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Sharon Helfeld, interviewed by Hannah Travis

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Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 0:04

I'm Hannah Travis and I am here with Sharon Helfeld working on the oral history project at the College of Brockport. We are currently at Miss Helfeld's home. It is November 4th 2019. So I'm about to begin. What year did you graduate from Brockport?

Sharon Helfeld 0:25

I graduated from Brockport in 1992.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 0:29

Can you tell me about like your family background?

Sharon Helfeld 0:35

Okay, um, let's see. I am the youngest of five. All my siblings also went to college. I think most of us all went to state schools. I have two older sister I'm sorry three older sisters and an older brother. And my parents, my mom, my dad passed away last year. But yeah, I graduated in May of 92.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 1:05

What was your parents educational background?

Sharon Helfeld 1:08

My dad went to college at Michigan State. He studied engineering. He became an engineer there and then he had back then they had lots of opportunities for jobs. So he had I think four different companies want him and so it was Carrier in Syracuse. Somewhere in Ohio, Westinghouse, maybe Frigidaire and some couple other places in the Midwest, but he liked carrier a lot. He also liked this area a lot. He liked the different seasons, the Finger Lakes. My dad was very avid outdoors, outdoorsy kind of guy. So he really wanted to settle in this area. So that's why he picked carrier and that's how I ended up here.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 1:59

What was Corcoran like when you attended high school there,

Sharon Helfeld

And I forgot to mention my mom too I'll say that real quick she went to school as well business school I believe when she while he was at Michigan State, she went to a business school there maybe got maybe something equivalent took a two year degree. And then she ended up working at the church for many years she was the ministry assistant and corcoran was great. I really enjoyed Corcoran and I was very active there. I played on the tennis team. I was in the band. It was a good you know, I had a good group of friends for the most part, and it was a good school.

Hannah Travis

What kind of student were you in high school? High School

Sharon Helfeld 2:41

High School was a pretty good student. I wasn't any. I wasn't a super high on a roll. I was probably on a regular on a roll. I was crappy a low 90s high 80s depending on the subjects in high school. I did do boces for my junior and senior year so I was only there half the day and then I went to what was called central tech back then. For cosmetology.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 3:19

What made you choose Brockport?

Sharon Helfeld 3:22

Well, when I went to when I was looking for schools I don't even think SU was an option financially for our family. We didn't look at it plus I kind of wanted to get away. I think I applied to only handful schools I applied to Oswego, I know. But I visited us we go on very cold and windy, nasty day. So I was like, yeah, I'm not going there. And I think the day I visited Brockport was a nice day so that helped think I applied to Geneseo, but I don't think I got in because it was very competitive back then. And I know I got in also to St. JOHN Fisher, but that was too expensive.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 3:57

How was your transition from high school to College.

Sharon Helfeld 4:01

It went pretty good. My first year there I had just a wonderful roommate we got along super well. Very, very well. She was really nice girl. We're still friends. And we had two suite mates we were kind of different but we Yeah, we all got along really well. So I feel like because of that, it was a smooth transition socially. Academically, I didn't find it to be too challenging and it was you know, it's tough but I wasn't, wasn't crazy hard I studied business. So

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 4:38

what was your intended major when you first came to Brockport

Sharon Helfeld 4:42

my intended major was business. I had decided that I was going to open my own salon. I was going to work. I was going to get a business major and I was going to work in a salon for my career, and I stuck with my business major. I wish I had switched majors Because I really wish I had gone for teaching Brockport's a great teaching school but I didn't put it all together until after I was done that that's really what I would have preferred doing. But I do enjoy doing, you know, business and numbers and statistics and lots of stuff like that. So, you know, worked out okay.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 5:21

Were there any national or international events that affected your time at college?

Sharon Heffeld

Oh, in the world going on. You mean I remember Kuwait I think it was bush was president. I think I remember watching the news at school kind of scary when I don't remember was Iraq or Iran one of those two invaded Kuwait and then we attacked them to defend Kuwait. So I do remember that event. I remember. Brockport had a horrible ice storm when I was there. That was really, school was closed for a couple days. You couldn't get around. You had to walk down Street there's like, the trees were like frozen and it was crazy. The power was power lines for down and everything. So, Ben's about to walk in the door. Just you know, he's kind of over here so he's gonna see,

Hannah Travis

did you participate in any extracurricular activities?

