

**TRANSCRIPTION RE:**

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

**Interview with William Head  
Professor Emeritus, Earth Systems Science & Policy  
College of Science  
Founding Director, Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center**

**Interviewer, Marsha Moroh, Professor Emerita  
Former Dean, College of Science**

**Transcribed by:**

**Carol Roberts  
[carris.roberts@gmail.com](mailto:carris.roberts@gmail.com)**

**Narrator: William Head**  
**Interviewer: Marsha Moroh**

1           **Moroh:** It is on. Hello!

2           **Head:** Hello!

3           **Moroh:** I'm here. I'm here with Bill Head at my house and this is Marsha Moroh. And it is  
4 November 5, 2019 and we are at last together.

5           **Head:** It's November 6<sup>th</sup>, by the way.

6           **Moroh:** Oh, sorry, November 6<sup>th</sup> and do I have your permission to record this interview, Bill?

7           **Head:** Yes, you do, Marsha.

8           **Moroh:** Okay. Okay. He is here by his own free will. I didn't drag him here and I didn't nail him to  
9 the chair.

10          **Head:** No.

11          **Moroh:** So now we can get started. So let's start at the beginning. All right?

12          **Head:** At the beginning. Well, that's like 25 years ago. Holy cow! [Laughs]

13          **Moroh:** That's right. We're going to try and get it out of you.

14          **Head:** Do I get to make up a bunch of stuff?

15          **Moroh:** Yes, you can. You can. There are no fact checkers here.

16          **Head:** [Laughs] No fact checkers. Oh, man.

17          **Moroh:** It all goes free.

18          **Head:** I can be Trumpian.

19          **Moroh:** Right. So you were happily living your life somewhere else and then . . . there must be  
20 some story about how you heard about CSUMB.

21          **Head:** Yeah.

22          **Moroh:** What was your odyssey to get you to CSUMB.

23           **Head:** It's really crazy. It's crazy and serendipitous. It's been like how my life has been defined, to  
24 be honest with you. I was out in the friggin' Bahamas happily directing a marine research center. We had  
25 no internet. We had a telephone that rarely worked, right? We never got the newspaper. So I had no idea  
26 what was going on in the United States.

27           **Moroh:** So was it a really small island?

28           **Head:** Yeah. The only thing on the island was a research center. But it was international. We had  
29 an airstrip and I had people from all over the world come. I never met so many people in my entire life in  
30 such a small space. [Laughs] But, you know, I was really isolated. I didn't really care what was going on in  
31 the United States because if I did it wouldn't matter. [Chuckles]

32           **Moroh:** You couldn't do anything about it.

33           **Head:** [Laughs] I couldn't do anything about it! The only thing we had was a marine radio. That  
34 was the only thing that was reliable, you know, to talk to other boats. Because we had to make sure the mail  
35 boat was coming because that carried all our supplies. But it was odd. I had taken some time off to spend  
36 seventeen days white water kayaking the Grand Canyon. So while we were on the Canyon a really close  
37 friend of mine, who was the marine advisor for the Central Coast, told me that they're going to be putting a  
38 CSU in Monterey Bay. You know, the Monterey Bay area. I got my master's at Moss Landing Marine Labs  
39 and so I was familiar with what the area was like and I was kind of perplexed. I said, "Why would they put  
40 a CSU in Monterey?" It's not a heavily populated area. It was really perplexing for me. So I came back  
41 with him to Santa Cruz. It was more out of curiosity because I had never really groomed myself to be a  
42 faculty member. I was adjunct faculty at the Florida Institute of Technology and at the College of the  
43 Bahamas and some other places but, you know, that's very different than being a tenure track faculty  
44 member.

45           **Moroh:** Yeah.

46 **[3:14] Head:** So I didn't know what that world was like nor did I really care. I had done a lot of other  
47 things in my life. I thought my trajectory had skipped that, to be honest with you. But I was curious as hell.  
48 So I made an appointment with Steve Arvizu [acting Provost]. I drove to Seaside. . . this was before the  
49 campus even opened.

50 **Moroh:** This was on your way to the Grand Canyon.

51 **Head:** No. This was after the Grand Canyon. I came back with Rick to Santa Cruz because that's  
52 where he lived and then I was gonna fly back. I wanted to spend some time with him and his wife. But  
53 before I left for the Bahamas, because once I go out in the Bahamas I'll never be able to contact anybody  
54 again. [Laughs] I was just eminently curious why in the heck they would put a campus here. So Arvizu had  
55 some time and so I drove to Seaside. I borrowed Rick's car and drove to Seaside. I met with him [Arvizu]  
56 and that's when he told me that it was a base conversion. That [Leon] Panetta was a congressman who  
57 became Chief of Staff for Clinton and they were closing a lot of army bases and they wanted to  
58 demonstrate a conversation of "swords into plowshares." Since Panetta was a Congressman from this area,  
59 he convinced Clinton that maybe politically it would be really cool to convert Fort Ord into a CSU  
60 [California State University campus]. So that's how it started. And Clinton agreed. So I guess the  
61 Department of Defense and Administration agreed to fund the initial startup of the University. Being  
62 ignorant and not knowing very much about academics, I said, "Well, is there anything special about this  
63 university that is going to make it stand out? Are there certain tenets that drive it?" Then he showed me  
64 this draft Vision Statement that he had put together. It was long, you know, because I'm not used to Vision  
65 Statements being that long. You know? It was like almost three pages if I remember correctly. It was like,  
66 "Wow." I talked to him about it. I took some time to actually read it. It was quite interesting because there  
67 were five themes that hit me. I remember them because I used these themes when ultimately I decided to  
68 apply to the University. I kind of based my application on five themes that I took from the Vision  
69 Statement. The first one was Diversity and Inclusion. That was a really key part of what the Vision was

70 about. The second was Collaboration. In the whole sense of working across disciplines, within disciplines,  
71 creating partnerships with other universities. The next theme was Mutual Respect, you know, for faculty  
72 and administrators within the community of academics which I really liked. The next theme was  
73 Innovation. This whole thing of thinking outside the box. And then the last theme was Partnerships.  
74 Community Partnerships, community service but also public and private partnerships. And all of those  
75 [6:38] themes really agreed with me. I was like, “Wow!” Because my whole background was centered  
76 around that. Plus he said that they were looking – I’ll never forget these words – they were looking for  
77 applicants that could think outside the academic box. I said, “Well, shit. I’ve never been in the box!”  
78 [Laughs] So at first when I went there, I had no aspirations. It was just more out of curiosity before I flew  
79 back to the Bahamas. The more I talked to him the more excited I got because when I was doing my Ph.D.  
80 --it was in oceanography --, I was doing this pretty heavy duty mathematical modeling stuff that [there  
81 were] probably only four other people in the world I could communicate with. It was really very narrow. I  
82 passed my comprehensives and my qualifying. So I had about a year or a year and a half left. But, if I  
83 looked in the future about what I could do with all this– there was nothing. I wasn’t excited. It was like  
84 wow, I had to make a really major turn in my life. So to everyone’s chagrin, because I was just so close to  
85 finishing, I switched. I moved over into Fisheries and Aquaculture. I had been working with a high school  
86 just voluntarily designing this solar greenhouse aquaculture system. I was very interested in recirculating  
87 systems and community greenhouses. I really wanted to be tied more to the community. I formed a  
88 committee in Fisheries and Aquaculture and challenged all the exams because I didn’t want to take classes.  
89 You know? I passed them all and I said I’ll get my own funding, which they didn’t believe, because no one  
90 ever does that. I said, “I actually will. I’m gonna have to leave the university. I’m gonna go move to  
91 Eugene.” I was in Corvallis. I formed a nonprofit corporation called the Amity Foundation and got my own  
92 funding to put together a community based solar greenhouse aquaculture system. Then I worked with the  
93 City of Eugene and the County writing economic development grant proposals. So I was the first one to

94 write proposals to get community gardens in Eugene in the city and outside. And even community  
95 greenhouses. I wrote some gardening books and the proceeds from that and [gardening books] some other  
96 authors [wrote] were used to fund an organization called “Tilth,” so the organic growers could have a  
97 centralized place to bring their produce. Safeway [in Eugene] became one of the first big markets in the  
98 country to carry organic produce because they had a central distribution. Because the growers were so  
99 small, you know, they couldn’t. . . The big markets didn’t want to take them because they couldn’t be  
100 consistent.

