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## **N.8 Undergraduate Internship Program: Spring 2016**

Interview N-0044

Betsy Davis

12 April 2016

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## **ABSTRACT – Betsy Battle Davis**

Interviewee: Betsy Battle Davis  
Interviewer: Kadejah S. Murray  
Interview Date: April 11, 2016  
Location: Chapel Hill, NC  
Length: 51 minutes

Betsy Davis begins the interview by reflecting on her childhood. She was born and raised in Chapel Hill; she has two older sisters and a younger brother. Mrs. Davis attended Lincoln Elementary School and Lincoln High School. During her time at Lincoln High School, she played in the band and was a statistician for the basketball team. She was also interested in home economics, which is one of the reasons that she majored in Foods and Nutrition when she went to Hampton Institute. Mrs. Davis reflects on her time spent at Hampton Institute, she chose to apply to Hampton, because she did not want to go to North Carolina Central University and follow her sister's example. She talks about her favorite classes, her relationships with her professors, and what emotions she felt as graduation approached. After she graduated from Hampton, she was required to complete a one-year internship in order to become a member of the American Dietetic Association. She completed this internship at Cooke County Hospital in Chicago, Illinois, and at that time she was the only nutrition student to do an internship that year. Mrs. Davis came back to work at the UNC hospital as a therapeutic dietician, before she decided to go to UNC's School of Public Health. She describes the program and the classes that she was required to take, how she prepared for class, and how she balanced having a family and going to graduate school at the same time. Mrs. Davis reflects on the racial problems that were happening at the school of public health and in the larger Chapel Hill area, she retells a story that one of her professors told her about the UNC hospital. She also reflects on the challenges she faced and her greatest accomplishment while attending the School of Public Health. After graduating, she worked as a nutrition consultant before she became the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program Manager for the Lincoln Community Health Center, which was the second health center to get a WIC program. Mrs. Davis describes what she did as the WIC Program Manager; she enrolled people into the program and taught nutrition education classes, which were required for certification. In order to be enrolled in WIC children had to be under the age of five and have nutritional risk factors. Every six months the clients had to be reassessed, Mrs. Davis describes some of the challenges she faced during the reassessment process. She reflects on the relationships she had with her colleagues, memorable experiences working at the health center,

and times when students from the school of public health would come visit the center. This interview concludes with Mrs. Davis giving lasting words of advice.

## FIELD NOTES – Betsy Battle Davis

(Compiled April 12, 2016)

Interviewee: Betsy Battle Davis

Interviewer: Kadejah S. Murray

Interview Date: April 11, 2016

Location: Chapel Hill, NC

THE INTERVIEWEE: Betsy Davis Battle was born and raised in Chapel Hill, North Carolina; she went to Lincoln High School and graduated in 1958. Upon graduation, she attended Hampton Institute and earned her Bachelor's degree in Home Economics with emphasis in Foods and Nutrition in 1962. After her time at Hampton Mrs. Davis worked did a dietetic internship at the Cooke County Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. Then Mrs. Davis worked as a therapeutic dietician at North Carolina Memorial Hospital. In 1969, she graduated from the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; she received her Master's Degree in Public Health with emphasis in Nutrition. Mrs. Davis worked as a nutrition consultant for the North Carolina Board of Public after she received her Master's Degree. Then in 1974, she became the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program Manager for the Lincoln Community Health Center in Durham, NC; she held this position until she retired in 2004.

THE INTERVIEWER: Kadejah Murray is a junior double majoring in Women's and Gender Studies and Sociology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is a part of the 2016 Southern Oral History Program Internship Program.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW: This interview took place in the dining room at Mrs. Davis's house. We started immediately after I arrived at her home, the interview went smoothly, and lasted about 51 minutes. About five minutes into the interview, Mrs. Davis gets up to turn the heat down and take off her cardigan. At the time 16:24, Mrs. Davis shows me the diploma that she received from UNC's School of Public Health. Mr. Davis, her husband, can be heard on the recording at the time 26:30. While we were talking about her job as a WIC Program Manager for the Lincoln Community Health Center, Mrs. Davis gets up to show me a booklet filled with pictures of her during her time working at the health center that her colleagues gave her when she retired. This interview focuses on Mrs. Davis's high school career; her education at Hampton Institute and UNC's School of Public Health.; and her work as the WIC Program Manager at the Lincoln Community Health Center.