(Interruption)

(Interruption)

(Interruption)

(Interruption)

Sharon Helfeld 6:45

Okay, so did I get involved in extracurricular activities? I think that I did special friends, which was a program they bought brought kids in on Saturday mornings and myself, my couple of my friends My boyfriend. We all had kids that we worked with and we would they would come in on Saturdays we'd meet the bus and we take them somewhere. Sometimes we just stay in campus. I remember taking them bowling in town a couple times out to eat to the ice skating rink or different things that Brockport had going on. Just hang out in our dorms walk around. That was a big thing I did special friends. Other than that, I think we did play broom ball, had a broom ball team and my friend and I were the CO captains and that was a lot of fun. We play at like midnight or something 10 o'clock 11 o'clock at night. Other than that, I didn't get super super involved. I cut hair. I didn't have a job ever there because I was able to cut hair in my room. And I did that throughout college. I did it for my roommates all for free and that way they didn't mind having mostly it was guy's coming and going all the time. You know, I did really well with that \$5 a haircut. What else? I think that's the main thing didn't get into a lot of clubs or anything like that

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 8:07

What made you want to do the special friends program?

Sharon Helfeld 8:11

I think it's because my friends were doing it and we thought it would be you know a good program to get involved with and we I did end up staying connected very connected to the girl that I worked with. We ended up going to her house a couple times talking to her mom trying to

figure out ideas actually my boyfriend has a brother, so we kind of had the family together and we would try to help her give ideas on how to especially the brother was kind of a handful I think ADHD and and actually I remained friends with the girl I not now I should look her up but she did come to our wedding. Even so we stayed friends with him when he was growing up. Anne, her name was Anne, the girl I helped with. It was a long time.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 8:53

I personally don't know what broom ball is. So can you explain what it is?

Sharon Helfeld 8:57

Yes, Broomball is where you take a thing. Take a broom and they like glue or do something to make the Bristles altogether you know hard and you go on the ice part and then go on the ice and you play on your sneakers. you run on the ice and use the broom like hockey but with you without ice skates cuz that way hurt yourself. Yeah. You have helmets and all that stuff.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 9:27

What was your social life like?

Sharon Helfeld

I had really good I made a lot of really good friends there we would hang out a lot in our room. I have tons of pictures of us just hanging out in our room, watching TV playing games. We played a lot of cards. I did meet my my boyfriend there who ended up marrying, we would i would hang out at his dorm sometimes and meet a whole different group of people over there and then you know, I remember we'd go to parties in town. Not a lot I don't think I did a lot but a handful of times to do that. We go to some of the bars in town and go to the movies there. Go out for breakfast at the Brockport diner.

Sharon Helfeld 10:12

We had a lot of fun.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 10:14

how did you meet your husband?

Sharon Helfeld 10:16

He was in my class my oceanography class. When I was a Freshman. Yep.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 10:22

How was the dating culture at Brockport all around?

Sharon Helfeld 10:26

I mean, I didn't get too involved with it because I did meet him fairly early on. But I think it was, you know, pretty good. I think with my friends, I mean, I had different friends that were dating, you know, different guys here and there was definitely a lot of it going on.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 10:46

Was there anyone who mentored you or guided you at your time at Brockport.

Sharon Helfeld 10:50

I remember one of my professors. It was Dr. van doozer, Edward Van doozer because he was business and I specialized in marketing. He was I had him as an advisor and also as a professor quite a few classes I remember him being very helpful trying to help me figure out you know, navigate my classes and and what I was going to do kind of little bit when I got done not a ton of guidance. I don't think from anybody in particular other than you know, some from him nothing super helpful, but you know, was he was helpful.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 11:27

Were there any classes that really made an impact for you?

