



7-11-2018

Smith-Stubblefield, Simalee Oral History Interview

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Recommended Citation

Hanyak, Robert, "Smith-Stubblefield, Simalee Oral History Interview" (2018). *Emeriti Society Oral History Collection*. 77.
<https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/esohc/77>

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FACULTY EMERITI INTERVIEWS
UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC ARCHIVES



Simalee Smith-Stubblefield (1983-2015)
Professor Communication Disorders and Speech-Language Pathology
Department Chair

July 11, 2018

By Robert Hanyak

Transcription by John Linhares, University of the Pacific,
Department of Special Collections, Library

Subjects: The role of the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Clinics in providing outstanding service to the local community, and the important role of the Community Involvement Program (CIP) in providing a Pacific education to first generation university students from San Joaquin County.

UOP ARCHIVES FACULTY EMERITI INTERVIEWS

Hanyak: Hi, this is Bob Hanyak and I am the past chair of the department of Speech Language Pathology here at the University of the Pacific, and today is July 11th, 2018 and we're doing this interview with Simalee Smith-Stubblefield, emeriti faculty, in the speech language pathology conference room, in Thomas J. Long School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. Simalee how are you today?

Smith-Stubblefield: I'm great, thanks Bob.

Hanyak: Good. Well lets just jump in and get these questions here, and we'll just start with the questions and let it go from there.

Smith-Stubblefield: Okay.

Hanyak: Simalee, what years did you serve at the University and what were your official titles?

Smith-Stubblefield: I started here in 1983 as a part time Clinical Supervisor. I took on a full-time position in 1988 as a Clinical Supervisor and the Clinic Director for our on-campus clinic. During that time I would often teach courses for faculty that were on leave. And so I started teaching courses, and then I think it was about 1993 that Joe Subbiondo, who was then Academic Vice President, allowed our department to put me, my dossier, forward as a tenure track professor, and I was granted tenure. In 1994 I was promoted, and was an associate professor for quite a few years until my retirement in 2015. During that time I was the chair of the department for five years from, 2000 to 2005. I was also the Clinical Education Coordinator. So I did a little bit of everything.

Hanyak: Very good. What brought you to Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: Well, I was a student here. I was getting my masters degree and I was also working full time at that point. After I graduated the faculty contacted me and asked me if I would be willing to work with the students in a clinical role as a Clinical Supervisor. So, basically that's how I started.

Hanyak: Okay. When you got to Pacific, what were your first impressions?

Smith-Stubblefield: Oh, I thought Pacific was a place for very privileged people. I thought all the students must be very well off to be able to afford an education like this, because you looked at the campus at Pacific, living here, and it was always just beautiful. It was kind of like a little island in Stockton. And, I tell you, I was wrong. Not all of the students, were well off, most students were on financial aid and had scholarships.

Hanyak: Was there someone at Pacific who was especially helpful in your initial orientation to Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: I would say yes. I think there are two people, Virginia Puich, who was a professor at that time, and Roy Timmons, who was chair of the department at that time. They, were very helpful when I was a student trying to get all my courses and work full time. They were also helpful after that when I came on as a part-time employee.

Hanyak: Very good. Let's talk about the curriculum. Can you describe the changes that you observed in the curriculum during your years at Pacific, particularly in the Speech Language Pathology program?

Smith-Stubblefield: Because we are an accredited program there's only so many changes that we could make. However, I think within those parameters we were able to provide an excellent clinical education for students. Even though the clinical education was an ongoing part of the curriculum I think we developed it from where it was when I got here. During this time there was much more interaction between the upper division students, the juniors and the clinical supervisors.

Hanyak: Can you describe a course or an innovative program that you helped to develop at Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: I would say that would be the Interprofessional Collaboration Group and the Helping Professions minor. There were three of us that got together. Jean Gonsier-Gerdin and Kathleen Sadao, were from School of Education and myself from Communicative Disorders. We got together and we thought about how to give the students an opportunity to see how professionals could work together. So, we started with inviting different professionals from all across the campus to join us in talking about how we could make this a better inter-collaboration experience for the students. From that, we developed the Helping Professions minor and that continues today.

Hanyak: Alright, what was your perception of your task to enhance the educational and academic programs of the University? And were there any challenges?

Smith-Stubblefield: I think it was mostly just to provide the best program that we could. Again, with the thought that we had to meet accreditation standards, we had to meet employer standards when our students graduated, and I think those were the primary challenges and I think we did that fairly well.

Hanyak: Alright Simalee, let's talk about the people at Pacific.

Smith-Stubblefield: Okay.

Hanyak: Who were the individuals who were most memorable at Pacific and why?

Smith-Stubblefield: Again I would say, for me, Roy Timmons, who was the chair of the department, Virginia Puich, who was also a faculty member, Bob (Hanyak), you for sure, are very memorable! You, Roy and Virginia are probably the most influential here at Pacific for me and it's because all three of you mentored me in different ways. You lead the department in many different ways, you were always very approachable, all three of you, very approachable and open to new ideas and especially you Bob, you are very entrepreneurial, you have a lot of foresight, and are very creative. So I would say those were the three most important and people I worked with most closely and are the most memorable.