101 **Moroh:** Oh, so they consolidated the growers -

102 **Head:** We’d have a big walk-in cooler and everyone would bring it [the produce] in. Then we  
103 would distribute it from there. It was just magical. So I’ve done a lot of stuff. Plus I worked in the private  
104 sector as a consultant. I was [also] an Assistant Director in an Energy Office. I just loved the  
105 [9:48] entrepreneurial startup type of stuff. So I decided, “What the heck, man, I’m gonna apply for this.”  
106 So I created my platform under those five themes. They called me in for an interview. So they flew me in.  
107 My whole platform was centered around the themes but in terms of the specifics of the Sciences, I said I  
108 was not going to have departments. I wanted things to be interdisciplinary. And then, as you remember, we  
109 had clusters. There was going to be a Science cluster, a Business cluster, – we didn’t have a Business  
110 cluster at the beginning but there was supposed to be one. I talked about [how] I really wanted to link the  
111 Sciences with Technology, particularly Computer Science with modeling and then with Mathematics. And  
112 then Economics with the Business cluster. And then the Policy side, I wanted to link that in with the Social  
113 Sciences.

114 **Moroh:** So did you have these discussions with Steve Arvizu before you came?

115 **Head:** No.

116 **Moroh:** When you talked to him he -

117 **Head:** No, he just – all right.

118           **Moroh:** He just handed you the Vision Statement.

119           **Head:** All right. Steve Arvizu told me not to apply basically. [Laughs] He said it was going to be  
120 very, very competitive. He didn't know my background. You know what I mean?

121           **Moroh:** Yeah.

122           **Head:** He said there were going to be, and there were, thousands and thousands of people that  
123 applied. I think that because I had no expectations and because I really did think outside the box and I was  
124 very creative, you know, I think that I was kind of an intriguing person. I think most of the people that  
125 applied were professors, you know, because they were coming from academic institutions. I remember the  
126 person going ahead of me in the interview was a full professor at some big university. I said, "Jesus Christ.  
127 I'm not gonna stand a friggin' chance." Right? [Laughs] So I did the interview. They did some phone  
128 follow-ups. And then I got a letter from Peter Smith inviting me to be a Founding Faculty member. I was so  
129 excited! I'll never forget this, Marsha.

130           **Moroh:** And you got the letter in the Bahamas.

131           **Head:** I got the letter in the Bahamas. It took a while to get there.

132           **Moroh:** On the boat.

133           **Head:** Yeah. [Laughs] It took like a month to get there. And so I didn't have much warning. So I  
134 got the letter and our dining commons was called the Lizard Lounge. At that time there were a lot of  
135 scientists from the United States there doing their research. It's a great place to do research. A lot of them  
136 were assistant professors, you know, working really hard to get tenure. So I walk into the Lizard Lounge  
137 and I make this proclamation, "Hey, you guys. I'm so excited. I've just been offered a faculty position at  
138 this new campus, CSU Monterey Bay."

139           **Moroh:** With tenure.

140           **Head:** Right. And then I said, "Hey, they offered it to me with tenure. Should I negotiate that?  
141 What does that mean?" They wanted to throw their Kalik beer bottles at me! [Laughs] To this day I get a

142 raft of you-know-what from a number of them that I keep in contact with. They were floored. They had to  
143 take a look, they had to look at the letter. They said, “You’re not only hired with tenure. You’re like a  
144 friggin’ Full Professor.” [Laughs] They said, “We’ve been working for years and years and years. It’s not  
145 fair.” I was so ignorant. I didn’t know what tenure was. I didn’t know what it meant. I kind of knew what a  
146 **[13:09]** professor [was]. I thought when I was going to school everyone was a professor. I didn’t realize  
147 Associate, Assistant. I really didn’t delve into that kind of realm when I was doing my Ph.D. I left the  
148 academy so I didn’t care about that. I wasn’t going back into academics. I was so ignorant. Because I was  
149 so ignorant they kind of laughed at me. They knew I was being innocent. [Laughs] They kind of laughed at  
150 me. But it was really funny. So then I called. I called Peter Smith when our phone was working. He thinks  
151 I was on a hammock, but it was just a bad connection. He thought I was on a hammock drinking a Mai Tai  
152 or something because there was this crackly connection, and that it was the wind coming. It wasn’t that at  
153 all.

154 **Moroh:** [Chuckles]

155 **Head:** So I called him to accept the position, but I said, “Hey, okay, I’m the outlier. I mean I know  
156 I’m the guy that is thinking outside the box and I’m kind of that person, that eccentric scientist that you’re  
157 bringing on.” I said, “Who’s the team? What’s the team here?” You know because when I learned we had  
158 to start like in eight months, right? I said, “Okay, who are the other people so I can contact them and really  
159 kind of get the lay of the land, you know, what in the heck we’re really doing?” And he said, “There is no  
160 team. You’re it!”

161 **Moroh:** You were the first one hired, huh?

162 **Head:** I was the only scientist they hired. I had a dual reaction. One was to go, “Oh, my gosh!”  
163 But the other one, because the side of me, I love startups. I’m very entrepreneurial. I was excited as heck. I  
164 wasn’t sure what the heck I was gonna do, but things tend to work itself out. I was elated. I thought, okay,



165 I'm sure there must be reasons why you only hired one scientist. I'm not gonna get into that but it's really  
166 odd, you know, that in such a quick startup you would only hire one person to get the thing going.

167 So that was my initiation to the academics. We were lucky because as you know when we started,  
168 we were thirteen Founding Faculty if I remember correctly. We were able to bring on two more. One of  
169 those persons was Jim Rote. I was really intrigued with Jim because he was a marine scientist that got his  
170 Ph.D. at Stanford, but his main contributions were he had been working in the State Legislature with Sam  
171 Farr --that's why he became such good close friends with Sam and Shary --and with NOAA [National  
172 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration], working on getting Monterey Bay designated as a National  
173 Marine Sanctuary. So he was actually my first hire because I was so interested in connecting Science and  
174 Policy. The only sad thing with him is that he had multiple sclerosis and at that time he was just on a cane.

175 **Moroh:** I remember. One cane. And then two canes. And then -

176 **Head:** Yeah, I didn't realize that stress is like the worst thing for multiple sclerosis. So as you  
177 know, we worked 16, 18 hour days. He would work like one day and then he'd be gone for two or three  
178 days. It was just driving him crazy emotionally and mentally because he was feeling like he was letting  
179 everybody down. He just couldn't sustain. And multiple sclerosis, as I got to know about it more, is  
180 exhausting mentally. It's not like you're just tired physically and you can still work mentally. It tires you  
181 all over the place and so he just couldn't get mentally up. You can imagine the toll it took on him  
182 emotionally, feeling that he was not carrying his weight and everything. So he had to resign a few years  
183 **[17:00]** later. I worked with Shary Farr to get an endowment for Jim. So we now have the James W. Rote  
184 Endowed Professor in Marine Science and Policy. James Lindholm is filling those shoes eloquently. Jim  
185 Rote would have loved him. Jim was a triathlete, you know, really a stud. And James is a triathlete. They  
186 have very similar personalities. [Laughs] I think they would have loved [one another] -- I wish that they had  
187 known each other while Jim was [alive].

188 **Moroh:** They would have really liked each other.

189           **Head:** Yeah. While he was still alive. But that did not happen. But yeah, becoming a Professor at  
190 CSU Monterey Bay was accidental to be honest with you. It was just one of those timing things that you  
191 never can plan for.

192           **Moroh:** So on the day when you showed up actually for your first day of work, what was your  
193 reaction? Was it as you anticipated?

194           **Head:** Well, the first day, first of all I was kind of wandering around trying to figure out where to  
195 go and I was directed to Armando Arias' office. I'll never forget this. I'm like an Eveready Bunny, you  
196 know, just energized all the time. I was ready to rock and roll. I said, "Okay, we've got to get this thing  
197 started." And I'm just jumping up and down. And he says, "Well, go for a walk on the beach. We're not  
198 quite ready for you!" They showed me our office and my office was basically an empty room with a phone  
199 on the floor that didn't work. [Laughs] So I went for a walk and I realized that this is indeed, you know, a  
200 startup. I was a bit concerned because of the short timeframe on the startup, and particularly given the  
201 Vision, pulling off that level of innovation let alone of excellence is not easy to do. It's something that  
202 takes a little bit of time and calibration. I was concerned about rushing into things and all the aspects of  
203 hiring. We were on a friggin' boot camp. There's no Science buildings in a boot camp, right? And it's like  
204 how am I gonna have a program in the fall that's going to have any credibility? Right? Let alone hire  
205 faculty. So yeah, the first day was very, very symbolic. I'll never forget it.

206           **Moroh:** [Laughs]

207           **Head:** So it got better after that. [Laughs] Everything was just in so much of a rush that it just felt  
208 like everyone was coming on mainly at the same time. None of that bothered me, to be honest with you.  
209 I'm okay with a bit of chaos, to be honest with you. So I was still very, very excited about it all and looking  
210 forward to meeting everybody.

