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Kihara, Cisco Oral History Interview

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Kihara, Cisco (1957-1973)
Professor of Pharmacy

By Alice Jean Matuzak
September 11, 18, 1998

Subjects: Move of staff from University of Idaho to start Pacific’s Pharmacy program, history of training of pharmacist
Today is September 11th, 1998. This is Professor Alice Jean Matuszak of the University of the Pacific, School of Pharmacy. I am going to interview Professor Cisco Kihara who was a faculty member of the University of the Pacific from 1957 until she retired in 1973. She has been emeritus and still active with the School of Pharmacy ever since her retirement. Cisco, could you tell me something about how you decided to come to University of the Pacific?

When Dean Rowland of the School of Pharmacy at University of Idaho, Southern Branch, was asked to begin the School of Pharmacy in Stockton, California, at the University of Pacific, by Dr., oh, what’s his name?

Cobb? Burns? Robert Burns?

By Dr. Robert Burns, the president. He wanted to have a staff with him and so those of us on the staff there decided to come with him.

You left your family in Pocatello and came to Stockton by yourself. This must have been a very difficult decision to leave your family and the school where you had been a student.

It was a hard decision for me to make but thinking of what I could do in beginning a new school of pharmacy along with the plans, what the dean had for the new school, I felt that I was spreading the training of pharmacists which was my life. I enjoyed being in the School of Pharmacy, teaching pharmacy.

Weren’t there several Idaho State graduates who practiced pharmacy here in California?

We had quite a few students from California in Idaho. They all returned to California to practice pharmacy. They wanted us to come and train pharmacists for the state.

Can you remember the names of some of those people? Wasn’t Al Runch one of the students?

Yes, Al Runch was one.

And his daughter then, later on, came to University of the Pacific.
CK: Yes. Then… [Break]

JM: I understand that the pharmacists who were trained at Idaho State were very good. Could you tell me something about that?

CK: We trained our pharmacists to be able to take over a pharmacy as soon as they graduated from our school. Not only were they versed in the techniques and the pharmacy, they also knew how to conduct a business. With that training, it was good for the individual store, the one-man store, to have one of our graduates take over at any time because they could conduct the business in addition to doing their professional work and meet the public and become a part of the community. What was needed in those days, especially in the smaller communities, was a one-man type pharmacy or drug store as it was called in those days.

JM: Did this influence the California pharmacists when University of the Pacific was looking for a new dean to start the school? Did this have an influence on selecting Dr. Ivan Rowland?

CK: Yes, it was. President….

JM: Robert Burns.

CK: President Robert Burns particularly made two visits to our school previous and saw how we were conducting our school. At the request of the pharmacy board, they invited us, invited Dean Rowland to start the new school of pharmacy.

JM: Now Dean Rowland was dean at Idaho at that time.

CK: Yes, Dean Rowland was the dean at that time.

JM: Who came with Dean Rowland?

CK: Five of us left Idaho with Dean Rowland. Dean Rowland and Assistant Dean Roscoe, Emmons Roscoe, and our librarian, Ina Pearson, and Associate Dean, Carl Riedesel and I. That made the five of us.

JM: Where did Dr. Donald Barker fit in?

CK: He was hired to be a member, let’s see, previous to our coming in the fall of 1957.
JM: So he was one of the original six.

CK: Yes, he was one of the original, well, he was the first professor that we hired.

JM: The first class of students began their studies in the fall of 1955.

CK: September.

JM: September of ’55. But who was the acting dean directing the program at that time?

CK: Dr. Cobb….

JM: Emerson.

CK: Dr. Emerson Cobb who was chairman of the Chemistry Department was the acting dean of the School of Pharmacy. Dean Rowland and Emmons Roscoe left Pocatello on January 31, nineteen-fifty….

JM: Six.

CK: Six. And arrived here, I think, on February 1st. [Laughter]

JM: Originally, where was the School of Pharmacy located on the campus at Pacific?

CK: What is the name?

JM: Weber Hall.

CK: The School of Pharmacy was located in Weber Hall.

JM: And how many rooms did they have?

CK: We had the lecture room, one lecture room, and the office to begin with and then we had a lab on the first floor and the lab on the second floor and a room on the second floor which was the library.

JM: Now this library was the beginning of the science library at University of the Pacific?
CK: Yes, it was. Ina Pearson, with the meager sum of $8000.00 which was allotted for the beginning of the library, built the library to what it is now.

JM: I’ve heard that many pharmacists donated their books and chemicals to the new school. I also have heard that you and Mrs. Pearson used to go to used bookstores to look for books. Is this true?