Sharon Helfeld 11:32

another class I did, besides the special friends as a volunteer was a class we took I don't know if they still have it, I forgot was called but we would meet over at tuttle for another group would come in with kids that are people, not kids, especially adults, that were mentally disabled and we would get partners with somebody and we would hang out with them for The night was like just a regular class and we just walk around look at stuff talk. I had a guy named Boyd I remember him and he was a nice guy and just enjoyed that had a big impact because I got to learn about his life and talk to him and try to help him you know, he told me about things that were going on with him and that was interesting and then there's a group again you know, my boyfriend had and one of his friends I think so we all kind of hang out and just you know, they're only there for maybe two hours at night or something. We've just kind of walk around tuttle and look at different stuff talk maybe they'd have games setup we would play that was one I really enjoyed. I took a ton of business classes I minored in psychology. I enjoyed those classes a lot

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 12:52

what interest in psychology Did you have?

Sharon Helfeld 12:56

I just thought I should have a minor and I took a psychology class and it was interesting. So I thought, well, you know, it's good to have when you're doing business to be able to talk to people. I mean, I don't think it will help me at all in any sense of that, but it was interesting. It was a good Minor to have.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 13:14

Have you ever been back to Rockport?

Sharon Helfeld 13:16

We did go back. I have a really good friend that still lives in Rochester and her husband and my friend Carolyn and Todd. We met them there she was in my business. She wasn't anybody I lived with, she was in my classes. And so we went we've gone a few times, I think to meet them and we had lunch with them a couple times. And then more recently, when Bree was looking for college, my oldest we looked up at about six years ago we went and then about last year we went there with Ben so I've been there a handful of times.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 13:52

Do you think any of your kids who still have to go to college, think they might go there?

Sharon Helfeld 13:58

Ben is applying there. He's going to study most likely education to be a phys-ed teacher probably won't end up going there because he wants to play football and he's not feeling any interest from their football team. Unfortunately, they don't know what they're going to miss out on. So he's probably going to go somewhere else because of that

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 14:18

did you notice any changes from the time when you went there to the time that you visited?

Sharon Helfeld 14:23

Definitely, yeah, I can tell they've done a lot. Especially tuttle. The whole gym area is all new. That's really nice. They have a whole new building when we went, that's when you cross the bridge. You come to the I wasn't even there before the huge building. It's got all kinds of classes and I don't know what it's called

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 14:43

liberal arts

Sharon Helfeld 14:44

Maybe it's kinda like a glass building. Yeah. And that's all new dorms look pretty much the same. I know they have the new dorms, but like the dorms where we stayed pretty much the same. They could use updating. But yeah, a lot of that looks Really updated or nice they've done a lot of work

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 15:04

where did you live on campus?

Sharon Helfeld 15:05

so I live freshman year Benedict think it was Benedict yeah the Benedict for one year and then I moved to cry really like that for person with a suite two and two and so then we lived in Gordon across I think that cross important on one of the other Harmon according whichever is straight

across from Benedict. And I think that was actually two years and then I moved off campus for my fourth year so I lived there as a junior too and then I lived in the Village Apartments or something across the canal.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 15:40

Did living off campus have any impact on your school?

Sharon Helfeld 15:45

It's definitely different when you live off campus you're not as connected to everything going on. I feel like but by then I was ready for that and had my car there by then. And I would walk a lot too so it was it was just different, but it was still I really liked it. But I really did enjoy living on campus a lot.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 16:06

What professional career Did you have after graduating from Brockport?

Sharon Helfeld

so when I graduated, I was looking for a job in business, which is very general. And so back then we didn't do a lot online. Everything was in the newspaper. So I go through the wanted ads and I found a place safety equipment company called default safety and they needed to inside sales person and I interviewed for that. And I started that pretty quick. I think I graduated in May. I think I started there by like, July, June or July and then I was there for a couple of years. I really, you know, I enjoyed them met some good people. I took orders on the phone, we sold equipment to different companies and we had like outside guys that went outside and sold and they call in they told me what they were their customers were ordering and put the orders and I really liked the job was a good job. person. One of the manager I worked for was not a nice man though. So I ended up only staying maybe a year, maybe a year to stay that long.

Hannah Travis

What kind of equipment Did you guys sell?