211           **[20:04] Moroh:** So you probably got there before the rest of the faculty then.

212           **Head:** Ken Nishita showed up that same day, too. But it was before we had our big faculty  
213 meetings. Yeah, yeah.

214           **Moroh:** Big faculty meeting all twelve of us, right?

215           **Head:** Yeah, all twelve. Yeah, or thirteen of us, yeah, right, right.

216           **Moroh:** Yeah, okay. So the early days were defined by innovative assignments. So [in] your first  
217 assignment, what did you see your role as? What did you envision you were actually going to do once you  
218 found out you were the only science faculty?

219           **Head:** I think it was pretty easy to figure it out. I was *the* Science Cluster, right? And here's  
220 another, Marsha. This whole chain of events with CSUMB has just been remarkable. Again, something that  
221 was totally unpredicted. Something that was totally unanticipated. NASA, in between [sending] lots of  
222 rockets up into outer space and taking photographs of our blue planet, we as a civilization started looking at  
223 the Earth kind of as a system rather than kind of all these individual things. God, what a beautiful planet!  
224 We've looked at it kind of from a microscopic kind of level. Never from that macroscopic outer space  
225 perspective. At that time, right at that time in 1995, NASA came out with what they called an Earth  
226 Systems Science Education Initiative. They put out a request for proposals. Of course we didn't even have  
227 a program yet but that didn't stop me. [Laughs] I was a PI [Principal Investigator] on the proposal. We  
228 submitted a proposal to ESSE [Earth Systems Science Education]. The reviewers' comments were quite  
229 interesting. One reviewer said, "Who are these turkeys? They haven't even started a university and they  
230 want to be involved in this big program?" But the other two reviewers plus the program manager loved us.  
231 You know, it's like Wow! What an opportunity to get a program involved that really is committed to  
232 interdisciplinarity! You know, I used the same platform as I did basically when I applied for the position.  
233 That vision really never changed in terms of trying to merge departments, have it interdisciplinary. That's  
234 exactly what ESSE was looking for.

235           So we were chosen as one of 45 universities! These other universities were like Cornell, Berkeley,  
236 Princeton, Penn State, New York University, UCLA, Stanford, Rutgers. On and on. They were really heavy  
237 hitters. NASA did that intentionally. They also had some smaller universities. They had a good mix of  
238 universities. They had big ones. They had private and public. They did a really good job. They really  
239 wanted to bring in some of the heavy hitters because they were committed to have curriculum changed.  
240 They wanted to see interdisciplinary majors come. They wanted to get away from the kind of departmental  
241 siloing that was happening, to form an Earth Systems Curriculum which would merge the boundaries. Not  
242 just boundaries within Science but also across things, in Computer Science, big data using GIS, modeling,  
243 remote sensing, all this technology stuff. I was very interested in the policy side because they hadn't  
244 considered that, but that was an element we really brought in on a strong front. It was a real exciting time.  
245 **[23:40]** We were funded in 1995. We made great progress. The universities all were developing  
246 curriculum. That's when I put together my Earth Systems Science and I added the Policy to it. But that's  
247 where the Earth Systems Science came from. It was the funding initiative from NASA. The reason I went  
248 with that was – because that was a hard decision, what to call something. Because if you call something  
249 Earth Systems Science and Policy and no one else calls it that you don't have a chance in hell, right? So I  
250 called it that because we had the big hitters that were in the playing field and that made all the difference.  
251 That's why they chose those people because they knew that if people like Berkeley and Rutgers and  
252 Princeton and Cornell really grabbed it . . .

253           **Moroh:** then that would be coming. . .

254           **Head:** . . . yeah, it would have an identity. Then the smaller schools could come along. So when a  
255 student looked at an Earth Systems Science program, they'd see it out of Berkeley and they'd see it at  
256 CSUMB and they'd go, "Okay, man, this is really, really cool." So strategically it was a brilliant move. We  
257 all appreciated that, the whole group. The fact that they had 45 institutions rather than just a few was also a  
258 big investment. It was exciting! It really provided me the catalyst to rethink about how I was going to put

259 this program together and provided me with confidence that actually I could put it together and it might  
260 have some traction.

261 **Moroh:** And probably helped you attract faculty as well.

262 **Head:** Yeah, the whole thing. The problem [Laughs] [Sighs] - Ah, the problem. The problem, now  
263 that I'm coming back in the real world, is that everything is at the vagaries of politicians. So it lasted as  
264 long as Clinton lasted. So when he left in 2001, [Earth Systems] Science Education disappeared. It did not  
265 have enough lifetime to get enough traction. So a lot of these campuses dissolved their interdisciplinary  
266 majors. There are some Ph.D. programs like Irvine, Stanford and other programs that have Ph.D. programs  
267 that are Systems Science. Most of the undergraduate programs went back to their departmental. . . . They  
268 still do collaborations but they're still biology or ecology or blah, blah, blah. They dropped the Earth  
269 Systems Science name. We kept ours for a while but if I go to Hartnell Community College and talk to a  
270 counselor they would say, "We don't know how to explain your major. We don't know whether it's a  
271 Geology major, or what it is, and so we have a hard time recommending students even going to the  
272 University." That's why ultimately we changed the name from Earth Systems Science and Policy to the  
273 Division of Science and Environmental Policy and then now it's the School of Natural Sciences. You  
274 know, with departments in Biology and Chemistry and Marine Science and Environmental Science. It's  
275 really, really interesting how the evolution . . . but if NASA had had . . .

276 **Moroh:** A couple more years.

277 **[27:03] Head:** ...yeah. If they had some more years I think that it would be a major that would be well  
278 recognized. I think it was appropriate. There were some of my faculty that were a little disappointed we  
279 changed the name. But I think it was appropriate. It required too much explaining. I'd go to places and try  
280 to explain Earth Systems. When you have to explain it a lot you know there are some problems there.

281 **Moroh:** Just jumping ahead to now, so this year Science split into the various departments and now  
282 they have Biology and Marine Science, etc..

283           **Head:** Yeah.

284           **Moroh:** Do you feel that that was a timely thing to do?

285           **Head:** I do.

286           **Moroh:** Or do you think it's kind of a shame?

287           **Head:** I knew there was a lot of controversy with that among the faculty and it actually got pretty  
288 personal, I understand. I wasn't involved in it. I intentionally did not get involved in that discussion.

289           **Moroh:** Me, too.

290           **Head:** Yeah. I didn't feel it was appropriate for me to come in and make any type of  
291 recommendation. But actually from the get go I felt that it was fine. The reason is because the way it was  
292 and as fast as it was growing it was just unmanageable for there to be a Chair of Everything. Right? There  
293 were just too many things going on. You couldn't satisfy anyone's need. So everything became, I think,  
294 mediocre. You really had to sacrifice quality, because there was just too much, too much to deal with.

295           **Moroh:** And it's also, as you pointed out, when they have the Biology Chairs meeting of the CSU  
296 and then they have the Environmental Science Chair the same person has to go to all of them.

297           **Head:** Yeah. I'm actually fine with it. It's like Marine Science. Marine Science has more  
298 undergraduates than UC Santa Cruz does in its Marine Science program. So I think that it lends itself to  
299 more focus. I think it still doesn't mean that there won't be collaborations. I think that it all comes down to  
300 the individuals and the people you hire. To be honest with you, when we were putting together the Earth  
301 Systems Science and Policy actually, and with the SIVA [Spatial Information Visualization and  
302 Information] Center, we actually saw the future. Because the future right now, regardless of names and  
303 departments, it's all collaboration now. As an individual person it's rare that in science you work by  
304 yourself anymore. You are working with computer modelers. You're working with big data sets. You are  
305 working with computer scientists, mathematicians, you are working with people in different disciplines. It's  
306 all being linked out of necessity. Because of the ease in which we now can collect large amounts of data,

307 now they're using artificial intelligence to analyze the data. So I do think that it's going to be interesting to  
308 see how this all evolves. But I do believe, at least, where it is now, I'm actually fine with it. I think that  
309 given the situation it was just untenable from a management perspective to think one person can handle all  
310 of the different interests.

311 **Moroh:** So it was kind of a natural progression as we grew.

312 **Head:** Yeah. I think so. I know some of the early founding faculty felt that they had lost that  
313 identity and collaboration and all of those things. I think those can be maintained just by bringing in the  
314 right kinds of people and asking the right kinds of questions. So I don't really dwell on it. I don't think it's a  
315 bad thing at all.

316 **Moroh:** Yeah.

317 **[30:40] Head:** Cause like for example, Andrew [Dean of the College of Science] right now, there's a big  
318 initiative -- I'm on the Science Leadership Council -- to look at mechatronics with an engineering type of  
319 aspect particularly aimed at agriculture and bringing on agriculture. It's really great to see the agricultural  
320 community respond. They're giving scholarships. We have an endowed professor. They have contributed  
321 to the [new] building. You know, they feel like -

322 **Moroh:** They're in on ground floor.

