

UHCL 30th Birthday Oral History Project

Interviewee: John W. Bailey
Interviewer: Kathy Dupree
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Transcriber: Shelly Henley Kelly

Dupree: This is Kathy Dupree interviewing Mr. John W. Bailey for the UHCL 30th Birthday Oral History Project. Today is Saturday, April 30, 2005.

Sir, could you please state your name and what city you live in?

Bailey: I'm John Bailey and I live in Friendswood, Texas.

Dupree: What years did you attend UHCL?

Bailey: I started the University of Houston at Clear Lake in 1976, and I graduated in 1980.

Dupree: Wow, so you're one of the original classes.

Bailey: Yes, indeed.

Dupree: What school or program were you in?

Bailey: I was in at that time—I can't remember the name, but it's the Natural and Applied Sciences. I was in the computer science department as a masters degree discipline.

Dupree: What degree did you receive and when?

- Bailey: I received a Master of Science degree in Computer Science in 1980.
- Dupree: How did you hear about UHCL?
- Bailey: Well, that was quite interesting. When I graduated from Texas Southern in 1975, I attended the University of Houston, main campus. I was working out at Lockheed, an electronics company, and that drive back and forth was a little difficult. I think a friend of mine had started here the year before and said, “Have you heard about University of Houston-Clear Lake. I found it back behind the woods there. [laughter]
- Dupree: What challenges did you face at UHCL?
- Bailey: The challenges weren’t necessarily at UH-Clear Lake. They had an excellent program, which I was looking for. The challenge was working a full time job and taking classes at night. That kind of was a major challenge. The low classes, the excellent professors, had made it pretty interesting and made it a rewarding experience.
- Dupree: And because UHCL was a non-traditional type university atmosphere, correct?
- Bailey: Exactly right. At U of H my first semester there it was large classes, they didn’t have microcomputers, which was the thing in those days. They had mini-computers. And it [UHCL] was a lot different and a lot more enjoyable.
- Dupree: What professors influenced you the most?
- Bailey: Oh, wow. My advisor was Dr. George Collins. An excellent professor at networking, and I learned a lot from this guy. But Dr. Charles McKay was

a very interesting professor. I learned a lot from him. He really pushed us.
[chuckles]

Dupree: How has attending UHCL changed your life?

Bailey: Well, being an African American, I think it really helped me out a lot in that once I had a master's degree, opportunities were a lot better for me. Not only here in Houston, but all around the country. I had a lot more opportunities to select from.

Dupree: What events did you participate on campus. Were there any events?

Bailey: Being that I had very little time running from work back to school, I didn't participate in a lot of things here on campus while I was going to school, but I have been kind of working and continuing to work with the university since graduation. I've been a part of the Alumni Association. I've been on the boards there two or three terms, and kind of helped to support the University in that way.

Dupree: And that was my next question. [laughter]

Dupree: What special memories - that you have of UHCL?

Bailey: Special memories are working with some of – when we worked in class we worked in teams and groups. The camaraderie that we had in doing projects. Seeing the computer labs grow, and those are some neat things that I think were good.

Dupree: What do you hope to see UHCL accomplish in the future?

Bailey: I'd like to see it continue to grow. I really, as being a part of Alumni Association, would like to see more of the alumni get connected back with the university. They're doing a lot of great things and as I know the university *is* growing. I'd like to maybe even look at working with getting more funding from the graduates putting back into the university. I've seen more outreach to the other communities, and getting a diverse population here. Moving up in the technology realm, maybe getting more online classes and things like that, and being more progressive like they were in the beginning.

Dupree: I'm sure you've seen all the changes that's happened with online service and... not dormitories, but apartments.

Bailey: Really? I haven't had a chance to go in the new building, but I hear it's beautiful.

Dupree: Yes, absolutely. Thank you Mr. Bailey.

Bailey: All right.

[End of recording]