NOTE ON RECORDING: I used a Zoom H4n recorder from the Southern Oral History Program.

**TRANSCRIPT—BETSY DAVIS**

Interviewee: BETSY DAVIS  
Interviewer: Kadejah Murray  
Interview Date: April 11, 2016  
Location: Chapel Hill, NC  
Length: 1 file; approximately 50 minutes

START OF RECORDING

KADEJAH MURRAY: Today is April 11, 2016. My name is Kadejah Murray, and I'm here with Mrs. Betsy Davis. So Mrs. Davis, can you start off by telling me a little bit about your childhood?

BETSY DAVIS: OK. I was born here in Chapel Hill. Went to Lincoln High School, which was a black school at that time. Elementary and high school there. I am the third of four children. I'm that middle child, so if you know anything about that, you know--.  
[Laughter] When I was growing up, I was interested in the band. During the summer, I worked at the university in housekeeping to make money to go to school. And, at that time, we didn't have any McDonalds or Hardees or any of that, so that was it. Or, the hospital was new at that time, too, so they were employing people as dietary aides to help get the meals out on the floor to the patients. Then I played in the band.

I was very interested in home economics and that was one of the reasons, when I went to Hampton, I majored in foods and nutrition with emphasis in dietetics. And my two older sisters

went to NCCU and my younger brother went to A&T. But my dad was a--. We called them janitors then, they call them custodians now--, but he was on the staff at UNC. And, at that time, that wasn't a real bad job for us.

KM: Did you have a very strong relationship with your siblings?

BD: My oldest sister is--. Let's see, Ruth is two years, so she's about six or seven years older. So she was always the one that was in charge because my mom did some work. But my sister that's two years older than I, she and I have a strong relationship. I don't have a very strong relationship with my brother, and I that's because he was the only boy and everybody catered to him. So I didn't like that attention that he got. [Laughter] Being honest.

KM: Can you tell me about your high school experience?

BD: I enjoyed high school. The thing I didn't like about it--, in a small community, many of the same teachers teach your older sisters, and, when they get to you, they expect you to be a carbon copy of them. And I refused to walk in those footsteps. So, when we did get new teachers that I'd say accepted me as who I was, I always did a better job for them than I did for the ones who compared me to my other sisters. But I often tell people, "I didn't realize I was poor until I went to the School of Public Health," and they say well, "If you're a family of four and you make this amount of money, you're below poverty." I said, "Well isn't this something? All my life I've lived this way." But the thing is, everyone in your neighborhood had the same, so nobody felt poor. And if they didn't have, you shared what you had.

But with my boys going to Chapel Hill High, that's a different environment. And I was talking to them once. I said, "You all never said to me, 'Mom, why can't we go to the beach or go to the mountain?'" Because the other kids were taking trips during the breaks and I was

working. My husband was working. So we had to find someone to keep them. They could either go to my parents or his parents. But they didn't get the same kind of experience as the other kids. But they never complained.

KM: What type of extracurriculars were you involved in?

BD: In high school? I did the band.

KM: OK, just the band.

BD: And I worked with the basketball team as a statistician.

KM: Can you tell me a little bit about that?

BD: Working with the--?

KM: Statistician.

BD: Oh. Keeping the records and making sure that the right people were on the list, those who were going to start. And then when they substituted one person for the other, make sure that they were in line and their names were given to the officials and everything.

KM: Did you have fun doing that?

BD: Uh-huh, I enjoyed the people. [Interruption]

KM: So why did you choose to apply to Hampton University?

BD: I chose Hampton because I refused to go to NCCU to follow my sisters. I was so tired of being sweet little somebody else. I wanted to be my own and I knew there--. I had no classmates or no friends going. I went by myself so I was going out on my own at this time. And it was difficult because during the summer, I had to make enough money to pay for my first semester. And, at that time, Hampton was charging a thousand dollars. Now that was back in

[19]58 to [19]62, so I had to have \$500 dollars when I started. And then my oldest sister, who was a teacher, she would pay some of my second semester and my parents would, too.

KM: So how did you feel when you first arrived on campus?

