

Lee Eubanks: So, my name is Lee Eubanks, and today's date is October 21, 2016, and to start with, could you please state your full name and your date of birth?

Doug Bauder: Sure. Doug Bauder, and I was born in 1949. August the twenty-ninth, 1949

LE: So could you tell me about where you were born and a little bit about your family background?

DB: Sure. I was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. When I was born, it was very much of an industrial town. Bethlehem Steel, which was the nation's second largest steel producer at the time, was sort of the king in the community, but beyond being a steel city in Pennsylvania, it also has Lehigh University and the college I ultimately attended, Moravian College, which is one of the oldest colleges in the country.

I think it's the sixth oldest. So in addition to being an industrial town, it's also a center of learning in some respects. A city of about 80,000 but with a relatively diverse population because the steel company was there, so I grew up with friends who were Greek Orthodox and Puerto Rican and African American, Jewish friends, as a child.

And what made that a rich experience for me as I thought back on it and as I got involved in multicultural work was before that word was popular, I lived that in a relatively small city.

It was not a town, but a small city, but with a somewhat of a cosmopolitan atmosphere, and that really enriched my life in many regards, so it was a good community to grow up in.

The other thing I would say about it, it was a community that emphasized both athletics – the Steel company had its own soccer team, which was a huge sport, as football was also in Pennsylvania – but it also was a community with a rich musical heritage related to the Moravian Church that I grew up in, or that's the denomination that founded the town.

So there was a nice . . . counter – what's the word I'm looking for – just a nice balance, I guess is the word I would use, between athletics and the arts, and I find that very true of

Bloomington, too, which is what makes it an appealing community, so I felt very fortunate to grow up where I did.

I was the middle child of—with two other siblings. I remind my sisters I was the well-adjusted middle child, and that speaks to the good humor and the relationship I had with my family. It was very nurturing and positive.

LE: That's really great, yeah. It sounds like a wonderful place to grow up.

DB: Well, it worked for me.

LE: So you touched on this a little bit already, but . . . so your education and college you went to, yeah.

DB: Yeah, I went to Moravian and studied—sociology was my major. I actually just was back for my forty-fifth class reunion, and that was fascinating to think back. So when I was in college, the war in Vietnam was still raging.

Nixon was elected and then reelected before we graduated, so the war in Vietnam. The civil rights movement was still impacting the culture. The first Earth Day happened, and the shooting on the Kent State campus happened a month before I graduated, so there was just a lot of political ferment.

I mean even—I don't know about more than right now, but we were very, very much aware of social issues when I was in college, and so it was the end of the—it was actually the early seventies, but there still was a lot of activism that even on a small, religious college in eastern Pennsylvania impacted us greatly so that our gift to the college was not a statue.

It was a gift to a Vietnamese orphanage run by the Quakers because there was that level of consciousness about national and international issues. And we reflected on that just last weekend about how there really was a commitment to issues. The draft started again at that—during those years, so it was an amazing time.

LE: Yeah. So from there, what led you to look at IU for employment?

DB: Oh goodness, well there was quite a period in between then. I never imagined I'd be involved in higher education as a career. Because of that nurturing experience, which was partly my experience with the family, but it was also part of the denomination, the religious, the faith community I was part of.

The Moravian Church is very much committed to education but very much committed to valuing relationships, and so I went into the pastorate. For 17 years I served as a pastor in the Moravian Church, both in Pennsylvania and then in Wisconsin. So one of the issues I was not looking at when I was in college was the issue of sexuality, and I was a very closeted gay man and didn't even identify that as an issue in my life in those days.

Although I did invite some gay activists to a Christian ethics class, and it's just so interesting to think about that because here I was advocating for lots of other issues, including this one, but I was still not able to identify myself in the late sixties, early seventies as a gay young man.

That was another 10 years before I could do that. So I was in the pastorate, identifying as gay, married, went through a divorce, and ultimately decided, you know, being more open about being gay was really important. And I did that both as a pastor in the—my closing years of serving a small church in Wisconsin.

But I was living near Madison, Wisconsin, which is very much of an activist community, and then that started up all over again for me as a man in my thirties. I was working for one of two cities in the country that had a taxpayer-supported gay and lesbian social service agency.

Madison, Wisconsin was one, and Ann Arbor, Michigan had an agency that was funded by the taxpayers, by the city, to provide support for gay and lesbian citizens, maybe bi. We weren't identifying trans as an issue at that time.

And after some years of doing that while being a pastor – I was volunteering and then ultimately took on some responsibilities in an organization in Madison – I decided it was time to come out more fully, and in doing so, I realized at that time I was limiting my options in the denomination.

I was not getting an invitation to serve other churches. So while serving a small, rural parish, I met the gentleman who I now share my life with. We met online. He was here in Bloomington.

I met with him several times here and decided that it was time to—I had been married for 5 years and then was single for 10 years. I had two young children but decided it was time to invest energy in a new relationship as a gay man, and Marty invited me to share my life with him here.

