

Dr. Harmon Martin: Dr. Shiela Harmon Martin, Professor Emerita of Political Science, University of the District of Columbia.

Interviewer: Thank you. Can you tell us a bit about your personal background? Specifically, where you're from, what was your home or family life like for you growing up?

Dr. Harmon Martin: I'm from a small town in southwest Louisiana called Welsh, that's W-E-L-S-H, not W-E-L-C-H, Louisiana. It's 23 miles east of Lake Charles, Louisiana, and it's 50 miles from the Texas border. I grew up during the period of the segregated South, but I grew up in a very loving community. Welch is a rural community of still, to this day, only 3,500 people, a small black community, but a very insular, loving black community.

Dr. Harmon Martin: I have three siblings, two sisters and a brother, and I'm the oldest of the clan. My parents, my father, for years worked on the pipeline, and then eventually, when he died, he had his own business, and then because, according to the stories in the family, my father, my grandfather was a mechanic, and he literally passed on that gene to my father, and so eventually my father was able to start his own auto mechanic shop, and he just worked on cars for everyone. My mother started her life as a domestic. But she eventually left that, when they built a hospital in my hometown, she applied to work in the kitchen as a cook, and she became the head dietitian, as they called her "mother".

Dr. Harmon Martin: But my parents were not; they didn't have a high school education, but they had this strong burning desire for their children to be educated. And when I was in the eighth grade, I spent that time with my mother. I spent that whole year in the hospital because I had scoliosis, and I wore a cast from my neck to my waist, but, because I'd always been a good student, you know, my teacher sent my work home. But anyway, that particular year, my mother used to literally save two dollars a week in what was called a Christmas club account. I think they had those throughout the South. And, but unfortunately, I didn't have any money.

Dr. Harmon Martin: And I, and I can't prove that it was just on the black accounts, you know, accounts of black people at the bank, but she only received her, her \$100 check, you know, the 50th week of the year, no interest. But I'll never forget that day. The mailman passed, we lived right outside the city limits and delivered the check. And my mother, she was a good person. My mother called me into her bedroom, and she said, "You see this check?" And I got all excited because, keep in mind, it was two weeks before Christmas, and I'm thinking she's going to tell

me, you know, that she's going to buy me something special. And my mother said to me, this is the first down payment on your college education. I... I... I swell up every time I just recall this, all these years later. So, she decided in the... a green. Despite the fact that, you know, I'm wearing this cast, I have her courage, she was inspired, that I was going to go to college. And that was the first payment on my college education. So as a result, you know, of course I was determined that I wasn't going to ever fail my parents. You know, in high school, I graduated, of course, from Victoria; valedictorian in my class, very small class. I was student government president. I did so much in high school until when I graduated, the principal said, "I just want you guys to know that I'll never be another Shiela Harmon," you know, because he just wrote that I was involved and everything.

Dr. Harmon Martin: And, and it was really one of my mentors in high school that when I was student government president, despite my little tiny school, she took me to Southern University. She took me to the Louisiana Association of Student Government Presidents, but you know, this was, keep in mind, these are still the days of segregation. Well, the Voting Rights Act had been passed because I graduated in 1967 from high school. But anyway, so that began my, you know, I knew I was going to go to college. There was some discussion. I was going to go to college. I knew about, you know, which school in Louisiana. My mother wanted me to go to Grambling. I wanted to go to Southern and I went out. And so, I graduated.

Dr. Harmon Martin: Like I said, my, and it was a very proud day for my parents. Although I was not the first in my extended family to go to college because my mother's youngest brother, my mother was one of nine children. And presently she's the last and the only one of her siblings still with us. She's 93 and we're so blessed that she's still with us. But her two youngest brothers had an opportunity to go to college in Texas, and I remember when my uncle went to college. However, all his sisters; they used to bake cookies, and you know, put them in boxes, and he went to Jarvis Christian College, and they would send these care packages, and it really just had an indelible impression on me how they were so supportive of him going to college.

Dr. Harmon Martin: And the first time I met anyone from the continent of Africa. Was because my uncle invited three of his friends to come to Louisiana for Christmas because it was, you know, too difficult for them to go home. And that was like, it was so special in our family because we were all kids, but you know. So, then my, my mother's youngest brother went to Texas Southern, so of the grandchildren, however. Really have the family. I was the first to go to college.