Sharon Helfeld 17:15

so there's all kinds of safety equipment. So I was like hard hat safety glasses, boots. And like we didn't make any of it. We were like a distributor. So we would buy it. I would, I would place the orders we would buy it from manufacturers or like a Granger, like somebody when they call us and I need this and we find it for them. And we'd mark it up, and we get it and we'd sell it to them. And then certain things we stocked like we had customers. There's businesses all over here that would buy like gloves from us and hard hats, safety glasses, cones, traffic cones, we sold tons of stuff we had it was a big warehouse, we'd keep a lot there for stuff that was always moving and we'd be ordering stuff all the time to for special orders for people. So good. So good job.

Hannah Travis

After that, what did you do?

Sharon Helfeld

And then after that I got a job at a place called Syracuse stamping, which is downtown and Deval safety. I don't think they're in Syracuse anymore. I think they closed they were out of Buffalo. That was the headquarters. So I think, I don't know if they're still there, but they're calling from here. Then I got a job at circus stamping. And that was a manufacturer of three different product lines. They sold. Three things that were totally not related. They sold like schools for like typewriters. They made them they made gate valves for 55 gallon containers that people work with. They made the valve that you hooked on there to get the liquid out. And then they also made garage door hardware. So it was three totally separate product lines. And the man who when I got that Job a man named Fred honald just bought the company is kind of the company is old had already been business close to 100 years. It was kind of going downhill downhill and then he bought it and he put a lot of money into it and it was going back up but he was also a very difficult person to work for. He really liked me but a lot of people I worked with he wouldn't like them he'd fire people real easily so it was kind of a tough situation. And when I was working there is when my first daughter was born, and I didn't really want to work full time anymore. I had to work but I didn't want to work full time I tried to work three days they really pushed me to work five I ended up working four and I'd always they'd always made me feel guilty taking one day off a week even though I wasn't a paid for it. I just wanted to only work four days. But um so I stayed there and then for about two years two probably. It was funny the woman who hired me really nice woman. She was like the director of Marketing. She hired me. I started there and the day I started she had already quit. Like, I remember going in. I'm like, Oh, I'm here for my first day and want to talk to whatever her name was. Because she's only connection. I handed the place and they're like, Oh, yeah, she's gone. I was like, Okay, so that was kind of like, Okay, this is going to be tricky, but it ended up being a good place. I got to travel a lot because we sold products to different companies all over across the country and had to go to some trade shows. I went to a trade show in Anaheim, California. Went to one in look, New Orleans. And Superdome went to just a day trip on my own. I flew to Kentucky wants to meet one of our customers that bought a lot of garage door hardware from us. Went with my boss, which was tricky on a road trip for like a week, longest week of my life, to Chicago And so it was definitely growing I learned a lot about how to deal with different people and customers and you know, we were selling to businesses and you know, most of them like I said, the company been around a long time. So we they liked it and we had a good product, good products high quality was just getting some business back I think that the company had lost over the years. So and I think I stayed there for two years. And then when I left, I did actually go back there a couple years later, when I was looking to switch jobs again, I did talk to Fred Honald. But I was I said to myself, why are you going to go back somewhere that you really didn't want to be so I never ended up going back and then he's passed away now. And I think the company is closed. It was on Clinton street now I think the Oxford house is there. Oh, that's right. But cross my own textiles. Oh, straighten you go down. Yeah. I don't know if the whole thing's closed because I never drive during aweekday i don't know i don't think still going six months he died kind of Yeah. But it was a good place to work for a good amount of time I learned a lot and made decent

