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An Interview with Hughie E. & Greta Mills

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

The Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV

University Libraries

University of Nevada Las Vegas

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The transcript received minimal editing that includes the elimination of fragments, false starts, and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the material. All measures have been taken to preserve the style and language of the narrator. In several cases photographic sources accompany the individual interviews.

The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of the Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project. Additional transcripts may be found under that series title.

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Preface

Hughie and Greta Mills spent their childhoods in Charlestown, West Virginia. Fate would bring them together years later in New York City. They married in 1954.

Both Hughie and Greta talk about achieving a better life through education and perseverance. He became an educator and she a librarian.

In 1989, the couple relocated to Las Vegas, seeing the weather and retirement lifestyle here to their liking. During this interview they describe their lives, individually and as a couple, and how they embraced life and living in Las Vegas as a retired, African-American couple.

Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project



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Name of Narrator: x HUGHIE E. MILLS
Name of Interviewer: CLAYTEE D. WHITE

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Claytee D. White 4/7/2011
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x Greta L. Mills
Signature of Narrator Date

Claytee D. White 4/7/2011
Signature of Interviewer Date



This is Claytee White. It is April 7th, 2011. I'm in the home of Greta and Hughie Mills.

So how are you today?

Doing well.

Greta (italics): Very well. Thank you.

Great. And Hughie, I want you to spell your first name for me.

H-U-G-H-I-E.

And Greta?

Greta, G-R-E-T-A.

Wonderful. So we're going to get started by just talking first about your early life. I want you to tell me a little -- and you may do this in any order that you like -- I want you to tell me a little about your early life, your family, what your parents did for a living, in any way you'd like to tell that.

Hughie: My dad was a coal miner. I'm one of five children born and then he semi-adopted another boy during my brother's traveling around with the Scouts. He traveled back and forth to the coal mines every day, like 35 miles each way, so he could stay at home. Through the deepest part of the Depression, though, he and some other coal miners rented what they call a shanty and he stayed there during the week and came home on weekends.

Where is this?

We were living in Charleston, West Virginia, and he commuted to two or three different places. One was Montgomery and one was in Turkey Knob.

So he worked at three or four different coal mines. My mother was a housewife. With as many as five or six of us to take care of, she was very, very involved with keeping the household going. We all had a chore to do. We all—four of us, anyway—were involved. They wanted us to be involved with music. So four of us were in the high school band. Elementary school was like three minutes from where we lived. But the junior high school was what we called uptown. That was from the seventh grade. We had to ride the bus and often walked about six-miles. Graduated there into high school, which was also uptown. The high school was closer than the junior high school was. So the city bus gave us bus passes so we could ride the buses. We all graduated high school. My dad says you've got one of two choices; you go to school or you go to work.

And did he mean in the coal mine?

I quit school and he took me to the coal mines and I worked for three days. He shook me on Friday, let's go, boy. I said I ain't going, Dad. He said what you mean I ain't going? I said I'm going back to school. He said go back to sleep, boy. And I never missed another day in school. My brother older than I also worked in the coal mines for a few days.

I had a happy childhood, aware that we couldn't go to the library. We couldn't go to the municipal auditorium. We couldn't go to the swimming pool. But that didn't really bother us as much because we had known nothing else. I guess when I was about 15 or 16 years old, about three of the men in charge that were people oriented opened a swimming pool on the river about ten miles, I guess, from where we lived. They had lifeguards and, also, we used to go to -- what do they call it? What was the name of the place?

Willow Bend.

Willow Bend. They call it Willow Bend Country Club. They had horseshoes and swimming. So that was our outlet for swimming. But we played softball. A block from where I lived was the junior high school, and it was built very much later in our life. But that area was the field where we played softball and baseball. When the circus would come to town, the circus was put up there. So everybody from town came there.

Were the schools integrated?

No. The schools were not integrated. In fact, my total education was in segregated schools from elementary and junior high, high school and then I went in the military and came back to college. It was also segregated.

Not until graduate school did you have --

That's right. Not until I went to New York to graduate school was that integrated and did I meet integration. It didn't upset me or I wasn't challenged by it. I just moved right in and took that as a part of my life. But I had a happy childhood.

Good. Give me the names of your siblings and your parents.

My mother's name was Mabel. I'm a junior, but I never, ever write it down, named after my dad.

Now, I was the third son and I was named after my dad.

How did you qualify?

I guess my mom named the others and my dad probably put his foot down. I want one named after me. That's what I believe. It was never announced, but I think that's the way it happened. And then I have a brother born after I was.

His father is really one of the old-fashion men who wanted a junior. Even when we were married, then, he kept wondering when would I have another Hughie; that he wanted the name to go on.

Yes. I think a lot of men feel that way.

Yes.

Well, I didn't. I didn't.

Because you didn't enjoy being a junior yourself.

Well, actually it didn't make that much difference. There was no preference given to me because I was named after my daddy. We all had chores that we had to do before we'd go out to play.

And what was your chore?

Going to the store for the widows.

Oh, wonderful.

My dad made sure that every widow in the neighborhood was well taken care of by his sons. And if Mrs. Morris wanted her lawn cut, we cut it. If Mrs. Washington wanted her pear trees trimmed or her laundry moved -- she did laundry -- one of us did it. We were not supposed to take a coin, not a coin. We lived on what was First Avenue. It was the first street from the river, the Kanawha River. Ours was the first street from the river. Then later on they built a boulevard that went the length of Charleston. It was Kanawha Boulevard. But from First Avenue to Third Avenue was our playground area, only place we could go because the one block over was the elementary school and they had a playground there. But every widow on First Avenue got free whatever she needed -- grocery store, lawn cut. Any errand needed to be run; one of us did it. And it was no, no, I ain't going to do it, Ms. Morris. No. When they called, you went with it. We had to accept it as a fact. It was some of the things that we had to do.

I didn't object to going to school. In fact, I looked forward to it. We had all teachers; naturally black schools, all black teachers. They instilled in us the desire to get an education. I mean from the first through the sixth grade. Then when we went to junior high school, her aunt taught in the junior high school I went to. They instilled the same thing. Then when we got to high

school that was really the turning point because we had fantastic teachers, fantastic teachers. In high school we had a high school band. Dr. Maude Wanzer Lane. She was the music teacher, but she was director of the band. In fact, we played at the World's Fair in 1939.

In New York?

The World's Fair in New York in 1939. I graduated in 1941. Couldn't go to college because finances. Coal miner with five kids didn't have the finances.

And your brother was in college then in Storer College.

Yeah, my brother was in college in Storer College.

Is that the oldest brother?

No. The second one.

The second one went to college. And what was the name of the school?

Storer College.

Hapers Ferry, West Virginia.

It's up in the panhandle near Pennsylvania. So I couldn't go to college while he was in college. Then the war came along and all of us went to the service the same time.

You were drafted.

How did that happen?

We were drafted.

The whole family was drafted at the same time?

Raphael, Marvin, Hughie -- not at the same time. As we became of age. My oldest brother is Raphael, Marvin, Hughie and then Lionel, as well as June, the one that we took in as a brother. He also went to the military.

Aren't there some --

We thought so.

Maybe it's about combat.

That was white folks.

Oh. So you knew what I was getting ready to ask.

I know. They wouldn't take all of the children. Yeah. But my mother had five stars in the window at once.

Oh, but that was after, because World War II they took them and the five brothers that were killed. They made a movie on it. [The Sullivans, 1944]

Oh, maybe that's when it started.

Yeah. That's when it started.

During World War II these five boys were in the navy, I think, and they all were killed. And so then they said never again.

So that's what I was thinking about. What size was the town you were born?

Charleston is the capital of West Virginia.

Forty-five thousand people when we were coming up.

Okay. Wow.

So Greta, tell me about your childhood and growing up.

Actually I'm the oldest of four children. There were two boys and two girls, I and then two boys and then a sister. Unfortunately my sister lived only five years. She was the prettiest one of us. We all still miss her as she came down with multiple sclerosis and died within six months' time. However, growing up was wonderful, again, just as Hughie says. I was born in Charleston, West Virginia, the capital. My father was always very active in politics. My father belonged to the Republican Party, the Young Republican Club as they called it in the 20s and 30s.

Right. The Party of Lincoln.

Yes. He could not understand why every black person was not Republican because Lincoln freed the slaves.

Exactly.

We heard this constantly. And he was a ward boss. So we had many meetings in the house at election time. He was also the man who gave the two dollars to those for their votes outside.

Now, are you talking about poll taxes?

No. No. To vote Republican you get two dollars. We were constantly told: I better not ever hear of you selling your vote, but he was willing to pay for anyone else. I thought he would die when my grandmother, his mother, actually went out to vote. He got his mother to go vote and then she wanted the two dollars. And no way. Of course, she was so upset with her son that he wouldn't give her two dollars. He thought this was the most disgraceful thing. However, he was willing to buy

any vote he could for the Republican Party.

I love it.

My dad had a saying that if it's bad weather the Republicans will not come out. So the night before election I can remember going to bed praying for a beautiful day so the Republicans will win and so my dad can get a better job because my dad was really politically involved and his jobs were based on the Republican Party. He had several good jobs in Charleston, West Virginia. During the war when most of the young men left, he was even appointed a city policeman. But then when the war ended, he lost his job there. But whatever jobs were available within the city. And finally his last days it was a Republican administration that he had a state job there in Charleston.

My mother stayed at home those early years, but then she went to work because there were times that dad couldn't get a job if the Democrats were in and my mother had to go out and work.

What kind of work did your mom do?

She did domestic work and, as I said, finally she worked with the family who owned the furniture store. He had a French chef and they taught mother to cook and serve the meals. We children delighted when mother would come home at night. Whatever was left over she could bring home. We all loved the cheese soufflé, even if it were cold when she brought it home. I mean whatever little cheese soufflé; that was the main one. So I think I grew up finally when we were married. I had to make a cheese soufflé because this is living.

Did your mom teach you how to cook?

Oh, yes.

Oh, she's a super cook.

So give me the names of your brothers and sister.

My brothers are Charles Edward Tuck and Wesley Thomas Tuck and my sister was Nancy Jane Tuck. It's three years between each of us. My kid brother as I call him, Wesley Thomas, did 23 years in the military. His last tour of duty was Nellis Air Force Base. So he retired here and that's how we came to visit him in the 70s and decided this is a nice place to retire. So we returned on several occasions, and finally in the 80s that's how we decided to move here.

Of course, I was on the border in growing up in Charleston. My parents didn't have a lot of money. But my father had been born in Charleston, West Virginia, also, and never wanted to leave.

I always after college named him like Emily Dickinson; that her biography could be summed up in three sentences -- born in Amherst; lived in Amherst; and died in Amherst. Well, my dad was born in Charleston, lived in Charleston, and died in Charleston. He instilled in us higher education. And this is what I always say; you've got to with a child from infancy talk about college. Don't expect them to become teenagers and say I'm going to college. My dad always said I was going college. Of course, his plan was that I would go and then I would help to support the brother and in turn the two of us -- it would go down the line like that. It didn't work out like that, however. But that was his dream.

That's great. That is wonderful. So you knew each other all along.

Yes, we did.

Well, yes and no. We lived a block apart at one time.

So we knew each other all the time.

We knew each other, yeah.

And I naturally was four and a half years younger than he. So he was in the service. When he came back I had at that point turned 17 and gone to college at West Virginia State, which is only eight or ten miles from Charleston in June of 1946. And September of '46 all of these veterans came to the campus. Oh, we were --

We took over.

We were a college of 500 students, but in September of 1946 we were 1800 students. All of the veterans returned. As I have said on many occasions, we girls grew up overnight.

And you don't have to explain that.

No, no.

No. She wasn't my girlfriend in college.

No, no. No, we weren't.

She was too nice.

Well, I'll take that as a compliment.

Tell me about the military. Go ahead.

Pardon me. He had been deprived for four years in the military. And so all of these girls on the campus -- he had a different girlfriend everywhere. That's all I'll say.

I had a car.

Oh, you had a car, too. Okay.

That's all I'll say. All right. Now, you can ask him the next question.

But she mentioned politics. One incident I'll never forget. When I went to vote for the first time one of the big Charlestownians, Dr. Hopson, who was a black doctor in town and a Democrat, he came in the little polling booth with me and I put him out. I says, you can't come in here.

When I got home the message had already gotten to First Avenue that you put Doc Hopson out of the polling place. I said, oh, my dad's going to kill me. You know what he said? Proud of you, son.

Wonderful. Was your father a Democrat or Republican?

I don't know.

Democrat. He was a Democrat.

I think he was a Democrat. My dad never talked politics.

Okay. Did you vote Democrat or Republican that first time?

I voted Democrat the first time.

Okay. Good.

But I put him out of the polling booth. And then people said, you put Doc Hopson out of the polling booth.

And my father was so proud. My first election was [Dwight] Eisenhower for President. I called Dad that night. Oh, Eisenhower won, isn't that great? And I voted Republican until [Richard] Nixon. And the first time Nixon ran I voted for him. After that I wondered how could I ever have voted --

So Roosevelt made no difference?

To most blacks in West Virginia [Franklin] Roosevelt made the difference, yes. Yes. Yes.

The difference. The difference.

Oh, yes.

That was the turning point for most blacks.

