to me that's one of the Dean's jobs. That's a huge obstacle.

558 [1:08:31] And then frankly sometimes there were a number of ... oh, golly, how to say it ... external
559 challenges that we had to confront. And that's always true. Heaven knows it's not that that was news to me
560 that that would be the case but it was challenging and I can't pretend otherwise. We also were expected to
561 do things that were untenable. At a pace that was unreasonable. And that's very difficult. When you're the
562 person responsible for making assignments you have to talk with people about "I so get that this is
563 unreasonable, please know that I get it!" And hope to heaven they know you are being sincere and
564 authentic and not just BS'ing to get something done. So that was challenging.

565 **Benmayor:** *But you have incredible powers of persuasion.*

566 **Makau:** That's so kind of you. That's so kind of you.

567 **Benmayor:** *Yeah, because you were able to ... we all knew when we were working 80 hours a week,*
568 *everybody was working that hard, and I can well imagine how you must have felt having to bring yet*
569 *another set of requests to the table.*

570 **Makau:** Oh, very painful. That's very painful. Oh, golly, yeah, that's so painful.

571 **Benmayor:** *But during that timeframe what do you think was your greatest accomplishment or several*
572 *greatest accomplishments?*

573 **Makau:** Well, I don't know that I could identify something I personally accomplished but as a community
574 I think we accomplished so much and I celebrate it to this day. I celebrate to this day. All right, here are
575 some examples. Now you heard the story of the untenable assignment. Six hundred students coming at four
576 levels. Now within two years we had students from our tiny little campus win the CSU system-wide
577 Research Award.

578 **Benmayor:** *We had several of those students, yeah.*

579 **Makau:** That's right. That's right. Well, I consider that an extraordinary community accomplishment. Not
580 mine. A community accomplishment. The fact that we were able to sustain and build a major in
581 Humanities and Communication that to this day is in the *top tier*. How many students have we graduated,
582 and how quickly and how effectively and how efficiently, and how well have they marshalled their way
583 into the world, that's an accomplishment that we see today. Twenty years later. I see that as an
584 extraordinary community accomplishment. We have a General Education program that if you read LEAP,
585 Liberal Education for America's Promise, that's the American Association of College and Universities,
586 new mandate –and, by the way, the CSU system-wide new mandate for general education in the State of
587 California and in the nation --, you will be stunned to discover our language and our core values and our
588 commitments. And while other campuses are working so hard to scramble to try to rise to this
589 transformative vision, here we are, there! That's quite extraordinary and it's only because everybody was
590 willing to do the work, to suspend their self interest in the service to the community. So I see those as just a
591 couple of examples.

592 **[1:12:23]** We have – well, we did have – I'm not sure where it's going right now but we did have
593 recruitment policies that were absolutely aligned with the Vision. Every single ad for a position aligned

594 itself with “This is what is required of us as a community to continue to serve this understanding of what it
595 means to educate people for the 21st century.” But sadly I went to a few meetings lately and I discovered
596 by looking online because I noticed there was no language that seemed to align with any of that, oh, dear.
597 There are many pockets where that’s been abandoned for whatever reason. But that felt like a great
598 accomplishment. RTP policy. That was so distinctive. It was the Boyer model.

599 **Benmayor:** *What’s RTP?*

600 **Makau:** Retention Tenure Promotion Policy. Critical for a university. It defines itself. I’ve always said
601 your recruitment policies and your retention, tenure and promotion policies, they define who you are and
602 what you stand for as a campus. What are you looking for? What are you embracing? Our Retention,
603 Tenure and Promotion policy defined itself in terms of four areas instead of the traditional three, one of
604 which was Professional Application. A deep and abiding commitment to reciprocal community
605 partnerships. Reciprocal being a key word, by the way. *Reciprocal* where we learn from and gain insight
606 from one another. Ernest Boyer had come up with this cutting edge vision, we embraced it with all our
607 hearts and to this day we still have that in the policy. It sometimes gets challenged, I understand. We have a
608 campus that recognizes higher order active engaged listening and learning as the path to citizenship and to a
609 meaningful life in the 21st century. To this day that’s embedded, that’s infused throughout the curriculum
610 throughout our general education. So those are just a few examples.