Interviewer: And how were you introduced to the field of political science?

Dr. Harmon Martin: Oh, that is really interesting story for me. Despite the fact that I had been very involved in high school politics, I was also very good at the sciences, and I had gone to, we call it L-I-A-L-O, Louisiana Intercollegiate Scholastic something, something, something. I don't remember all of it. But it was a competition. You started on the parish level, and if you went on the parish level, then you competed on the state level. So, I always went in the sciences. So, of course, when I applied to college, I applied as a biology major. And but my first Sunday on Southern University campus. I was in a student union with another young lady that I had met. And these two guys walked up to us and invited us to a reception at the home of the president of the university, President Felton Clark. And of course, and they were upperclassmen, of course, we looked at them and said, yeah, right. You know, you're a freshman. You think everybody... you're trying to take advantage of you, you're scared anyway.

Dr. Harmon Martin: And anyway, they said, no, we're serious. Well, those two individuals end up being Dr. Franklin Jones, who is also a political scientist, and Dr. Sanders Anderson. They were seniors, yeah, they were, yeah, they were seniors on the Student Government Association. And so, Lydia and I finally said, okay, they seem to be okay. And we went over. And so, my first Sunday on campus, I met Dr. Clark and his wife, or anyway, of course, then they started pitching to us that we should run for the positions of freshman senators for the Student Government Association. So of course, first thing I said, you know, I'm from Welch, nobody's going to vote for me. I don't know anyone. My class was 3,500 students, the freshman class in 1967.

And I said, you know what? So, but I taught... they talked me into applying. And then the day that we had to introduce ourselves to the class, all the people who were candidates for these different positions. So, when it got my time, I was standing in the back of, I'll never forget, I was standing in the back of, oh God, I can't even think of the auditorium now. And I panicked. I said, I can't do this. I can't do this. I can't do this. And they said, "Oh yes, you can." And then they gave me this push and I was like in the center of the aisle. And so, I just walked up, and I introduced myself.

Dr. Harmon Martin: I said, "I was from Welch, Louisiana. I was a biology major." And then I said, "you know, I really would like to represent you." I gave him a little spill. I can't remember exactly. And lo and behold, I got elected. I got elected. Elsie Scott at the time was a senior and Elsie was on the Student Government Association. So anyway, I got elected, liked the campaign piece. And at the same time, I was enrolled in American government. Mr. Pinson was an incredible professor. It was, I don't know if you've ever had a professor that, he just makes the class a class and the information come alive. We were just excited to go to his class. So, but I'm still a biology major now.

Dr. Harmon Martin: In the meantime, I have an 8 o' clock biology class. I'm studying until 2 o' clock in the morning. I'm a freshman. You know, the rumor was that I had the hardest teacher in biology, that he had failed his wife and his child. So, you know, I'm just study, study, study, study. And then finally, I realized. Oh, my gosh. I don't really want to major in biology because I like this political science stuff. And plus, keep in mind, my professor had... he just... I had this wonderful experience with him. And then I also had a world history professor who was great. And I'm like, I think I'm more of a history, political science kind of person. So, I eventually, in January.

Dr. Harmon Martin: I was also in the honors program at the university. So, I just changed my major. And I served as a, you know, sophomore senator, freshman senator. And I just, you know, was very actively involved politically. I joined the sorority. Was always doing things politically. Had the wonderful opportunity. Southern University changed my life in so many ways. When I was 19, through the political science department, I studied abroad one summer in Switzerland. And I was the, well, there's only two black girls. It was an experiment in international living. And then by the time I was entering my senior year, my sorority talked me into running for Miss Southern. But I really did not want to win. I campaigned, but I didn't want to win.

Dr. Harmon Martin: And the reason why, I had received a scholarship to go to American University in D.C. in the Washington Urban Semester Program. If I had won Miss Southern, I would not have had that opportunity. So, I lost. My sorority couldn't understand why I wasn't devastated. But then I had to really reveal to them that, you know, I have this other wonderful opportunity. So, as a result, I went to American University. I did an internship with Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts. And I, until the day I returned to D.C. as a professional, he had stayed in contact with me. I went to his funeral. And that experience on Capitol Hill with Senator Brooke, I worked with... he had Delano Lewis was his legal advisor. Delano Lewis, by the time I moved to D.C. as a professional, was president of what was known as PEPCO, the big, you know, electrical power plant. It was a school company in D.C. And then this other woman, black woman, his legislative assistant; they just took me to all these meetings. They, it was just, it solidified my love for the discipline of political science. And I had the kind of experiential opportunities that, you know, I was convinced I just wanted to be a professional student in political science.