Yes. But not your father?

Not my father. No.

He never changed.

Why did I say I prayed for a beautiful day so the Republicans will come out to vote? Because if they don't, the Democrats are getting in.

He never changed. In fact, when he'd come to visit in New York, it was politics and he was still a Republican right down the line.

Wow.

You want military?

Yes, tell me about the military.

Horrible experience. Still segregated.

That's one of the reasons that I was told about the two of you.

Yeah. It was still segregated. I was inducted in Kentucky, Camp Campbell, Kentucky, as were all of the rest of us from Charleston. Got on the train with the blinds down and went down to New Orleans. Now, why were the blinds down? They reputedly had white folks shooting at black soldiers as they went on the train. So they pulled the blinds down so they didn't know. Even the white soldiers had the blinds pulled down so they didn't know whether it was white or black. So I was in a port battalion, loading and unloading ships. I went overseas to England.

Where did you have your basic training?

In New Orleans, loading and unloading ships. That's where we had the basic. That was our job, unloading ships, really, because they would come to New Orleans and we unloaded them, whatever was on them. So I went overseas in a port battalion. We landed two days after D-Day and ended up as our location in Cherbourg, France, because it was a port city. So we loaded and unloaded ships 24 hours a day. They had three shifts, eight-hour shifts, and they rotated, so you didn't do the same shift all the time. So I think we went like six weeks and then rotate six weeks and rotate. After the Battle of the Bulge, the 761st Tank Battalion, which was the only black fighting outfit in Europe, had an article in the Stars and Stripes that they needed replacements. So I inveigled a couple of buddies of mine; let's do it, let's do it, let's do it. Big mistake. But we did. We went over. I ended the war there in the tank battalion.

So before you tell me about that, so once you had seen Paris, what was --

I didn't stay there but six months. That was the only -- I won't say that -- but a period in my life

where I felt like a human being.

Explain that.

Color in France was nothing. It didn't mean a thing because they had the Sinhalese and all of the black folks that had been coming to France for years and years and years. So we were not a novelty. We were novel when we went to Germany; no, in England. [There was] a man named Garrison. We were playing softball. It was in May. It was cool and we were playing ball. But Garrison took his shirt off. And one of the little girls -- he's like that all over. Garrison, we never let him forget that. Yeah. So to them it was something new. There were not that many black people in England. But France, no, we were not a novelty in France. I stayed over there until the war was over. I didn't have enough points because when I had changed from the port battalion to the 761st, I had to start from scratch on building up points.

What points?

For each month you served in an area of the military you got points. When the war was over, those with the most points went home first. So when I transferred from the port battalion to the 761st, I lost my points. I had to start from scratch again. I even lost my rank. I was reduced -- I wasn't a big deal. I was a corporal and then I had to go back to private. So I had to accumulate more points. So when the war was over, I was on the tail end of going home. So there was a French culture course offered and I applied for that and I stayed in Paris for six months. That was really wonderful. It was wonderful. I mean in terms of interacting with people on an equal level without any fears.

Did you learn to speak French?

A little. I could make myself understood after about six or seven weeks. It came pretty easy because that's all you hear. But at Cherbourg they had, for the GIs that were there, English teachers and then they had a course in French that we all took. So I learned to speak it fairly well.

Then when that was over I went back to England and came back from England. I've been still wondering to myself I don't know why they sent me back to England before I came home, but I went back to England and I came back home from England in February '46. I actually stayed as long as I could. That was one of the things Dad pushed the education, so hey, I can do it now and I let somebody else pay for it. And so that was my military.

Now, something happened in the military that you talked about in class here in the program.

None of the experiences were good.

Was it experienced in England or was it perhaps with the 761st?

I think it's something with the 761st.

Well, one of the things that impressed me, or that depressed me. We led advance for the infantry. If there were problems that impeded the infantry from advancing, we went in and cleaned it up.

So give me an example.

Say they have pillboxes set up that are attacking the infantry. We went in and destroyed the pillboxes.

What is a pillbox?

It is a fortification that the Germans used. So we went in to destroy them. Then the infantry could go through. But what ticked us off was when the town was taken, the reporters who were embedded with the infantry would go right past us. All of the newsreels you saw in America was the white guys taking over a town. And we had cleaned it out. Not once, not one time did we ever have a newsperson stop and talk to us.

These were American news people?

American news people. And I had been -- for several times I saw it when I watched -- what's his name on CBS?... The one on "60 Minutes."

Oh. Andy Rooney.

Andy Rooney. Andy Rooney was a reporter for the Stars and Stripes. I've been saying I'm going to write him a letter and ask him if he ever talked to black troops. I know he didn't.

You should write him a letter and have him do that at the end of "60 Minutes."

Well, I'm going to probably do that because he was one of the reporters. I mean I didn't know him. I never saw him.

Right.

But they would come up and go right past us and talk to the infantry. The infantrymen would like kiss our behinds because of what we did. But you never saw in a newsreel -- in fact, when they had the movie "Patton," you didn't see a black person in that movie. And we were Patton's glory, supposedly. I wasn't with them then. But they said when I've got an outfit that we need another tank battalion; we've got one, but they're black. He said I didn't ask for color, I asked for fighting men.

And the dedication that they had and the fighting spirit that we have, we knew we had to succeed.

Did you hear anything about the Tuskegee Airmen as you were serving?

No.

No one ever talked about them?

No. No. We heard that they were training them. But once we got into our thing, we didn't hear a thing. We didn't even know until we got back home that there was the 99th Pursuit Squadron. One of our teachers at West Virginia State had been in it.

And one of the students.

And one of the students.

We called him Mr. Death. He was such a thin person, Whitehead, John Whitehead.

John Whitehead. John would say I'll see you a little later. He was still in the reserve. He would come over and fly over the campus, zoom, and go back, because Wright-Patt was only like, what, only a hundred miles from Charleston.

Wright-Patterson Air Base.

Air base was only a hundred miles from Charleston. So he was one of the -- and Roscoe Brown.

You may have heard of him.

Oh, yeah.

He was at West Virginia State, also. So when the war ended and I went back to Paris that was, as I said, I felt like I could walk the streets and nobody ever looked back at me. You're just another person here. You could be a Frenchman as long as you say "bonjour."

So when I got back home, I was discharged in Maryland and had to go through Washington, D.C. to get the train from Washington to Charleston. They had a restaurant in the station. I went over to get something to eat, and they told me I couldn't eat in there. I had a couple of dummy hand grenades. Well, the powder had been taken out of them. So I was furious that I couldn't eat there. So I saw the bellman or the porter and I asked him what time does the train leave? He said, you'll hear two minutes before it pulls out. I said okay. So I lay around the restaurant. And I took this hand grenade out when I heard it and I hollered grenade and threw it in the restaurant.

I'm surprised you made it back to Charleston.

Well, now, I got on the train. All the blacks were in one coach, right behind the engine. So when we

got to Virginia, the police came onboard. One of you boys threw a grenade in the -- everybody was mum. Nobody said a word.

Good. And they wouldn't have been able to identify you, anyway.

No. It was black. It was all black.

We all looked alike.

That's right.

That was my coming home. So when I came home then I started school right away.

So then your father didn't have to say coal mine?

No, no, no. Interesting story. Mom said dad came home from work one day and said all my sons are gone, all of my sons. That impacted on him. He was proud of us that we had served. And we all came home. My oldest brother was injured in Italy. He had his kneecap wounded and rather than do an operation they made the leg stiff. He walked with a stiff leg and that affected his spine. I think that led to his death. He died -- how many years ago?

Well, he was 70, though.

So tell me what it was like when all those military men came to campus.

Oh, they haven't been in adult life. They wanted everything to change. We were a small college in the village eight or ten miles from the city. So, of course, they controlled us totally. I mean we were still children.

We couldn't even hold hands on the campus.

I remember that.

Yes. And these guys just wanted to change everything. They were going to do what they wanted to do, hold hands. Of course, they had problems getting books and all of those things. Their money --

Because there were so many?

Their money didn't come. The government didn't --

Oh, okay.

For everything they decided they would have a --

Walk out.

When books, they couldn't get them, they -- what did you do?

We boycotted the bookstore.

And you've got to realize, though, just as I told our daughter when we took her down there in 1969, it was our black world there and we knew no difference. It was wonderful to see everyone in every office, everything. So this is how we grew up, with all black people.

The whole administration was black, wasn't it?

Oh, yeah. We had two professors who had come from Germany.

Oh, yeah. I meant the administration, though.

Right. Two professors, the one who taught German, Dr. Lehner, came from Germany prior to. And then Dr. Homberger taught business. But otherwise, it was a black world.

As one of our black professors said, you're in duck land.

Duck land?

Oh, yeah. He was hard on us.

Well, he was a philosophy professor. Just through the years I think we've discovered that there was a lot even within our educational system that was backward. Administration ruled and you didn't contradict them ever. So this is why I think he named it duck land. So we all went through college talking about duck land. And there have been times at things through the years we say, yep, it was duck land. He always told us in philosophy class to get out of duck land. So I feel as though it had more of a meaning; that he was truly a teacher of philosophy; that there's a lot out there in this world; don't stay in this little black world.

He came out of University of Illinois. He was a graduate of University of Illinois, had his doctorate. Dr. Herman G. Canady. When you think about it, the things that he tried to embed in our minds were something that was useful later. But we did not know or acknowledge it at that time because we were in duck land, as he said.

That's right. I remember the fear when I first went away to college. So I know exactly what you're talking about.

Yes. Yes.

How did you get away from Charleston -- well, first --

Oh. Now, you're going to hear some real stories.

I want to know how you met Greta after --

All right. Let me tell it. I'll tell the truth. I'll tell the honest story.

Oh, you mean that led to matrimony?

Yes.

How we became engaged and married.

Right. To a nice girl.

Nice girl. Charleston, West Virginia, back to when I graduated West Virginia State in 1949, I wanted to teach English. And again, the political system in Charleston. A high school teacher saw me in the supermarket with my mother and said congratulations, I hear you finished college; well, what do you want to do? And I said, oh, I want to teach. And he said, oh, that's good; where? I said I would like to get a job right here in Charleston. He says you know you'll never get a job here in Charleston because your dad is a Republican and it's Democrats.

That's how big politics was in that town.

You will never get a job in Charleston. Oh. And my mother said, well, no one has to know how she's going to vote when she goes in the polls and closes the curtain. He says everybody knows Earl Tuck and you won't get a job. So, of course, I went to see the assistant superintendent of schools.

He was black.

Yes, we had a black assistant superintendent. The superintendent was white. So Mr. Scott Brown told me English teachers are a dime a dozen and I don't want people with their bachelor's degree, I want them with a master's now. And I said, well, you know my family and I can't go on to school, but I'll go every summer to summer school and get my master's if you'll give me a job. Well, we'll just have to see about it. So needless to say, I never got a job.

Now, an English teacher sent word to me, apply to the Southern Teachers Association; go down south and get a job and get experience. My dad said never will my daughter go to the south. Now, we're below the Mason-Dixon Line, but this is still not the south. And Charleston, West Virginia really was a strange place to grow up. We could ride the bus anyplace. We were not segregated on the buses. We could go to town, buy clothes, try them on, do anything. No one deprived us. But we had separate schools. We had separate theaters. We had one enterprising black man who had a movie house. That's the way our system was.

And we couldn't go in the major library. We had a small library.

Oh, yes. We had our separate public library. The county library we could not even enter. Even

when I was graduating from West Virginia State and wanted to do work on my thesis, I had to go to the Kanawha County Public Library and I could only sit in there and use the books. I could not borrow any book. That was 1949.

Okay. I didn't get a job. My dad didn't want me to go south. My college boyfriend had graduated the year before me and he had taken his commission in the army. So he was a second lieutenant. So I even wrote two can live as cheaply as one. So by December 1949 we married and we were out -- his first real -- well, my first was out at Fort Lewis, Washington, in Seattle. Then in 1950 Korea conflict came, and so it was the first unit taken overseas. Now, we had only been married six months. You had to pack up everything. That's when I realized -- I thought, oh, the war is over, we're going to see the world. Well, it didn't work like that. Needless to say, he was killed. But it wasn't even that simple. He was only missing in action for four years. All of those bodies they never found. But, okay, once he went to --

Are you in Washington?

Once he was sent out, I packed up, went to his sister in Brooklyn, New York, and lived with them. Then in January of 1950 I got word that he was missing in action. Well, my parents began calling, come on back to West Virginia now. I knew I didn't want to go back to West Virginia. I had gotten a clerical job in New York and was beginning to make friends. So I thought why am I going back to true segregation? New York, whites and blacks, we were all together, having a good time. But my parents were pressuring me. So on Saturday, March 17th, 1950, I went to apply for government typist/clerk typist exam. They were offering it and I was going to rent the typewriter. At least I would go to Washington, D.C. and being a veteran's widow that I would get a higher preference for a job. I took the exam. But now, I went to just get the typewriter that day. And as fate will have it, I'm on the bus, Brooklyn, a corner. There's a candy store. Finally after everyone had loaded on the bus and the bus is beginning to pull out, I noticed there were hands in the little candy store window trying to get someone's attention. And I looked and it was Hughie and two other graduates of West Virginia State.

The triumphant.