611 **Benmayor:** *How about your teaching? When you were a Dean were you teaching at all?*

612 **Makau:** Oh, that was one of the saddest things for me, I have to say. First of all, I think it’s critically
613 important for a dean to stay in touch with what’s happening in classrooms. Real world, not just abstract. I
614 had been teaching for decades so it’s not as if I didn’t totally understand what happened in classrooms but I
615 felt sad that my circumstances simply didn’t make that possible. So I wasn’t teaching. And that’s one of the
616 things that I guess you asked me earlier what was really hard? That was hard. Not teaching was hard.

617 **Benmayor:** *And so when did you come back to teaching?*

618 **[1:15:26] Makau:** Oh, the minute I wasn't Interim Dean anymore. [Laughs]. And I embraced that task
619 with all my heart, as I always have ever since 1973 or '74 in Berkeley where I was invited to teach. Just
620 extraordinary.

621 **Benmayor:** *There are many other questions that I would like to ask but we've been talking for about an*
622 *hour and I was wondering if there is anything that has come to mind in your process of talking that you*
623 *would like to elaborate on. Any aspect of the early years, first two years, three years, challenges of putting*
624 *things together?*

625 **Makau:** Well, maybe something we haven't had a chance to discuss yet that does feel rather important to
626 me is in the second or third year, I really don't remember when, but in the relatively early years throughout
627 the State of California there was a shift. It took place after Munitz left and a new Chancellor took hold. But
628 it wasn't just a shift here in California. It was a shift nationally in which there was a change of language
629 and a change of understanding of what is a university's purpose and who does it serve and how does one
630 serve humanity best through a university. And I remember in particular, the most graphic examples for me,
631 are when suddenly resources were being taken from direct service to students through Student Services,
632 through faculty lines, through student assistantships, through peer advising, all of which from my
633 perspective as a Dean in particular, were among the most cost effective use of resources imaginable if you
634 want to serve your ostensible purposes. A shift away to more and more and more administrative lines. And
635 to more and more and more bureaucratization. And here is the ultimate irony. In the name of efficiency and
636 transparency. I mean I always find that the ultimate irony. I remember as that was happening being on a
637 very important committee from my perspective with some administrators who themselves noticed that this
638 trend was happening system wide and might really not serve us well, and wanting to look ahead at some of
639 the challenges that could create for us, and to develop an MPP --that's an administrative position --,
640 evaluation process. That started with people under the administrators as well as people above them. In
641 other words, that administrative ... that the assessment of an administrator's performance wouldn't be

642 strictly based on so-called supervisors but also on the communities they serve. And so we developed a
643 whole policy that would have enabled that. And I rather liked it and I thought it was very fair and
644 reasonable and transparent and accountable. But it was not to be and what we've had since then is from my
645 perspective rather a grave movement, continued movement toward language, values, a way of being in the
646 world that is fully aligned with corporatization. And I am very concerned about it. Not just for our little
647 university.

648 **[1:19:18]** I see a university as a living lab because it's so on the cutting edge that if any place could have
649 mitigated that move, it would have been CSU Monterey Bay. The fact that even CSU Monterey Bay finds
650 itself sometimes referring to students as clients, talking about disruptive innovation in the industrial reform
651 complex language as if that were an ideal, having flags that no longer speak to the vision but that articulate
652 very nicely with materialist individualist culture. Oof! Boy, that really...that really is disturbing.