Interviewer: And so, how did you make your way to graduate school?

Dr. Harmon Martin: Okay, well, during undergraduate school, Dr. Jewel Lamar Prestige was my mentor. Now, I did not meet Jewel when I first got to Southern, because Dr. Prestige was on leave

with her last child. I remember her. I remember seeing her once pregnant. But then, you know, Dr. Edward Jackson was acting as chair. So, I really got to know Dr. Prestige during my junior year. And she was partly responsible for me going to American University that phase. The study abroad and all that was while she was away, and other people within the department. So, Dr. Prestige, you know, and you've probably heard this from me. So many of her graduates that you may have interviewed, she was an incredible mentor. She gave so much to us. And with Dr. Prestige, it wasn't just you. It was your whole orbit, your whole family, you know. And she stayed in touch. And so, of course, she also kind of dictated what schools you were going to go to.

Dr. Harmon Martin: So, I applied... oh, gosh... I applied to all these schools that she said I should apply to. And I got accepted to... some people would be surprised some of the schools I got accepted to and did not go to. Like I got accepted to the Ohio State. I got accepted to the University of Illinois. But I'm still... I'm a Southern girl. Those places are too cold. And at the time, Dr. Mack Jones, it was a really good period. But anyway, Howard University and Atlanta University had received this grant from Ford Foundation. And I got accepted at Howard also. But because I had gone to D.C. my senior year, I had such a great time. I said, oh, no. I'll never get a degree if I go to Howard.

Dr. Harmon Martin: So, anyway, I decided to go to Atlanta, which was... and it was an incredible experience. Franklin Jones and Sanders Anderson, years later, they had gone to the military because we were in school during the Vietnam War. So, although they were seniors when I was a freshman, they had gone into the military and now they were back in graduate school. So, we all were in graduate school during that period. So, I went to Atlanta University, studied under Dr. Mack Henry Jones and many others. So, that was an incredibly wonderful experience being in Atlanta with so many wonderful professors. We had such a sense of community. The first thing that I had to adjust to was that we were not to call our professors Dr. Jones or Dr. Lewis and, you know, Dr. Walton. We were to call them by their first name, you know, because it was all about... so, you know, when you've gone through a tradition at HBCU. So...

Dr. Harmon Martin: But it was a wonderful experience. And because of contacts that I already established when I was in undergraduate school, my first summer after graduate school, I went back to Washington. I did an internship in the Office of Telecommunication Policy. By this time, this was the Nixon administration. So, that summer, in fact, Dr. Prestige, she kept in contact with us. I was trying to find somewhere to stay. We just happened to have a conversation. She said, "Oh, Elsie is trying to find someone to rent her apartment because she's going to be away." You know, always that work, always linking us up, always keeping that sense of family, of her mentees. We call ourselves Jules, Jules, Jules, Jules. So, I was able to go back to Washington and do that

internship. And it was a wonderful experience. In fact, it led to what I eventually decided to write on for my master's thesis.

Interviewer: And did you complete your doctorate in Atlanta as well?

Dr. Harmon Martin: Yes, I completed my doctorate. By the time I completed my doctorate... so, we had become Clark Atlanta. Because, you know, Atlanta was just a graduate school, but the universities had merged. Yes, I did.

Interviewer: And now, can you tell us about your research trajectory? So, what was your dissertation topic? What's your current main area of focus? And were there any particular scholars whose work was influential in your thinking and research?

Dr. Harmon Martin: Okay, I had, you know, I've been reflecting. And then, I had a very interesting trajectory. And I think maybe it was because I had, I was interested in a lot of stuff. And then, when I looked at everything, I think the broad category was public policy. But, let me start with my dissertation. I wrote my dissertation looking at women in the criminal justice system. Although, as Elsie probably told you, at that time, it wasn't criminal justice. It was developing. So, it wasn't a discipline, so to speak. But it was... it wasn't really in political science. But it was a topic we studied a lot. Because, really, when I looked at my dissertation, the theoretical framework of David East's political system, it just fit. You know, anyway. So...