money you know, but then I ended up leaving there to go to work at a place called discanos sales promotions because I just wanted a little less I wanted to work less and they were always pushing me to try and work more and I started I think I discanos part time I think I only started four days a week. They let me do that and I worked for a woman named Mary Lou Discano. And that was so different of a job than the other one because it was we did samples in grocery stores. Okay. Not Wegmans because they have their own people, obviously. But PNC used to hire out just discanos. So marketing companies would call Discanos and say I want to do, I have a new product coming out, I want to sample this product on these dates at these stores. And then they'd ship us the samples, coupons or whatever they wanted to hand out. Or if they want us to make a recipe. they'd send us the recipes. And it was interesting. And so my main job when I worked there was to schedule all the demonstrators for the and mostly this was little old ladies, because that's who did these samples. So I went from working there to working at another company scheduling these ladies to work in these stores. And That was interesting, it was a good that was a good it was definitely different lot less stress than the other job I had and think I was there when Kayla was born. so I had kayla when I was working there and only problem with that place. Eventually she was having financial difficulties. So like we're supposed to get paid a certain day but she wouldn't have enough money to pay us. So she'd be like, okay, who really needs to check because I can only pay one of you was like either of us in the office or something and I was like, Okay, I can't do this because I'm paying a babysitter for two kids now with you know, good amount of money. And so I ended up staying there, maybe around two years, then I left there. And that's when I got the job. That's what I feel. Yeah. I do have a lot of jobs that I worked the for an orthodontist. Then it worked for an orthodontist. And so I was looking for something different and kind of looking through the paper and I found this job called the treatment coordinator and I thought oh, check that out. But I have not and he had no experience doing teeth and that that, but it was more of an office position and it was a new position He created the Dr. Meharg was nice man finally worked for a really nice man.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 25:04

he does my teeth.

Sharon Helfeld 25:05

Oh he does I worked there. Oh, I worked there for when I when I started there they were on N Salina. He was just taking it over from Dr. Selly not Dr. Selly was the orthodontist forever and then he had Dr. Meharg come in. Dr. Meharg You know was working more hours than Dr. Selly was working less and then Meharg wanted to have what they call the treatment coordinator, which Dr. Selly never had one and this is where when the new patients come in, this is the person that greets them. That gives them a tour of the office assistant on the appointment when he's examining them that breaks everything down. What do we need to do, then when he's done explaining the treatment, then they tell them the price then they tell their insurance, then they make other appointments or they follow up if they don't schedule so it's a little bit sales because it was kinda, you know, doing that part but it was a lot of just learning about teeth and how braces work and ended up getting a set myself when I worked there as credit then I had braces on. And you know that was a really good job I really liked it. They're like man I worked with for

like patients I like my co workers. They always did want me to work more. That was always the thing with every job. I was wanting to work a little less and they always wanted me to work a little more I remember and when then they move to actually, when Ben was born, I was out for like a month or maybe 10 weeks. I always took the minimum. I wish I could take more but I never could but when I went back they had moved to Franklin square. Where they are now so pretty over there. Yes. So do you go there now and then Okay.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 26:50

I have an appointment tomorrow.

Sharon Helfeld 26:52

Do you really? Tell him I said Hi, He'll remember me sharon yep sharon helfeld. His treatment coordinator now, is um I trained her it's and she's a very nice woman. Oh, I see Lisa forgot her name Trish. Trish she she's the treatment coordinator so unless she left she I think she's been there since I since I left. Yeah, and I think that's who it is. And it's her job too. She has her own little office in there you go in you examine she'll write it down and put it in on the computer now and all that such thing Yeah. Good job. But then I left there because I think it was one of the things Yes. I wanted to take the day before Thanksgiving off because I was I wanted to make Thanksgiving dinner for like my first time I wanted that day off. And he's like, no, that's there. Whenever the kids were off school so like around Thanksgiving April break February break summer. That's when they want me to work more which I get because It's the patients are mostly kids now I think they do a lot of adults. Now I'm having three kids. I don't want to work more in the summer around the breaks, I want to work less. So one day I when I was talking about Thanksgiving, he's like, I don't think so I went home I said to my husband, I just I can't do it anymore. I said, and the kids were very unhappy with the babysitter. Very unhappy. We moved up here, got a new babysitter, she was not good. Had to take Their old babysitter didn't like her either. They just I was done. I said, I need it. I need to be home. So I was home for one year. Best year of my life. I wish I could have these moms they could stay home for when their kids are born to when they go to school full time. Very lucky. They don't realize how lucky they are when you have kids and you have to take them to a babysitter that they don't like and feel guilty all day and worried about them. So I left, Ben was four I think three or four. I we just moved here and I said I'm just going to go for a little bit. Stay home. And, you know financially It was very difficult for us. But we were able to do it and I was very frugal. I've always been very frugal anyway, we grew up with not a ton of money. You know, growing up with my just my dad mostly working. So we were always very careful. And my neighbor right after I left my neighbor around the corner. Derek, Mrs. Derek she, her babysitter quit on her something she needed somebody to watch. James her youngest for one day a week. And as I jumped all over that they going to be like \$40 a week, but it was like something. So that really worked out good. And then I was home for a year with Ben and then he went into kindergarten. And then I thought okay, I need to start working again. And that's what I got the job at walberta. They said that way I can be a new schedule. I can drive to school, I can pick up Kayla from Cherry road, and I loved being on the kids schedule. That was like best as far as the schedule is, 'cause I was always having to work, I said all my other jobs more, more and more as what they always wanted. I wanted, you