Hanyak: You describe three people in the department who were memorable to you. Were there other individuals at Pacific who were most helpful and supportive?

Smith-Stubblefield: I worked under three deans. Roy Whitaker, in C.O.P., Bob Benedetti, In C.O.P., and Phil Oppenheimer here in the Thomas J. Long School of Pharmacy and Health Science, and all three were very supportive of me and our department. I think in being supportive of the department that also helped the mission of the University. However, there were so many other individuals who were instrumental in the success of our program as well, I can't name them all!

Hanyak: Simalee, during your years that you were involved with Pacific, how would you describe these different groups? Let's start first with students.

Smith-Stubblefield: Oh students! I think in our department our students are very focused and they have very specific goals. Actually, I see two different sets of students. I see our students who are pre-professional are our grad program, but at the general University level, when I would teach general education courses I saw all types of students. There were those who are very dedicated to their education and those who weren't quite as focused, didn't try as hard as most of the other students.

Hanyak: Okay. And how about faculty?

Smith-Stubblefield: In general, I think the faculty are marvelous! When I was in the College of the Pacific, faculty served on many different committees, and I really enjoyed working with the faculty from so many different disciplines. I was chair of the C.O.P. council and I got to see many different styles of how faculty work with each other and I really appreciated that.

Hanyak: Okay. How about administrators?

Smith-Stubblefield: I've gotten to work with lots of really good administrators. Of course, the deans I've already talked about, Judy Chambers, in Student Life. Judy Chambers was always wonderful, to work with on the Student Life side of things. Lisa Cooper was another administrator that was excellent to work with. Boy there were so many, but I just think those were the ones that stand out.

Hanyak: How about any staff that you worked with? Are there any memorable staff members, or just staff in general, that you would like to talk about?

Smith-Stubblefield: I think the staff, for the most part, are very supportive of the faculty and the University. My last couple years, I was fortunate to work with Kristen Hernandez, who was always very helpful and a positive person to work with. Most of the staff that I've had to deal with I have never had really too many issues with them. I think most faculty have good relationships with staff.

Hanyak: Were you involved with the Regents in any way or have any special feelings regarding the Regents during your time here at Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: I didn't really have that many opportunities to work directly with the Regents. When I was on Academic Council, we got to work with some of the Regents a little more closely, but I don't really feel like I got to interact with them in a way that I could talk, you know, add very much.

Hanyak: Alright, and how about with alumni and University donors? Any special people there that you've worked with?

Smith-Stubblefield: I think Pacific alumni are pretty awesome because they do donate time and money back to the University. I think especially our alums are supportive of the department. We get them to mentor our students out in the field and if it wasn't for them we wouldn't have a program because you don't have many professionals out there that are willing to work with them. Joan Eberhardt and her family are amazing! Joan graduated from our program and now

runs her private practice out of our Department. She is VERY generous with her time, materials, knowledge and financially. Her family designated our program as one that benefits from the Eberhardt School of Business Investment Program. That Program has generated a lot of revenue for our Department. Here on this side of campus, we are fortunate to have the support of the Long Foundation, the Lowe family, and the Chan family; they have all been amazing donors to all aspects of the University.

Hanyak: Very nice. Can you tell me about your working relationship or your perception of the working relationship between the faculty and the administrators during your years here at Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: Well its been both kind of positive and negative. I've been here through a few Presidents and I think after Atchley we needed some kind of spark. President DeRosa filled that need. The financial side of the University thrived and academic programs were successful. He was easy to work with and I felt that most of the faculty felt that way.

Hanyak: We're going to move on here to a different topic here. Can you tell me about programs you were involved in or had an interest in the you feel were particularly significant, and they can be either ones within the department or outside of the department that you've participated in?

Smith-Stubblefield: I think some of the programs, as I mentioned before, the Interprofessional Collaboration group that was a wonderful group to work with because it really brought the liberal arts and the professional schools together. We did develop the helping professions minor from that and I think it gave students the ability to see how you can work across different professions and how you utilize other disciplines as well. I think here in the department working with students as the National Student Speech-Language Hearing Association advisor was very rewarding. I got to work with the students in a professional way and during the time that I was the advisor is when president Eibeck began her ROAR (Reach Out And Read) book drive. Our student group collected thousands of books for the book drive during that time and it was just wonderful to see how students got so excited about doing that.

Hanyak: Very good. Are there any controversies that came about, during your time here at Pacific and if so, tell me about them?