BD: I guess I was just happy to be there. Just happy to be in a different environment away from home and on my own.

KM: Yes. [Laughter] Were you involved in extracurricular activities?

BD: I was in a social club. I wasn't in the band there. And I think that's about all--. Did some babysitting. I guess I was more interested in trying to get money to keep myself floating rather than--. And at that time, if you didn't have your money at the beginning of the semester and you went to finance and said, "Look, my sister doesn't get paid until this time, I'll have it here by this day," they would let you register and get going. It's different world.

KM: Not now. They'll put a hold on your account. [Laughter]

BD: They've come a long way. I guess they had to.

KM: So, what kind of classes did you take?

BD: With me being a foods and nutrition major, I had to take biology, I had to take chemistry, I had organic chemistry, I had to take accounting, and at that time I said, "Why do I need all this? I want to be a dietician. Why do I need all this chemistry and stuff?" And I was the only person in many of the classes that was not a major. Most of them were majoring in biology or chemistry or some kind of science-related class. And I wasn't, but I was in there with them. The professor picked on me, "Let's hear from the little foods and nutrition person."  
[Laughter]

I didn't have a whole lot of choice as far as elective classes. At Hampton, everybody at that time had to take swimming. And we had to do that first and second--. Still, getting your hair all wet and all of that but, in order to graduate, they required folks to take swimming.

KM: So what was your relationship like with some of your professors while you were at Hampton?

BD: In my department, I knew most of the professors and my advisor. But in the other areas, I was just treated like the rest of the kids and there might have been ten or twelve kids, I was just one of those. And since the other chemistry and things were not my major, I didn't spend a whole lot of time in those areas, although most of those classes had long labs associated with it. So I had to spend more time in that area to get my lab work done, but I wasn't working directly with the instructor. It was more with other students.

But Hampton had some good instructors then. I will always remember my accounting instructor because--I think we went to class on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. On Tuesday and Thursday, we had to take--. He lived on campus, he gave us homework, and we had to take our homework--. He had a little box on his porch that we had to put homework in. And back then, our semester was not over until January. So during Christmas break, we were still in the first semester. And we had a work book of a company that we had to debit and credit and make sure everything balanced. And that's what we had to do during the Christmas holidays. So they didn't play with us. [Laughter]

KM: So what was your favorite class while you were at Hampton?

BD: I enjoyed the foods and nutrition part. Because, at that time, I enjoyed cooking. Thinking that dietetics would be similar to that, in the long run it isn't. It's a different chemistry

of all its own. So I enjoyed that part. And really, when you look back on it, some of the other classes that I took, I enjoyed. One of the things that Hampton did, they had a speech pathology class and they would--with the freshmen and everybody coming in--they would send you to speech therapy. And at that time I had trouble with S's, so I had a student who worked directly with me to help me with my speech problem.

KM: That's really cool. I've never--. Is that something that they did at other universities or--?

BD: I don't know. And I don't know, at that time, if Hampton was one of the few black schools that had that kind of department. I don't know.

KM: That's really cool. So you graduated in 1962? So what emotions were you feeling as you were approaching graduation?

BD: I was kind of happy to leave. Enjoyed it but when it's time to go, you're ready to go. [Laughter] When I was leaving there, with my program you had to do a year of internship. So my advisor had me apply to different hospitals and I was accepted at Cook County hospital in Chicago. And so, at that time, I was waiting to get a reply to see where I would go to or if I would even be able to go, if nobody accepted me. So I did get to go to do a year's internship at Cook County hospital.

KM: OK. How was that?

BD: Different. First of all, Chicago is different. Chicago is cold. When I got up there in the summer, it felt like the winter down here. And the hospital is a big county hospital where sometimes they had so many patients, they had them out in the hall. Now it's probably changed, but it's still a city county hospital. So I'm sure you don't get the kind of care that you would get

at some of the private hospitals. But as a dietician, I was to follow doctor's orders as far as special diets were concerned. And the place where we lived, we lived in a dorm. And it was connected to the hospital. It had a tunnel that you could go--. And many things worked on that scale there at Cook County.

KM: So this was during your time at Hampton?

BD: No, I had graduated from Hampton. So I had to do a year of internship after to become a member of the American Dietetic Association. And that's the governing group of nutrition professionals.