And I came to Bloomington without a job but with a sense of hope that there was something for me here. And because I had done this work in Madison, I was in a unique position to qualify for the position as – at that point it was coordinator, now it's director – of the GLB – originally GLB, then GLBT – office.

I knew the university was interested in opening this facility, and while I was looking at other options working in AIDS-related work or as a hospital chaplain, this really appealed to me. I applied for the job and got it 20-some years ago.

LE: So what was the process of applying for this job like? I know that there was, like, a committee to name the coordinator at the time.

DB: Yeah. You've read all the history, haven't you? So there was a committee of student, faculty, and staff who interviewed I think—well, they didn't interview 80 candidates, but somehow the number 87 strikes me because I think that was in the newspaper articles that we kept.

But they whittled it down after résumés were given to five candidates . . . three, I guess, it was eventually, who got interviewed. And I remember it was a day-long interview, meeting with students and the dean of students and faculty members, and it was grueling, and I had never interviewed in a formal way like that.

Within the church, it's a different system, and you're called to a church without a lot of formal interviewing that happens, so this was a really unusual situation, but I was so committed to this at that point in time.

I was really very relaxed in many ways as people asked questions. Maybe that's what helped me be comfortable being interviewed. I don't know, because I do it a lot now. But I really felt I was in a unique position.

The dean of students at that time asked me a question that, I think, solidified my response because, of the three candidates, one was someone who was already on the staff here, a well-respected educator in a residential programs and services.

The other was a community activist from Louisville, a younger woman; and I was the third candidate, and when the dean asked me how I would deal with . . . religious conservatives, specifically, identifying this as an area that was still somewhat associated with what he called the Bible Belt.

He was wondering how I would approach that as a person in this position, and I think my ability to speak from a theological perspective about these issues really helped to solidify that.

I also network well and really enjoy people, and I think those characteristics gave them some assurance that they weren't looking for a community activist, someone to make a lot of waves.

I think they wanted a more steady person who, again, could speak both to students, but also to critics of the office, and there were a lot when the office opened. So I took on that challenge and been having fun for 22 years.

LE: Yeah, I mean, as someone who can bridge connections, I can see that, yeah.

DB: The bridge, I think, was important.

LE: Mmhmm. And there was a lot of controversy about the GLBT office when it first opened.

DB: There was.

LE: I know there were politicians like Woody Burton who were totally against it.

DB: Totally against it and threatening the university by withholding up to a half million dollars if the office was open, so President Brand – I love telling this story – he, in his wisdom, chose to fund the office privately.

Sadly, the way that was communicated really frustrated students and others on the campus, I think, because they felt betrayed by him and the trustees, that somehow—and there was a lot of miscommunication, that they were going to call the office something else that people wouldn't even know what it was and that the funding was going to be private.

“Why would they do that when gay people pay taxes?” and, “It wasn't meant to be just for gay people. The office was to serve all students.” There were lots of arguments, but ultimately, the wisdom of the decision was that Myles Brand wanted the office to get up and running and establish itself on the campus.

And he felt the best way to do that was to get it out of the political fire and get it established and get going. And he apparently trusted me because I met with him very soon after I took on the job, and I knew he had been supportive of a similar office in Eugene, Oregon, where he had previously been president. I had that information.

That assured him that I wasn't anti-Brand, that I realized what he was doing was—under the circumstances, in this culture, it was the best way to get the office up and moving, and we became not fast friends, but I think we built a trusting relationship of respect and kind of got the controversy behind us. And there was just, really, an outpouring of support that the office even got opened, and we've just been building on that ever since.

LE: So how was the grand opening of the GLBT office, when that happened?

DB: It was very quiet. I was all by myself that first day. I was expecting protestors and all sorts of things, and what I most remember about that day was a woman who was on the staff at the main library who came by with a vase of flowers from her garden saying, “Welcome to IU.” It was sweet. It was low key.

It was—but then students started drifting in and sharing stories and asking for help. I mean, as often happens here, what I did during those early months—and we opened just before Thanksgiving, so it was sort of the end of the semester.

But I spent a lot of that first year just visit—I established an advisory board with people representing various areas of the campus, including those who had served on the search committee.

Then I started visiting deans and, you know, other influential people, both on the campus and in the community, who I knew were supportive or who I wanted to be supportive.

And I think – if I can use this phrase – I think I quickly understood the magic of Herman Wells and established relationships of trust that really – again, building those bridges – that really helped to enlarge our circle of support on the campus.

It was there; it just needed to be identified, and I was so impressed with how many people were really happy the office was open. Not just people who identified as lesbian, gay, bi, or trans, but a lot of allies, too.

LE: Yeah. So what were the day-to-day realities of having this job?

DB: Well, I think I was smart enough to know that I shouldn't take on too many things. Do a few things well. I was being supervised by Pam Freeman, who was just an outstanding colleague and, ultimately, a friend.

There were already some things in place, so I was working in conjunction with her, and she was the director of the Office of Student Ethics and Anti-Harassment program. So one of the things that I did was agreed to serve on the GLBT anti-harassment team, which was a small component of what we did to address issues of harassment.