CK: [Laughter] Yes, we accepted any books that could be used. Ina Pearson was…. She just saved everything thinking it would be of use later, which was very true because many of the books and papers that she saved were valuable, and were in use later. [Break]

JM: [When] a decision was made to start a third school of pharmacy, why did they look to Idaho State for leadership?

CK: The Board of Pharmacy liked the way we trained our pharmacists and so they asked if we would be willing to come to train students in a similar manner here.

JM: When a person looks into the history of pharmacy education, there always has been at least two different ways to train students. One has been very highly scientific, training them perhaps to go to graduate school and do research. At the other end would be training students for practice so that they would be ready to step in as soon as they graduated but University of the Pacific, School of Pharmacy also started a graduate program early. Who was the first graduate student in the program?

CK: [Laughter] I was the first graduate student in the program. I worked in physiology and pharmacology under the direction of Dr. Riedesel.

JM: What was your research project?

CK: My research project was working on the alkaloids of the narcissus, the… commonly known as jonquils.

JM: So you took the was it bulbs of the narcissus? Is this what we call them, the bulbs? And isolated the chemicals, the alkaloids?

CK: Yes.

JM: Then did you test them on animals also?

CK: I can’t remember the name of them.
JM: Well, that’s okay.

CK: I worked on the alkaloids of the bulbs. I had to extract the alkaloids and refine them and then I used them on white rats. I found that they were very potent. It just took a very, very minute dose to receive action.

JM: In talking with Dr. Riedesel, he said it was difficult to get a graduate program established at Pacific. Did you have cooperation from the other people in the School of Pharmacy when you were doing your research?

CK: I had complete cooperation even with the other departments, especially the Chemistry Department. I learned very much about the scientific aspects of the chemicals. It was an eye-opener for me, a revelation to me. [Break]

JM: [When] Pacific started the Pharmacy School, there were two schools of pharmacy already in the state, the University of Southern California and the University of California in San Francisco. Both of these schools offered a six-year doctor of pharmacy degree but Pacific chose to have a five-year bachelor’s plus a one-year post-B.S. Pharm.D. degree. Why was that?

CK: We were mainly trying to train the community pharmacist. So we kept the B.S. degree, the five-year degree for people who wished to enter that part of pharmacy. Then, for those who wished to go into advanced work, research and more advanced training, went into the additional one-year program which we called the six-year Pharm.D. program. But mainly, the five-year, the B.S. program was for the training of the community pharmacy where there was a lack of the community pharmacist.

JM: I’ve been told that at the time the school started, they hoped to attract students from the Central Valley because if those students went to Los Angeles or San Francisco, they didn’t want to come back to Fresno and Bakersfield and Stockton. Is this true? Have you heard that?

CK: I heard that but we found a good many of our students going into community pharmacy and practicing very ethical pharmacy. [Break]

JM: In 1969, the School of Pharmacy moved from Weber Hall to its new building across the river, here where we are occupying the space today. Could you tell me about that move?

CK: I was on my sabbatical the first part of 1969 and I was away. So I did not return until near September, I think. Others had already moved my office and my lab into the new quarters when I returned.
JM: Well, that was convenient. [Laughter] I also wanted to ask you about your office in the new building. Now this is Room D 114 which happens to be my office now but this is the only one of two offices that have clear glass windows.

CK: Yes, when we were planning the building, I requested the windows for the Department of Pharmaceutics so we had those windows and I was very happy to get them.

JM: Also, I imagine the location of the laboratory right next to your office was very convenient for you.

CK: The location of the laboratory and the storeroom was very convenient to my office, to have all the storeroom and the laboratory and my office all in conjunction together. In my laboratory, I had to use many chemicals and preparations so I needed much storage space to keep all of these preparations in stock. Of course, the laboratories were large enough to accommodate, I think, over thirty students so I did need much room and I also had a very nice laboratory, a very nice office with a little sink and shelf where I could do some little research on my own.

JM: That’s a big change from today. Today, with the OSHA rules, a person can’t do research in the same office where they have their desk and where they’re sitting. You have to have a separate room with a hood and all that to do research but I appreciate having the benches and the shelves there for, at least for storage and some small things. I wanted to ask you about the change in the calendar when the Pharmacy School started here in the new building, going from the two semesters a year to the trimester program.

CK: This was primarily to shorten the time of the training of the pharmacists. By going into the trimester system, the student cuts his school time from four years to three years which will effect, which effects a great savings on the part of the student.

JM: The first year that they had the summer classes, did you notice any of the students complaining about having to work so hard in the summer?