So John Gault and Bill Jones. So, of course, I just waved, oh, and the bus pulled out. I went and ordered the typewriter and came back and got off that corner. I thought, well, I'll just go in this

candy store to see. Sure enough, they all were still there.

What was happening in the candy store?

Bill worked in the candy store.

On a Saturday afternoon they're just hanging out.

Hanging out, making our plans for whatever we're going to do that night. Saturday night was -- you know.

So, of course, Hughie began saying immediately, because everyone knew my story even then, come on, let's go home for Mother's Day, because I had a car at this point. I had driven all the way across country... With only a permit.

A learner's permit.

And my father, who had no license, was with me. So we drove all the way across the United States. So anyway, Hughie says, let's drive home for Mother's Day, because from New York to West Virginia is only 600 miles. No, I'm going back to stay. Mother and dad want me to return. Why am I staying here in New York?

So then a girlfriend that I had who had graduated the year after me, she even said, well, we can find you someplace to live, because I knew it was not pleasant any longer in my in-law's house and I felt all right, and my mother and daddy are saying come back, so why don't I go back?

So, okay. I took the typist exam. I got telegrams for jobs in Washington, D.C. At this point, well, five of us drove to Charleston for Mother's Day weekend. By the time we were coming back I thought -- and I told my mother and she knew then. I said I'm not coming back because I just realized that I was having fun in New York. I was only 22 years old. So why go back to West Virginia? And these are all people who are having the good time. Hughie began taking me out to Birdland, to dinner, and we were just having such a good time.

Theater.

Were you dancing?

We would dance, yes, at the Savoy Ballroom. All the big bands would come there. So, of course as we would talk, I realized, oh, this is what I really wanted. He's sincere and he's from my hometown. I know his family. My cousin was married to his oldest brother. So I even asked Hughie, why haven't you ever gotten married? He just hadn't found the person. I thought to myself, oh gee. So

after that we had a good time with a group of friends who were all single. We'd go to the beach on the weekends. We'd have parties. We were having a good time. Then, of course, one by one they began getting married. And everyone knew that we couldn't get married, yes, because the government would send me a letter every six months -- we are sorry we cannot give you any further information; that he is still considered missing in action. That's why I voted for Eisenhower because Eisenhower said elect me president and I'll go to Korea and find out what happened to all those boys. There is in Hawaii a monument of the 8,000 who are still considered missing in action. His name is on the marble wall.

There were three of them from State.

Three of our West Virginia State college guys had taken their commissions after graduating and were in this 503rd Field Artillery Battalion that was still segregated.

Yes, because not till Harry Truman.

Right. Well, Truman was president then, but it had not -- integration had taken place in '48, supposedly, supposedly.

Because I was born in 1947 and I didn't know. I went to all black schools all my life.

Integration in the service, Truman had in '48 said it. However, it didn't totally. They still had white officers. Of course, the black officers were lieutenants and -- what's the very next one?

Corporal? Colonel?

Colonel. That is as far as the blacks went in command. So, of course, that's how our hands were tied. But once Eisenhower was made president, he actually within -- this was '52 he was made president, so he assumed office in '53. So all of '53 he actually tried to clear all this up. So in January 1954 I finally got a letter telling when it had been determined that he had died. With that Hughie said we were getting married June the 26th because he looked at his calendar immediately and found out when his week's vacation would be. And so we got married on June 26th.

Now, that's even an interesting one because we were really happy and gay and we wanted to take a cruise for our week of honeymoon. We went to a tour agency in New York City. They informed us that there was no place that they could send us on a cruise but to the Virgin Islands and there was no cruise being planned for that week; so I'm sorry, you can't take a cruise. And we knew even then that we wanted that type of life. Now, mind you, since we've been retired we have 156

days with the Holland American Line and we've taken several other cruises with several other lines. So we really love it. But that's how Hughie and Greta—

—That's how I proposed.

Wow. Wonderful.

Hughie tell me how you got to New York.

When I graduated from State, I wanted to go to graduate school. Couldn't go to West Virginia University. So I wrote to Byrd, Senator Byrd.

Robert Byrd?

Robert Byrd. And told him I was a veteran of World War II and I wanted to go to graduate school and I couldn't go to West Virginia University; why? And he wrote back and said if you get admitted to any school in the north, I will see that you get your tuition paid and a stipend. So my brother, just the one older than me, he had already gone to New York University to get his master's degree. So I said I'll go to New York University, then. I made arrangements and they admitted me at New York University. I sent the information to Department of Education West Virginia and they paid my tuition and gave me a stipend. And I had the GI Bill, also. But I got a stipend from the state to go to NYU. I took my master's degree in New York University.

And that was in business, business administration?

No. I took it in public administration.

But tell me about the Savoy and tell me about New York in those years.

Well, New York in those years --

And what was open to blacks and what was not?

I don't think we had any problem going anywhere in New York. Did we have one place?

Oh, we did. We had problems.

Yeah, a couple of places.

Even one of his white co-workers, after he was with R.J. Reynolds—they were all white. He was the one black on the force. We went out to see the television show Sid Caesar. Then in those days they had the live tapings of shows. After the show this other couple, Gil Ramirez and his girlfriend wanted to go to dinner. We went into a restaurant, midtown Manhattan. We walked in. So, we want a table for four. There were very few tables taken at that time. They asked us do you have

reservations? No. Well, I'm sorry, we can't take you.

I can remember being so embarrassed as we exited that, oh, how terrible, I know why they wouldn't let us in there, because of us. Finally it hit me I think the next day because I was just so upset the whole evening. We finally found a place that we could eat. But I said why should I have been embarrassed? This lets these white people see what we suffer, and they were deprived and denied because of us. So then I never worried anymore. But we reached the point we always made reservations every place we went. Even traveling we would make reservations.

Hughie got me one time. And Hughie began calling for reservations for Dr. Mills. We were standing there signing in. Of course, then as they even wanted the payment first, so he called me to give the money. So he says all of a sudden, oh, and by the way, if someone is sick in the middle of the night, don't call me, I'm a doctor of education, not an MD. Remember that time at the hotel and they called, well, look.

See, they played games with us, so I played games with them.

That's right.

So, of course, I had to go, oh, yes, yes. We got out. I said don't do that to me again. Please let me know.

That's right. Yes.

And we were going home. We were coming from New York to Charleston. And we decided that rather than drive straight through we'll stop overnight. It was a motel. So we went up. He said we don't have any vacancies. I said your vacancy sign is on. Well, that's so that people who have reservations will know that they can still come. I said okay.

So I went to the phone booth and there was a hotel in town, the George Washington Hotel. I called and I told him, listen, we're black. He said we don't care; come on in. So when we would travel from West Virginia, we'd go through Pittsburg and we would stay at the George Washington Hotel in Washington, Pennsylvania. I had a big car. It was a big '98 Oldsmobile. So it didn't bother me. I mean you got to the point where you knew.

You knew how to negotiate.

And how do deal with it. Yeah.

So tell me about working at R.J. Reynolds at that point in history.

At that point in history working for R.J. Reynolds was an experience.

They had the black force.

They had a black sales force. There's a picture here somewhere. Don't I have a picture somewhere?

I saw it earlier.

Yeah. All of us had to have a degree. You had to have a degree. We all had territories that we worked. I was working in Brooklyn, New York, just doing sales promotion with grocery stores and places. Then we would go to events that people had and pass out samples. I made a friendship with the coeditor of the Amsterdam Newspaper.

And tell me what the Amsterdam Newspaper is.

Afro-American newspaper. It was "the" newspaper in New York, and this was the Brooklyn division. Daphne Sheppard, I'll never forget her. Anything that was coming up I could tell Daphne and she'd write it up for us. We became really friends. But it was not a glamour job. Going to the different social functions, to a black organization having a party or something, we'd go and give out samples.

So a typical day you would go to?

Grocery stores to try to get them to take our brands -- Camels, Winstons, Cavalier smoking tobacco, Snuff, you know, whatever the products. We get them to stock it and try to get it on the shelves. So that was it. It was no glamour involved. It was really wearing.

And he came down with an ulcer, too. That shows you how much it upset him that --

It was not a job equal to somebody who had a master's degree. It really bothered me. There was no opportunity for any advancement there for blacks. So I worked at that until I --

They had the black force. They had them to meet separately. They would bring them to North Carolina for an annual meeting, just the blacks.

Or Chicago.

Or Chicago. Right. Now, within his Brooklyn office he was the only black. And they met every Monday morning and were told what to do for the week. But even though he's the one black salesman and for the black area in New York, Brooklyn --

Oh, okay. I thought you were in Harlem.

No. I was in Brooklyn, Bedford-Stuyvesant area.

No. Because that was Sidney Bradshaw -- I know Sidney isn't on that picture. He was the New York City. At that time it was Lee Skipper. There was quite a black force of sales representatives.

Beer, whiskey, cigarettes.

Now, Thomas Shropshire was with Philip Morris. He is one of the few that really moved up. Philip Morris was more lenient and liberal than the others. They used them strictly for pushing within the black community.

Tom ended up vice president.

Because R.J. Reynolds is really from Durham, North Carolina.

Yes.

Yes, ma'am.

He was even taken down there for a meeting with them once.

So it was a livelihood.

Well, even though he had a master's that was -- still in the 50s they weren't open to hiring blacks, college degree --

Put that in a resume. Hey, you're Hughie Mills? I knew the way that question was asked I'm not going to get this job.

Yeah. So how did you get out of that kind of work into education?

A friend of mine named Thomas Watkins called me and said, Hughie, Columbia is looking for somebody to be the liaison between Columbia and Harlem because Columbia is actually in Harlem, right down the hill.

That's right.

Community relations. So I went up and I got the job. That was during the time when the flag was waving, when we were doing things and they got the Urban Center. So I went to Columbia. I formed a student group called MBA Management Consultants. We would send students into Harlem to show the merchants the method of operating a business. That went well. So that was one of the things that went great.

Then the money was getting tight. The dean of the school was Eisenhower's budget director. So I told him -- I called him Courtney. His name was Courtney Brown. I said we're running out of money for black student scholarship. There were only four blacks in the school when I went there

out of 640 students. I started drumming, you know, we need more black students. So he said you find the students and I'll get the money. So he got like \$20,000 from a foundation. Then he said but, Hughie, you've got to find more money if you want more students.

So there was a library in New York called the Foundations Library. All it has is lists of foundations and what they would give to it and so forth. So I spent a lot of days in the Foundations Library trying to find out organizations that would give money. I picked the Sloan Foundation. I picked a lot of them and they couldn't do anything. So I went to the Sloan Foundation. I saw one of the officers and I told him what my dilemma was. He said it sounds interesting. He says how many students you have there? And I told him. He says, well, are the other business schools having the same problem? I said I assume that they are certainly. He said, well, I'll tell you what, if you can get ten of the major business schools to agree to join a consortium, I'll consider giving you some money.

So I go back uptown to see Courtney. I went in and told him I want to see Courtney. He's busy. I said this is important. I said this is important; I've got to see him. The secretary buzzed him and says, Hughie's here and he says it's important; he's got to talk to you. He said send him in. I went in and told him what I had done and that Dr. Crieger down at the Sloan Foundation if we get the ten major business schools he would consider giving some money. So he got on the phone right away. He called Harvard. Well, these are the schools that are listed there.

Berkeley?

Uh-huh.

Pittsburgh, Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, MIT, University of Pennsylvania, Stanford. Wow.

So he called them. When you say money to somebody or you bring money, they say, okay, fine, fine. So I went back to him and told him that we've got ten schools that are prominent schools and they are willing to join if we have enough money. He says all right. He said we'll give you three million dollars, a million dollars a year for three years. I never heard that kind of money in my life. So I don't go back there. I called Courtney when I got out to a telephone booth. I said I've got to see you; when I come in I've got to see you. I told him. He says great.

So they all agreed. So they came to New York for a meeting to discuss it. So we discussed participation and how we'd go about it and what have you. They said, well, we'll need a director of

it. So they wanted a director. Oh, golly, what was his name? A black guy in the banking system. To be the director. But the dean from Stanford said, wait a minute, hold it, who raised this money? You got your director right here. He's the one that raised the money. So they agreed that I should be the director. So I directed it for –

And he organized it all.

This is wonderful.

Yes.

Now, you had gotten a job typing.

Yes. Yes.

What happened?

Well, of course, when we got married -- and I was employed at the American Journal of Nursing Company because I had worked in the college library. My whole time in undergraduate school I had to work. My father with his jobs, we had no money—even though I'm going to college. And that's a story. During the war years girls would take typing in high school and get jobs in Washington, typists. And my mother said to me why don't you go on and take one of those exams to go to Washington? And I said but Daddy says I'm going to college. She says, well, you can go to college later, but they're paying money during the war for secretaries. Why don't you go to Washington now? This is just why I said when it is instilled in a child you're going to college, by hook and by crook you will get to college.

And so an English teacher in high school had gotten me a job at West Virginia State before I even graduated from high school to work with a professor in the English department. So I worked there with her for my first year and a half and then got a job in the library for my last two years in college.