know, little, a little less. So walberta was really good for goes there for like five years and I that had nothing to do with my degree because I was a teaching assistant. And I really enjoyed that. That's when I realized I should have gone for being a teacher. But who know so I worked there for quite a few years. I was a special ed teaching assistant for the first two years. And then they actually they had these, so they're special ed and then there's the general ed teaching assistance they had in kindergarten. I don't know if you remember but they used to do like centers in kindergarten or first or second over at walberta and They have like Mrs. Suratnick. or Mrs. Jones those they were the three like general TA's. And I always envied them because they didn't not. Not that there's anything wrong with working with kids specialty needs, but that's not it made me nervous. It's a hard job I give the people who do that 24 seven so much credit because that's a lot of work. And I know I've talked to your mom about it too, because I know she's got her job too, sometimes very unpredictable, you know, don't know what you're going to deal with. And I had some kids when I started that were very tricky to work with I mean there'd be days I just was like, I don't want to go to work today and tell my husband he like, it's fine. Just you know, you can only do what you can do. If they do that. That's not your fault. You know, you just have to pick up the pieces and go from there. So anyway, um, I think one of them left of the three, this Mrs. Gem, she left to apply for that job and I got it. And then I was a general ed ta which means I was able to be right in the classroom I didn't have a child assigned to me I was just another teacher in the room which I loved you know I was able to do the center I had a center Mrs. I was in was in Mrs. Burns room she had a center and then we had like a parent come in to help and so I was doing that and I was just doing projects helping you know I'd have a schedule where I go you know, Mrs. Vercillo's from for an hour and then Mrs whatever, and then help the kindergarten that I was all over the school and I wasn't tied to one child I wasn't you know, I just really liked that. And then they decided about a year or two later to eliminate those jobs. At westhill I don't think they brought them back yet, but they got rid of all the general ed TA's. So I had to go back to special ed and that's when I said you know what, I need to figure something else out. Because you don't make hardly any money as a teaching assistant. I think I was making \$16,000 a year. I mean, I had the summers off I had the breaks but like a teacher, you make a living 50 \$60,000 maybe I was making like 15. So I was like, okay, I can't do this for forever. And then I said to myself, I want to work at SU, because I want to not have to worry as much about paying for college. So I set out to get a job at SU, and I did. And here I am. What do you do there? And I am a financial aid reviewer. So I review students' financial aid applications. I started out the front desk. The way I got in there was because it's a lot with snap, you don't want to say what you know who you know, and I had a friend that had worked with me at walberta that got a job up there in the financial aid office. And so I contacted her when I realized I just needed to make that change and she let me know when there was a position open. I applied she gave them my name and then I interviewed and got the job as a desk person where you just answer the phone all day and greet the students when they come in the front door.

(Interruption)

(Interruption)

Sharon Helfeld 34:15

so so that was a lot It was a busy job like couldn't leave your desk unless you know somebody was there to cover it was very Miss I liked it, but it was a lot of all day long. On the phone, I think I'd answer like 50 or 60 phone calls in a day I come home I picked the phone once I remember saying University office and I'm like why am I saying that home because it was so used to saying it all day. And I miss the kids too. I really did. You know, I mean you see the students you know they're not they're not the same as little kids. And so then there was a position open maybe about a year and a half after I was in the front desk. They had reviewer position, open And those are the people that review you know, their fafsa and their profile and you know, taxes and, and I thought let me see if I can get that job. So I applied I got it and I did that for about two years or so and then they had what's called the lead financial aid reviewer which is like them a little bit above all the other reviewers your you do more work, you do the training and stuff like that I applied for that about two years ago, I got that job. And so now I'm the lead financial aid reviewer for SU and I get to work at home one day a week, which is really nice.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 35:38

Are there any do you think from your time at Brockport did any of those any skills you learn that really helped you?