653 **Benmayor:** *vWas that part of your decision to retire?*

654 **Makau:** No. I've never let challenges get in the way of my work. But I've been at this since 1973 and
655 that's a long time. And I'm a strong believer in opening the way for others. I had many personal reasons
656 also. But I have the great good fortune that not everyone has, of colleagues, junior colleagues who are so
657 extraordinary that I know they are going to lead the way and they are going to have insight I lack. They
658 have a lived sense of – I mean hopefully I have some wisdom to share borne of my many years of
659 experience and they do come to me and I appreciate it and we can share with each other. But leadership
660 needs to change and it needs to leave room for new minds and new insights that are borne of a different set
661 of experiences that I haven't had. My students teach me, I'm convinced of this. I'd like to think I teach,
662 too, but oh, my gosh, I learn so much from them. And I leave every class with deep gratitude. And I feel
663 that way about junior colleagues. They're ready in my view. They are ready to be the leaders of the future.
664 And sometimes those of us who are kind of wedded to our ways, and I am one of those, could get in the
665 way. So, it wasn't selfless. I have many things I am so excited about being able to do as a result of

666 retirement. It was a combination of my own personal desires and needs and interests, my family's needs
667 and interests and those are abundant, too, and this beautiful recognition that I'm not needed in a way that I
668 might have been at one point, if there weren't these amazing junior faculty to lead into the future.

669 **[1:22:12] BENMAYOR:** *Well, I think that might be an appropriate place to end today's interview. I am*
670 *sure that we will have an opportunity to talk about some other things.*

671 **Makau:** I just remembered one thing. Very quick, I'm very sorry.

672 **Benmayor:** *Oh, yes. Please.*

673 **Makau:** But it's so critical.

674 **Benmayor:** *Oh, good.*

675 **Makau:** Assets-based pedagogy. I'm so sorry. That's terrible ... this is one of my greatest commitments
676 and I can't believe I left that out, because I'm very concerned. I'm very concerned I'm seeing more and
677 more deficits language. And that is something we confronted early on. It was an obstacle. There was a great
678 deal of deficits language coming from a variety of circles. There is nothing more important ultimately, at
679 the end of the day, on a campus committed to really equipping students for the 21st century to reveal the
680 extraordinary strength of an assets-based approach to multicultural education. So I'm sorry. I really wanted
681 to put that on the table. Sorry.

682 **Benmayor:** *Yes. That is very important.*

683 **Makau:** Thank you.

684 **Benmayor:** *It defined our whole philosophy towards learning.*

685 **Makau:** 100%. 100%. I'm really sorry I didn't actually bring that up.

686 **Benmayor:** *And there's something that I didn't bring up but that was always very challenging for me was*
687 *this notion of outcomes-based education. [Chuckles]*

688 **Makau:** Right. Oh, yes.

689 **Benmayor:** *Oh, the incredible struggle to sort of wrap your head around what that was.*

690 **Makau:** I'm so glad you brought that up. Do we have just a minute?

691 **Benmayor:** *Yeah, yeah. Please.*

692 **Makau:** Oh, I'm so glad you brought that up, Rina. That's a classic example. It's a fantastic example.
693 There are at least three different visions of outcome-based education. I'm not going to run through those.
694 We don't have time and it's not appropriate. But just to help you see what I'm trying to convey, one of
695 those visions is extraordinarily beautiful. It's manifested in the HCOM major. It's where you work
696 together, you harness all your resources to identify outcomes that you will -- all of you -- work toward
697 fulfilling. Fostering development of the knowledge skills and sensibilities and values required to live and
698 do well in the 21st century. That's an example of a learning outcome. Now when you collaborate across
699 disciplinary and cultural boundaries to harness all your resources in pursuit of that common understanding
700 of what it means to learn and to live and do well and to build a university for the 21st century, so-called
701 outcome based education is *extraordinary*. It's a gift. And so what we did was we articulated all three
702 visions. A really narrow, constrained one that is death knell to any learning. A second one that is strictly
703 bureaucratic. It has only to do with so-called efficiency which is in reality the antithesis of efficiency,
704 which I would love to explore some other time. And the one we adopted, which is bountiful and beautiful,
705 and perfectly aligns with the Vision. That's the one we embraced and there have been articles written about
706 us to help other campuses not fall prey to the other two notions of outcome-based education. A *learning*
707 centered, not student centered, no, *Learning* centered institution that embraces and takes all of its resources,
708 harnesses them to collaborate in pursuit of the shared vision, that's outcome based education as we
709 understood it.