I did college in three and a half years because I took extra courses and because I wanted to be a June graduate. In elementary school two of us pretty little girls had been skipped a half a grade, and so I was then January all the time in the system. And I had never had the big graduation. Even from high school there were only 33 of us who graduated in January because, again, they had graduation twice a year because kids were going to the service. It was still the war years that our boys were being taken to the service. They would have graduation in January and June [and] I was

a January graduate. I wanted to be a June graduate. Now, it never occurred to me, then, to stay an extra half-year in college because I mean money was tight and you get out. So I doubled up on classes so I could get out in June.

But that's how, then, in New York I went there to go to Columbia to get my library school degree since my husband has gone overseas. Well, while you're there I'll go and take courses. Now, mind you, even we talk about how things have increased in price. At Columbia University in 1950 it was only \$20 a point for graduate school. I don't know how much it is now.

Oh gosh, don't even think about it.

But it was only \$20 a point. Of course, I had to take the GRE, the Graduate Record Exam. Well, of course, I mean I was from a little black school, and so I did poorly on the GRE. I can still remember as I sat there the dean of the library school, he said to the lady, Ms. Christi who was the secretary, she isn't even college material. And, oh, I left that night just crying. But I had a job at that point with Special Libraries Association. It was the executive secretary who had encouraged me to go on and get that degree; that you know you want the library science. So she called Ms. Christi, the executive secretary at Columbia University Library School, that here are people who are intelligent and just because they haven't passed that exam they're being denied and this is a good person, give her the chance.

And so, all right, they decided to accept me to Columbia on condition that I had to make a B average for my first semester. School had already started a week. Number two, I had discovered Hughie. So my argument was if I do so poorly, you're going to take me in two weeks after classes have begun and expect me to maintain this B average. And all I could think is and then I won't get to see Hughie, I'll be working so hard.

See, I didn't know that.

You weren't supposed to.

**So I became indignant that no, I'm not going to accept something that you expect me to excel after I have been denied; that I'll never make it. So I didn't accept that. However, Mrs. Stebbins, executive secretary of Special Libraries Association, got me a job at the American Journal of Nursing Company in their private library. So it was the librarian and I as assistant librarian. We did research for nursing magazines. I had a marvelous time there and really opened my eyes to total*

librarianship. And I knew I still wanted to, but then we got married. I stayed there. Oh, American Journal of Nursing Company had decided to give me scholarship money to go to St. John's University to get this graduate degree. The only stipulation they were making that I would at least stay with the American Journal of Nursing two years after I graduated. And that's when I discovered I was pregnant. So I had to turn that down. And then as years went by -- I was a housewife from the time our Grace was born. I stayed at home with her. I did freelance work with the Journal. I did indexing, a couple of books, things like that. The librarian was always a good person and she would get me little jobs like that.

All the sudden dear Hughie, we have a home that we're buying and his job with the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, he began proctoring exams for the Graduate Record Exam on Saturdays. One Saturday he came back home with a newspaper and said look what librarians, are doing now. And the government wanted black students to go to library school. And they were willing to give us stipend, no less.

And pay the tuition.

Of \$250 a month. And I said I'm going to apply for that. Of course, Hughie says, well, what are you going to do about Grace? And I said I'll work it out. She's a teenager now. We'll manage. And sure enough, Grace cooked many meals for us. But I was one of the recipients. They had six scholarships even at Queens College, which is part of the City University of New York system. Now, there was one stipulation. You had to get your degree in one year's time, 36 credit hours. Ugh. I've been out of undergraduate school 20 years. Ugh. Again, how do they expect us to do this? I did it with the help of Hughie and Grace.

Oh, that's wonderful.

One dear friend had her annual New Year's Eve party. I was so exhausted in trying to write papers during the holiday. Tommy, we just can't come. Well, why can't you? I'm in graduate school now and I'm 41 years old. She never forgave me for that because we didn't come to her party. But she didn't know how difficult it was that year. I did it. What impressed me, there was even one young girl who was getting her degree in this program and Judy couldn't keep up. Judy didn't have anything to worry about but college, and right out of undergraduate school. And she never even completed the degree. Even another girl, Chinese, was in the program, Helen Lai. Our daughter

years later worked with Helen Lai and Helen had never gotten that degree even then, but she had been able to move up in the system and was at the law school at Queens College. That was our daughter's first job.

Now, our daughter has her law degree from Columbia University. And then she got the library school degree from Queens College. She's a lawyer librarian.

Where?

Now she's in Minnesota.

Hamline University.

But then she went to Florida, to Florida A&M when they decided to reopen the law school. She was called and accepted the position and built the library totally from scratch.

Oh, what an accomplishment.

Yes. Yes.

Oh, that's wonderful. Something to be proud of.

And which job did you take? Okay. Your daughter is still a teenager.

Oh, yes. Yes, yes, yes. All right. Now, we lived in West Hempstead, New York. That's Nassau County, Long Island. I had been active in Girl Scouting through the years. I had been active in PTA work. And so all of a sudden I was in the supermarket and the wife of one of the school board members was there. We had been very friendly through Scouting and PTA. I said, oh, Gladys, I've gone back to school; I'm getting my master's in library science. She said, oh, are you going to take the librarian's job at the high school? I said I didn't know. She said, yes, she's retiring in June.

So West Hempstead has three percent black population. They're right next to Malverne, which is almost totally black. But West Hempstead is the white community. They had one black English teacher in the school system. Well, since our daughter was in high school, I called the principal and asked for an appointment. So naturally, they thought I was coming to inquire about our daughter, Grace. When I was there I said I understand the librarian is retiring and here's my resume and I'm finishing library school. With this, well.

And so of course, then, they knew they needed another black teacher in the district. The head of the English department knew one of the professors at Queens College and said, do you have any blacks in library school? And this lady said, well, Greta Mills, doesn't she live there in that

district? She's in library school now. They even went through a black person in Hempstead, can you find us maybe a black person? And it got back to Hardy Franklin, who was a professor there and in charge of the program, and he says, well, Greta Mills is in library school now. Everyone was saying Greta Mills. But Hughie had been a force in the school district of making demands, and so they didn't really want Greta Mills.

They didn't like Hughie Mills. I kept their butts to the fire.

Now, this is when your daughter was in school?

Oh, yes.

Yes, yes, yes.

I even threatened to close the school.

Oh, my.

So, of course, there was nothing but to hire Greta Mills.

And then, did Verpault have it?

Well, I'm certain. Verpault was the board member. Then, of course, there was another board member, John Schofield, too. I had several of them. So, of course, I got the job. Happily I stayed at West Hempstead High School for 15 years and loved it. I love teenagers. They need someone to listen to them. I am a good listener. Even though I talk here a lot, I mean I can listen, too. That's what teenagers need, someone to listen to them.

I don't know what she did with the football players. They loved her. They loved her.

I read my papers on the weekends and I listened to the ball games so that I could talk sports with them. Then the girls, I could talk books. And I mean here, this is a good book report. No, I didn't ever say that. I just tell them this book that I've read, blah blah blah, and then just tell enough to make the student want to go.

My only regret was that I didn't go back until I was 45 years old. That if I had had another 15 years I would have preferred elementary education because that's where the need is to make children want to read and too many children do not read now. I always felt I had that talent that I loved children and could instill in them. And I tell you just enough of what I just read that makes you want to read it.

Yes. That's important.

The kids loved her, the boys. In fact, who was it? They had a skating at the school.

In the gymnasium one night, roller-skating.

We had roller skates. So Greta's getting ready to put her skates on. Oh, look, Mrs. Mills got her skates; oh, that's going to be fun. Greta got up and began skating. I about got a kick out of that.

Oh, that's great. That's great.

Yeah. So I loved them all the time, really. I only retired at 60 because Hughie was 65 and wanted to retire and he refused to think about my working while he sat at home. And so --

We're never going to get rich. I'd rather be happy than rich.

And so I quit at 60. And that's how we packed up and came out here.

So I think this is a wonderful place to end.

All right.

Looking at Las Vegas from different eyes, especially from someone who grew up in the east, south and east, compare it to Las Vegas.

That's what I have said. I grew up in hills that were beautiful, green trees, and now my last years are spent in the desert, no foliage at all.

When you reflect on it, I did a lot in Las Vegas.

...Oh, thank you. It's nice to --

It's good to reflect on your life.

Yes.

SESSION 2

This is Claytee White. I'm with the Mills again in their home in Las Vegas. Today is April 18th, 2011. We're going to begin to talk about a few things to follow up and we're going to come to Las Vegas.

So you just showed me a letter this morning. Tell me about this letter.

Well, I thought I had done some work for Columbia that I was proud of. Evidently they thought it was worthy of value, too. So this is really a product of the students who went through the program. I think they were the catalyst behind this, and, of course, the university had to approve it. It was approved by the university and it's in perpetuity. So to be honored with a professorship in your name is, I think, a very—I told my brother who was a professor at Murray State University. He's got buildings named after him. He said he'd trade that for a professorship.

Oh, that's great.

So when I told my daughter, I think she probably went through the roof. It is really an honor.

Yes, it is.

So it's there. I have not promoted it. It's just there. I thought it was important to let you know.

Yes. And we will put a copy of this in the book that we're going to have bound.

All right. I'll have a copy to you before this week is out.

Great. I think we touched on this the last time, but how did you eventually decide to leave and move to Las Vegas?

Well, we had retired. When we retired we said we're not going to stay in New York—weather-wise, cost-wise and all of that. She had a brother that lived here and we had visited a couple of times. We came in the winter once, didn't we?

We came at Christmas, yes, and February. That's how we decided the Christmastime we came that this is delightful.

Weather-wise.

Forty degrees, just a jacket on. With that we decided to return the summer of '88 to look at housing. They were just beginning to build multiple dwellings. We decided immediately we did not want a house any longer. We had had a corner house on Long Island, a plot of 90 by 160. We didn't want

that any longer. So this would be delightful to have an apartment. Also, we decided we wanted in the heart of Las Vegas. Of course, Summerlin was just being thought up then. But we decided this is where we wanted to be. We had lived on Long Island and commuting to the city for activities because we did enjoy the theater and all.

Now, back up. We always said we wanted to retire in a college town. At that time in '88 and '89, UNLV was on top of the world with their basketball team and even football. Randall Cunningham.

Oh, that's right. Yes.

And so this was just, oh, wonderful, sports activities.

Golf year round. And the prices were right then. There wasn't these 200-thousand-dollar houses being built at that time. They didn't start until a couple of years after we were here with some of the other complexes. So this was ideal for us, right near the university. We never had regrets about it. And they had already built phase one in this development and were beginning phase two. No, they hadn't even begun phase two because we had to put only a hundred dollars down for an apartment. So we decided okay. And the day we found this we had the suitcase in the car, ready to return to New York, but one last time, let's try a couple of these others. My prerequisite was a large bedroom, a bedroom where I didn't have to hit my legs as I went around the corner of the bed any longer. For 35 years these small rooms just upset me. This unit, there are some that have a patio upstairs and that makes the bedroom small. But ours does not have a patio, so it's an extra six feet. So it's perfect. Of course, at this point we have lounge chairs, we have an exerciser, we have a king-size bed; it's almost a room that you can't move around in again. But we have everything in it that we want.

You refer to this as an apartment?

Right. This is really a condo.

Yes. We purchased this condominium. It's a town house, really.

That's the way they advertised. Town house sounds very --

Yes. But an apartment is sort of a New York phrase.

It is definitely a New York phrase.

Yes.

When I see these I say, oh, they have town houses and condominiums.

Yes, yes. So that's it. And so we put our hundred dollars down. I went back to New York and I thought I don't even know what the unit is going to look like. They have not broken ground for phase two. What if it isn't what we want? And then I decided, well, a hundred dollars isn't too much to lose if we don't like it. We came back in February and looked. They were working on it. In April of '89 we signed for it. Hughie had already retired in December of '88. So, of course, I retired June of '89. We, in the process, were selling our house, too. We had it sold. Packed up our car. Of course, we decided we were not bringing any furniture out here.

She got a decorator.

Well, when we saw this they had several models. I inquired who was your decorator? They gave me her card. We came to see her in February of '89. I told her I liked what she had done. We wanted it simple. We wanted basically southwest. So, of course, she purchased all the furniture. She did all of the decorating. She sent us swatches back and forth in the mail. This was her design. We've changed the chairs. They were leather chairs that wore out, lounge chairs. Otherwise, it's still just as it was. Of course, the computers that weren't too much then. We made that little area an office, like office/den. So that's it. We have never regretted.

That's wonderful.

The location is perfect.

Yes. I agree.

I get UNLV's bulletin every month. Our activities not necessarily circle around that, but we follow very closely the lecture series. The Barrick Series we don't miss.

Yes. Those are wonderful.

Where else could you get that? If we were in New York, we'd have to travel into Manhattan. This way if it takes me seven minutes, it takes me a long time.

That's right.

This is ideal for us.

Actually though, we did meet some black friends here. We had a little group called the Scorpions.

Scorpions?

Yes, it was the Scorpions Club. It was made up of eight couples. We met every other month on a

Sunday afternoon at four o'clock and had dinner at the home and put in five dollars for dues. So during the summer or whenever there was an activity we would use the treasury. We even donated shoes to the West Las Vegas area at Christmastime. We had that project. So all of a sudden we began getting older. It was all couples. More and more we were deciding we couldn't cook dinner anymore, so we would entertain in a restaurant. Then, of course, age really caught up with several. I think we're the only couple left.