Smith-Stubblefield: Well, of course before President DeRosa was President Atchley and Atchley and the faculty did not really see eye to eye in my opinion and I don't think that was a very bright spot for Pacific. We were in the depths of financial crisis as well, and he just was not the academic visionary that we needed at that time. So, that was a rocky time in Pacific's history and I just say that we were glad that we were able to get a very supportive president after that. Another time that could be looked at as controversial was within the department when for quite a few years there was a faculty member who was quite difficult to work with, toxic really, and that pushed a lot of people to their brink. But it also brought people together. So, things can fall apart, but when the environment changed there was healing and a positive outcome as well.

Hanyak: Very good. Can you describe the most significant achievement during your time here at Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: I would say that during my tenure there have been many significant achievements. One being the building that we're currently in right now, the Chan Family Learning Center. This

building was built and this has been a wonderful environment, our clinic up here has been a fantastic addition to providing a quality clinical education. We have a clinical audiology program that serves the community, that was also new. And the last four or five years our department was associated with the Doctor of Audiology program in San Francisco, and that's a big thing. In fact, right now we have one of the graduates of that program as one of our clinical audiologists here.

Hanyak: Alright, what issues were you involved in that stood out in your mind as important to the growth and development at Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: I think one thing that stood out in my mind in helping the University immensely was dropping the football program when President DeRosa came in because with him there was more of a focus on academics and more money for academics as well. Another issue that our department was involved in was that our department changed schools from College of the Pacific to Pharmacy Health Science and I think this had mostly positive ramifications. I think that the most negative thing was the relationships that were really developed over in the College of the Pacific were still there, but it was different working in a professional school of which we were the only undergraduate program. In terms financial support, facility support, those were all very positive benefits in changing schools. Another program that stood out, which was under the Educational Equities Programs, would be the Community Involvement Program, C.I.P., that program was very instrumental in getting Stockton youth, the Stockton community involved at UOP. I think the perception was that Pacific was, as I stated earlier, only for very fortunate, more affluent individuals. I very much enjoyed serving on the Educational Equities Board for quite a few years and chaired that for quite a few rotations as well.

Hanyak: Alright. Where do you think the energy came from for progress and change here at Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: Well, I think bottom line it's the faculty. The faculty have an influence on administrators and regents, but then I also think the administrators and the regents who had different visions to help the University evolve and become what it is today.

Hanyak: Alright Simalee, let's go back to a few questions about students. What do you remember about the students that you taught and their activities during your years at service here at Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: One of my favorite things to do, and I know it's not a lot of faculty's favorite things, but I really enjoyed advising students. That not only meant helping them choose their classes, but helping them chose the right career, if SLP wasn't right for them. Helping them to select a graduate program to apply for. I think that was one of my favorite things, other than teaching in the classroom, to help students see where they were going or at least provide some support for them while they were trying to navigate their educational experience.

Hanyak: Alright. How did the student's attitudes change while you were at Pacific? Did you notice that there was a change in the way you related to your students over your thirty plus years at Pacific?

Smith-Stubblefield: Actually, yes, and I hate to say it, but I think I think the students feel a little more entitled now, so it's a little more difficult to teach them. I think that the level of respect for both education instructors, fellow students, is not to a level that it used to be when I first started, and

that's a little disappointing. I have adapted a little bit to the changes, however, I still feel like I'm probably very old fashion in thinking that we all deserve a little more respect in the classroom.

Hanyak: Alright. Very good. Simalee, what contributions do you feel Pacific has made to the local community, to Stockton in general?

Smith-Stubblefield: I know that Beyond our Gates has been a very positive initiative to get the University out into the community. Also, as I mentioned before, the Community Involvement Program has gotten disadvantaged students an education here. So, I think those are some of the most important things. I know that our program provides wonderful therapy services for both children and adults. We provide excellent audiology services in our clinic as well. I think the [Jacoby] Center with their tutoring program reaches out to the community. There are so many of these little programs out there, but don't get maybe the recognition that they are due. In fact, our program, our clinic has been active almost eighty years in service to our community. So, of course I'm a little biased about this, but I think that the services that we provide to the community are very important and probably don't get the recognition that they deserve.

Hanyak: Alright. Often times when a University is in a town you'd have what we call a town-[gown] relationship, and how do you feel the city of Stockton and the people of Stockton view the University and do you think it's good or bad?

Smith-Stubblefield: I think especially the programs that I just mentioned are important to the community and I think that the relationships have improved. At least since I've started here because again I think most people looked at UOP as an ivory tower kind of place that you wouldn't step foot in there, but with the programs that have reached out to the community I think that, most people would think that an education at Pacific is unattainable, So, I think it's been a positive improvement.

Hanyak: Very good. Well Simalee we've covered a lot, we're coming near the end of our interview here. Are there anything that we haven't talked about that you would like to discuss or anything more that you would like to add?

Smith-Stubblefield: I just have a final comment, I think that the people here at Pacific are, for the most part, wonderful people who want to, further students' education. We have great programs and I just felt very fortunate in working here for so many years and especially with you Bob because you've been so supportive of me. I so enjoyed my time here. In fact, I enjoy it so much that I'm still teaching one class. So, I guess they will never get rid of me!

Hanyak: Alright. Thank you, Simalee.