KM: So everybody had to do that internship--?

BD: If they're in that. But at that time, I was the only nutrition student that did an internship that year.

KM: So what did you do after your internship?

BD: I came back home and I got a job at UNC hospital as a therapeutic dietician. And I worked there three years and I said, "There must be more to it than just circling diets and visiting patients." And some of the units I didn't like. We had a burn unit where kids and adults who had been burned were in this unit, and many of them were very uncomfortable because I'm sure as the burn was healing, it began to itch and they wanted somebody to scratch on it. So, to me, it was a very hard unit to work because of the condition of the folks that were in there. So then that's when I decided, "I'm going to leave here and go across the street to the School of Public Health."

KM: So can you tell me a little bit more about your program that you were in when you were at the School of Public Health?

BD: OK. I was in a nutrition program. [Interruption] But the School of Public Health, at that time, was a little different. Although there were five or six people in my program--the nutrition program, per se--most of our classes were with the total population. We had epidemiology, we had statistics, and we had public health administration. And all of those classes were with the other majors. The only thing that we had with the five or six of us was the nutrition classes. So we didn't really spend as much time in nutrition as we did with some of the core classes. And it was only a year, so it's very difficult to get everything in in a year.

KM: So your whole program was a year?

BD: Just a year.

KM: Just a year? OK. How many other African Americans were in the program with you?

BD: In my program I was the only one. In the foods and nutrition. But there were other African Americans in the School of Public Health, but I was--.

KM: And did you have any relationships with them?

BD: The other blacks? I didn't. I didn't see them that much. Our schedules were just--. In statistics we had a lab that we had to go to--and with epidemiology, too--but there would be a few in there, but not that many. And then I had a family so when I through with that I'm heading to pick up somebody from the day care or something like that and coming home.  
[Laughter]

KM: So were you able to develop relationships with your professors in that year?

BD: With the folks in the nutrition department, yes. We got us a tutor, the group of us, to help us with statistics and epidemiology. And we each paid a certain amount and they would

come and help us prepare for exams or tests or whatever. The classes were so large, they had them in the auditorium of the School of Public Health. And none of us really had that stronger math and--. Epidemiology is more looking at disease and the road way to a certain thing and how you can come up with solutions to it. So you have to develop a certain type of skill-solving to work with it.

KM: So how did you balance having a family and going to school at the same time? Because I can only imagine. [Laughter]

BD: It was hard. My husband helped, but going--with them being in day care--and picking up there, coming home, getting in. So many times, I tried to do all of my work while I was there, so when I did get home I didn't have any. Or if I did, I would wait until I had finished with the kids and then I would work on homework.

KM: So were your kids in school at the same time?

BD: The oldest one was in day care.

KM: So, when you weren't in classes, if you weren't with your family, what did you like to do in your free time?

BD: I didn't have too much. [Laughter] I still enjoy walking. I go to the senior citizens at Seymour about four days a week to exercise and I like to read and I like to do Sudoku. I enjoy puzzle solving and things like that.

KM: So, during your time at UNC, the Lenoir food worker strike happened. Do you remember anything about that or the campus reaction?

BD: I don't. Because that was a separate part of the campus. But there was quite a bit of racial things going on. I remember Dr. Greenberg, who taught statistics, used an example--,

He said, "If there was only one incubator over at UNC Hospital, and there was a black child that weighed five pounds and a white child that weighed five pounds, who do you think would get the incubator?" You know the white child would have. And he said, "Well, you're right. They would. But the reason would be that black kids usually are born with lower birth weights than white kids. So although this kid weighed five pounds, they were identical, low birth weight was more prevalent." But I didn't believe that. [Laughter]

I went along with it, but--. And that was a time that there was a lot of unrest in the schools and in the community because I know this guy from Durham, who was a black militant, came over and spoke at the School of Public Health. And he was just talking about his struggle with society and how difficult it had been.

Many people think just because you grow up in Chapel Hill, you have no problems. But that's not true. It gives you a false sense of security. I used to have to tell me kids--. They wanted to go on campus to the student union. And I had to tell them that's for UNC students. It's not for Chapel Hill High kids. Your place is at either the community centers here or at home. You have no business being on the UNC campus. But with them living in this environment, they grew up a lot faster than kids living in other areas.