I also worked with the Health Center early on. They had this educational component of organizing panels on LGBT – LGB, initially, and then, again, the T was added – to speak to students, both to provide support when we went out and spoke in classes, but also give information to straight students who just had questions about LGBT issues and individuals.

So, you know, I think I decided those were two really important components: support and education. And if we did those things well, we could always build on that. I think as time went on, students became impressed with what we were doing, appreciated what we were doing, and started offering their services, and then we were able to gain a little support to develop internships and . . . you know, students who came with projects.

I regularly say, I think the thing that we do best is respond to individual students who come in the office and say, “I have a class assignment, and I’d like to interview someone,” or “I have an idea.” Originally, it was people were coming in more for personal support, and we provided that, myself and a part-time colleague did that.

I hired an office assistant, and we worked together, but then we were able to develop things like a peer support group: students who had come out and were fairly confident and wanted to help other students in the process, and we developed a program for that.

And, you know, within a few years, there was a student who was interested and said, “We have a lot of allies out there, and a lot of people who, I think, graduated from the school and would be willing to support this office.”

So we were able to establish an alumni association, a GLBT alumni association, and then programs kind of grew out of that. Union Board asked to do programs on LGBT issues, and I started working with, you know, other offices, and, again, you just establish relationships here, and you do a program well.

I try not to take on too much, but each time you did something, and it worked and it was effective, people were grateful and were willing to help out, then, with the next program. And so it’s sort of a snowball effect.

LE: So you’ve mentioned this a couple of times about how the T was added to GLBT later on. And was there a process behind that at all?

DB: Again, everything is a process, but, yeah, that’s a great question. I don’t remember—I think other offices around the country were doing this. There were a few brave trans-identified individuals who were calling for this, so usually . . . everything we’ve done over the years has been initiated by students, and I can’t remember a

particular individual, but certainly students were bringing to us, as they are now, the need for a name change . . . bringing to us that we weren't addressing the needs of trans students, and it made sense as we were watching what other schools were doing to add that.

There was some objection to that because people saw sexual orientation and gender identity as two distinct issues. They are, in a sense, but they're certainly related by the issue of discrimination and harassment and such, and because, again, other campuses were doing this, it made sense to add the T.

We discussed this in an advisory board meeting. I think we had to go to the trustees on that. I'm not—that really is a long time ago, but I think we wanted to get buy-in from others because it was a major name change, and it would mean changing the sign out in the front of the office, which took money and all of that.

But it made sense to more people, I think, as we talked about it, or as we identified students for whom this was an issue. It wasn't a large number of students. Certainly today, the number of students who identify as trans or gender-variant or binary or who sort of fall in to that category, folks are much more comfortable identifying, today, that dynamic in their life than was the case 22 years ago.

LE: Yeah, and you also mentioned, so the founding of the GLBT Alumni Association. So what was the driving force behind that?

DB: Again, one student, who had worked for the alumni association and wanted to see himself represented in that organization. I mean, I think that's a fair statement, and we were able to get—I remind students in IUSA every year that it was that organization, the student government.

When a lot of other student groups were not supportive of us, they were willing to support us to the tune of providing money for a summer internship, and that's what we did.

The treasurer of the student government at that time was a gay man, who was one of the first students who came into the office seeking support, and we had developed a

relationship, and then, he returned the favor by saying, you know, “There’s money available in the IUSA account for summer internships. If there’s a program you’d like to work on, we can help.”

And so that came out of that. And there was initial concern on the part of the Alumni Association that the university would lose support or lose finances again, that the threat would be out there.

But there were enough people in the association who said, “This is bogus. If we lose money, let’s lose it for the right reasons.” And as it turns out, folks who threatened to withhold their, you know, contributions to the university were not big givers.

And I started reminding people, “You know, there are folks out there who feel disenfranchised from this university, and you might be asking the wrong question,” meaning what do we do about people who refuse—who stop giving?

There might be people out there who will start giving because you’re taking this principled stance, and that’s exactly what happened. And it didn’t take long for people to say, you know, “Sometimes doing the right thing is the right thing to do.” And so the Alumni Association got going, and within a few years, it was one of the more active groups. It was really interesting to watch that evolve.

LE: Yeah, and so you’ve been employed as this—at this job, for over 20 years now.

DB: They’re stuck with me. I have been. Yeah, and it was interesting. I think one of the questions in the interview was, “We need some continuity in this position. We need someone to be around for two or three years.”

They didn’t want someone to come in and you know—because they understood it was going to be about establishing a foundation and . . . but I found myself—I said, “I can certainly make a commitment to two or three years.”

I didn’t know what my own career plans were. I found myself enjoying the work so much. As I said, I was heading into another career, but this not only helped me to be myself, but I realized being myself was a significant part of helping other people be their self. It wasn’t that difficult.