Dr. Harmon Martin: So, I do this dissertation in what someone might view as a topic in the area of criminal justice. But then, after that, except for, I did publish an article in one of Haynes Walton's, a book that he edited. And I'm sorry, I'm trying to remember the name... about black women. And I think I did, early in my career, I did a few articles. But then, I went in this whole different direction around public policy. So, I got hired at Federal City College in Washington, D.C. And, Federal City, eventually, Federal City, a minor's teacher's college, and Washington Technical Institute, were merged to create the University of the District of Columbia in 1978. These were the public institutions in the District of Columbia.

Dr. Harmon Martin: Most people do not realize that before the incorporation of Federal City College, there were no public institutions of higher learning in the District of Columbia. They were all private. So, you get Federal City College. So, I started at Federal City College, and the early

years, you know, of course, I was a junior faculty. And one... today as I listen to my colleagues talk about their careers in higher education, I think about how, I find myself thinking about how sometimes when you're a junior faculty, you have to learn how to say no. And, my early years, I was not very good at that. So, I found myself. I was... we started a faculty senate at Federal City. I was the representative of my department.

Dr. Harmon Martin: Now, when I entered the Department of Political Science, at that time, I was the only black woman, and there was a white woman. And all the other women... all the other were men. So, there were about maybe twelve people in our faculty. And then, two years later, the white woman left. But, so anyway, I ended up being the department representative on the senate. You know, eventually we unionized, and I... you know, so. Later in my career, I learned how to say no. But, anyway, so in terms of my research, I, when we became the University of the District of Columbia, I was the first person to bring to the university a private foundation grant. I had a Ford Foundation grant, a hundred and ninety thousand dollars. Now, this was in 1987, '86.

Dr. Harmon Martin: That was a lot of money back then. And, what I did, the proposal was, the 1988 presidential election was, you know, on the horizon. So, I literally produced four video conferences looking at the impact of the black vote on the '88 election. And, it was, at that time, you had universities across the country with cable ties, television stations, but no programming, because programming was expensive. And, there was the Black Satellite Network that existed at Howard. I subcontracted them. We had a television station at the university. So, I had these panels. In fact, Lainey Ganeer, at the time, was one of my panelists. Gwen Ifill, Ron Walters. It was just, I still have the VHS tapes, you know, of course. But, anyway, I finally, I ended up producing those programming's for 104 colleges and universities.

Dr. Harmon Martin: Because people were just, and it was free. And, so, that was my first grant. But overall I... so, I started looking at expanding the footprint of the university within D.C. government agencies. Because, after all, we... you know, we were the equivalent of a state, a state university. So, we had this Center for Applied Research and Urban Policy. And, I had brought my Ford Foundation grant through the center. So, I got to know the director, because, you know, I was a faculty person who brought some money into the center. And, so, then she invited me to be a part of... you too young to know this, but back in the 80's, early 90's, this problem of drug-affected babies. So, you know, the, they called them crack babies.

Dr. Harmon Martin: They called them, some places, border babies. There was Mother Hale out of New York who had this home for these babies. Because many of them had been abandoned in

hospitals. But, anyway, we were having this issue in the district. And we received, oh, I think it was \$350,000 at the time to do a study. So, anyway, I ended up through the center for years working on public policy, public health kind of issues. And I studied all the national programs for this particular project. Then, I worked on, for years, we did the market rate study for childcare for the District of Columbia. In fact, we did that for 12 years in the district. That was the major study we did for D.C. government.

Dr. Harmon Martin: I worked on a need assessment for children with special needs. I mean, I have, you know, I looked at it and I have all these public policies, and I said, "I like my real academic scholars." I didn't publish as much in these academic journals, but I have these public policies for children. We looked at the changing face of poverty over a 20-year period in the District of Columbia. And I ended my career last December by completing a 10-year performance evaluation for the Office of Health Care Ombudsman and Bill of Rights in the District of Columbia. It was a \$400,000 memorandum of understanding. And so, this agency had been created in 1999. The legislative mandate called for a biannual performance evaluation.