323 **Head:** Yes. So I do think that there's some payoff. Then James [Lindholm] can focus in on some  
324 of the marine realm, you know? So rather than everyone spread themselves out so thinly that they don't get  
325 anything done. So actually I'm pretty excited.

326 **Moroh:** I remember when the students used to refer to ESSP as an Every Stinking Science  
327 Possible. Do you remember that?

328 **Head:** [Laughs heartily] Yeah, which it was! Yeah, right, yeah. I mean we were so naïve and  
329 everything which actually is a virtue of being naïve, you know, because you can take a lot of risks and a lot  
330 of chances. But, you know, again, I thought as it grew and as the ESSE [Earth Systems Science Education]

331 program grew and we were able to bring on more faculty that we would have a pretty strong identity. I still  
332 believe that. It's actually unfortunate the ESSE program dissolved. It was just premature. We were very  
333 [31:57] upset. We wrote a lot of letters to Congress but it made no difference. We had a new President. He  
334 really didn't care. And a new NASA administrator. They'd likely do different initiatives than the previous  
335 one. [Laughs] It was like a non-starter unfortunately.

336 **Moroh:** And I guess you were lucky you got as much time as you did.

337 **Head:** Well, yeah, we were at the right spot at the right time. It was an exciting time for everybody.

338 **Moroh:** Let's go back to those early years and the work and the campus culture. Can you describe  
339 a typical day of those early times when you first got to campus?

340 **Head:** Well, they all varied of course.

341 **Moroh:** The kinds of work that you were doing.

342 **Head:** I'll never forget. Jim [Rote] and I would go to a lot of meetings and I wish I had kept them –  
343 he would write limericks about some of these meetings because we were trying to figure out what these  
344 meetings were really about!

345 **Moroh:** Do you mean on campus meetings or community meetings?

346 **Head:** No, this was on campus with the founding faculty. A lot of it was just kind of soapbox type  
347 of meetings where people would get up on their soapbox and make these kinds of strong exclamations. We  
348 weren't sure where everything was going. And then finally Bob Van Spyk, remember he put that calendar  
349 up and said, "Hey, you guys."

350 **Moroh:** The PERT chart.

351 **Head:** Yeah. It was a reality check here, man. We've got to get a program going. But a lot of the  
352 earlier discussions, it really was a bit frustrating. We were kind of like a lot of split personalities. On one  
353 side we really valued camaraderie and collaboration. That's what the Vision was talking about. And  
354 partnerships. But on the other side, we were confronted with limited resources and limited time. So for



355 example, I was struggling to even get approval to hire science faculty. I had all of the sciences. I would get  
356 like one faculty slot. And two, and how am I gonna run a full program? I think there were a lot of things  
357 going on behind the scenes. Because of the quickness of when we had to start, I think we were kind of  
358 lending ourselves to be defeated in a way. Even though we talked from kind of a general perspective, I  
359 didn't really get a sense of collaboration. I got a sense that we were siloing ourselves because we had to get  
360 our programs going. You know, we talked about these big picture things but I didn't feel like we had a  
361 leader on top of everybody to kind of like distill [things]. Sometimes we were going around in circles. We  
362 were kind of spinning our wheels in a way, and I wasn't sure where it was all going in terms of how does  
363 this impact our curriculum? How does it impact who we are and what we're doing? Peter talked about  
364 [34:57] outcomes-based education. I actually believe in learning outcomes, I really got that. But I didn't  
365 get it in the way like Peter Smith said: "You can come in with all these experiences and blah, blah, blah,  
366 blah." And some people didn't want to have grades. There was all of this stuff. I said, "Well, let's look at  
367 Santa Cruz as an example. They started like that. And, you know, you can't scale it up." So we were really  
368 confronting this issue of being a boutique-ish kind of CSU, which we weren't going to stay. CSU's aren't  
369 boutiquey little private colleges. You know? How are we going to scale everything up? How are we going  
370 to make this all work? And I felt that we spent a lot of time on these boutique-ish things and people's  
371 opinion about things. I know that Arvizu stood back a bit but at the end of the day nobody really  
372 synthesized the big picture things and really had us do some reality checks. So a lot of us had to spend time  
373 on the side really looking at the nuts and bolts of putting these programs together with the timeframe we  
374 had because, man, it's going to be pretty embarrassing to open our doors in August and what if you don't  
375 have faculty? You don't have curriculum? One day I was asked, "Hey, Bill, you need to buy some  
376 equipment for your – what's your equipment budget?" Christ, you know, I hadn't been working on this, I  
377 had to come up with [a budget] and I said, "\$2 million." I had no idea what it was going to be, right? So it

378 was really hard because you were caught in between looking at some big picture stuff and at the same time  
379 you really had to put some flesh on the bone, right?

380 **Moroh:** And as I recall, you spent a lot of time building community relationships.

381 **Head:** I was out there a lot.

382 **Moroh:** While you were working in the inside you were running out going to Moss Landing and  
383 going to MBARI [Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute].

384 **Head:** Right.

385 **Moroh:** And going to the Aquarium.

386 **Head:** Yeah, and Hopkins. Yeah, the Aquarium.

387 **Moroh:** And trying to get into the club of those institutions who said, “Who do you think you are?”

388 **Head:** You know, one of my struggles -- and you know this in terms of at the beginning --, because  
389 when I first started, I’m a Marine Scientist. I got my master’s at Moss Landing Marine Labs. One of the  
390 first things I did because I had to decide on faculty hires, I had a meeting with the faculty at Moss Landing  
391 Marine Labs. They were in trailers in Salinas. I think that was problematic. I think they felt a little bit  
392 threatened. I think that before I got here Peter or somebody made some claim that Moss Landing was  
393 going to be absorbed by CSUMB. And they were just loaded for bear. But I didn’t know that and so they  
394 said, “Hey, we’ll be your Marine Science arm.” You know? And I said, “Cool. This will be great.” Because  
395 I went there, I had a great fondness for Moss Landing. Before the earthquake. I really loved my time at  
396 [37:55] Moss Landing. And so [for] my first hires I didn’t really focus on Marine Science because I had  
397 the whole of Moss Landing to work with. How wrong I was. It was probably one of my bigger  
398 disappointments because they had said they would come over and teach and they would help us develop  
399 our program and then that way we could evolve it, because I was interested in marine science and policy  
400 and watershed systems but I had to make some decisions on some of the initial hires. So we aimed more at  
401 like remote sensing and modeling, you know, bringing in with the ESSE side. With Moss Landing, as you

402 know, even though we gave them \$100,000 a year, they didn't come over and teach one class. They were  
403 just holier than thou. There was such an opportunity for this to really be magical. Of course our students  
404 could go over and take classes but the classes were all day. Then, you know, they started complaining our  
405 students weren't well prepared for the classes. Of course, our response was "Well, why don't you come  
406 over and teach some of our students so they can get prepared?" As you know, they didn't do it. There was  
407 not one class that any of the Moss Landing faculty [taught] ... in fact, they rarely came over to our campus.  
408 We always went over to theirs. I was on the [Moss Landing] Governing Board. You had to deal with it,  
409 with Kenneth [Coale] the Director. I mean over and over again. So we did delay the startup of our Marine  
410 Science program because I was fairly naïve. I really did think that Moss Landing would step up to the plate.  
411 I thought, they have a great group of faculty. They would be our starting Marine Science program. And it's  
412 really not very far away, it would be easy, and they would come teach some of our introductory classes.  
413 And then our students would go there. To me, ostensibly it looked really great. It just didn't end up being  
414 that way. I think that in retrospect it's okay. We put our own Marine Science program together. I funded  
415 the development of our Science Diving Program. When I realized that it wasn't going to happen, we kind  
416 of had to change our trajectory. But I think ultimately it might end up being okay.

417 **Moroh:** I think the campus is now just inching towards where you thought you were going to be -

418 **Head:** Yeah, 25 years ago. Yeah, I know. I think part of it is they felt really threatened and I don't  
419 know who it was that claimed that Moss Landing should be part of CSU Monterey Bay. I assured them  
420 over again that that wasn't going to happen, that I have a great fondness for Moss Landing and their  
421 autonomy. They were so close, you know. I said they would be the great marine arm. They have the harbor  
422 there. Our boats could be there. We could help fund [projects]. They have extra land. We were looking at  
423 building dormitories there, all kinds of things. It never happened. So, I put a lot of my efforts into the  
424 Watershed Systems and bringing in some technology particularly on that, on the technology side and the  
425 policy side. And economics. Because we didn't have a Business program. So I hired an economist. But he

426 felt so isolated. He was the only one [laughs] and he finally ended up leaving. But ostensibly the idea was  
427 **[41:12]** good in terms of what we were putting together. But yeah, an average day was a long day. I  
428 remember, not being within the system and being out in the Bahamas, I had no people that I had already  
429 pre-identified to hire. So I guess a lot of faculty already knew other people. But I would be looking at  
430 resumes and applications until three in the morning, trying to do my due diligence and trying to be  
431 thorough because these hires are so important, you know? Some people would come in and cut it really  
432 short and leave, you know, and I was like, “Okay. . .” I knew a lot of the marine scientists but again, I was  
433 not really focusing on that initially because I thought Moss Landing would fill that role. It was challenging  
434 because Jim was unable to commit at the level he wanted to commit at, so really I felt alone a bit.