Right. That they began dying.

One or the other has died.

We're the only couple of the eight left.

Why the name Scorpios?

Because most of them were Scorpios and they decided to name it. But then they decided that they had to let the wives or the mates in. And so with that they kept the name Scorpios.

I see. So which one of you is a Scorpio?

Me.

And I'm a Scorpio, too.

I'm a Pisces.

Oh. What's your date?

November 8th.

Oh, all right. I'm October 28th.

Okay. So you would get together. So it was a social club, as well as you did some charity-type functions.

Yes. Right.

Okay, but minor. But it was just, too, so you could get to know some people here in your new city.

Yes. Even Dr. McMillan, when he published his book, we got it and read it and invited him and his wife. They came here to this apartment. We all discussed the book. Of course, David Hoggard was also one of our members. We just found out a wealth of knowledge of Las Vegas and what they had gone through.

Now, that's something that interested us and why we loved Las Vegas, also. When we were

looking for houses no one ever said to us, oh, perhaps you better go over to the other area or we don't have anything in this area, and we certainly had seen this in New York on many occasions. And so this fascinated us that no one looked at us with a different color that we could get a place wherever we wanted.

So even in the 80s you expected to hear something similar to that?

Yes. Yes. Yes. Because it was still in New York. Even though we lived on Long Island, once a black family would move into a community --

The conversion started.

-- it was still changing. Yes. So we were so pleased. Never did we hear that in any of the homes we went in. So with this we were sold on Las Vegas.

How did you begin to meet the other black couples?

We went to an AARP meeting. Actually, it was one Sunday that we went to something at the library and I had already met Lois Ice. She introduced us to Ruby Garland that Sunday. Ruby said, oh, you must join AARP. She made certain that Thomas Leigh began calling us each month for the meetings. And we decided well, let's go. So of course, it was the black group of AARP members at the West Las Vegas Library.

Good.

We joined. And I stayed there long enough to become president of the chapter. I think I was president, what, three or four years, wasn't I?

Two years.

Two years. And then I got the statewide office, the minority affair advocate for the AARP in the state of Nevada. So I had that responsibility.

What do the local chapters, especially the black chapters, what kind of emphasis do they have here in Las Vegas?

I couldn't get them to have an emphasis at all. They wanted to come to the meeting and have a picnic and Christmas party.

So this was mostly the social arm of AARP.

Unfortunately yes.

Okay. What were some of the things that you think the chapter should have been doing?

Oh. One of the things I did when I came here, I said I would be involved was in the reading program, the literacy program. I wanted to work with the literacy program. I really enjoyed it. I couldn't believe that there were people to this day and age that couldn't read. So I volunteered for that (weekly). But they didn't want to get involved with it.

I was a smoker. So I quit smoking. Greta was away visiting her mother. I saw the American Cancer Society had a nonsmoking program. So I went to stop smoking and I stopped. Then I eventually became a programmer to help people stop smoking for the Cancer Society. I finally ended up on the board of directors for the American Cancer Society. For a long time I'd go somewhere and somebody would say, you know what you did for me? Thank you. Smoking program.

So were you surprised when he stopped smoking?

Yes. And I was very pleased.

Oh, yeah. Oh, that's great.

It has never bothered me, though, anyone smoking. The smoke does not affect me at all. But as I said to him when we came here, gee, you've smoked all these years and they're beginning to say that it's a serious problem. Why don't you stop now? You have made it to 65. Perhaps, it's still possible not to be affected. He didn't say anything then. Now, mind you, the whole time our daughter was growing up, though, she would say, Dad, stop smoking that cigarette. I told her you let your father do what he wants to do. I really always felt that if anyone smokes, that's what they want. It has never been a thing for me. I just never wanted to. His being a cigarette salesman, there were cigarettes in the house all the time. I suppose during the couple of years I was home before our daughter was born, I thought why don't I smoke? There are cigarettes here. Everyone smokes. I was 26 or 27 years old then. And with this I lit a cigarette. And then I thought I don't want to smoke and I put it out. So, of course, as I said, here he waited until I was gone. I don't know why that happened. But I'm glad when I came back and he told me. Then, good. I've been very pleased. I feel -- he catches colds regularly -- that there is something that nicotine did do. But thank goodness -- he's had pneumonia a couple of times. So I'm certain there is some damage there from cigarette smoking.

But I've stopped a lot of people from smoking.

I think that is wonderful.

I am so impressed that you came here and you got to meet all these people. What was your impression of J. David Hoggard?

He was a good pinochle player. I'll tell you that.

He was a delightful --

He was a delight.

We really got close with him. He would sit and tell us -- he'd sit here some afternoon after they had played pinochle and he would just begin talking about -- and he had been here since the mid 40s. So it was fascinating to listen to him. I think we both really regretted when he died.

Oh, yeah.

We were away and our daughter called us and told us.

But I was here for his funeral.

Oh, yes. We got back.

I spoke at his funeral. I was torn to pieces.

As the pinochle player.

I was torn to pieces.

Yeah. He was amazing. So did you get to meet Verla?

Oh, yes. Verla called me just yesterday. I started to ask her had you met her, and I just didn't say anything. I thought I'll ask Claytee today. Yes. Yes, Verla. We still keep in touch with Verla.

She was a member of the club, too, right?

Was she one of the Scorpions?

He brought her in after his lady friend died. Yes.

Yes. Mr. Hoggard was different.

Yes, he was.

And his son, too.

Now, the son we want to interview. Let me tell you why --

No. He's dead.

He's dead.

Wait a minute. The son who was the president of the community college at one point?

Yes.

He passed away?

Oh my gosh, two years ago.

Oh.

David Hoggard Junior?

Yes.

And he was a member of our alumni association because we formed our West Virginia State College Alumni Association here. There were eight of us graduates from West Virginia State College.

Somehow our arms were twisted to form a chapter and we did.

Well, he was one of the alumni lived in California and he was the regional director. Why don't you start an association? So we did. I ended up being the regional director for the group for the far west.

And he was the president. Hughie has been president and I was secretary in perpetuity. Now, Hughie just told them last year no more. We formed it in 1990. We meet three times a year. Young David Hoggard was the treasurer. The last meeting here at the house in February of '09, then, was when at this point Hughie was saying I can't keep it any longer. Well, David, what about you?

David said no, I can't do it. David was dead the next month. It just shocked us to no end. But we knew him very well. We knew both of them very well.

Wow. Because I didn't recall that he had passed away. Through just circumstances we were called at the university because someone had gotten a trunk of Mabel's materials. And we went to the house where the person sometimes buys these sheds. He didn't know what he had. For some reason, I guess he went online and he found her name and he found that she had been a significant person here in Las Vegas. He said that that was after he had thrown away garbage bags filled with her papers. We were so sad. So because we cannot make heads and tails to a lot of things and cannot piece together some of the events, I thought that Junior was still alive.

Yes, yes, yes. Well, his first wife is still living.

Junior's first wife?

Yes. Jackie. Jackie Hoggard?

Yes. She still goes by Hoggard.

But is it Jackie?

It's Jackie.

Okay. So I'm going to try to find Jackie.

Okay. I have her telephone number and address. I'll get it in a minute, then.

She went to West Virginia State College, too.

Oh, my goodness.

See, David Junior went to West Virginia.

How did he get to West Virginia?

Well, because David Senior knew -- oh, because he had married Mabel who had gone to Bluefield and then spent a summer course at West Virginia State College. So she was the one instrumental in seeing that David Junior went to West Virginia State College. As he says, he had to ride the train all the way across, because we asked how did you get to West Virginia from Las Vegas?

He married Jackie and she was from Newport News, Virginia. So they married as a result of [meeting] at State and they got married. I don't know if they got married in school or probably after.

No. After I think.

That was his first wife.

This is amazing because when I first met David Hoggard, Senior, I said you have to forgive me if I pronounce your last name incorrectly because where I'm from the name is "Hog-gard." And he said where are you from? And I said Bertie County, North Carolina. He said that's where I'm from.

Oh, no kidding. I didn't know that.

Okay. Is that the area that was affected over the weekend? [Referring to Hurricane Irene that hit the area in September 2011.]

That's correct.

Verla was telling me about that and she's been waiting a couple days to call to see if anything happened to property down there. Okay. Yes.

Yes. I just called friends yesterday just to make sure that everybody is okay.

Were they affected by it?

Well, they were semi-affected by it. One girlfriend, some of her distant family members were

some of those who passed away and some property damage severely. But it is just amazing how small this world is.

Yes. Yes.

It is. It is. You know, a buddy of mine had -- see, all of us can read and write -- how did Bill say that thing?

There's only a thousand of us --

That can read and write and we all know one another.

Yes. Yes.

Something like that. It's amazing how now you know people that we have known for years and it just evolves around. If you're a people person, you'll meet a lot of people, a lot of people.

Yes. One of the first black people I interviewed was J. David Senior.

All right. Good. I'm glad you got to talk with him. What about Marie McMillan because you got her, also?

Well, not only do we have Marie McMillan's interview, she is donating papers to us, as well.

Oh, wonderful.

Yes. Right now she has just moved into a facility, sort of a retirement facility. She broke her arm I believe. It's a wonderful place that she's in. But now she's beginning to get serious about getting her papers together for us.

Yes. Yes. All right. We were very pleased at how fortunate we were to make the contacts, even Lois Ice. There is a story, again, because through the university they had the community plays. What was that thing called years ago? Three or four plays a year, a concert series. We saw that one Sunday there was something at the university. So we decided let's go. It was for 7:30. Lois Ice was in the ticket booth. Of course, when we went to enter, they told us you had to get a ticket. And we said oh. So we went to the window and they said that you're not members of the Community Concert Association. Lois Ice said let me check to see how much you have to pay. So we were standing there and we thought but we don't really want to even go to something that we have to pay for this evening. It was just a freebie activity that we were interested in. We thought, well, let's see if we can sneak away. As we were trying to exit, Lois Ice came to the door and hollered, yes, you can get tickets for ten dollars. We said, well, thank you. And she reiterated it's only ten dollars.

I remember that distinctly.

We said, well, thank you. As we left I said I hope I never see that lady again; I'm so embarrassed.

A dear friend came to visit me for a week while her husband was away. She had the name of Lois Ice that she wanted to call. Lois Ice wanted to come over and visit one afternoon. So I gave her directions. When Lois came to the door I thought hello. So I said you look so familiar. She said also that I looked familiar. So she came in. The conversation went on for about an hour. Then she asked, well, how do you like Las Vegas? I said, oh, everything is just wonderful here; it's so cheap. When I said it's so cheap, it hit me. I said were you in the Community Association? She said yes. I said oh. I had to tell the story. So we always laughed about that.

Oh, that's great.

I told her, I said, I had said to Hughie that night I hope I never see that lady again; how embarrassing, and to think that in the middle of saying it's cheap, this is where I've seen that lady.

Oh, that's wonderful.

Was she an AKA [Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority]?

Oh, yes, she was an AKA. So we became good sorors. I was active in the chapter till about five years ago.

Okay, wonderful.

Yes. I am a golden soror at this point. But just the sorority itself has changed through the years.

She has changed.

The sorority has changed through the years. I'll talk about the sorority, not me.

Pardon me.

But, yeah, so I feel as though we were very fortunate to have met these people who were really instrumental within the black community here in Las Vegas. Ruby Garland, have you met her?

Yes. Interviewed Ruby. Now, I have not interviewed Lois Ice.

Well now, she's gone too. I understand her daughters took her back to Detroit. They decided she shouldn't live alone. Yes, she was very active. Her husband had been the very first black psychiatrist here in Las Vegas.

I think that's correct.

Yes. Yes.

So I know that there is now the sorority -- AKAs and I think others, as well. We now have chapters on the UNLV campus.

Oh, you do, really?

Yes.

Undergraduate?

Uh-huh, undergraduate. I'm not sure it was always -- so how has the sorority changed, do you think?

Oh, well, I just feel as though our emphasis has been to get too many members without really checking totally and that one must outdo the other. The AKAs must outdo the Deltas. They've got to keep their enrollment larger. They have a lot of good programs. But I just felt the emphasis of just taking in, grabbing everyone is not good. So we did within our own chapter. We had a couple of problems that really upset me to no end with some of our newer members. So I decided I do not need this.

Okay. Yeah, because those were institutions in the black community doing all kinds of civic, social, all kinds of things for the black community.

Right.

What other clubs did you become a part of?

Well, I was in the Kappas [Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity]. What other clubs? I had a golf club. Played golf.

So did you become a member of the golf club here, the black golf club?

No, I didn't. But I played their tournaments.

Did McMillan tell you about the golf club and how it started?

No, he didn't.

McMillan was one of those early members along with Jimmy Gay and Q.B. Bush.

Right.

A lot of the other men, early black men here, they started that golf club because they couldn't just play anyplace they wanted to in the beginning.

Yeah. There was a problem. I know that. I was told about that. But when I -- well, it was in the early 90s. They had solved that problem then.

Of course. Yes.

They had solved the problem when I came here. I didn't take an active role in the golf club, but I played as often as I could. Didn't I? I didn't accept any office in the club, either. I didn't even accept any office in the fraternity.