It wasn't that . . . but it was still challenging, and I think one of the things I love about the job, even today, is I'm still learning about these complicated issues of sexuality and gender, and these days the intersectionality – that's the buzzword, of course, in the year 2016 – what does it mean to be African American and gay? Or Latina and lesbian?

Or a Muslim? Or a Jew? And transgender? And the intersection of all of these issues, which we're becoming more aware of and more comfortable discussing is sort of the latest phenomenon, and back to my early comments about multiculturalism always being something I valued, here it is, happening all the time around me.

And even as an older man, I have a perspective that this is important for individuals, for our society, and IU is in this unique place to provide for a greater understanding of these issues of intersectionality.

A place with the history of the Kinsey Institute gives us a unique perspective in all the country. Justice Kirby was here from Australia a few weeks ago and reminded a group of students he met with in the office that the Kinsey Institute and IU, more generally, is a great American story.

If you think about, here in the heartland, in the Midwest, in a relatively conservative state with a conservative governor, you have this community that really values and celebrates sexual diversity.

That goes back to the 1930s and the amazingly strong leadership of Dr. Herman Wells, so even people who might be a little uncomfortable with these issues, I think, are proud of the history of tolerance and, more than tolerance, of valuing and affirming this aspect of diversity.

LE: Yeah, I think that's definitely true. Yeah. Do you have any, like, over the years, have you had any significant relationships with different members of the faculty or staff at IU? Or any students?

DB: Oh my goodness. Well, the student relationships continue to be significant. I met a young man this morning. He's not a student here, but he's here through a program. I got

a call yesterday from a staff member in international studies in the College of Arts and Sciences.

There's a group of high school students from Mongolia who are visiting here, and there's one man who's a 16-year-old gay man, who's one of the most mature young men I've ever met, who wanted to come into the office.

I said, "If he comes in tomorrow at 9 o'clock, there's a high school group that's going be here from Bloomington High School North. He will get to meet some other people his age." It was a phenomenal experience.

The students from Bloomington were impressed with this young man. He was so strengthened by their presence, and he identified himself to the group as gay and then said, "That's the first time I've ever told anyone that I'm gay," and he was so proud and confident.

This is just one encounter. And I have an idea, even after I retire, I'm going be in touch with this guy, who may stay in Mongolia, but I have an idea he's going come to an Ivy League school here and do amazing things.

But there have been many students over the years who have been significant in my memory, but I'm also honored to recall the fact that I also had a chance to sit down on several occasions with Dr. Wells and thank him for his leadership in terms of diversity issues.

I've related to some of the other presidents over the years, and Myles Brand was a special case of someone who welcomed me and who I think I provided some support for when legislators were beating him up, as were students who were feeling betrayed.

And I tried to say, "You're barking up the wrong tree. This man is our friend, and give him some time." He was here all of two weeks when this controversy surrounding the office erupted, so. I've had a chance to meet religious leaders in the community through the university, the athletic director.

I think as we become more and more comfortable with LGBTQ+ issues, more people are coming out as allies, and so over the years I've had a chance to meet some of the real leaders in different areas of the campus, and that's been a great gift.

We've also welcomed some amazing speakers including, Jim Obergefell last year, who's the main plaintiff for the marriage equality movement. And that day was a memorable day for me, as people called from around the country, celebrating the Supreme Court decision by thanking our office for the work we had done in their own lives as students. That was significant. So, yeah, lots of good memories.

LE: Have there been any other additional roles on campus that you've done? Like serving on different committees or volunteering?

DB: Yeah. Lots of committees. Three years ago, the office moved from the Division of Student Affairs, where I reported to the dean of students, to the Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Multicultural Affairs at the request of that vice president, who felt that issues of sexual diversity and gender identity should be included among the other cultural centers, and we should—and just asked if we would consider that move.

It made sense to me that we had moved from being a support office to actually more of something akin to a cultural center because we had begun, I think over the last couple decades, to define queer culture as its own unique phenomenon and that we had something unique to offer to the diversity dialogue on the IU campus. So I accepted that change. It took about a year to make that, but that was significant and something I'm very glad that we did. Did I answer that question?

LE: Yes, yeah. Definitely. Oh yeah. So what would you say are some of the best benefits you've seen of being in this role as director of the GLBT office?

DB: I've often said the office has become sort of the one stop shopping place for LGBT issues. And the value of that is, again, I get a call from someone yesterday from the College of Arts and Sciences about this 16-year-old Mongolian student.

We get a call from the law school saying, “Would you consider sponsoring this program with Jim Obergefell?” Last year, we worked with the School of Public Health in bringing Greg Louganis here to the campus. We had the wonderful experience with Union Board in bringing Laverne Cox here.

What an amazing, you know this rising star, African American, transgender woman, who just wowed the students. Students who I’m sure never had thought about transgender issues, who just heard the story of this person, who attended IU years ago as a young man and is now this beautiful woman, starring in a TV series that is very popular among some students.

So, again, we get—we don’t have to come up with an agenda. I wake up in the morning, come to work, and there are all sorts of opportunities to support our students through the requests of others to do something in this area or that, and often it’s the students themselves who initiate it.