Dr. Harmon Martin: Of course, they hadn't ever done one. So, I put together a research team. We did a 10-year, and it was so well received that now the city council and the agency want us to do and continue to do it. In fact, I was on the phone this morning with the director. But in terms of my research, you know, the focus was public policy. And, as a result of that, you know, I did a lot of research focusing on public policy issues. But I also used my... how do I describe this? So, I also used the opportunities of being a faculty to go to the university to expand my knowledge about public policy. And so, from 1980 to 19... oh, really, 1983, I worked in the Reagan administration. But I worked in, I know people out around my race, because I'm a lifelong administrator of the urban mass transportation administration.

Dr. Harmon Martin: There is what is known as the intergovernmental, the Intergovernmental Personnel Act. And so, utilizing this, and this exchange program that allows you to go into government or government, you know, experts to come at universities and teach or whatever. It's this exchange kind of program. So, through that particular program, I was given the opportunity to go, to serve in a Reagan administration. And I was in the Office of Policy. And which was just really fantastic, because although I didn't know anything about a great time because it was when they were looking at new starts. They were looking at, you know, what would be the model for urban transportation in Los Angeles, for example, you know, in Miami and all these different cities. So, I had the opportunity to sit in a lot of these meetings to work with the individuals in grants. And, in fact, I discovered then that I had this colleague at the university. I did not know her, but I met her one day in a meeting at UMTA because she was representing UDC.

Dr. Harmon Martin: Well, and so, after so, I went on leave, went back to the university, continued my research, in fact, wrote an academic article around the Surface Transportation Act, which Congressman Perrin Mitchell at that time had passed, that set aside, that created one of the first set asides, minority set asides in the area of transportation. Anyway, and so, in addition to that opportunity, I served in two mayoral administrations. And so, I would go back to the university, I would get renewed, you know, because I had all this new information that I wanted to expose my students to. It was always also an opportunity resources were. And then, in 1996, I finally agreed to the request of my friend, Mayor Marion Barry, to join his administration, and I joined his ambassadors to the Office of the Mayor just doing all the international work.

Dr. Harmon Martin: I advanced trips to South Africa, a five-country trip to Africa, to China, Hong Kong. Anyway, it was a wonderful experience, and I was having a lot of fun. I was on leave from the university, and one day, I received an invitation from my dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to have lunch, and my dean had been my colleague in the Department of Psychology for years. So, I had decided I was going to ask her to extend my stay with the mayor another year, but I didn't realize that she had her own agenda, so she invited me to lunch, and she told me, it's time for you to come back to the university. And I said, oh, she said, I need you to become chair of the Department of Urban Affairs, Social Sciences, and Social Work. And my eyes stretched, and I said, chair? I don't know how to be a chair. She said, oh yes, you know how to be a chair.

Dr. Harmon Martin: So, by this time, I was, you know, we had a new mayor. Now, I was working for the new mayor, Anthony Williams, but she was like, oh, you're going to be chair of the Department of Urban Affairs, Work, Social... Social Work. And the first year was not very easy because I had been away, so there were, and there were new units. So, I remember the director of social work didn't quite like me and felt that I didn't know anything about social work. But, of course, I had to learn. I had to, you know, but non-social and I ended up social work, taking social work through that reaffirmation of accreditation twice, you know, which is very different from some other accredited programs. So, I literally served as a chair for 20 years. In 2010, I finally... the board of trustees finally accepted my position as the chair so, that was a separation created two separate departments and then, later on, they created a division.

Dr. Harmon Martin: So, I retired in 2019 as the Chair of the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences. So, throughout my career, I was offered, literally offered, the position of Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs. I turned it down because I felt that it came too early in my career as a chair person and really, once you really master the job of being a chair, you can, I think, really work well in those other positions, but I never, I never was that ambitious. I turned down being an Assistant Dean. I was perfectly happy because my first love was teaching. All while I was a Chair,

I always made sure that I had a course in my schedule. I taught from 7 to 10 o'clock on Thursday nights and because it kept me in contact with the students, what I called a real sane aspect of my job because it was my passion, the thing that I loved most about my job. So, in 2019 I stepped down as division chair and then I retired on August 15, 2023 after returning to the classroom for two years and now I'm living out the second journey of my purpose-driven life as it relates to the University of District of Columbia.