CK: I did not find, not too many complaints. They all were aware of the advantage of having this shortened training time.

JM: At the same time, going on the trimester, there was a major change in emphasis whereby the six-year Doctor of Pharmacy became the major degree. What was the decision, how did you arrive at the decision to do this? [Break]
CK: It was found that in order to obtain the Pharm.D. degree, it took the two years of pre-pharmacy plus the four years of professional training making six years total so we decided to go on the trimester system as far as our professional sessions were concerned. This cut the four-year professional time of training to three years thus cutting off one year of time and affecting also the cost. It was advantageous to the student to go on this trimester system and save one year of time and cost.

JM: Also, the community colleges had been developing programs where more students could do the two years of pre-pharmacy at a community college and then come to Pacific for their professional work. Did this also have an effect or was this one of the reasons they took into consideration in going to the doctor of pharmacy?

CK: Yes, this was.

JM: So with the combination of the student being able to perhaps live at home for the two years of pre-pharmacy, come to Pacific for the shorter program, this gave us a marketing advantage for students to come for their doctor of pharmacy. Would you say that that’s a correct statement?

CK: Yes, yes, I believe so. [Break]

JM: The pharmacy class was about fifty people. How many students did they intend to have as optimal number and maximum number in the new building?

CK: To my recollection, the last number was about a hundred. I think the maximum number that we were able to take was a hundred and eighty to my recollection. That was in 1973 when I retired. [Break]

JM: You taught a required course in the history of pharmacy when the School of Pharmacy first started. Could you tell me about the course and why it was considered important?

CK: At first, I think, the course, History of Pharmacy, was an elective then it became a required course. I was always interested in the history of pharmacy and looked up materials and read books on how pharmacy developed from the Renaissance times and even periods before. In searching through all of the literature, I found a great deal of interesting information such as the use of some of the drugs which we are using today being used three and four thousand years ago by the Egyptians and the people of the biblical lands which was very interesting to me so I ….
Begin Tape One, Side B

CK: …to take the students on these trips to see how drugs were manufactured and to show them what was done in the manufacturing of these various drugs in the form of pills or liquid mixtures, everything. We generally went during the Easter vacation week and presented all of this to our students who could afford to go.

JM: Where did you go?

CK: We went to, well, let’s see, to Upjohns.

JM: Kalamazoo.

CK: In Kalamazoo. Sometimes we went on further directly to the east coast where we visited Abbotts.

JM: Abbotts in Chicago. Lilly?

CK: Lederle in….

JM: Pearl River, New York.

CK: In New York.


CK: Let’s see.

JM: Eli Lilly in Indianapolis?

CK: Eli Lilly, yes. All of these large manufacturers. Sometimes, we’d have time to visit one or more cities but mostly we would select one city or one location, for instance, Chicago or Indianapolis or New York. While there, I would try to arrange a tour of the nearby locations. For instance, New York, we always tried to have a tour of the well-known tour places in New York because some of these students had never been out of….

JM: California?

CK: Stockton and it was an eye opener for them to see other places and what other cities had. It was an education in seeing how others lived.
JM: In addition to visiting the pharmaceutical companies, I know sometimes Dr. Donald Barker would arrange for the students to go to a Purdue University football game especially if he could get Purdue versus Notre Dame. He always wanted to have that game for them. Also, in visiting the companies, they normally paid for the students’ room and meals while they were there. Is that not right?

CK: Yes, that was right. We were guests of the company, I think, which was very nice on their part. It was really an eye opener of what large manufacturing firms can do.

JM: Do you remember when you visited Eli Lilly in Indianapolis that they would have a banquet the last night you were visiting them and for dessert they had ice cream in the shape of a mortar and pestle?

CK: Yes, the mortar and pestle really caught the eye of the students. It was really very nice. In fact, every manufacturer, they always took care of our hotel and we always ended with a very nice banquet. [Break]

JM: The School of Pharmacy always wanted to get to know their students as people not just students. Could you tell me about the spring barbecue picnic that was a tradition with the School of Pharmacy?

CK: We used to have these barbecues at various places. If I remember correctly, we used to go to…. Micke Grove?

JM: Micke Grove?

CK: Yeah, Micke Grove and have our barbecue there. Let’s see, Dr. Barker always prepared the meat and brought it there, well marinated in the marinade. Then, of course, the rest of us, the faculty, we would bring the salad and other goodies. We always had a grand time. I think some of the students would play. We’d play baseball. Let’s see. We just used to have fun. It was fun. It was just a gathering of students and faculty like one big family. I certainly enjoyed that close contact with our students.