So that’s what’s so satisfying. No day is the same, and some days I know what’s on the agenda, but someone can walk into the office and turn the day upside down, almost always in positive ways, really.

LE: That’s really great, yeah.

DB: It’s a very exciting position to be in. I feel very fortunate. I mean, you’ve done that yourself. Here you are in the Bicentennial Committee, and it’s like, “That’s kind of a neat thing. We’ve talked about this. I love history, and here I am a small part of history of an institution, one of the major universities in this country, that has a most unique take on gender identity and sexual orientation, and I get to be part of that history because of you.”

LE: Well, I’d definitely say that the GLBT office is a very important part of that history. So are there some challenges that have gone along with this role also?

DB: I don’t think of challenges as a negative, and I think maybe that’s, again, part of my personality and maybe one of the reasons I’ve done well in this position. I . . . as I moved along, I’ve looked to other people to turn to.

I have an advisory board and some trusted colleagues on that board or around the campus who I go to when I'm looking for some support. And yeah, there've been legislators who've done some things.

I think the current—and said some things that are a ridiculous. Woody Burton, you mentioned earlier, and he's still in the State House as far as I know. I tried—I *did* sit down with him over lunch one day to try and explain what we did.

And I felt after 10 years in the office, he had moved a little bit in his understanding of issues of sexual orientation because his issue was that the office would become a den of iniquity and we wouldn't be serving the general populous, just a small number of students.

Anyway, but I think the other . . . the challenges are the limitation on time, often. We can't do everything we get asked to do, but I've gotten better and better over the years at finding ways to delegate and to use the amazing number of highly motivated students, who want to do something to further the cause.

And these days, that includes – and I love telling this story – that includes a large number of straight students who see this as an issue. That was especially in evidence three years ago when Freedom Indiana was working on marriage equality in this state.

And scores of students, probably over 100 on any given week, were in the office three nights a week, Sunday afternoons, making phone calls to discuss the value of marriage equality with common citizens around the state.

They did very effective work and kept the state legislature from adding discrimination related to marriage into the state constitution. They really did very effective work, and most of those students were straight.

That was so significant for me to see how things had changed, how much these students wanted to be supportive of their gay friends or family members, roommates, classmates. So that's been a really satisfying thing to see.

But I think all that relates to the fact that we did educational work through the panels and through programs like Laverne Cox, and this is an amazing setting into which to

change hearts and change minds and challenge – you ask about challenge – I mean, the opportunity is there to challenge students to think beyond your little world, you know.

Get to know some people who are different. Spend some time over at the Kinsey Institute. Realize this is an amazing place where you can learn a lot, but don't limit yourself just to your circle. There's a big world out there.

LE: So going back a little ways to when you were talking about the Freedom Indiana campaign. How do you view the GLBT office as taking part in different campaigns, including the campaign for marriage equality?

DB: Yeah. Yeah. Well, that's interesting because I think that role has grown for us. We are much more seen as an office doing advocacy. When we first opened, there was so much controversy. My supervisors were suggesting, "Steer clear of controversy. Don't be—you're not needing to make public statements."

And I've done that on occasion when I think it's appropriate, but I'm not trying to get out and . . . be the leader of activist movements. Students do that well on their own, and we support them in that work.

That's part of what it is about, to support students. But I'm more about finding money and getting folks committed to attend a weekend conference, the Midwest LGBT college conference, to learn about activism, to learn about advocacy, to learn how to do the important work of creating opportunities for dialogue.

So if we're providing opportunities for the students to do that, and we're supporting them in their efforts, I don't need to take the lead in being a spokesperson. I think there are people who probably see me as an activist.

I prefer to think of myself as an educator, which is a kind of activism, but you find ways to do that that, you know, aren't putting the university in a difficult position. So . . . I'm not sure if that answers the question, but I think I've just learned – because we have so much support out there – I've learned I don't need to be the only person speaking to these issues.

LE: Yeah. Well, and going to your point about how, over the years, like, going from the more controversial opening when you couldn't really do much advocacy work and to now when you have more freedom to do that.

DB: I have more freedom, and students are more interested because they come out at an earlier age. That's a point I had missed. Kids are coming out in high school and middle school, even elementary school and are then looking for a university that is clearly LGBT-friendly.

And part of that is standing up for our rights, arguing when the governor passes a religious freedom restoration act because we're now in concert with other corporations and with other citizens and, you know, I think the work we've taken on is considered more mainstream.

It's been a slow process, and I know that sometimes is frustrating to students. They want to see change quicker. But I think lasting change takes a longer period of time, and I'm fortunate in having been here 20 years.

Students are only here, generally, four years and have a shorter window to see change. But I think a lot of students have seen significant change, not just on the campus, but in the community, too, in the—you know, Bloomington being one of the first cities in the state to add sexual orientation and, ultimately, gender identity to the non-discrimination statement here in the city.