Sharon Helfeld 35:47

definitely I would say a lot of the skills, you know, being able to figure things out kind of on your feet because a lot of the jobs I had to learn throughout all these years, different things. I had to learn different industries, you know, from safe equipment to the gate valves schools to sampling how that works with marketing companies orthodontics I mean I've learned a lot about totally different things for years and now financial aid you know stuff I had no clue about when I started there. So I'd say a lot of just you know how you have to start a class and figure it out, figure it all out read about stuff write about it. That helped me a lot to organize so I know you know, I take notes a lot I all my jobs that's why I'm the one of the one of the reasons I got the job to be the lead reviewer and the trainer's because I'm very, you know, and I learned that probably, you know, Brockport maybe even at Corcoran as a skill to you know, just to be able to listen to somebody and not necessarily write everything down, they say, but the key points that you're going to have to use again yourself, you know, I think I learned how to kind of pull up the key points of information. So that When I had to do it on my own, I wasn't asking again, how do I do this? I don't like to I like to somebody show me and I kind of asked questions and I write it down. And then I like to be able to just refer to my notes and figure it out or, you know, write a few more questions if I still don't get it but then between a couple times being able to figure things out, I think you being at Brockport helped and the business classes you know, I think about I mean, I took a statistics class there that I really liked actually ended up tutoring statistics. So I think that helped me a lot. I did a lot of had to do a lot with spreadsheets. In a couple of my jobs. I did do sales forecasts when I worked for circus stamping. I had a forecast for the company based on what we were averaging, selling versus what we contracts we had coming up so that they would know how much steel to buy. So it was a big kind of a big job, you know, to know, to be able to put formulas in to figure out you know our sales what Sales projected where the

company did sell from two to \$3 million and stuff so this was a big job. I think I learned a lot in Brockport just to help me multitask you know that all that stuff to do.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 38:16

Did you continue on throughout your life with the cosmetology background?

Sharon Helfeld 38:22

So after I did work as a in one summer at Long Island when I lived down there one summer with my fiance I worked in a salon I didn't really like it though. I didn't like doing it that way. I might have liked it better If i worked up here, not down there. People are kind of in this area. I worked in there all about like that they don't know where Syracuse is so you know, it's just very different. I missed it up here. So I was kind of homesick too. So that might have been why I didn't like it. But I mean, I worked in the salon and it was okay. You know, it wasn't horrible. I like more just cutting people's hair and then letting them go styling themselves rather than do that part. And I did have done throughout all my years so I cut all my kids hair, which saved our family, a ton of money and my husband's hair and my own hair. And so I did that for a lot of years. I did a lot of my family's hair for many years. My parents siblings, nieces nephews, kind of phased out with that over time, some like, done with that it was too much. But I've always done I still will cut my daughter's hair sometimes and she'll cut mine and my husband, he cuts his own now. He just shaves it off but he has me check it for me to make sure he didn't miss anything. But yeah, I think it's I'm glad I did that because financially, I think I saved a ton of money doing that plus, I go somewhere to get it cut. I you know, I kind of know what I want them to do and I can kind of explain it and then I go me check it sometimes I cut it more myself. So I feel like I did, you know, use it not, you know fully but some plus I let my license lapse so I'm not able to work in a salon anymore. I've told Kayla because she got her license now to you gotta you gotta remember I think they send you something in the mail they should but you have to remember to renew it every I don't know how many years it is or and it's hard to get your license a lot of work. So I never want to go through that again. Yeah, yeah. So I'm done

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 40:33

is there anything you do different that you would tell your younger self?