435 **Moroh:** Yeah.

436 **Head:** I did talk with him [Jim Rote] but I had to be very careful because he was so exhausted and  
437 he was [felt] really guilty. He said, “Bill, I’m just too tired,” type of thing. But when he was on, it was  
438 great. We had great conversations. With the other faculty, everyone was working on their own thing. There  
439 was nobody that really got us together in terms of really crossing these boundaries. I mean we talked about  
440 these general big things but when it came down to some specifics like curriculum, like how are we going to  
441 share curriculum with you, and on the Math . . . . They hired some Math people that were pure Math  
442 people and they didn’t want to work with scientists. They wanted to do their Math and our students didn’t  
443 understand the Math they were teaching and couldn’t apply it in Science classes. Those kinds of crazy  
444 things that were happening.

445 **Moroh:** You did have some good hires despite all of that.

446 **Head:** Yeah.

447 **Moroh:** Some of your first hires were wonderful. Like David Takacs.

448           **Head:** Yeah, no. I'm very proud. I stole David from Josina because she wanted him as well. He  
449 was great. No, I'm very proud of the hires that I made. I think that a typical day at CSU Monterey Bay was  
450 never typical.

451           **Moroh:** [Chuckles] Right.

452           **Head:** Do you know what I mean? It was like, "Okay..."

453           **Moroh:** I think you're right. This is an interesting question. So were there key moments of change  
454 or struggle that stand out in your memory? You already talked a little bit about how the ideas of the  
455 President were so different. Are there any sort of changes that you saw?

456 **[44:08] Head:** [long pause] Probably. I'll talk about the negative side first and then get rid of that and  
457 then talk about maybe the positive side in terms of key moments. Probably the one that hit me the hardest,  
458 because I think again maybe it was my naiveté. I came here because of the strong statements in the Vision  
459 Statement of collaboration and mutual respect, all of that. When the President and the Provost started  
460 having their differences and then some of the founding faculty did some very personal attacks particularly  
461 on the President and then personal attacks on other faculty, it really made me take a step back, I must say. I  
462 was profoundly affected by that and profoundly disappointed. I was surprised [that] at the leadership level  
463 someone didn't bring a halt to that in terms of the code of conduct. Maybe we were just letting everyone do  
464 whatever they wanted to do, but it was a poor code of conduct.

465           **Moroh:** I remember 'Run until you're tackled.'

466           **Head:** What's that?

467           **Moroh:** That was Peter. 'Run until you're tackled,' right?

468           **Head:** Yeah. Maybe it was a christening for me because I gave a lot of people the benefit of the  
469 doubt. Some people would get on their soapboxes and talk about all kinds of things that weren't that  
470 relevant, but I would listen and be very respectful. Because the attacks were so personal and vicious, they  
471 were not professional at all, and no one was calling them on it. What happened was we used to exchange

472 ideas on email and all kinds of things. Email was a major mode of communication for a lot of the faculty.  
473 It just shut it down. If someone said something that was in response to what someone said, it would be just  
474 a barrage of negative things coming back to that person and calling that person a racist or all these things  
475 that were just unacceptable to me in terms of code of conduct and behavior. What it caused me to do was  
476 actually step back from feeling like the environment was really truly as collaborative as the Vision was  
477 laying out. I was disappointed. In fact, I don't know if you were part of that group when we went to  
478 Arvizu's house. We tried to get him to make amends with Peter because this was driving everybody crazy.  
479 That all never happened. But on the negative side that, if I think back to the early years, that was a big  
480 moment for me because I started to hesitate then. I wasn't hesitating before.

481 **[47:26] Moroh:** Did it change the way you were working?

482 **Head:** Absolutely.

483 **Moroh:** What happened as a result of it?

484 **Head:** I became less quote-unquote collaborative in a sense.

485 **Moroh:** It was too much of a risk.

486 **Head:** Well, yeah. And everyone was on these negative tirades and we were no longer talking  
487 about intellectual things, about curriculum. It was too much Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. I couldn't embrace  
488 someone who just called someone a really negative, nasty name. I couldn't go over there and feel like I  
489 could have a really good conversation when it wasn't fixed. It wasn't brought out. It was not behavior we  
490 would condone in our students. It would be something that we would – like when I put UROC  
491 [Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center] together, I had a strong code of conduct and we didn't  
492 have that. So for example, I'll give you an example where I put some of my efforts into. I still collaborated  
493 and everything. It was challenging, I must say. There was a time like when Steve Moore and I met with  
494 people in the Social Sciences and we wanted to do some collaboration and they were not really interested in  
495 collaborating. We didn't have a Business Center so we really didn't have a sense with Economics. People

496 seemed to be already becoming siloed because of the quick startup and really trying to create their own  
497 identity and their own programs. So I think that a variety of circumstances forced that. I think the time  
498 element was a big thing. It's unfortunate that I know that [President] Clinton needed to come out on Labor  
499 Day and open it up. But it was such a bad decision to really try to put together such an innovative program  
500 in such a short -

501 **Moroh:** So fast.

502 **Head:** So fast. And I think we paid a dear, dear price. And we paid that for quite a while. But what  
503 I did, for example, I shifted a bit. Because I'm such a positive person, you know, I didn't want to get caught  
504 up in that kind of negativity. That's not what I came here for and it wasn't of interest to me and just leads  
505 nowhere. So I put a lot of effort into, as you know, figuring out how to get a Science Center. Because we  
506 had nothing. We had to convert a dental -

507 **Moroh:** The blood bank.

508 **Head:** Yeah, the blood bank. The Dental Building. So I was fortunate to get money from the  
509 Community Foundation and from Packard. We hired Stanford Research Institute. I had been following this  
510 NSF initiative. The National Science Foundation had an initiative called Project Kaleidoscope and it was  
511 just beautiful. It was looking at particularly undergraduate education in STEM and in new pedagogical  
512 ways that were more inquiry based and have the students engage in research and activities. But  
513 additionally, it was really taking a fresh look at architecture. You know, because science buildings  
514 traditionally are very staid. They're kind of linear and they're dark usually and they are compartmentalized.  
515 They don't create a lot of bumper car space. [Chuckles] Project Kaleidoscope was really trying to shift  
516 with these new ideas of pedagogy and teaching. We have to have new ideas in the way we design and  
517 construct Science buildings. I thought, "Wow, this is perfect." So working with Stanford Research Institute  
518 we came up, as you know, with this concept of a Science Plaza. Because one building wasn't going to be  
519 enough. I got real excited about that. We got a little more money from the Packard Foundation and we

520 were able to get the State to put in money for a Science building. [sigh] Unfortunately [long pause]... I'm  
521 not sure, but I think it was just a combination of things. We had our facilities people who were very  
522 conservative. I gave the facilities people and Anshen & Allen architects, Project Kaleidoscope and I was  
523 real excited about the new building. Stanford Research, they were great. They had really good preliminary  
524 [52:04] designs that were really airy. But to cut to the chase, when I saw the initial drawings and  
525 everything, it was a Science Center that was boring. It was dark. It was uninviting. And when I challenged  
526 the people at the University I got nothing but negative feedback. And eventually I was told not even to  
527 contact the architects anymore. When I went to the facilities people I said, "Why aren't we doing  
528 something that's innovative here? You know, I mean it's just the perfect time for us to do this. Particularly  
529 with our Provost, interdisciplinary." They said, "Well, we don't want to make any waves, you know,  
530 because if we do we don't know if we'll get more funding from the CSU system." And I said, "Well, that's  
531 a bunch of bull crap." You know? "If you do it right then everybody is going to really look at you in a  
532 favorable way." But the Science Center was – you know, one of those yin and yang things. It was a major  
533 accomplishment. It was the antithesis of what I wanted it to be. It was dark, uninviting, cold, narrow. And  
534 so I don't know if you remember this but being Bill Head, being the Energizer Bunny I am, I decided,  
535 "Okay, this is the way it is. I'm really depressed by it," and I was. I was emotionally – I almost resigned to  
536 be honest with you. But instead of that I wrote another proposal. I wrote a proposal to the Economic  
537 Development Agency for \$5 million to build a lecture hall and a meeting room that would be -

538 **Moroh:** Attached to -

539 **Head:** - adjacent to the Science Center. And my thought was that would be an anchor for another  
540 building and get the momentum going and we could bring [in] funding. But at least we would have a  
541 building that this – I'm not gonna let anyone not have it be airy and open and inviting. [Laughs] And we  
542 got the money. We got the \$5 million. However, I had taken a sabbatical and during that time Peter Smith



543 reallocated it. In that initial proposal, I had a small amount of money to convert an existing building to a  
544 Visitors Center, right?