And . . . I'm also thinking back to the shooting this summer of the people in Orlando. There were well over a thousand people who attended a vigil a few days afterward here in Bloomington. Mostly straight folks. I mean, largely, as far as I know. We, I think, are valued as citizens in this country, as we are on the campus here.

And, I guess the other secret to that, or the other thing I would say about that is I have chosen to not be seen as a one-issue person. And so among my closest friends are the directors of the other cultural centers, and I try and stand with them when they're experiencing difficult days or harassment or whatever.

And so we stand together. And I think there's a campaign expression about stronger together. But that's really important, and so you're lending energy to other issues, and those folks will be there for you when you need support.

LE: Do you have any significant memories of when the GLBT office and you have kind of allied with the other cultural centers?

DB: Oh, well the one story, and it's coming up again, that I like to tell is this lovely experience with La Casa, who is our very next-door neighbors. And they invited us to be part of their Day of the Dead celebration, which is a fascinating cultural phenomenon for Mexicans, where they really spend time, often at family cemeteries with meals and remembering and honoring ancestors who are no longer here.

And the tradition, then, was spread out to our office and First Nation for us to think about people in our culture, people like Harvey Milk or Audre Lorde or, you know, people on whose shoulders we all stand.

So it's a way of remembering those who have died for just causes – Matthew Shepard – and whose names are part of our history. But it comes to us as a gift from Mexican culture.

And when we did that the first year, I was struck by two things: one student saying, “This is really nice that you're, sort of, doing things as a neighborhood,” when they recognize that each of our culture centers are distinct and stand alone.

But they thought it was really neat that we were collaborating because students would move from one place to the next and do some activity. But the other thing was a student who realized the value of taking time to honor ancestors. Her grandfather had just died, and she wanted to honor that man with a little altar in her room.

Because we were . . . we each had an altar in our off—in our center with pictures of famous people or not so famous people in our culture. And she got the idea and – and maybe courage is not the right word – but she got the idea to do that in her own little dorm room, and that was a gift to her.

It gave her an opportunity to grieve and value a person in her life, so . . . that's just a . . . it was a relatively small program. Maybe 150 people came through that evening. But it was such a sweet blend of a cultural tradition that was not ours but that we were able to adapt to our own.

And it solidified a very significant relationship because La Casa has been our best next-door neighbors in a wonderful way. And we try to do that with other culture centers, too, but that's one that always stands out for me.

LE: I think that's a really wonderful connection, yeah.

DB: It is.

LE: And since we're talking about honoring those who have passed, and you mentioned Matthew Shepard, I know there was a vigil held for him back in 1998 after he had—was murdered. And was the GLBT office a part of that?

DB: Yeah. Yeah. We actually sponsored it. And what I remember about that is the trustees were meeting here on the campus. There were maybe 200 people. It was not as large as the vigil this summer. But it was a candlelight vigil. There was some music, which was moving.

And then we invited people to move from Dunn Meadow across the street to our front porch, and we had candles on the front porch. And rainbow notecards, various colored notecards that people could write notes to Matthew's parents, which we then sent off to them.

And it reminded—it was reminiscent to me of standing in line at a funeral home because we walked over from Dunn Meadow. The dean of students was with us, and he stopped the bus that was traveling on Seventh Street.

He stopped traffic for us to get over safely. And then we stood in the line to write these notes on a beautiful autumn night where there was almost no wind because people's candles were put around the lawn outside.

They just stayed lit. People started chalking messages on the sidewalk, which stayed for days afterward. There was something almost sacred about that evening. And that suggests to me the fact that there are times when loud, boisterous, celebrative events are appropriate.

That was a very quiet, solemn, but very meaningful evening. And what meant so much to many of the students was to know that Dr. Brand, President Brand, was standing in line to do that with the students.

And that meant an awful—this was I don't know how many years after the opening of the office. I'm guessing another generation of students coming. They may not have even known who this man was, but when word got around that the president was standing with them, that meant a great deal.

LE: Yeah. It seems like a really powerful statement.

DB: Mmhmm. It was.

LE: So would you say that your job has changed over time in accordance with the change in, like, the larger Bloomington, IU community?

DB: Yeah. But the interesting thing is, I—you know, I realize we have been affected by what's going on in the larger culture, but as soon as I say that, I think, "But we have helped to make that change happen."

The students who have left this campus—one in particular comes to mind: Shane Windmeyer, who has an organization called Campus Pride, that surveys campuses all over the country for how LGBT friendly they are.

He cut his teeth here at IU as a graduate student in higher ed and student affairs. He worked with us, and he's now sort of considered one of the national spokespersons for LGBT life on college campuses.

That's just one example, but yeah, life has changed. So we're now working more closely with the Admissions Office to make sure incoming students know this is a gay-friendly

campus, whereas, 20 years ago we were dealing with closeted students who weren't coming out until they came here. And just—yeah. So much has changed.

You know, I'm celebrating more weddings than I ever did. And I did a few, I officiated a few weddings before it was legal. It just was something people wanted to do with someone who had a pastoral background.