I think with golf you worked with a group of them for a long time.

Oh, I had a group. It was called Tee to Green. We worked all these casinos in town. We'd invite the high rollers here to play in golf tournaments and they gave a big prize to the winners. They had to be monitored. So it was a fellow who had had the group called Tee to Green. Talking about playing in tournaments, he asked me would I want to join. We would monitor these golf tournaments to make sure -- say, the closest to the pin paid a thousand dollars. So we didn't want to fudge it a little bit. How much is closest to the pin? \$5,000. He said, hell, he only pay a thousand dollars. I said I know. And things like that. So we monitored them and they paid us. We got paid for it. So we had a lot of those. But here recently, the last year and a half the economy just kind of like squashed that. I haven't played any more. But I was active in that, too.

I think again that as far as race relations, we really -- we came about through segregation and all. I always was pleased when May 20th [17th, Brown vs. Board of Education], 1954 came that integration. And I remember going to work the next morning and saying, well, we're on our way now. My head librarian, special librarian, she said, oh, Greta, you don't think just like that it's going to end? And I said, well, the Supreme Court has said. I was always such a young innocent person I believed that because the Supreme Court said it there's going to be no more segregation.

When we had our daughter we never discussed black or white per se in the home.

Everything was just individuals. I really tried to bring her up that each person is an individual and that's it. I think she became a teenager before I really had to start saying, well, that I could see problems and why someone isn't asking you someplace. But we had never exposed her because now there's no difference. And so, of course, once we came out here, the same thing; that, okay, it's wonderful, there's no difference in black or white.

I'm trying to remember what was it that I had applied for and I went to see them and he said you're Hughie Mills?

It was a new job, a job interview.

Where?

Still in New York.

In New York, yeah. You're Hughie Mills? I had the degrees and they didn't associate. You're Hughie Mills? I said, oh, no. I said forget about this one, baby.

So, of course, out here, once again, we came. And unfortunately even our church in West Hempstead, it was first basically a white church. But, again, once blacks had begun to move into the area, the whites moved out. So our church finally became practically all black even to having a black minister. But when we had first attended, there were white members and there was a white pastor and we accepted it. So of course, when we came out here, then, we saw the University United Methodist Church. And the first Sunday we went I said to Hughie, ah, aren't there any black members?

For one thing it never bothered us. We never thought that we've got to step back. I mean we thought we were great as anybody else. So we just went to the church and it was their problem if they didn't want us here.

So through the years we can see changes taking place even at University United Methodist. There have not been that many blacks to join, though. Recently, well, our alumni association had a jazz afternoon last October there at the church from two to four o'clock. One member has come into our group, she is originally from North Carolina, she said this is a very nice church. And then the next question was, Is it all black? I said no. She said oh. Of course, she's never asked me anymore about joining or coming. So I can see that still is the most segregated hours, 11:00 on Sunday morning.

Do you ever go to the Methodist churches over on the Westside?

Yes. We went to Zion on several occasions especially when David Hoggard was there.

We couldn't escape that.

And, of course, Hughie has the feeling that sometimes he just has to get some of the good old-time religion. Unfortunately, though, being perfectly honest, the minister we didn't think much of who was at Zion Methodist Church for 30 years. I'm not going to say his name.

The next person who came along is completely different. And I think now there is even a third person since we've been here because I didn't come here until 1992. I think that leadership has changed three times since you've been here.

All right. Yes. Because seemingly even though minister who had been at our church became regional director, he really made changes. But it was so funny. I said to David Hoggard on several occasions, why isn't the minister changed? In our Methodist church, every five years [they change] and you've been able to keep the same minister for 30 years over there.

That's correct. And even though black people moved out of that core area of the Westside, on Sunday mornings you wouldn't know that because you can't find a parking space over there.

That's right. Some friends of ours came to visit once and Hughie was driving them around, just showing them Las Vegas. He questioned, are there any churches in Las Vegas, Hughie? With this Hughie went on the Westside and began showing him there's a church here, here, here.

Yes. At one time I even had the count of the number of churches right there in that little Westside.

We went over there just last week for a friend's funeral, English. Was it Victory Baptist?

Right there near Second Baptist. Yeah. They're back to back almost.

Yes.

You mentioned jazz a few minutes ago. Did either of you join the Jazz Society?

No, we did not.

We've attended a lot of their functions.

We did not. Gwen -- whatever her name was -- yes, Gwen gave us the application because we met her. We saw her at everything because we went to the summer jazz concerts early and Gwen was there. I always wanted to know who is Gwen? She had introduced herself to us as just Gwen. Then we would see her at the supermarket. She even went in the back of her car and pulled out the application to join. All right, Gwen, we shall. At one of Joe Williams' concerts when he said we have lost Gwen -- and I still don't remember her last name -- with this I was shocked and that he had known her so well. They had been so close.

I can't think of her last name, either.

But we never joined. Then the year after that I said I'm going to join in memory of Gwen and didn't.

One of the reasons I ask is because I think they're not what they used to be. I guess that next generation didn't keep up that love of jazz in this city.

Did either of you ever take jobs once you came here?

No. Nothing to be paid at, no.

No. No.

I would volunteer for things that I thought I wanted to take part in.

And Hughie will volunteer. Hughie will volunteer in a minute. But then Hughie becomes discouraged that --

Well, you know, I have time to spend. I don't have time to waste. If there's a program that I think is worthwhile of contributing my time to it, good. If it's somebody who's willing to go another step, I'll stick with it. But if it's just to be a part of it, no, I'm not just a joiner to say I belong. If I can't contribute anything, I'm out of there.

Okay. Tell me about the program that you're involved in now at UNLV, the educational aspect.

OLLI. [Osher Lifetime Learning Institute]

Tell me about that and what that is.

It is a delightful program. I think it's meaningful for seniors to have an outlet where they can take courses that are noncredit but courses to their liking. You get a chance to interact with people. You get a chance to be current with current topics and you get a chance to learn things that you didn't know because in the Tuesday class, that is called Soapbox, they have -- well, the last week we had experts from the Atomic Energy to speak about Japan, all of that. Each segment has been something of interest, education. Politics have not been an issue. We don't involve politics and our religion. Those are two subjects. And the people, whether they're open to us, they interact with us. I'm not to the point where I can just say they all are -- you know. But they interact with us. In fact, just night before last we went to a 60th anniversary of a couple.

Yes. I was telling Claytee about it. He's one of the coordinators for that Tuesday program.

Okay. And it's called -- what is the name of it?

Osher, O-S-H-E-R, Lifelong Learning Institute.

Yes. It's a spin-off from EXCELL. EXCELL began I think in 1990, E-X-C-E-L-L. This is what has come from it, OLLI now, as they call it, O-L-L-I.

And how do you like OLLI because I saw you kind of smiling?

I like it. I smile because Hughie and I do not take classes together. I let Hughie have his freedom to

speak.

I was on the board.

But this came after. Hughie always makes himself known and I'm a very quiet one. When someone said to me just the other day at our jazz class, oh, we see Hughie in the Tuesday morning class, I said yes. Someone even said, well, I didn't know that you were even active. I let Hughie have his classes and I have mine because if we're together I'm saying, shh, shh, and this isn't right. So I let him speak. We are so different from the standpoint I listen to others and I readily accept that you may have different views from me. Occasionally if I really want to, I'll state my point. But Hughie will argue. He swears --

Debate.

And I just feel that no. He gets very --

In OLLI, like in most large organizations, they don't know blacks.

Okay. Yes. I would agree.

They never dealt with the blacks that could put two sentences together because the blacks they knew were working in their house; were their maids and so forth. So they never knew any blacks who could put two sentences together. On issues that were either local or national they assumed that, hey, they don't know anything about that.

And so Hughie makes certain.

I make certain. And listen, evidently they didn't hold it against me. They voted me on the board of directors.

Okay, good.

I must tell this little story, though. The person who is the monitor or one in charge of the Tuesday morning, in March an invitation was sent to Hughie to keep this date open for April 16th. It was sent just to Hughie. Now, they have a directory and we each have our pictures in it. So we thought then, well, why is it just to Hughie? So the invitation came for the anniversary party and it was sent just to Hughie and you had to respond by the end of March. So, of course, Hughie said, well, I'm not going without you. Sometimes, yes, I can be devilish. I waited until the deadline to return the invitation and I wrote on it Mr. Hughie Mills does not accept. Then I put a Greta Mills return address label on the outside envelope to let them know there is a Greta Mills. So Mr. Devour called

Hughie immediately to find out why are you not coming? And Hughie told him that I don't go anyplace without my wife. And, oh, it was just a misunderstanding; please, bring her. All right, so we went. Just as we suspected there was only one other black couple there. The fellow who was in that morning class also, he and his wife.

Bruce McCloud. Have you met him? He's now on the OLLI board.

Not now. He's off now.

Is he off?

I'm certain he didn't continue. But anyway, okay.

He was on the OLLI board just recently.

So, of course, we were the only two black couples that were there Saturday night. Even President Smatresk was there. So it was quite an affair, really and truly. These people must have spent \$10,000 for an evening.

And I think that's an underestimate.

So I just let Hughie have his freedom, and, of course, last semester I took the books, Great Books. I enjoyed that.

Oh. What did you read?

*Actually it was a televised program and they just discussed the books. They had a different one each week and then the class would talk afterwards. One week when the black boy -- no. What was his name? **The Forties**, the book. Afterwards the instructor asked, well, are there any comments? I said to the person next to me who is also in the Tuesday morning class with Hughie that I know Hughie would have something to say.*

I will challenge.

I'm not going to say anything. So, you see, I sit quietly. I listen to people and I feel as though I can't change -- if I can change you by your just looking at me, all right. Accept me for what I am and that's it. But I'm not going to argue. I'm not argumentative at all. However, there are times, though, between the two of us we have quite heated discussions.

That's great.

Difference of opinion.

What are some of the classes that you've taken through the program?

All right. Now, we have been in the jazz class since the second year that it was there.

Is it mostly jazz appreciation, learning?

Yes. Yes.

They wanted to cut it out.

The fellow who started it, Wayne Echt, has really been a jazz enthusiast throughout his lifetime. He was the one who started it. But then Chuck Carter, who was even affiliated with KUNV for a while and he's from Chicago, he started working with Wayne. He really has done more for it. Chuck is black. He has done more for it since he's been there. I wonder how Chuck ever sleeps. Chuck seemingly goes to all of the night hangouts and encourages the musicians to come and give us an hour of jazz on Wednesday afternoon. We've had some very good ones. Last week we had Marlena Shaw.

Oh, yes. Oh, that's great.

Yes. And I don't know whether you've been exposed to Ronnie Rose here in Las Vegas. Okay.

Ronnie Rose is one who's been here now just since 2000.

He's got a regular gig now at the South Point on Thursday nights.

At South Point on Thursday evening 7:00 until 10:30. He's very good. He's 59 to 60 years old, a very good voice.

But the jazz program, those people who had registered for it would invite their friends to come.

OLLI insists that to attend classes you have to be a member. You have to pay the tuition. So, so many were coming to the jazz classes that they put it on probation. They said, no, we can't have this. They were going to close it down.

Doesn't that mean that they could get even more and more people?

Well, I told them, I said, now, wait a minute. I went and spoke to them at the board meeting. I said, look, this is an integral part of the entertainment and the knowledge of jazz. I said I will talk to them. I'll tell them that we've got to have membership and so forth. So I talked to Chuck and to Wayne and they accepted the fact that, okay, we can't let them come in unless they join. So they did join.

Some joined. And those others stopped. Because this semester they have every week come into that class to make certain. You now have to have badges on. And if you didn't you'd come and get one pass for just today only.

So the classes, do you take jazz part one and then next semester jazz part two? How is it done?

No. It's just a continuation. There are many DVDs now --

Do we have an OLLI program now for next semester? Oh. You put it away?

I have the OLLI booklet up on my table upstairs.

Oh, that's okay.

They have a variety of programs.

Oh, yes. There are DVDs, a lot of them that have taped a lot of the good jazz musicians. And when there is no live entertainment, they do have a show for us. Even half of those who are members now who are assigned for the jazz if there's no live entertainment at intermission, they just leave. A half dozen of us stayed through the entire set because there's some good entertainment even on DVDs now.

Oh, yes.

Somehow they began announcing when it would be a live session. This past week it went out that Marlena Shaw would be there. Bob (Sax Basis) and Vince Falcone. And we have always the last meeting brought something to eat. Well, there were 50 people in that class.

There had never been that many before. The people who brought the food, we couldn't get in the line.

All the plates disappeared. And I saw people with plates filled with food. We didn't get hardly any. So that's how it was really popular. Matter of fact, Hughie said to the one who sends out announcements Saturday night, do me a favor, don't send out an announcement anymore when we have the live entertainment. It is nice, though, for the entertainers to --

Yeah. Because they can enlarge their audience.

Surely. Sure.

I think that's wonderful.

I take a class on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Tuesday is this one I mentioned, Soapbox, where there's about 130 in the class. They have Jon Ralston. The president has spoken. People come in and speak. On Wednesday in the morning I have The World Today. So we discuss topics of what's happening in the world. We have sports, world news, local news, music, various topics.