JM: One tradition that the faculty had, faculty and staff, was a Christmas party for their families with usually, I think, somebody playing Santa Claus, maybe the dean, Dean Rowland. Do you remember those Christmas parties?

CK: Yes, we used to have those Christmas parties. It was fun. Let’s see, we would, I remember one year, we had our Christmas party in Weber Hall. The faculty, let’s see, Ina Pearson used to make her famous…. 
JM: Persimmon pudding…

CK: Persimmon pudding. The rest of us would bring the other goodies while the dean would have the turkey roasted by the dining hall and then brought over. We would have our turkey with all the goodies that went along with it and with Ina’s persimmon pudding. We enjoyed a very hearty Christmas dinner. Then, at the end, Santa would always make his appearance because at that time, some of our faculty had young children. And, of course, with the young children there, we had to have Santa Claus. It was my, one of my jobs, to get the gifts ready for the children. I just remember going down and trying to find proper presents for the youngsters that Santa could carry in his bag. The dean, Ivan, made a very good Santa Claus. His ho-ho was very infectious. We could hear him throughout the whole building. It was fun. And the children enjoyed him. When he passed out the presents, they all scrambled to receive their gifts.

[Break]

JM: …I wanted to ask has to do with your opinion of the administration when you came to Pacific, in particular about President Robert Burns.

CK: I found and also I think our whole faculty found the administration, in particular Dr. Burns and his staff, very cooperative. They always listened to our needs and tried their best to help us. I have no score on anything as far as cooperation is concerned with the administration. They’ve been very good to us. [Break]

JM: Your opinion of Dean Rowland who was the founding dean and served as dean for twenty-five years.

CK: Dean Rowland was really the perfect dean. He was always trying to see what was good for our school. His one thought was to do everything he could to ensure the success of our school. He bent all of his efforts towards bettering the staff, the school itself, the program, everything. So I have nothing to say against Dean Rowland. I still consider him to be one of the best deans, the best dean that I have known. [Break]

JM: One of the activities that really influenced a lot of universities during the 1960s was the demonstrations that often occurred against the Viet Nam War. I believe that this was probably the year 1969-70 when it reached kind of a maximum time and I think either in the spring of ’68, ’69 or ’70 that I had heard that the university did not offer final exams during the spring semester. That the professors based their grades on what tests had been taken up until the final but finals were dispensed with and some of the students went to various countries like Mexico to try to help the people. Do you recall any activities of this type that affected the School of Pharmacy?
CK: I do not recall any such activity. You see, I was on my sabbatical during that spring semester of 1969. I was not there but to my knowledge, as far as the School of Pharmacy was concerned, we gave our final exam.

JM: Do you remember any special courses, they called them teach-ins, that were conducted over here for the pharmacy students?

CK: No, I do not. [Break]

JM: [Professor Kihara] retired in 1973 but has kept a very close contact with the School of Pharmacy ever since and has become active in the Emeriti Society. I wanted to ask you, Cisco, to tell me about the Emeriti Society and your participation.

CK: The Emeriti Society was founded after I had retired. I was one of the founding members. At that time, I think our, the president was Dr. Medford and the vice-president was Dr., of the Chemistry Department, Dr….? I do not remember, I’m sorry. What’s her name….?

JM: It’s okay. Just tell me about what you do.

CK: These officers served two terms, I think. Then Fay Goleman was the vice-president. No, she was the…. Yes, she was the vice-president. I’m sorry, I do not remember too clearly. Then they held their first election and I became the first elected vice-president of this group and served my term. I’m still a member and enjoying their meetings.

JM: Do you think this organization is effective in transmitting some suggestions to the university?

CK: Oh, yes. This organization has done quite a bit for the university. They’ve aided in many…. I just do not remember. They have worked with the university and aided them in many of their actions. I think it is a good organization. [Break]

JM: The next question has to do with the University of Pacific. You came in 1957 as a faculty. Since your retirement in 1973, you have still kept a very close relationship with the university and have been active in a number of the activities that the School has had over the years. I want you to tell me what makes Pacific special to you.

CK: Pacific is special to me because it’s my school. I came here with our faculty to start the new School of Pharmacy and I’ve seen it grow. Then I’ve kept up my
contact with UOP as a whole. I used to know all of the faculty, both in the School of Pharmacy and also on the UOP campus. It’s just part of me. I hold everything dear to me and my good friends, the faculty here. They are still my good and best friends. It’s just part of me. I love UOP.

End of Interview