But that's pretty satisfying to be able to do, so . . . so many changes. The one significant one that I noted a moment ago was so many more of our allies who come in to use the office or to find ways to be supportive of the queer community.

LE: Well, in what ways would you like to see more change in the future?

DB: Sometimes it's hard to imagine what more change is needed, but I mean harassment still happens, discrimination, violence, even among people in the trans community, in particular, which is a concern. I think one thing we haven't addressed as effectively as I hope, maybe, would happen in the future is a queer studies program.

And specifically related to, again, the amazing history of our movement. We do things sort of piecemeal, but it seems to me IU's the ideal campus to have a more rigorous queer studies program, maybe in relationship with the Kinsey Institute.

I'm not an academician, so that's not my area of expertise, but I would hope maybe another director down the road or someone would take the lead in that. Because we don't know our history, and that's why I so value this project and the work of the Bicentennial. Maybe that'll be an outgrowth of the Bicentennial Committee.

LE: I'd say that's a possibility, yeah. They're exploring things like that.

DB: Sure.

LE: So what kind of facilities on campus physically have played the largest role for the GLBT office throughout the years?

DB: Facilities in the office, you mean?

LE: Mmhmm. Yeah.

DB: Well, I think there's value in having – I sort of alluded to this – many campuses have a multicultural center where the queer office—I mean, at IUPUI, which is a brand new operation, they have a—their office is part of a larger multicultural center, and that's a model that works very well on many campuses.

The history here is different in that we each have our own separate center. There's the black center. There's Black Culture Center. There's La Casa. There's Asian Culture. First Nations. And GLBT now. And what is especially significant, I think, still, for us is that our facility is an old home.

And, as you know, we've tried to make it feel really welcoming with everything from a "Welcome Home" sign in the front to the selection of furniture that's less sterile, a little warmer. We really try and create a home-like atmosphere, so people feel they can hang out and be safe and feel secure.

And so we hear a lot of people say it's a really cozy atmosphere. It's really—maybe someday there'll be, you know, a couple million-dollar gift, and there'll be a brand new spanking building. And that's great.

That's fine if down the road that happens. But for the time being, I think the fact that the facility is an old home, which we were told would be—it was built for the dean of—the first dean of the School of Education, that house.

And I've probably told you this story. A relative of that couple, for whom the house was built, visited the house two years ago and indicated that her grandparents were very involved in civil rights issues, and she feels that they would be very pleased to know how the house was being used now.

Well, that suggests to me a certain spirit that exists in the house, and maybe that's too spooky for some people at this time of the year or too spiritual, but that's who I am. And I think there are very good vibes as people come into the house that might just be a carry-over from the good people for whom the house was built.

LE: Well, and I think the office has a lot to offer, like, for example, the library that you have.

DB: Sure. Sure. Yep. A wonderful library with films and books and workspace and a brand new lounge area that we're developing right now. So this was the building that was once called the Dean of Students Annex, and when the office opened we had one little room there.

But after Student Ethics moved out about four years ago, we pretty much inherited the whole house. So we have room for students to make it a hangout between classes and, as you said, a fairly extensive library and workspace and counseling space.

LE: When was the library established?

DB: Day one. I brought in a handful of books that I had and put on the shelf, and people saw that and recognized the need for resources and started donating things. So we— there was a feminist bookstore in town that closed just about the time the office opened, and we got 300 lesbian-related books, many of which were sort of these dime novels, which today would be sort of archival.

We got rid of most of those in recent years because students weren't reading them. But over the years we've gotten some wonderful acquisitions: fiction, non-fiction. And then when the film festival happens, we often get the films that directors gift us with afterwards.

So that happens in January, and then we get a new batch of films. So donations as well as purchases we make through contributions to the office, so that's nice. It's a great little library.

LE: Oh, and speaking of the film festival, The Pride Film Festival, have you had opportunities to collaborate with that?

DB: Well, we actually initiated that. The story, again, that I enjoy telling is that two students – one gay, one straight – came into the office. They had a film studies class in the School of Fine Arts. They wanted to do something with gay films.

They knew we had a small collection. We hooked them up with the woman who was restoring the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, and she designed an evening of films with

them. It was so popular that they did it the second year. And that was 15 years ago. It's still going now. But it just started out, again, as a small student project.

And out of that organization, then, a group of people decided to organize something called Bloomington Pride, which has now taken over the film festival. And Bloomington Pride is now working with the LGBT aging group and the Prism youth group, and they did the summer festival, summer fest.

So in essence, all of those started because two students came into our office. I mean, it's the legacy that students leave here. And some don't even know what they've done. When we celebrated our tenth anniversary, we invited those students to come back. We had kept record of who they were, and one of them was able to come back to watch what this little class project had become here in town.

It's really exciting and speaks, again, to the power that students have. So I expect, you know, your project will inspire someone to do *something* someday. I guess it's inspired you a little bit.

But I think these things have a ripple effect. It's a pebble in the pond, and, you know, it happened again this morning with this student from Mongolia. You could just see him growing in his awareness in what he wanted to do with his life.