545 **Moroh:** A-huh.

546 **Head:** And it was just a small amount of the \$5 million, right. It was already an existing building  
547 and it was just kind of doing some retrofits.

548 **Moroh:** Yeah.

549 **Head:** And so when the money came Peter repurposed it. I remember the word. He repurposed the  
550 money for the Alumni Visitors Center which has like a friggin' fireplace. I was friggin' livid. I couldn't  
551 understand. I went to Peter and he made some bureaucratic excuse. And Cindy Lopez, she still laughs to  
552 this day because I refused to go into the Alumni Visitors Center for over a year. She would call me and say,  
553 "Bill, I know you won't come over here!" When I was submitting grants I would send it to her and [say]  
554 "I'm not going to enter that building."

555 **Moroh:** I stood next to you at the opening of the building.

556 **Head:** So you remember that! [Laughs]

557 **Moroh:** I do. It was all we could do to keep you from throwing tomatoes.

558 **Head:** Oh, man, I was so pissed. Even when they had the Science Center going up when I drove  
559 onto campus I would intentionally take a route that I could not see the Science Center

560 **Moroh:** The Visitors Center, you mean?

561 **Head:** What was that?

562 **Moroh:** You mean the Visitors Center.

563 **Head:** No, the Science Center.

564 **Moroh:** Oh, the Science Center.

565 **[55:18] Head:** Yeah. And so okay, and so all right, they rechanneled that money that was going to be a

566 lecture hall. I didn't give up. You'll remember this. On the first floor of the Science Center as you walk in  
567 on the left there's a big lecture hall and then there's a roof. I was able to get money from you, thank you,  
568 Marsha! And so Anshen & Allen, who were the architects, did kind of a feasibility study of putting a big  
569 meeting room on top of that. It would be on the second floor. And the meeting room would have this  
570 beautiful vista, a view. We had no meeting space, we had nothing in the friggin' Science Center. We met in  
571 this friggin' basement. I mean it was embarrassing how unplanned this was. So anyway, this was to have a  
572 conference room, a meeting room where we could have speakers, we could meet as a group, we could have  
573 fundraisers there and really show off the place. You know, have these nice vistas. They did the whole  
574 feasibility study and came up with the cost of a million dollars. I think I presented it to you or whomever  
575 and by that time [Laughs] – it just wasn't gonna happen. I kind of gave up. I must admit. Man, because I  
576 don't usually give up. I fought as hard as I could. I guess the only redeeming thing in the Science Center  
577 was, I know David Takacs took the lead on this, but the faculty on the third floor, appropriately, put a  
578 plaque by the bathroom.

579 **Moroh:** That's right.

580 **Head:** Which is called –

581 **Moroh and Head:** The Bill Head head! [Laughs]

582 **Head:** It's a great legacy for me, I love it! [Laughs] I love it! Oh, man. Do you know what I mean?  
583 That was so appropriate! But it's really neat because being on the Science Leadership Council there's a lot  
584 of movement now for, I think it's like an \$80 million building, you know, a Science building. So I've been  
585 talking to Andrew, "Please have some openness to it. Some bumper car space." [Laughs] You know, really  
586 inviting and not just negative. We had narrow halls. It was this really cold concrete. You know. "Please get  
587 away from that coldness and make it inviting, like it really should be!" Because Science can be so exciting!  
588 Particularly in today's age. [Laughs] So anyway, I'm proud of the fact that the first new building on  
589 campus was the Science Center and all the work that you put into that was phenomenal, too.

590 **Moroh:** Well, and the labs themselves are lovely.

591 **Head:** Yeah.

592 **Moroh:** The only part that's really nice.

593 **Head:** Yeah. Yeah. But I remember because we didn't have a graduate program so we had a very  
594 hard time getting research space. I just couldn't believe we couldn't get meeting spaces, you know? It's like  
595 how in the hell do you have a meeting? What happens when we want to bring some people and have them  
596 give talks? We had to reprogram a room that wasn't even supposed to be on the grid, right?

597 **Moroh:** Yeah. The loading dock.

598 **Head:** Oh, God. It was so embarrassing! [Laughs]

599 **[58:26] Moroh:** I know, I know. So what made you decide to leave [the Science Center]? Was it just time?

600 **Head:** It was just time. You know, to be honest with you I had really a bad experience with the  
601 Science Center. I was in there for a while but determined to get out of there. I didn't like coming to the  
602 Science Center. It just really affected me and stayed with me for a long time. It still does. But you had  
603 asked me to work on the McNair Scholars proposal. I had run an internship program. I was very proud of  
604 the internship program I had. It had money from a lot of different sources. But the outcome for the  
605 internship program was very different. The outcome was really to get the students employed right after they  
606 graduated. Because I had such great contacts with the community, like you said, I spent so much time out  
607 in the community and because of who I am I set up a really I think a top notch internship program. I paid  
608 all the students so they could work in smaller organizations. The organizations didn't have to pay. They had  
609 learning agreements. The organizations loved me. Every one of the students got great jobs. I really, really  
610 enjoyed that. But then, when you asked me to work on the McNair Scholars program you know, most of  
611 the programs I looked at were more to get the students to graduate [school], right. Even the AMP program  
612 was to get them to graduate [school], the Alliance for Minority Participation. When I read the McNair  
613 Scholars philosophy I had to step back. I said, "Wow, we are not doing a good job, are we?" Because we

614 had capstones which the students presented in the Spring. We had a capstone class in which not once were  
615 the students talked to about graduate school. We had a Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
616 symposium on campus. Not one of our students would ever present. When I'd go to Capstone in the Spring  
617 I'd ask what the students are going to do. They had no idea. They said, "Well, I'm gonna apply to grad  
618 school in a year or two," which of course most of them will not. So I had this awakening moment, Marsha.  
619 It's like I've been a friggin' charlatan! We have great students, but we're accommodating them. We're like  
620 saying, "Everybody, you are doing a great job." But we're not preparing them to be successful, particularly  
621 at the graduate [school] level. Because the McNair Scholars Program's goal was to get students not just  
622 into Ph.D. programs but Ronald McNair wanted them to be leaders, to be effectual. Not just getting in  
623 because they were underrepresented or first generation or any of that. They wanted them to be  
624 accomplishing and make a difference. That just rang true to me. It was hard to get funded because the  
625 people who had previous McNair grants were given 15 points extra credit.

626 **Moroh:** To break into that.

627 **Head:** We had to have a perfect score. We got 99 out of 100 and I was really pissed we didn't get a  
628 hundred

629 **Moroh:** Wow.

630 **Head:** But we were the only campus, the new campus brought on that year. I don't know if you  
631 remember this. I had written the proposal with Renée [Curry]. It was great because it was across  
632 disciplines. It fit my philosophy perfectly. I loved writing it. And it was to get students into grad school  
633 and all that. It was just great. It had research experiences. And I just really fell in love with writing it. But I  
634 didn't know anything

635 **[1:02:07]** about the review cycle. So I started a sabbatical that fall. And you called me in September, end  
636 of September, I was on sabbatical about a month or so. And you said, "Bill, we got the McNair Scholars  
637 Program!" "Oh!" I said, "Great! That means we can start up next year when I come back from my

638 sabbatical.” “No, we have to start it in two weeks.” [Laughs] “It starts October 1.” [Laughs] Do you  
639 remember? We had to go through all the hiring process and everything. I had to drop my sabbatical and  
640 come back. But that was the genesis for the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center. I am in contact  
641 with a lot of our students that are doing their post docs, finishing off their Ph.D.’s. It’s just magical!

642 **Moroh:** And most of them went through the UROC program?

643 **Head:** All of them, yeah. I’m proud of UROC, not only the impact it had on the students we dealt  
644 with but I believe it had a really strong impact on the culture because now faculty are doing research.  
645 They’re engaging their undergraduates. They really are. Working with them to get into grad school. Before  
646 we spent all of our friggin’ time on the capstone, right?

647 **Moroh:** Um hmm.