Interviewer: We're going to shift gears a little bit. What does being a black political scientist mean to you?

Dr. Harmon Martin: Being a black political scientist means, for me, it meant that I had a responsibility to give back, to serve my community. First of all, I made an early conscious decision that I wanted to teach at HBCU. I had had the exposure of a PWI in my undergrad school and in a whole lot of other circumstances. But, because, and I think it had a lot to do with the influence of my mentors and how, I remember Dr. Prestige always talked about how, you know, she knew she could become it for me. As a black political scientist, I wanted that to be my experience. And so, I made a conscious decision to stay at the University District of Columbia. And, by the way, I did teach at Howard as an adjunct during my career. But, the University District of Columbia was a different kind of experience, you know, what folks considered non-traditional students.

Dr. Harmon Martin: And, it was just, it was just an opportunity for me to give back so much of what had been given to me through my career. In graduate school, in fact, this was Dr. Mac Jones' inaugural speech as President of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists, and it was called The Responsibility of the Black Political Scientists to the Black Community. And that became so much a part of what I wanted to do. And, in fact, that was the first required reading for every student that took black politics for me. So, anyway, so... for me, it was to be able to give back, to be able to mentor, to be able to influence the next generation of political scientists, whoever they were. Because I saw my school change from, let's say, 99% African American to probably now, in terms of the political science department, 50%. But, all my students, for me, it was the student conference with me. I have a white student, I have an international student, you know, and I've taught students of all races. And I respect them, and I require everyone to respect other students' opinions in the classroom because there was a space. And, during the course of 49 years of teaching, you can imagine.

Interviewer: So, what challenges, if any, have you faced throughout your career, either due to your race, gender, or chosen through study?

Dr. Harmon Martin: Well, I think one challenge, well, initially, when I first started teaching, and because there were so many responsibilities at my university, and the type of students that we were mentoring and working with, I went through a period, well, where I felt inadequate in terms of my academic scholarship, and coming to the, you know, conferences and hearing other people, academic papers, and these theoretical great ideas. And then after a while, I just, you know, I just said, well, you know, I see myself as a scholar-activist, but I'm a different kind of scholar-activist. You know, maybe I'm not writing for the Embassy of South Africa against apartheid. You know, they were there, and they were, you know, I made sure that they... I ran a whole series on South Africa during the apartheid period, because I knew a lot of the South Africans who were in D.C. who were in exile. So... so, you know, then I just, so, but that was the initial challenge at my school, because we just didn't have the resources or the time. I started out teaching four classes, you know, every semester four classes, four credits. So, and then, of course, unfortunately, I didn't know how to say no, so it was like, where do I find the time to? But so that's one of the challenges, I think, a lot of professors, especially at HBCU feel because we can't just teach or just write.

Dr. Harmon Martin: And then, of course, even young scholars today, I mean, in all the new environments that are so different, they feel those kinds of stresses and pressures. Lack of resources was another challenge throughout my tenure. You know, it's a state institution, our budget is determined by Congress and then the budget of the university by the city. We went through a lot, we didn't have the resources to come to our academic conferences or something that I always wanted to do and always did, found a way out of no way to do, was to take students, especially in-coach. So, as a result of that, and I know that was a major challenge, now that I'm retired, what I'm doing, I created a pay-it-forward fund for political science students. So, before I left the university, I asked the Office of the Registrar to give me the list of all political science graduates from 1990 to 2023. And I convinced my dean to let me create a fund under the College of Arts and Sciences. And since November, I've been finding my students. I'm in contact with a lot of them, though, a lot, you know.

Dr. Harmon Martin: When I retired in May, I cried because I couldn't believe all the students that I had taught, and he came back to D.C. He said, "I wouldn't have missed it, Dr. Martin." But anyway, I've created this fund and I've contacted my alums, and the first email I sent out, one of my 1992 graduates, I haven't seen him since 1992, he donated \$500 to the foundation. So, long story short, I've raised \$25,400 since November because, on February 6th, when I was conferred with professor in maritime, one of my students showed up at the, um, for the event and he asked to speak and he got before the board and he pledged \$10,000 for the next political science students. And he said to the board, the only way you will get this money is if Dr. Harmon Martin administers it because she will do for political science students what she did for me. So, and I've gotten that

kind of reaction. I don't remember all the things that they tell me I did for them because I was just doing my job. I was, you know, um, and, uh, so I don't remember all these things, but the important thing I realize now is that they do remember. And that, um, so this political science graduate is a multi-millionaire. The week before I left, another political science graduate asked me to come by his office and we said that he sent \$2,000 to the foundation. And so now I have... I'm receiving emails saying, "I heard that you're raising money and you haven't asked me for a donation. Will you please send me to DT?"