I mean, his eyes were open to a culture that's supportive of people like him, which is not true in his home country. I expect he's going to be a major activist in time. Doesn't get much better than that.

LE: Is there a major event that happened, either at IU or national event, that you remember particularly well from your time at IU?

DB: Oh boy. I remember going to Washington, D.C. with a group of students for the unfolding—I think it was the last year the AIDS quilt was able to be unfolded in its entirety. And I remember an October morning, a group of us—the fog was lifting on the mall in Washington.

The sun was rising because we had to be there very early, again, a very solemn ceremony. And we all got—there was a real order to how you unfolded these quilt

panels. Almost like the reverence with which a flag is folded and given to a widow or a partner in the case of the death of a veteran.

So that was very memorable, just to be part of that. We've also brought panels from the quilt to IU. It's been years since we've done that, and that's, sort of, now a . . . I don't know what to say about that.

It's kind of a . . . kind of a lost icon, but, you know, as people have been living longer with AIDS or living with AIDS, we're not paying attention to that in the same way that we did in the eighties and nineties. But to be in Washington on that last year when the quilt was unfolded was pretty dramatic.

LE: Yeah, that's really powerful.

DB: Yeah, it was. And, again, a student . . . a student organized that as a project, I think, with Union Board, and we filled a bus and off we went, and so. I'm sure there are other moments that I'm not recalling, but that's one that stood out.

LE: Oh yeah. So how would you characterize your relationship with the community, both at IU and in Bloomington?

DB: Probably go back to bridge building. I like to think that—one other event that stands out in my mind had nothing to do with gay issues, although somewhat. It was the shooting of a Korean student by a neo-Nazi here, back in 1999, I believe it was.

And this was an IU student for a very short time, who was basically a neo-Nazi and who was leaving racist and homophobic and anti-Semitic literature all over the campus for a year before he came back the following summer, the Fourth of July, and shot and killed a Korean student entering a church on Third Street.

It transformed this community in many, many ways. But the good that came out of it was the solidifying of relationships among people in the black and the gay and the Asian and the Jewish community.

Leaders in this community who started developing some really close ties, and who, again, were willing to stand up for each other when nasty things happened in those

communities, so . . . there was a community service for healing here that brought Janet Reno, who was the attorney general and a representative of the White House and the governor's office, to a ceremony here where hundreds of people who couldn't get into the MAC were sitting on the grass outside as this student was honored and—as the student who had died was honored, and issues of violence were addressed by national leaders.

Three of us were then invited from Bloomington to go to the White House – I guess that would be another significant moment – to meet with leaders of other communities who had responded to hate crimes in their towns, and the Preside—President Clinton, Bill Clinton had invited people from different communities to come together to talk about how to deal with hatred in towns around the country, and we spent a day in the East Room with President Clinton.

So that was pretty significant. But, again, the value of it is out of that conversation and those—that event, both the service and the trip to Washington, a lot of trust was built between two, three, four different communities that—smaller communities that were part of the larger community that maybe hadn't talked to each other over the years, didn't know each other or trust each other, and a lot of that has changed, I think. So that's been . . . that's been really satisfying, and I feel very honored to have been a part of that.

LE: Yeah, that's really. Yeah. That's a lot.

DB: It is a lot. My life is rich.

LE: It's really great to hear about connections being built like that.

DB: Yeah. Yep.

LE: So, to you, personally, what does IU mean to you?

DB: Well, I remember when I started my job thinking about the fact that I had read some of Kinsey's writings when I was a younger man, and never would I have imagined that I'd end my life – I haven't ended my life – but I'd—in my career that I'd be working at a place that fostered the relationship of this man.

I mean, I wouldn't say he was a hero of mine, but his research changed my life, as it did for that gentleman from Australia. Yeah, I can vividly remember reading and thinking, "I'm just part of a subculture. I'm not a sin. I'm not a criminal. I'm not," you know, "There are other ways of thinking of this difference in my life."

And so I guess I got to return the favor to Alfred Kinsey. I guess . . . I would never have imagined that, but it means the world to me to know that on a campus where some amazing research was done before I was even born, I had a chance to benefit from that and then . . . and then maybe benefit others in the process.

I don't know what you call that. Maybe grace. Something very, almost spiritual about that, again, from my perspective. I feel very grateful to have been here these years.

LE: Do you have anything else that you would like to add?

DB: You asked a lot. No, no. This was a great interview, and you do it well. I realize you have some questions to ask, but you create a nice atmosphere, so if you're doing more of this, I wish you well.

It's a great experience, and it's valuable—maybe it'll be valuable for the folks who listen to this, I hope, at some level. But it's also a valuable experience and an all too rare experience for us to take time to reflect.

That's the value of a bicentennial or an anniversary or whatever, to think a little bit about what has happened and what it means. We don't do enough of that in academic communities. So I'm glad for the chance to do it with you.

LE: Yes, well, thank you.

DB: My pleasure. My pleasure.