Then the afternoon is jazz. Then on Thursday afternoon we go for classical music. So offerings for classes I think they've probably got about 35 or 40 offerings, haven't they, total?

Oh, that's wonderful.

Yes. Yes.

See, but sometimes you've got to make a choice, The World Today or something. But the offerings are there. If you wanted to go every day morning and afternoon, you can do that. If you pay one fee, you can go.

Ten to 12:00 in the morning and one to three in the afternoon for five days.

So if you wanted to you could go, you could go all day every day.

So Greta, how often do you go?

I go just for jazz and for classical music now. I encouraged Hughie to come to classical music. When I first started, though, it was a person who wasn't too knowledgeable, but he liked classics, and so he certainly gave us what he could. He did a little research. However, now we have Ken Hanlon.

Oh, is he a vibrant, knowledgeable man.

Oh, he's something. He should be in the jazz one, as well.

Yes. Yes.

He is unbelievable.

He teaches the afternoon classical music class, even just our last session. I said Thursday to Hughie afterwards he's really an absent-minded professor because he says, now, ladies and gentlemen, we've already used up five minutes of the time, so I'm going to put this film on. It was "Fantasia." If we don't get to finish, we'll stop at three, and next week we'll finish it. And everyone hollered but this is the last session. You mean there are no more after this?

That sounds just like him. Did he play the trombone?

No, he didn't play the trombone.

No. He hasn't entertained us at all. And I had said last week, oh, you're going to show us the movie, because last week he had all of the classics that are in "Fantasia" for us to listen to. So then now, this week we saw the movie with it. So I said you mean we're really going to see the movie? He said yes. And I said shall I bring popcorn?

She made popcorn for everybody.

I think that's great.

Of course, I went in with these two huge bags. I put them in quart plastic bags, filled each one of them. I popped popcorn all Thursday morning. Of course, when I went in with them and took them up to him, he said, ladies and gentlemen, the movie will start now; we have our popcorn.

I love the idea of the classes. I just love that because now I can retire because I have something that I want to do.

Oh, do.

Not really. But I love the idea of having those kinds of resources here in Las Vegas.

I do too.

Tell me about -- do they have anything for -- more than just a book club. But is there anything for readers?

Oh, yeah. Which one?

You had said something about the books, the Great Books.

Yes. As far as the OLLI program? No.

I think so. It's Great Books.

Well, she told me about that one.

That's the one that I went to and it was a filmed presentation that Martha Wood was in charge of it.

But, otherwise, there are a couple of courses of writing.

Art.

Wonderful. Probably cooking?

No. I don't think there's one on cooking.

No. There was a Buddhist class and I went the first session. I had to miss the second session, and then I just didn't go back anymore. I said to Hughie, well, I was enjoying it because the last half hour we had to just meditate. And so I didn't return to that one, though. Oh, we did the Health Is Wealth. We went to that once.

Oh, that's wonderful.

Yes. It really was good. He does, though, the same thing every semester. But, no, there are no other books. But they're writing composition, your inner self. Again, I'm such a private person I can write

something for you if I like you and talk to you. But to go into a class, I was not interested in giving my inner thoughts for everyone.

I see. Yes.

And I have a lot that I can write all the time. But I have to know you first before I'm going to expose myself.

I love this. I really thank you so very much. This is great.

We've enjoyed it.

We don't have enough interviews, I don't think, with -- the mission of the Oral History Research Center, of course, is to gather the history of Las Vegas. And so far we've interviewed people like J. David Hoggard and people who came here in the 40s and 50s and some of the early doctors in the city to talk about early healthcare, like the first one who was a psychologist or a neurologist, to talk to them about how healthcare has changed in Las Vegas. But I think it's also good to talk to people who came here in 80s, 90s, and even look at the changes over that short period of time.

I know I was impressed by one of the presidents of one of the colleges this year. I wrote a letter to the Review-Journal about education, something about education. Dr. Maryanski from Nevada State College called me. He called me and wanted to meet me. How many times did I go see him? Several times. He'd call me and I'd call him. He wanted me to be on his diversity council. I was just amazed how open he was. I don't know whether it was my approach that he liked or what it was. I thoroughly enjoyed his discourse. He'd call, come by and see me. So it's an everyday joke, what does he want to see me for? I think I went over to the college three or four times and talked to him on the phone any number of times.

About every two or three months he would call just to inform Hughie what's taking place over there. And then regrettably, Hughie had this serious lung infection last year and Maryanski had called and I had said that Hughie was asleep right now, can he call you tomorrow? Hughie, then, was sick almost the entire month. Then before Hughie called him back, we saw in the paper Maryanski had died.

I know.

I mean it was like that. He had to be ill a long time. But he never divulged it to me.

But look at the president of UNR. He just passed away yesterday.

That's right. He was 73 years old. But he was really an open person. You know, people read letters to the editor. But he had the time to call me and thank me on my views on education and how it should be amended and so forth and why don't you come over to my office? And I did.

Oh, I think that's amazing. That's wonderful.

And I didn't bite my tongue. I told him some of the things --

Oh, I'm sure. I'm sure.

If you ask me to come and talk to you, you're going to get what I think.

And I think that's wonderful that you're not afraid to share.

No. I'm going to share what I think. And if you don't like it, hey, this is my opinion. This is the way I do it.

Wonderful. I love this and I love people coming to the city. I have to convince people that Las Vegas is a wonderful place. I love Las Vegas. And to sit here and talk to you about it is just -- I love this.

We really love it, too. We always said we wanted to retire in a college town so we could have activities like that. It has pleased me to see now how colleges in small towns have gone after retirees encouraging them to retire here, just with the climate and all. I think the only other place through the years that I have read about would be North Carolina that there are a lot of colleges there.

That's true. A lot of them, yes.

But this is what we wanted to be, in a college town.

But I'm from North Carolina and I think this is going to be my retirement community right here.

I've been to every black college in the country.

Right. You were telling me that. Yeah. That's interesting.

I remember I was in Jackson State the week before they shot it up. Remember? I had spoken to one of the young ladies. I can't come to New York. She came. She got her MBA and she's still in New York. She's working at the community college. She's got an important position there. So it's

just amazing. These kids came into the program from southern schools very, very uncertain with themselves. I tell them, you know, you got what it takes, or otherwise I would not have put you in a position where you'd be embarrassed. They have been -- I think I told you, you always wonder what impact you may have had. I was in a bookstore and I saw Forbes Magazine. They had blacks who have become CEOs and they had the pictures there. Five of the seven were in my program.

Oh, that is amazing.

One from New Orleans, like Joyce Roche is just a dream girl. So it had some impact.

And he lost the magazine when he went back to New York to show it at the big to-do that this is what had pleased him so much. And that magazine disappeared. Someone got that magazine.

From Columbia to the place where we had dinner, the magazine disappeared. But at any rate, it pleased me to see that.

It's going to come to you. Tonight in the middle of your dreams you're going to wake up and say --

Yes.

Yes. But Las Vegas. We really have not seen much prejudice. We're just pleased with it, really and truly.

It's not overt.

Yes, it's not overt. I think it's great that people do integrate into various organizations. I think that's important.

That's where it helps. That's where we can let them know that we can put two sentences together. It makes a lot of difference.

Yes. I thank you so much.

We thank you. Thank you.

Thank you, Claytee, really. It's so much that you think about that it's been delightful to share for a moment.

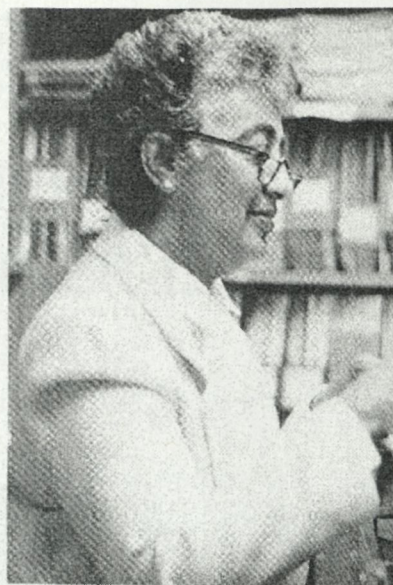
Have you ever left a research paper for the last minute? Chances are you ran into our library looking for a few good books to base your paper on. You probably enlisted the help of Mrs. Mills, our school librarian. Unfortunately for the underclassmen, Mrs. Mills will not be returning to West Hempstead High next year.

Mrs. Mills, who has been here for 15 years, is retiring. She and her husband, who retired last December, are getting their things together for their move to Nevada. Their building complex will be located only three blocks away from the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. Mrs. Mills, who has studied Latin and French, but majored in English, plans to further her studies in languages by taking Spanish and German classes at the university. In her spare time Mrs. Mills plans to work on her stamp collection, on which she does thorough research of each stamp. She and her husband will also spend plenty of time exploring the west coast.

Mrs. Mills is excited about her move, but says she will miss West Hempstead High.

"There are many changes going on in our library, including a new data base center," Mrs. Mills said. "Next year a modem will be added expanding our resources."

Mrs. Mills wishes she could be around next year to see these advancements but she is looking forward to retirement.



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HONORING



HUGHIE E. MILLS

Class of 1949

1999 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

Saturday, October 16, 1999

7:00 p.m.

Charleston House Holiday Inn
Charleston, West Virginia

HUGHIE E. MILLS

Class of 1949

Hughie E. Mills was born in Fayette County, West Virginia. His family moved to Charleston, where he attended public schools. He participated in various school activities, and especially enjoyed playing the trumpet in the high school band. In 1941, he graduated from Garnet High School.

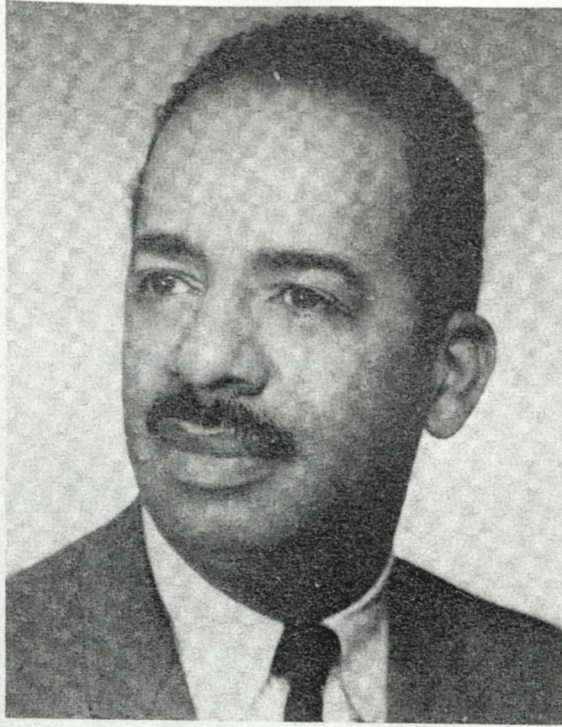
He served in the United States Army during World War II, and spent two years in the European Theater of Operations. In June 1946, he enrolled at West Virginia State College. He was initiated in Tau Chapter, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity in 1948. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, history major, in January 1949. He graduated from New York University with a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in Public Relations and Personnel Administration, in June 1950.

Hughie remained in New York for his employment career. He was one of the early black sales representatives for R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. He also represented Chock Full o' Nuts Corporation in their coffee sales division during Jackie Robinson's administration.

In 1968, he accepted a position as Assistant to the Dean of Community Relations at Columbia University, School of Business. From 1970 to 1974, he was on leave from Columbia to organize and become the first Executive Director of Council of Opportunity in Graduate Management Education (COGME). This consortium of major business schools combined their resources with a grant from the Sloan Foundation, to develop a program to recruit and retain minority students in graduate business programs. In 1974, he returned to Columbia Business School as the Director of Financial Aid. In 1983, he accepted a position at Nassau Community College in Garden City, New York where he formed and served as Director of Alumni Affairs until his retirement in 1988.

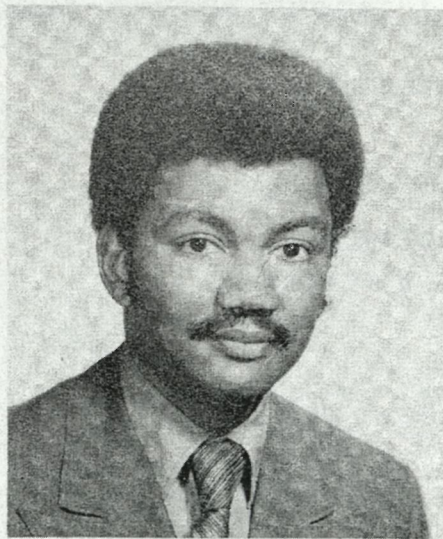
Hughie married Greta Tuck Majette in 1954. They have one daughter, Grace Marie Mills, and all reside in Las Vegas, Nevada. Since Hughie's retirement he has volunteered at the American Cancer Society, serving on the Las Vegas Chapter Board of Directors. He has just completed a stint with the AARP as Minority Affairs Specialist, representing the State of Nevada.