648 **Head:** And what was happening, the student would send something to a faculty member who  
649 would redline and send it back and the faculty member ended up writing the gosh darn thing, you know?  
650 And it was never presented anywhere other than at the capstone [festival] which really doesn’t have much  
651 impact or much meaning, right? So with UROC I had funding not only from McNair but all kinds of  
652 sources, as you know. Plus I’m really proud of the fact I got a \$2 million endowment which enabled me to  
653 bring students on regardless, because some of my funding was restricted. You’re either first generation or  
654 low income [in McNair]. I didn’t want it to be restricted.

655 **Moroh:** You could also broaden the field.

656 **Head:** Broaden the field. Be in any discipline, it didn’t really matter. Because I would not have  
657 been good if it was just McNair Scholars. McNair Scholars had to be first generation and low income. Or  
658 underrepresented. I’m not in favor of just having that kind of a program, particularly given all the benefits.  
659 So I was really proud that I got lots of money from a lot of different sources to fund whomever applied and  
660 was qualified, regardless. We had a great mix of students from a lot of different disciplines. I go to a  
661 number of graduations and they’re all having kids now. [Chuckles] But one of my students who is at the

662 University of Washington is in diabetic research and she was a UROC Scholar. She was not writing really  
663 well. What was going on? It ended up she was really severely dyslexic. So we had her tested and I paid for  
664 her to get some training. She is finishing her fifth first author publication as a grad student. And everyone  
665 **[1:05:20]** wants her as a post doc. She is just radiant. She called me out of the blue, “Bill, I’m looking at a  
666 post doc. I want to talk to you about it.” You know? But it’s just like those kinds of stories, as students they  
667 have, they get to – not only their identity but their strength, and that’s what I really valued about the  
668 McNair, that philosophy. I hadn’t really looked at – wow! Because I really wanted to demonstrate to our  
669 University that our students could really achieve at the highest level. And they obviously can. They can bat  
670 in the big leagues, so to speak, right? [Laughs]

671 **Moroh:** Yeah.

672 **Head:** We would get five getting the GRFP [Graduate Research Fellowship Program] which is  
673 bonkers! The first time we did the pre-doc with the CSU, I got five students in that. Yeah. It’s just giving  
674 the right kinds of support and the right kind of mentoring and the right opportunities. I think the big thing  
675 for us at the beginning of that was when we put UROC [Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center]  
676 together we didn’t have a lot of research going on on campus, as you know. So because I had a lot of  
677 money from a lot of different sources, I was able to fund students to go to a lot of different places. And that  
678 was magical, Marsha, because a lot of these students hadn’t been to other places. So they had this kind of  
679 imposter syndrome. They didn’t know how they would stand up. And they did quite well. They were able  
680 to come back very robustly, thumping their chests and their shoulders back. It was magical. And then what  
681 was really a secret sauce was funding students to go do summer research at a university where they’re  
682 interested doing their graduate work. Because if they made the connections, it was like a piece of cake. If  
683 it didn’t work, that was fine, too. But that’s worked out really, really well. There are all of these things that  
684 just kind of fell into place.

685           **Moroh:** I think the byproduct, as something you mentioned before, was just that it increased our  
686 own faculty's research productivity because when you have a student coming to you saying "I want to do  
687 research with you!" You've gotta be doing research.

688           **Head:** Yeah. Also, I've seen a nice shift in the CSU and it's a really good shift, it's a challenging  
689 shift but a shift where research is really valued. I think it's a tough row to hoe because as opposed to UC  
690 where you are given so much leeway in terms of teaching to focus on research, at a CSU you are almost  
691 asked to do too much. You know? Because you have pretty heavy duty teaching and then a robust research  
692 agenda which requires serving on all the committees as well. I served on a lot of committees and I know  
693 Cheryl [Logan] does. You just have to get your name out there. And write tons of proposals. It's not easy.

694           **Moroh:** To be everything.

695           **Head:** Yeah. To be a faculty member at a CSU I mean it's just a lot of demands. And certainly  
696 across disciplines now. I know the Council of Undergraduate Research used to focus more on the STEM  
697 disciplines but now it's in creative activities, in Humanities, and everything. There's a lot of expectation  
698 in scholarship and engaging students. One of the challenges we had with UROC was some of the old school  
699 Humanities faculty said, "Well, I do all my research by myself. I don't know how to bring on a student,"  
700 type of thing.

701           **Moroh:** Right.

702           **Head:** You remember that. Those times are really changing.

703           **Moroh:** Right.

704           **Head:** Because what they're finding is that when a student has an opportunity to do that level of  
705 scholarship or creative activities that actually is a really better indicator of how they are going to be when  
706 they go on in the profession or in graduate school. It's really giving them an opportunity to express their  
707 identity. If they just take linear classes and things, is that really them? It also gives them an opportunity to  
708 kind of figure out where they want to be. To really promote themselves with some type of vision and

709 purpose. I'm working now with a lot of universities, with their faculty and undergraduates and graduate  
710 students on mentoring around the Graduate Research Fellowship Program but a lot of it is just writing  
711 proposals. How to write good letters of recommendation by the faculty. Working with graduate students on  
712 all kinds of proposals and applications for scholarships. And now I'm working with a group of graduate  
713 students at UC Santa Cruz and Penn State for capacity building. I wrote a big primer for the Graduate  
714 Research Fellowship and so I've been mentoring a lot of students. But that's an activity. That's something  
715 that, you know, I can mentor you, for example and that's great but that's just an activity. You [1:10:05]  
716 benefit from it. Now what I want to do is work with the grad students who are then going to work with the  
717 undergrads and other grads, you know, really develop capacity.

718 **Moroh:** Train the trainer.

719 **Head:** Yeah. You got it, yeah. They're all excited because they're students I've worked with, I've  
720 mentored, and they've done really great jobs on their applications. They said they never worked so hard but  
721 they never have produced something as brilliant as what they feel they've submitted. They really feel  
722 strongly about it. And so they're really committed to this. They say, "Man, I really want to help other  
723 people. I just really didn't realize that this was the benchmark, you know what I mean? I thought it was  
724 down here." One student -- I'm going to put her essay in my primer,-- she says, "I want you to also put the  
725 first essay I gave you. [Laughs] Just to show the students where I started from. And where I ended up."  
726 There are dramatic differences. "You know, I didn't start at this level whatsoever. And I thought where I  
727 started from was pretty darn good!" [Laughs]

728 **Moroh:** Isn't that interesting. So if you reflect back about all your accomplishments, it's kind of  
729 coming full circle. What you thought you could accomplish and what you did. You accomplished so much  
730 in so many different areas. Do you think it was a successful endeavor? I mean would you have done things  
731 differently if you had known then what you know now?



732           **Head:** I'm really proud. I brought in over \$20 million in grants that were for student support, for  
733 faculty enhancement, for infrastructure development, for capacity development, endowments to keep the  
734 thing going both for UROC and for the Rote professorship. I'm exceedingly proud of that. I'm very proud  
735 of the work I did with the RTP document particularly considering I didn't know what tenure was. [Laughs]  
736 The thing about the RTP Document, when I wrote it there was a committee but we were just going around  
737 in circles. All these opinions and we weren't doing anything. So I really used the Boyer model of  
738 scholarship where you value scholarship in the areas of Teaching and Learning, Discovery, Professional  
739 Application, University Service. But particularly within the aspect of teaching and learning because you  
740 know as a CSU a lot of this is just teaching. I understood exactly what he [Boyer] was trying to say. If we  
741 do value Teaching and Learning, we should value it at the same level that we do Discovery and Integration.  
742 It needs to be done at the level of scholarship. In other words, if you're going to claim that your teaching is  
743 to be evaluated at a scholarly level then you need to communicate it. You need to publish on it. You need to  
744 go to conferences and present on it. You really need to look at the pedagogical implications.

745           **Moroh:** And you need to influence the practice of others.

746 **[1:13:04] Head:** And you need to influence the practice of others. And probably one of the most  
747 dismaying things to me. . . I served on the University RTP. I served on all kinds of friggin' committees.

748           **Moroh:** So for the record, RTP is Retention, Tenure, and Promotion.

749           **Head:** Yeah. We fell back into student evaluations or maybe you would come in and observe and  
750 that would be the Scholarship of Teaching, even though we had a Teaching, Learning and Assessment  
751 Center. I don't think we understood what Scholarship of Teaching was really about. We had such an  
752 opportunity at those beginning years, in my opinion, to really take a look at. . . particularly since we were  
753 doing outcomes based education, right? But none of us were doing scholarship in that. So that was one  
754 disappointment. Another thing, when we put together the RTP document, when we put it together that it  
755 would just be a framework. It was explicitly stated in the document that each of the Departments or

756 Institutes or Divisions or Schools, or whatever they wanted to call themselves, were to take that as the  
757 platform, as the basic, you know, and then amplify that based upon what their needs were.

