

2008

San José State University Oral History Project Collection

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Guide to the San José State University Oral History Project Collection

Processed by Veronica Cabrera, Reviewed by Danelle Moon.

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Date Completed:

2008

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Descriptive Summary

Title: San José State University Oral History Project Collection

Dates: 2005-2006

Collection number: MSS-2006-04-01

collection size: 2 Boxes 1 Linear Foot

Repository: San José State University Library.

San José, California 95192-0028

Abstract: This collection contains audio tapes and transcripts documenting the experiences of key administrators and faculty from San José State University. The oral histories described, reflect the changes in campus governance, curriculum and student life from 1952 to the present.

Physical Location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's Online catalog

languages: Languages presented in the collection: English

Access

The collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

San José State University Oral History Project, MSS-2005-04-01, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

Processing Information

Processed and EAD encoded by Veronica Cabrera, 2008.

History

San José State University (SJSU) has the distinction of being the oldest public institution of higher education on the West Coast. The early history of SJSU began in 1857 in San Francisco with the formation of the Minns' Evening Normal School. The Minns' Evening Normal School provided the foundation for the formation of the first California State Normal School in 1862 and firmly established the college and university system in the state. In 1870 the campus moved from San Francisco to San José.

San José State University's name has evolved along with the institution. In 1921 San José State Normal School became San José State Teachers College, later renamed San José State College in 1935, later renamed California State University, San José in 1972 when it achieved university status, and finally, San José State University in 1974. From its beginnings as a normal school to train teachers for the developing frontier, SJSU has matured into a metropolitan university offering more than 134 bachelor's and master's degrees with 110 concentrations. The California State University system is the direct descendant of the San José Normal School.

The SJSU Special Collections & Archives received a generous donation from Hobert W. Burns, former Academic Vice President, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, to sponsor the San José State University (SJSU) Oral History Project. This donation provided the funding needed to interview key administrators, faculty and staff. These interviews document the history of the university from 1952 to the present, and provide a rich array of personal accounts of student and campus life, faculty and university governance and policymaking.

Scope and Content

This Collection consists of fifteen audio interviews, interview transcriptions, and project correspondence from San José State University Oral History Project, conducted in 2005 and 2006. The Interviews were conducted by Dr. Margo McBane, Bonnie Montgomery and Suzanne Guerra. Each interviewee was asked to reflect on their early experiences working at SJSU, to describe key historical events, to discuss changes in policy, and to comment on the how these policies impacted the students, faculty, and administration. The interviewees include: Wanda Blockhus, Jack Douglas, Lester Lange, Mary Male, Brett Melendy, Sam Milioto, George Moore, James Noah, Lela Nobel, Theodore Norton, Jay Pinson, Wiggys Sivertsen, James Walsh, Reverend Benton White, Jo Bell Whitlach, Ruth Jaffe.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into one series: I. Oral History Project, 2005-2006.

Subject Heading

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

San José State University-- Curricula--Programs

Education, Higher

Education--California--San José

San José State University (Calif.)

Box/Folder 1/21-2/1

Series I **Oral History Project 2005-2006 2005-2006****Physical Description:** 2 Boxes**Series Scope and Content Summary**

This Oral History Project documents the history of SJSU from 1952 to the present. The interviews cover a wide spectrum of subjects from student life, faculty and university governance, policymaking, capital campaigns, and changes in higher education in California. Collectively these interviews document the sweeping social, political and economic changes that shaped American society and which thereby transformed academic life and culture at SJSU. The post-war years offered great prosperity and new opportunities for college students in California. The impact of the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War forever changed academics and influenced the development of new programs and disciplines, including the formation of New College (1968-1980), an experimental interdisciplinary school, and new majors in African American Studies, Chicano Studies, Asian American Studies, and Women Studies. Changes in curriculum and the diversity of the student body and faculty led to a watershed that moved the institution forward from a small college to a major metropolitan university. The interviews and specially the account of Reverend Benton White, Professor of Religious Studies, present some of the challenges the university faced in addressing civil rights on campus and in society. Many of the themes from these interviews shed light on student and faculty strikes during the Vietnam War, the Tommy Smith and John Carlos 1968 Olympics controversy, the development of an ombudsman position to address racial discrimination and other social justice issues on campus. The tumult of the Civil Rights Movement and anti-war demonstrations on campus, mirrored other college and university experiences across the United States, yet laid the foundation for a more democratic and diverse institution.

Wanda Blockhus
 Business
 Jack Douglas
 Library
 Ruth Jaffe
 Chemistry
 Lester Lange
 Science
 Mary Male
 Special Education
 Brett Melendy
 History
 Sam Milioto
 Personnel Management
 George Moore
 History
 James Noah
 Journalism
 Lela Nobel
 Political Science
 Theodore Norton
 Political Science
 Jay Pinson
 Engineering
 Wiggsey Sivertsen
 Counseling
 James Walsh
 History
 Reverend Benton White
 Religious Studies
 Jo Bell Whitlach
 Library

Arrangement

This series is arranged alphabetically by Interviewee

Box/Folder 1/1

Interviewee Agreement/Signed "2005-2006"

Box/Folder 1/2	Interviewee Correspondence "2005-2006"
Box/Folder 1/3	Interviewee Resume/CV "2005-2006"
Box/Folder 1/4	Photographs "1992" "1995" "2005"
Box/Folder 1/5	Staff Correspondence "2005-2006"
Box/Folder 1/6-1/21	Transcripts "2005-2006"
Box/Folder 1/6	Blockhurs, Wanda "March 07, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/7	Douglas, Jack "March 14, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/08	Jaffe, Ruth "February 22, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/9	Lange, Lester "January 27, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/10	Male, Mary "February 12, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/11	Melendy, Brett "February 27, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/12	Milioto, Sam "February 22, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/13	Moore, George "March 01, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/14	Noah, James "February 25, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/15	Nobel, Lela "February 27, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/16	Norton, Theodore "March 03, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/17	Pinson, Jay "March 07, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/18	Sivertsen, Wiggsey "November 30, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/19	Walsh, James "October 12, 2005"
Box/Folder 1/20	White, Benton (Reverend) "April 26, 2006"
Box/Folder 1/21	Whitlach, Jo Bell "February 22, 2006"
Box/Folder 2	Transcripts-Audio Tapes "2005-2006"