Hughie and Greta organized the Las Vegas Alumni Chapter of West Virginia State College National Alumni Association in 1990. They also were the catalyst for the formation of the National Center for Human Relations on the campus. Hughie has served as President of their chapter since its inception. Since 1995, he also has been the Far-West Regional Director. He has been the recipient of the Glover L. Smiley, Jr. 110% Award and the James R. Waddy Meritorious Service Award. Last year he was honored by the Columbia University Business School, Black Business Students Association at the 17th Annual MBA Conference as the first recipient of the BBSA Service Recognition Award. He is proud of his most recent accomplishment. He single-handedly has spearheaded the Class of '49 Scholarship Fund with continues to grow.



HUGHIE E. MILLS — EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

B.A.—West Virginia State College 1949; M.P.A.—N.Y. University—1950
On leave of absence from Columbia University as Assistant Director
of Admissions and Student Affairs in the School of Business.



PHILIP V. WHITE — Assc. Dir.
B.A. — Williams College 1966
M.B.A. — Columbia University
Graduate School of Business—
1968; Asst. to the Dean—School
of General Studies—Columbia
University — 1968-70



TYREE P. JONES — Assc. Dir.
B.A. — Knoxville College, Knox-
ville, Tenn. — 1949.
A.A. — American Academy of
Funeral Service, New York,
New York — 1955.

April 15, 1970

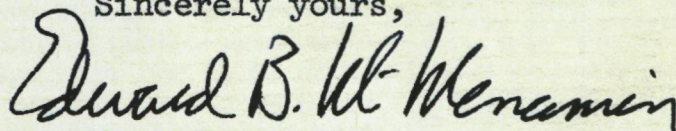
Mr. Hughie E. Mills
School of Business
207 Uris

Dear Mr. Mills:

I am authorized by the President to inform you that your salary as Executive Director, Council for Opportunities in Graduate Management Education, Faculty of Business, will be at the annual rate of \$17,500, effective July 1, 1970.

With all good wishes for the future, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Edward B. McMenamin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E".

Edward B. McMenamin
Secretary of the University

cc: Personnel

mrs

COGME TO Aid MINORITY MBA'S: Ten B-Schools Form Group

By Palmer Sessel

For the first time, ten of the nation's leading business schools have joined in a concerted effort to promote the flow of minority group members into significant management positions, using graduate study in business as a channel. "COGME" for short, the Council for Opportunity in Graduate Management Education combines the efforts of the University of California (Berkeley), Carnegie-Mellon University, Chicago, Columbia, Cor-

nell, Dartmouth, Harvard, MIT, University of Pennsylvania and Stanford Graduate Schools of Business.

Chairman of the Council is John W. Hennessey, Jr., Dean of Dartmouth's Amos Tuck Business School, and the Executive Director is Columbia's Hughie E. Mills. Mills has been granted a two-year leave of absence from his positions as Assistant Director of Admissions and Student Affairs to supervise the COGME program, which will be headquartered in Uris Hall.

"I expect this to be a full-time job -- at least!" said Mills. "We really have our work cut out for us. One of the first problems we've got to tackle stems from the fact that minority students really have no way to include management opportunities

in their frames of reference when planning careers. Black students, for example, can usually get informal information about careers from black lawyers, doctors, social workers and such, but how many product managers or financial analysts do they know?"

"Our first job is to get to these students, and promote the idea, first of all, that a career in business management is one of the opportunities they should be considering, and second, that graduate study in business is the way to prepare for it. Once we've done that, we want to help these people by making it financially possible to study business, work on giving their studies maximum relevance to their goals, and then helping them go out and put all this to work. Hopefully, the long-range impact of our program will center not just on helping people to whom we give grants, but even more on filling the 'local information gap' that presently exists. If we're successful, minority students in the future will be able to look to today's COGME-sponsored MBA students as examples of opportunity in the business world."

Mills emphasized that COGME's thrust will not be directed toward black students alone. "One of our assets," he noted, "is the geographical diversity of the member schools. There are a number of relatively 'local' underprivileged groups in the locations of the various schools, and we want to try to devote an effort to these students, as well as to blacks in all areas." As examples, he cited the significant Puerto Rican population in the New York area, and the Mexican-American communities on the West Coast. "We hope to be able to serve these people, as well as other groups, such as American Indians."

(Continued on page 2)

Rise : Auto-Alarm System Considered

appearing" from the Business School's Library.

"Because we work a 90-hour week year-round," Mr. Driver said, "we can't provide exact loss statistics, but we do have a rough idea provided by comparing an inventory of heavily-used books we took three years ago with one we're in the process of taking right now. In the sample we're talking about, over nine per cent of the books have been 'lost' or stolen during the three year interval. If this attrition rate is approximately the same throughout the library, thousands of books are being stolen every year."

The Librarian noted that, considering the library's heavy usage, present security and inspection procedures could not fully cope with the problem. "If someone really wants to steal a book," he said, "he can devise a way to do it which no inspection, short of a total 'frisk,'

(Continued on page 6)

the cost of purchasing have been stolen from d run well over ten t doesn't include the process and catalog The speaker is Ben rian, and the subject hich books are "dis-



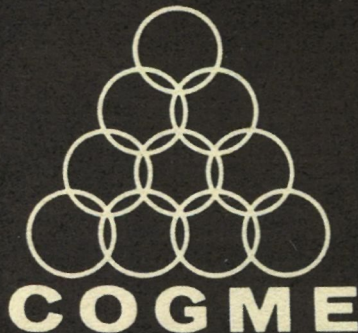
Photo by Howard

Journal from which pages
 lical Replacement Slips
 within last two weeks.

In this Issue :

- ★ Starving MBA's (Page 5)
 - ★ Security? (Page 3)
 - ★ Job Hunting (Page 3)
 - ★ MBA's for Peace (Page 8)
- ...plus other news and Features!

**COUNCIL FOR OPPORTUNITY
IN
GRADUATE MANAGEMENT
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Berkeley, California 94720

Graduate School of Industrial Administration
Carnegie-Mellon University
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213

Graduate School of Business
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois 60637

Graduate School of Business
Columbia University
New York, New York 10027

Graduate School of Business and Public Administration
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York 14850

The Amos Tuck School of Business Administration
Dartmouth College
Hanover, New Hampshire 03755

Graduate School of Business Administration
Harvard University
Boston, Massachusetts 02163

Alfred P. Sloan School of Management
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Boston, Massachusetts 02139

Wharton School of Finance and Commerce
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

Graduate School of Business
Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

PROFILE OF *A*WARDEES

Daniel M. Fisher, Jr. (Class of 1973)-Outstanding Alumnus of the Year

- Consultant, Governmental Affairs, Nassau CC
- Former Town Clerk, Town of Hempstead

Victor Abravaya, JD (Class of 1970)-Excellence in Education (Faculty)

- Professor and Chairperson, Department of Theatre and Dance, Nassau CC
- Advocate for free speech and academic freedom

Anne Emmerson, EdD (Class of 1981)-Excellence in Education (Administration)

- Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs, Nassau CC
- Advocate for adults and children with special learning needs

Mary Anne Holzkamp (Class of 1966)-Excellence in Public Service

- Treasurer, Nassau Regional OTB
- Former Mayor, City of Glen Cove

Hughie E. Mills -Special Guest

- Organizer of the Alumni Association
- First Alumni Coordinator at Nassau CC

The Alumni Association of Nassau Community College
Cordially invites you and your friends
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Celebrating the Achievements of
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N.Y. Times
11/6/74

Blacks' M.B.A. Struggle

The campaign by graduate business schools to recruit and train minorities for business leadership threatens to pass from infancy to serenity without having reached maturity.

In keeping with the civil-rights movement's push to expand opportunities for black people and other minorities, which peaked in the late nineteen-sixties, several programs to introduce minorities to business experience were devised.

But in recent months, business educators say, such efforts have weakened because of a shortfall in financial aid—at the same time that the cost of education has grown rapidly.

While the shortage of financial aid has been discouraging to some admissions people, many of them are heartened to find growing interest in business among minorities. But observers of the effort to place highly trained minorities in business agree it needs new aid from industry and especially from Government to meet growing demands.

One of the largest and most prominent programs to recruit minority students to

study for masters in business administration is the Council for Opportunity in Graduate Management Education (COGME) based in Cambridge, Mass.

COGME, which got under way in 1970 with a \$3-million grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, attempts to attract minority people to member schools and provides financial aid where needed.

The COGME member schools are: Stanford, the University of Chicago, the University of California at Berkeley, Carnegie-Mellon, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Pennsylvania.

The Sloan support was to consist of a \$1-million grant in the first year, with subsequent annual grants decreasing by \$200,000 each year thereafter. Contributions from industry and other sources were to have played an increasing part in COGME funds, all of which were to supplement student-aid funds at the schools.

Under the COGME program, students must first be admitted to full-time study at member schools. Then

they may apply for COGME funds to help pay the costs of matriculation.

The number of minorities enrolled at COGME schools—including blacks, American Indians, Asian-Americans and Spanish-surnamed students—was 257 in 1969, 435 in 1970 and 606 in 1971. It slackened to 580 in 1972 and 575 in 1973.

Bertram H. King, director of COGME, said that charges had risen 30 to 35 per cent at member schools since the organization began.

"I can recall that when I graduated from Harvard in 1968, annual costs were \$4,500," he said. "Now the costs at some schools run up to \$6,800 a year."

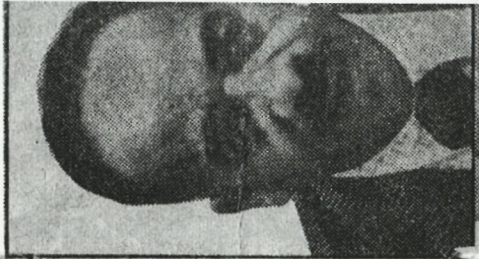
While enrollments at COGME schools have declined from their peak, applications for COGME fellowships have risen steadily from 404 in 1970 to 650 this year.

The Consortium for Graduate Study in Management, another group that works to attract more minorities to M.B.A. programs, has managed to increase minority enrollment at its six schools from 22 in 1967 to 100 this year. The schools are: Indiana, North Carolina, Rochester, Southern California, Washington University of St. Louis and Wisconsin.

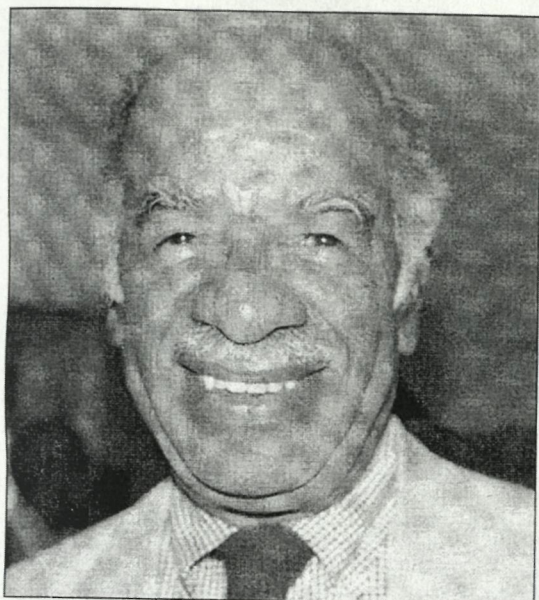
"One of the big disappointments to us," said Wallis Jones, assistant director of the consortium, "has been our failure to attract a single penny of help from the Government."

COGME received small grants from the Office of Economic Opportunity (restricted to support of Indians) and the Office of Minority Business Enterprise, but Mr. King and others have

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BBSA Service Recognition Award Recipient Hughie E. Mills



Born in a coal camp in rural West Virginia, Hughie Mills moved to Charleston, West Virginia before grade school. He attended segregated schools but found the learning experience, taught by Black teachers, rewarding and thorough. He participated in various school activities and especially enjoyed playing the trumpet in the high school band. He served in the Army during World War II and spent over two years in the European Theater of Operations. Mr. Mills attended West Virginia State College and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1949. He attended New York University and graduated with a Masters of Public Administration in 1950 with a concentration in Public Relations and Personnel Administration.

In 1968, Mr. Mills accepted a position as Assistant to the Dean of Community Relations at Columbia Business School. One of his duties was Director of the MBA Management Consultants. This was a group of dedicated business school students who served as consultants to minority businesses in the Harlem area. In 1970, Mr. Mills took a leave of absence from Columbia to become the first Executive Director of The Council of Opportunity in Graduate Management Education (COGME). This consortium of major business schools combined their resources with a grant from the Sloan Foundation, to develop a program to recruit and retain minority students in graduate business programs at Dartmouth, MIT, Harvard, Cornell, Carnegie-Mellon, Wharton, University of Chicago, University of California at Berkeley, Stanford and Columbia. The program was extremely successful in enrolling and graduating more than 700 students in a four year period. In 1974, he returned to Columbia as the Director of Financial Aid. In 1983, Mr. Mills accepted a position at Nassau Community College in Garden City, New York where he served as the Director of Alumni Affairs until his retirement in 1988.

Current activities include the Las Vegas Chapter Board of Directors for the American Cancer Society, Director of the West Virginia State College National Alumni Association, American Association of Retired Persons, Former President Local Chapter 4395, and Minority Affairs Specialist in Nevada of AARP.

Mr. Mills' wife of forty-two years, Greta Tuck is a retired West Hempstead librarian. Their daughter, Grace Mills, is the Director of the Reference Library at North Carolina Central University School of Law.