710 **Benmayor:** *Do you remember the struggles we went through in sort of trying to define this?*

711 **Makau:** Tremendous. Tremendous struggles as well you should and would. This is something that I hope
712 is always a struggle. We would never want to settle on "We have the answer." We would never want to
713 settle on "I know best." We would never want to let one perspective prevail over all the other insights. And

714 that's what I mean by assets based. Recognizing difference as the most extraordinary resource available to
715 us. Because it is only in the face of difference that we can apply scrutiny to our ideas and openly think
716 through together what's the best path and not let a single one, *monocultural* or one *monodisciplinary* or one
717 *individual* person rule the day.

718 **Benmayor:** *Do you think the campus still does that?*

719 **Makau:** I think there are many pockets that still do that and I sit in meetings and it's glory. But there are
720 also many pockets that I'm a little less confident have that shared belief and partly because the recruitment
721 policies no longer... you know, it's a self-perpetuating cycle.

722 **[1:26:57]** And we have, oh, my gosh, the administrative buildout has been quite stunning especially in the
723 last couple of years. Wow. Wooh! I would love to see a budget analysis of the ...

724 **Benmayor:** *Especially in the time of budget constraints.*

725 **Makau:** Oh, my goodness. Quite stunning. And again, ironically in the name of efficiency and
726 accountability which is truly stunning because it's a one-way, one-way accountability process, never ... by
727 anybody's account, pardon the pun, that is not accountability. It's the antithesis. What that is is fiat. And
728 there is nothing that kills – and here is the ultimate irony – nothing kills ... all research proves this ...
729 nothing kills efficiency and the entrepreneurial spirit like fiat. Nothing. It's so ironic. The ultimate irony.

730 **Benmayor:** *That's why all these tech companies are so extraordinary because they give you open –*

731 **Makau:** Exactly. I'm sorry.

732 **Benmayor:** *- open rein to innovate.*

733 **Makau:** I'm sorry. I'm going on and on and I apologize.

734 **Benmayor:** *Right. So what would you say... I know that you don't like to ... how shall I say it. That you*
735 *always talk about the collaborative accomplishments. What do you think are the greatest legacies that*
736 *we've left?*

737 **Makau:** Oh, what a good question.

738 **Benmayor:** *You've talked about the ways in which other people have written about us and that sort of*
739 *thing but –*

740 **[1:28:40] Makau:** Yes. If I look at the LEAP initiative. If I look at *Educating Citizens*, the book. If I look
741 at the multiplicity of articles written about how this tiny little place with – against all odds, to be candid
742 with you, it was clearly meant to be, I am a firm believer of that, how we were able to develop a distinctive
743 approach to outcomes-based education, a distinctive approach to what it means to be a learning centered
744 campus, a place where we embraced diversity, where we embraced assets based pedagogy. We're not
745 teacher centered. We're not student centered. We're *learning* centered and all the implications of what that
746 means, where we have reciprocal community partners and recognize – I mean look at your work in Salinas,
747 with Amalia Bains and Richard Bains, the Visual and Public Art program and its Reciprocal Community
748 for the Arts are just two classic examples. Service Learning, we haven't even talked about. Oh, my gosh.
749 Talk about a legacy! So the fact that we embrace cross-cultural competencies as at the heart of an
750 education. Ethical reflection and practice appears everywhere in our documentation, in our curricular
751 programming. Social responsibility. A commitment to social justice and all that that entails. An HCOM
752 major that is truly distinctive and very successful by all standards, even the most bureaucratic ones. It's just
753 quite delicious.

754 **Benmayor:** *But yet recently in the face of the push toward disciplinary majors because they will perhaps*
755 *bring more students to the campus . . .*

756 **Makau:** The ultimate irony. It's the ultimate irony. Here's another irony. If you have evidence-based
757 decision making you are not going to draw that conclusion. You're going to say, "Hmm, look at these
758 various, this extremely successful major." Everywhere else in the country the Humanities majors, the
759 disciplinary ones, are struggling. At CSU Monterey Bay we've been in the top tier of attracting students
760 and of graduating students. Shouldn't that tell evidence-based decision makers that going backwards is not
761 helpful?