Sharon Helfeld 40:37

Yes, I would have studied teaching. When I was a kid in our basement we lived in the Valley we had a chalkboard, and I would be down there for I remember, I think I was a really good kid when I was younger at least because I would go down there after dinner and I would just play with chalkboard and I'd have a piano over here. And the Students I had these, I could still remember their name surely stuffed animals that were like big in desks, like three of them. I had Hubert Catherine mary somebody else. And I would grade their papers and I would go from play the piano and have music, I would have so much fun with these. And I never. And then of course, I got a little older and I didn't do any more. And then I forgot about them kind of in school and about not loving school who does and I'm thinking that's the last thing I want to do would be in a school all day teaching. So but I should have thought about it. When I was at

Brockport said, Maybe I just had my head set a certain way that I was going to do business and open my own salon. And I never wavered from that. And that's what I tell my kids is to don't just go in with one idea and that's it. You know, it's good to go in with an idea but if something else comes up, that seems really good. Or, you know, maybe take a class in something different just to try it to see if there's something different you like, and I push all my kids now to be teachers. Because it's a great, it's a great job. I mean, I know that it's, I know, depending on the school you get in and I know they don't make a ton of money but and I just did it for five years and it was just the best thing summers off, the breaks, the snow day, there was a snow day before, I'd have to scramble. What am I even doing with the kids today because I still have to go to work. Now I'm home with them, you know. So that was wonderful. And I think my son is going to study to be a teacher phys-ed teacher, which I think can be really good. And I try to get Kayla to be an art teacher but she she said no to that and maybe it's not for everybody. Maybe you know, that's I get that and and I know the jobs are harder to get now you know, too but I feel like without the baby boomers retiring soon, there should be more jobs. I think it's some, I think it's a good job and really wherever you live. You can do that job for the most part. There's gonna be school around like, it's not like, you're very specific, you're only working, you know, one area or something. So just like nursing, I think in nursing is a great field too, because I always knew that flexible scheduling work at nights, you know? Because daycare when you're going to have kids is very important. I always had a hard time with my daycare and my kids were never really happy with it. And I'll always remember that and feel bad about it.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 43:27

Now with all the jobs you had, how was the job industry like did you find getting a job easy or?

Sharon Helfeld 43:34

I really never had a problem getting a job I think I'm a very good interviewer very confident because I feel like I know what I'm talking about, you know, now and I've interview for jobs. I don't know. I don't know the like I interview for SU you I didn't know anything about financial aid. I interview for Franklin square. I knew nothing about braces. I never had braces as a kid myself. in depth. Think about when I worked at syracuse stamping about any of those products nothing but I'm confident in myself that I'm able to figure things out work well with other people ask questions if I don't understand something. And I think I relay that really well my interviews I've always interviewed I've been told even at SU because I had to interview just two years ago and I want to get that next level that I'm very good Interviewer And I think if you're confident and you know yourself that you can do it then you know that kind of speaks to people and you can share and I have so many examples created many different jobs of different things I've done and how I handle different situations. I think that has always helped me I never really had a hard time in getting into SU was hard i i'd apply apply apply hear nothing because they probably have 200 resumes for one job. So you just have to Kind of having somebody that will at least pull. But that was up to me to, you know to have a good interview and to get the second because at SU was like think I had two or three interviews for when I got in there wasn't just one interview and you're done you had one time then you go back talk to more people, and I've had interviews where five or six people, so many questions so busy, but you just have to be confident in

yourself. I never would have been fired from a job every job I left on good terms. Still good terms at Franklin square, you know, I took Ben there and Kayla there Ben had braces. Great terms of walberta you know, all the jobs just left and that's I think, very important. I've always had good references for you know, different jobs and, and it wasn't like I just was a job and left like I was at jobs for good two and three years, you know, trying but it was just, there's just always a different reason I needed to change. Or I need more money or I needed less hours or you know, needed more flexibility so

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 46:07

if you have anything else to add about like

Sharon Helfeld 46:10

Feel like I've been talking for so much, feels so great to just get to talk about myself.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 46:16

I'm here to listen. But on my end I have no other questions for you.

Sharon Helfeld 46:24

I don't really think I have any other things just Brockport was a great school really enjoyed it. And my husband there a lot of good friends there. I wish you could have the football team look into Ben because then he could go there but they they're very not looking at him. Just too bad for them. But because that I would be able to go back there more. But no, I think that's good. I'm good.

Travis, Hannah C (htrav2) 46:51

thank you for your time.

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