KM: So can you tell me a little bit more about the racial problems that were happening in Chapel Hill?

BD: In the early [19]60s, [19]58--. Well, that's when I left, [19]58. So when I was in high school, it was segregated. So before [19]58--and I don't think the schools here--they said they have been integrated for fifty years. They had an article in *The News & Observer* about the integration. The problems that they were having. Some of the black kids said the teachers

wouldn't call on them. I think they had some riots and some things that went on among the kids when the schools were integrated. But before that, we were in our separate areas and we knew no different.

KM: So what was your biggest challenge at the School of Public Health?

BD: [Laughter]

KM: Or some of your challenges?

BD: When I applied to UNC, there was a girl from UNCG and me from Hampton, and they had one stipend, so you know who go it. So that was my first encounter. We made the same grades the whole time we were there, because she was in my area. But they wanted me to think, "Well UNCG is a much stronger school than Hampton is and she probably has a better background than you have," which could have been true, but I would think that they would want to be changing the racial--and they would take a chance on somebody not coming from the same system. So that was my thought there, but once I was there I had no trouble adjusting to that environment.

KM: So what was your greatest accomplishment?

BD: There? Graduating, [Laughter] getting out. [Laughter] That was my greatest accomplishment there. Back then, they were advanced in that they had computers and we did many things that other folks in other environments did not do. Because this was before [19]69 and we didn't have a whole lot of computers and things like that in the outside world. And they had money and they could get funds. There's not too many schools of public health around even today.

KM: So after you graduated from UNC, did you immediately get a new job after that?  
Where did you start to work?

BD: I worked for the state as a nutrition consultant and I had about six or seven counties that I had to visit to try to develop some nutrition programs, or if they had them, what could we do to improve them? So I did that for about three years. And then, when I left there, I went to Lincoln Community Health Center, and that's where I retired from. I was there for thirty years with the WIC program.

KM: Can you tell me more about that?

BD: Uh huh. And what you might want to do when you go back is go to the WIC website. They have WIC North Carolina. And they have Lincoln Community Center under that. All the counties in North Carolina have WIC programs now, but Lincoln was the second one. The first one was over here in Chapel Hill, Carrboro. Piedmont Health Center was the first, and Lincoln was the second. [Interruption] I started there in [19]74 and retired in 2004. [Shows interviewer something]

KM: So this is all you?

BD: The folks put it together for me.

KM: So when you first got there, what was your job position?

BD: WIC coordinator.

KM: So what did you do?

BD: I had to enroll people in the program. We had to get our case load up to a certain amount--I think it was five hundred then--before we could employ another helper. So, at a time there, I was the only nutritionist for the program, and then, as we began to increase our

enrollment, we were able to add more clerical staff and more nutritionists. It's changed since then and it's good because when I was with it, we didn't have the fresh fruits and vegetables that they have now. So I think that's a good change, especially for the kids.

KM: So, with WIC, they get vouchers to go to the grocery store? So were you in charge of making the list of things that they could get or--?

BD: We helped them with that. There's a certification procedure that we had to use, and when the clients came in we had to document whether they would be eligible for the program or not. And it was for children less than five years old. So if they were over five, we knew they didn't qualify because of the age.

But then they had to have nutritional risk factors, and inappropriate diet was the one that we used more with our children than any of the others. Low hemoglobin hematocrit. If they were underweight, that was a criteria. Frequent colds and upper respiratory infections. If they had had more major medical problems. If they were not growing properly we would see them every six months for assessment. But when I left, they were coming in every two months instead of every month to pick up their vouchers. And nutrition education was an important part of the certification process and then we tried to offer it one additional time between the six month certification.

KM: So what would happen during nutrition education?

BD: What we would do is get a twenty-four-hour dietary recall. Finding out where you are now. And then what kind of things that we can change that would improve your nutritional status. One thing I heard recently a few days ago, they were talking about since they had included fruits and vegetables on the programs, the kids were now eating more of that and

drinking less of the juices. And when I was there, it was juices. And they really consumed a lot and they have quite a bit of sugar. The fruit itself gives you so much more nutrition than just a juice.

KM: So after the nutrition education programs, would you meet with the children and the parents again to see their progress?