762 **[1:31:07] Benmayor:** *But when you look at the numbers, the way the numbers crunch now, we are not. . .*
763 *on the campus we're not. . .*

764 **Makau:** Is that right? Really? In graduation rates.

765 **Benmayor:** *Well, I don't know about graduation rates.*

766 **Makau:** I think that's what you need to look at. I've always been very upset by how we count so-called
767 majors. This was one of my battles. I don't know why I didn't bring it up. How in the world can you
768 continue to say, when a student walks in the door make them call themselves a major. The minute they
769 walk in the door. Which is contrary to all the evidence about what fosters the best student learning and
770 student environment. That's number one. Number two, and actually use those data. How about using the
771 data – we have 20 years of it by the way – of where the students ultimately land and how many of them
772 graduated? That would be very helpful data. I'd love to look at that. I think I looked at the last data and we
773 were still in the top tier. If that's the data you use. Not when these poor – when these – poor is the wrong
774 word --, young people who are at a juncture where we would like to invite them to think deeply about the
775 purpose and meaning of life before – by the way, all neuroscience proves this –, before they have fully
776 developed cognitively or affectively. That's very important. And morally for that matter. That's not trivial.
777 Give them a chance. But ... whatever, as you can see I never prevail.

778 **Benmayor:** *Corporatization has –*

779 **Makau:** The corporatization, that's exactly right. Unfortunately. But whatever, you know, you fight your
780 battles. You pick your battles. [Chuckles].

781 **Benmayor:** *Well, Josina, I want to thank you so much for participating in this project and for being ...*
782 *this is a project in which we are all collaborating. We are both interviewing and being interviewed, so in*
783 *that sense it's a carryon of the values that we all came here for. And so this is really lovely. Thank you so*
784 *much.*

785 **Makau:** And I am deeply, deeply grateful to you, Rina, and to all others participating in this project
786 because this is a chance for us to hear the multiplicity or perspectives and to really leave a record of this
787 extraordinary campus and it's genesis and I'm so grateful. Thank you.

788 **Benmayor:** *Thank you.*

789 **[1:33:40] Benmayor:** *Josina, we wrapped up our conversation a few minutes ago but as always happens*
790 *with oral history, when you turn off the machine, when you turn off the recorder you all of a sudden*
791 *remember something that you wanted to say. So this is our coda to our interview. We were talking about*
792 *different issues that are important to us and you brought up one that you want to talk about.*

793 **Makau:** Thank you so much. Sorry that I forgot this but it strikes me that the following anecdote might
794 really speak to an issue close to my heart and I think may be close to others' hearts. When I was
795 interviewing at Ohio State University the Chair of the Committee who was really clearly friendly to my
796 application warned me the night before the interview, "You know, Josina, people are so excited about". . . .
797 In fact, they called me on the day of my application arrived. So they were very excited about my
798 application but they did have one reservation, one concern I would need to address, and that was that I
799 appeared on the surface to be terribly committed to teaching! Now that's really ironic given it's a public
800 land grant state institution. But I understand where they were coming from because it's also a Research
801 One institution. And fortunately, I already had a publication even as a grad student, which was unusual at
802 the time. And a number of conference papers. So clearly I was able to mitigate that concern since I have a
803 deep and abiding commitment to scholarly inquiry. It's one of my greatest passions. Fast forward 20 years
804 or 15 years later, rather. And I forgot that I had an oral interview over the phone with the President, Peter
805 Smith, and the Provost, Steve Arvizu, before I was hired. It was a follow-up to the larger interview. So they
806 called and we had a conference call. And they shared that everyone was very enthusiastic about my
807 application. I'm not sure but I might even have been the only person whose application wasn't actually
808 invited. It was a cold application. So that was really gratifying and they were very enthusiastic. But they did

809 have one major reservation and they shared that with me. And it was they were very worried that I
810 appeared to be very committed to research, which of course is really, really interesting, especially given my
811 experience with the OSU interview. I reminded them that I had recently won Ohio State University's
812 Distinguished Teaching Award, and if they looked back at my application and all of my materials, they
813 would see very strong student evaluations as well as additional evidence of a deep and abiding commitment
814 to teaching. And they allowed that "Oh, that's right, of course." But the fact that my very strong record of
815 scholarship was alarming to them is itself cause for alarm.