758 **Moroh:** Right.

759 **Head:** Very few, if any, did that. They fell back. So they did this matrix thing, so it was relatively  
760 easy for a faculty member to maneuver the system, right? And get tenure. Which was a little bit  
761 disappointing to me because that wasn't the intent, but it ended up being the consequence of it.

762 **Moroh:** Right. But it was quite an accomplishment developing the document.

763 **Head:** Yeah.

764 **Moroh:** In addition to developing the Science program.

765 **Head:** Yeah. I'm very proud of putting ESSP together. I really value working with you and I'm  
766 certainly very proud of putting UROC together. The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center. And  
767 kind of not only the impact it had on the students but also I think the impact it had on the culture of the  
768 University. I'm very proud of the endowments that have longevity, that will go beyond me, particularly  
769 within UROC and in recognizing Jim Rote. To be honest with you, the hardest thing, because I was so  
770 enamored with Project Kaleidoscope, was the Science Center. Like I said, I almost resigned. It really,  
771 really hit me hard. It hit me hard because nobody seemed to get it. They were in this rush to build it. And I  
772 asked the Facilities people, "Why? Why do we have to rush so fast?" And they said, "Oh, we have to."  
773 And I don't think that was true. I think they lied. I think that we could have taken some time. Because I  
774 wanted to go out and visit some other campuses that were involved in Project Kaleidoscope. And we didn't  
775 **[1:16:16]** do any of that. I didn't understand why. I was incredulous. So I'm really happy to see we're  
776 gonna get a new building. I hope that it will have some of the aspects of it that I valued when we designed  
777 the [first one]. At least the preliminary designs, we did the concept of it. I'm obviously very proud of the  
778 faculty, growing the program. I think I maintained my integrity through it. I was disappointed when things  
779 became a little personal, aggressively, in a negative way, by some faculty, in a way that was I thought was

780 a bit over the top. I was surprised. Maybe we should have established a better code of conduct. But I think  
781 we were all trying to figure out how to handle all of that and didn't know really what to do. But I think it  
782 kind of distanced us from one another as far as a team went. Do you know what I mean?

783 **Moroh:** Yeah.

784 **Head:** I don't know what you're hearing from other people coming in and talking to you, but I  
785 thought that there must have been a time of really bonding of these thirteen, fifteen faculty members.  
786 That's the way I thought we started out because I think we all had that great intention. We were in this  
787 great adventure, in that we were going to sacrifice ourselves, basically. I worked 20 hours a day. I mean I  
788 never took a day off, you know? We all worked really, really, really hard but there was a purpose behind it  
789 and it was something that was driving us.

790 **Moroh:** And a deadline looming in front of us.

791 **Head:** We had a deadline looming, but you know, we wanted to get reinforcement from the other  
792 founding faculty and we tended to, I think, isolate ourselves a little bit in more of a protection mode.  
793 Because here I was just a little more cautious. I mean when you are hesitant it takes away from the  
794 spontaneity of things and this kind of repartée, of just sitting down with coffee [and having a conversation].  
795 You tend to get within your own group and be with the people that you feel more comfortable with, that are  
796 going to support you. I was there for the opposite reason. I wanted to be uncomfortable. I really wanted to  
797 be shaken up a bit because I thought that's what we were all about and that's what startups are about. I  
798 wanted to visit other campuses. I just wanted to get all this stuff going. I worked with Marian Penn in the  
799 Service Learning Institute, getting that together. I didn't have a monumental role. I worked with putting  
800 together RISE [Recruitment in Science Education] and the chemistry labs. [Laughs] You know, all these  
801 programs.

802 **Moroh:** You really had an amazing impact.

803 **Head:** Yeah, the Watershed Institute, yeah, the whole thing.

804 **Moroh:** Quite a legacy.

805 **[1:19:21] Head:** It was a lot of stuff, yeah. You know. The faculty were great. I think that the Moss  
806 Landing partners were a little disappointing, obviously. I think now with James [Lindholm] at the helm. . .  
807 I worked a lot with UC Santa Cruz. They didn't realize Santa Cruz had fewer Marine Science majors than  
808 CSUMB does. [Chuckles] They had many more faculty, trust me.

809 **Moroh:** Any other closing thing we need to talk about?

810 **Head:** No. I think this is actually an important thing to do. I am sure that you guys are getting very  
811 different perspectives from all the different faculty.

812 **Moroh:** Yeah, well we'll see when they go up on the web, right? Then we can read each other's  
813 things.

814 **Head:** Yeah. Before we close, What do you think about it all?

815 **Moroh:** We're closing. We have a post script going here.

816 **Head:** I just want to add when we were first putting the Earth Systems Science and Policy program  
817 together, Susan Alexander who was at Stanford and also a postdoc at NASA, was one of my early hires as  
818 well. She worked with me as we wrote that proposal to be a part of that Earth Systems Science Education  
819 Program. Without her input and without her insights I don't know if we would have actually gotten the  
820 award. She was very instrumental. I want to make sure to give all these people credit. Steve Moore, I'll  
821 never forget, when we interviewed him he looked like he was 19 years old. He had a pony tail and was  
822 wearing a fanny pack. Boy, but he was indefatigable. You know, he just worked his friggin' butt off. He  
823 was one of the first persons we brought on. All of the initial faculty were just phenomenal. I remember  
824 when we were trying to figure out how to organize our different courses, we had a white board and we had  
825 little stick'em notes. We were just writing the courses and trying to figure out where we were going to put  
826 where, what, and David Takacs and I were running around. I'm hearing, "No, it won't work there because  
827 someone has to teach over there as well," because we had so few faculty. But the initial faculty that we

828 hired were all phenomenal. Suzy [Worcester] and Steve [Moore] and David [Takacs]. You know. Susan  
829 [Alexander]. Everybody. On and on. Sharon [Anderson]. All of those people were great. Obviously they're  
830 the ones who made the program. I was very thankful and grateful to have them as partners in putting this  
831 **[1:22:20]** all together. As I was grateful to have you. I'll never forget when Jim May stepped down, we  
832 had to decide who was going to take over Dean. And of course you being you. . . .

833 **Moroh:** Nobody wanted it.

834 **Head:** I know. You being you, you said, "Bill, you do it." [Laughs] Fortunately I said, "No,  
835 Marsha. I have to put the whole Science program together so you do it." [Laughs] You turned out to be  
836 much better than I.

837 **Moroh:** I don't know about that.

838 **Head:** But you know, at the end of the day, when you look at it, it's really the people. It's the  
839 people and the energy. In this particular situation, you and I both experienced, it's also the leadership. We  
840 had some challenges in our leadership. We had some differences of opinion in our leadership. I think we  
841 didn't have a really great established code of conduct so there were some behavioral issues that I think got  
842 us side-tracked. I don't think it necessarily derailed us but somehow we took some different circuitous  
843 routes to get to where we're going. We just didn't have enough time to do that. I think that kind of  
844 impacted us. I wouldn't give this up for the world. It was a magical experience and very memorable.  
845 Something that I will cherish as long as I live and beyond, I'm sure! [Laughs] I'm very thankful for the  
846 opportunity I had, and for any legacy, if there is any at all, that I have been able to leave at CSU Monterey  
847 Bay and particularly with opportunities to work with people like yourself, Marsha. I really appreciate it.

848 **Moroh:** That's sweet. Me, too. The feeling is mutual. Post-post script.

849 **Head:** Yeah. It's really funny because I hadn't thought about this in twenty five friggin' years. You  
850 bring out all these things and you realize that it's all the people that make it all happen. With the  
851 Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center, I think you remember when I was brought back from my

852 sabbatical, we had to hire. Remember when we brought Jessica Brown in and she asked like a million  
853 questions during the interview, right? Which were all really great questions and I was really intrigued. So  
854 she always used to give me a hard time because when I called her references, I talked to each one for over  
855 an hour because it was such an important hire to me, because I knew that if I didn't make a good hire then  
856 that was going to be really tough, because I had this big vision. UROC was still just McNair. I mean UROC  
857 would not be what it is had it not been for Jessica. We were just like the perfect partners. She was a  
858 phenomenal grant writer. We worked so well when we wrote proposals. We had fun writing proposals.  
859 Really, I just want to make sure I give real deep acknowledgment to what she contributed to the foundation  
860 of UROC and to where it is right now. Because if she hadn't been part of my team and the same with  
861 Bobby Quiñonez and others, but particularly Jessica, without her UROC wouldn't be where it is. It was  
862 just a joy working with her and it was fun putting UROC together because of that.

863 **Moroh:** That makes a huge difference.

864 **Head:** Oh, it makes a huge difference to have the right people.

865 (END OF RECORDING)

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