BD: Every six months they had to be reassessed.

KM: OK, so they would do the same thing? Were there any challenges with that?

BD: The one thing that I had problems with is that many of the parents did not take the time to prepare meals for the kids. Many of them would have Oodles of Noodles breakfast, lunch, whatever. "Ma'am, that's not a complete meal. You might want to add some vegetables and meat to that. That would make it more--." Because Oodles of Noodles are nothing but noodles and salt. [Laughter] It's a little like a noodle soup, which is nothing. But many times they would use that as a meal.

And then the grandparents who were raising their grandchildren, that was a challenge because, number one, at their age it was a more difficult kind of thing. And, two, their children-- . The parents might have been in and out of the household, but the major responsibility was on them. And after you've raised your own children, I don't think you should have to turn around and, you know. So I had a special heart for those people because I realized that they were in a difficult situation.

Then we had the breastfeeding moms, and we had a breastfeeding lactation person on staff. And at that time we also had a breastfeeding room where moms could go. We had a

recliner chair and a refrigerator down there, and containers that they could put their milk in. So they could go there and breastfeed if they needed to do it at a time they were at Lincoln.

KM: So were there any other programs that you were a part of besides the nutrition education or were there any held at the WIC office for mothers and children?

BD: The health department had quite a few classes there. The only other thing I was involved in would be nutrition assessment with some of the other clinics. If [pediatric] sees somebody that they want me to talk to or if adult medicine had somebody that they thought could benefit, then I could also spend time with them.

KM: OK. So you were mentioning the grandparents raising children. Those were one of your challenges dealing them having to feed the kids and already having to raise kids. So how did you help them with those situations?

BD: Number one, I would always tell them what a great job they were doing. And I realized the conditions that they were working under. And I would try to suggest things to them that the whole family could do, rather than something just for the child that was on the program.

KM: So what did you like most about working as a WIC coordinator?

BD: I enjoyed the people. I really did. And I've been retired for ten years and I still see people that remember me from WIC, "Lady, I know you," and I said, "Yeah." "Well are you a teacher?" I say, "No, I worked with WIC." "Oh, that's where I know you from. Lincoln." And I tell my husband, "Man, I've been gone a long time." [Laughter] But I enjoyed what I was doing. It was fun. Sometimes you were helping people, sometimes you were not. But that's the way life goes. You're not a hundred percent successful in anything you do, but it was a joy. The worst part of my job was getting there. I had to fight 15/501 for traffic. [Laughter]

KM: Yes. [Laughter]

BD: I tell people, they ask how I'm doing and I say, "Doing great, now I'm here."

[Laughter] And I didn't like it. I would always tell my kids how I hated when the time changed. It was so depressing coming out of there when it was dark. I said, "Have I been in here all day?" [Laughter] So those were the things I don't--.

KM: So were there any people that you encountered over your thirty years working as a WIC coordinator that you still remember to this day? People that were very influential to you or special to you?

BD: There are many people that I developed a relationship with. Some of the clerical staff that worked with me. We became friends because we were a close knit group. If we were getting ready for audit and we had to get things together, many of us stayed there until we got it ready. It wasn't, "Bets, I got to go now," [it was], "Bets, what else do we need to do?" So I enjoyed that kind of environment.

And then waiting on people. People would wait until five minutes before you close to come and then they'd say, "Well, you weren't supposed to close until five o'clock." Well there's no way we can leave at five if you come at five minutes to five. But those were some of the things that would happen. That was just part of serving people. I know right now if you go to some of the stores and you wait until they're about ready to close, you'll see somebody running in last minute.

And I think many of the clients were appreciative. They were happy to be part of it. I think they tried to use the food the best that they could. You know that we knew that it wasn't going to be used just for the child on the program. If you got more than one child and you got a

jar of peanut butter, everybody's going to get a little bit. And you can't blame them. I can't anyway. But we knew that was going to happen, but at least they had it in their household and it was available to them. And then there were other folks that would sell it and use it for drugs. That's just the way the system's set up. But we were hoping that at least the majority would make good use of it.