816 **[1:36:34]** Why? Because from my perspective our students, especially the demographic we serve, but all
817 students... have a right ... we have a moral obligation to serve them on the cutting edge. To provide to
818 those students a Harvard education. An education that is grounded in the scholarship of the day that evolves
819 and changes with the time, that recognizes the importance of staying in tune with one's discipline and with
820 other disciplines. And so I have continued all that scholarship, published three books and a number of
821 articles, and made numerous conference presentations during my tenure at CSUMB. And the reason I
822 convey that is that I think it's so easily lost. If even our President and our Provost, who were at that time
823 really committed to serving the Vision, the demographic who were identified in the Vision, if even they
824 would express some reservations about research, that's a red flag, that we need to be vigilant, ever vigilant
825 always to hire people who recognize the symbiotic relationship between scholarship, research, inquiry,
826 teaching and learning. And candidly, administrators who understand that that requires time.

827 **Benmayor:** *You know, that's a really important point that I think resonates with everybody because I*
828 *know when I came ... I came from a research center and I was doing research 24/7 and the position did not*
829 *mandate teaching. And so I've always been in this sort of one versus the other, either all one or all the*
830 *other. And when I came to campus one of the things that became very clear to me was that it was going to*
831 *be really hard to continue to do research in the way that I had formerly been doing it. And so at that point,*

832 *and I spoke with Franny [Payne Adler] about this, too, we began to realize that we had to somehow or*
833 *another build into our teaching the research ... to do research about our teaching in some ways.*

834 **Makau:** The scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

835 **Benmayor:** *The scholarship of Teaching and Learning and we became really involved in that. But it was*
836 *the only way that I could think about to continue writing and scholarship, which I deeply love, rather than*
837 *being segmented into different bodies. There was no time to do that.*

838 **Makau:** And that is a very major issue for a campus dedicated to serving students well for the 21st century.
839 Faculty have got to be on the cutting edge. Have got to be visible in their disciplinary and interdisciplinary
840 communities. And that's very challenging if resources are taken away from faculty and put into the
841 administrative mix. That's very, very important to put on the table, I think.

842 **Benmayor:** *Yeah. And the lack of resources, and the lack of time, and the lack of release time for doing*
843 *scholarship and all of that.*

844 **Makau:** Yes, yes. It's terribly important in my view.

845 **Benmayor:** *And I personally feel that that has ... as you had mentioned, the recruitment has gone in*
846 *different directions and I feel that one of the things that has gone with that is the commitment to hiring*
847 *faculty who are cutting edge in their fields.*

848 **Makau:** There are pockets, and Humanities and Communication is one of those pockets, that remain
849 deeply committed to hiring scholars, really top notch scholars who also ... who embrace teaching and
850 learning and recognize the symbiotic relationship among the two. But it's not true of all pockets and I share
851 your concerns, deep concerns about that. And the people in HCOM find that their work is unsustainable
852 without reassigned time. So this is a major issue.

853 **Benmayor:** *Which is why we had to struggle to figure out how to turn our classes into research*
854 *laboratories.*

855 **Makau:** Exactly. Exactly. And I'm very grateful for this chance to bring that to the table.

856 **Benmayor:** *Yeah. Me, too.*

857 **Makau:** Thank you. Thank you.

858 **Benmayor:** *Thank you. Okay, now we'll really end this. Okay, all right.*

859 **Makau:** *Bastante!*

860 (END OF RECORDING)

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