KM: Did you have any memorable experiences that you still talk about with your husband? [Laughter]

BD: [Laughter] I had a little boss, Dr. Schmidt. And she was a partner with me and, by that, I mean when I was by myself and people were lining the hall, she would come up and say, "Bets, let me help you." She said, "Look, I'll write it," and she as a doctor. She said, "You know they won't be able to understand it, but don't worry about it." So she knew that I was working under strained conditions at that time and she would come up and try to help me and relieve me. So, I was telling somebody, at least she was aware of what was going on and wanted to try to change it if she could, or to provide her assistance with the program.

KM: So how did administration change while you were there?

BD: You know what? I had the same boss the whole time I was there. Dr. Schmidt retired--I retired in 2004--so I'm going to say she retired about five years after I left, so 2010. She was a good administrator and her thing was, "What have you done for me lately?" So it doesn't matter what you did fifteen years ago or twenty years ago, what are you doing now? And you have to be that way to run a department. You can't live in the past. Just going forward. Everything else is. And she had problems getting money. WIC was funded through USDA and also through the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services nutrition grant.

But they change all the time. When you go to the website it will tell you now what the department is and who's funding it. And so we didn't get any ( ) money, our money came from the Feds and from the state to run that program. But Lincoln had other programs that were run by the center. And I was telling my husband, talking about people being audited, I said, "Look, we were audited by the Lincoln auditors when they came once a year, we were audited by the state every two years, and sometimes the Feds would come."

So there was nothing that we could do. And we shouldn't have been concerned about it, but at least we had to keep decent records of who received the food, what they received, and had the receipts and voucher numbers available of the people that did get it. And then they would match that with what we had in the computer to see if the flow was correct.

KM: So that's what each agency would do when they came to audit? They would look through your records and--?

BD: Uh-huh. Or some would say, "Just let me see your books for September." And they would go through that and they would need vouchers and things like that and we would pull them. They would tell us what they wanted and we would go and pull it for them. And then if everything was alright in that month, they might do another one. But if they found problems then they were going to continue through many of your months to see if that was a consistent kind of thing that was happening.

KM: OK. So what does your husband do?

BD: He is retired also, but he did work for the town of Chapel Hill. He was the building inspector there. And I guess he was there for about thirty years or more.

KM: OK. So both of you were at your jobs for thirty years? So did you ever think of doing anything else while you were working?

BD: No, I enjoyed that kind of work that I was doing at Lincoln. And I enjoyed the people that worked there and the clients. So, to me, it was an environment that I enjoyed being in. I often tell people when the folks from the School of Public Health would come, some of our clients would always fight during that time. [Laughter] I had to call security, "Come to WIC please. Security?" [Laughter] And they would look at me and say, "How can you stay in this environment?" But never failed. Let me have some company is all. [Laughter]

KM: So are you still connected with the people that you went to graduate school with?

BD: No. I'm not. I had one friend that was in Virginia, Jean ( ). And at one of the meetings that I attended, she and I had lunch together. But the other folks, I don't know where they are.

KM: So the people that visited you at your job from the School of Public Health, were they people that you were friends with or--?

BD: No, they were people in the nutrition department that wanted their students to see the WIC program. So they would bring some of them over and I would talk with them and take them up in the area where we worked and issued vouchers and did nutrition education and just the flow of the patients from one area to another. But they were just getting experience. [They] wanted their students to see what a WIC program looks like.

KM: Oh, OK. So it was an educational experience. Did you do anything like that while you were in graduate school?

BD: They didn't have anything like that. [Laughter] Yeah, they only started that--what did I say, that was in [19]74? That was when they just started it.

KM: So you didn't take any field trips at all?

BD: No. We might have gone to Raleigh to the state office. We did internship kind of things and I was stationed with one in Raleigh so I worked with the nutritionists [and] dieticians coming out of there.

KM: OK, so it was like a mentor program? How was that experience?

BD: It was alright. They went to different health departments and some of them would have programs that they were doing in the community and I would go with them and observe their actions and things.

KM: So are there any lasting words that you would like to say? [Laughter] Any words of wisdom or advice?

BD: I think it's important that you find something that you enjoy doing. And, as they say, it's not going to be more like work. If you can come home with a smile on your face or go to work happy to see the folks. In the long run, people will appreciate it and they can tell when you're sincere.

KM: Thank you so much.

BD: Sure. Sure.

END OF INTERVIEW

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