Dr. Harmon Martin: That's a good place to be. So that's what, um, I didn't realize it at the time of my retirement speech, but I told them that I was preparing for the second phase of my purpose-driven life. And that, um, gosh, I read them a quote from Mother Teresa, which I can't remember the exact words right now, but the essence was, you know, it wasn't... it's not about how much you serve, but the fact that you serve. It's something like that. It's a... paraphrasing. And so, um, anyway, over the summer, I just, and, you know, as I was preparing to... I'm like, okay, I'm really going to do this. Um, and folks were saying, well, why don't you have all this leave? Why don't you just take a year's leave and then you make it 50 years? But I don't claim what I'm not experiencing. You know, I don't want a year of sick leave because I'm not experiencing that. And I don't want to claim that. So that's why I have that one I can give them... that one year to have... that one year with my mom because I don't know how long I have her. So that's why I am...

So, in your view, what is necessary in order to further diversify the discipline and make it more equitable and welcoming to scholars of color in the profession?

Dr. Harmon Martin: Well, I think, and I've looked at, well, first of all, in terms of the American Political Science Association, I really appreciate the effort that has been made because I've been able to view it over a long period of time. And because I was on the status on the Committee of Blacks probably in the late 90's, okay? So, I've seen that progress and, of course, I remember when Dr. May King was a staff person there because when I came to Washington in '74, Dr. May King was also a major force behind our graduate assistantship program. Once again, I did not know her plans for me because a year after I arrived here, she moved to Nigeria and she said, "I need you to start organizing the fundraisers for the graduate assistantship program." So many people in NCOBPS don't know that I was president of the graduate assistantship program for 10 years and I used to have these huge receptions, the major fundraiser.

Dr. Harmon Martin: We would honor African American politicians where we always had the event at an African or Caribbean embassy linking to the U.S. the first time I went to the U.S. And I

remember the first time I went to the U.S. and I remember the first speech at the Montreal APSA meeting and I still have a copy of that in my files. I probably need to tell Kim that because maybe that might be something that she might want for APSA files. So, I remember, and I sent a student in the early years of the program who is a PhD Harvard graduate in political science, and it was as a result of the Ralph Bunche experience. But I took a look at the more recent recipients and one thing that immediately caught my attention was that there were only two HBCU and then 20 students in the 2023 class. But I was proud to see that 50% of the class were Spanish-speaking students with last names from what I could tell. But I think that it could be more of an effort to reach out to HBCU's and try to get more HBCU students into that particular pipeline because when I come to NCOBPS and I see for years Jackson State, HBCU, I feel that they would benefit tremendously, and they could bring a lot to the program Bunche.

Dr. Harmon Martin: So if I think that's one area that I would ask whoever to just take another look at and see how maybe you can target the professors and say "Hey, because they're at HBCU's and I know they're doing a thousand things, because I've already told you that we just have so much work to do, but I would like, I think, that is a wonderful program." It's been a wonderful pipeline for increasing people of color in a discipline where continues to reach out to young scholars. So, you know, I would recommend to do what you're doing. Kim has been just awesome in that position. You know, I've had Kim come to the University of the District of Columbia as my you know, Pi Sigma Alpha speaker when we, you know, when we induct students. So, I just continue doing what you're doing. I think these interviews are very good and especially when we assign our students these kind of research projects and say, okay, I want you to go find out about this professor.

Interviewer: Thank you. So, this is the last question. Now, you've held a number of leadership positions in the profession over the years, including as former president. What, in your view, makes a good leader?

Dr. Harmon Martin: You said, including what president? No, I've never been a president. Several people were shocked about it. And I said, that's because they didn't realize that I had served all that time as secretary. Well, I served as secretary for eight years. But prior to that, I had been the GAP president for ten years. We had all these major fundraisers had to manage them. So, all of that was the first thing, I think, in academia. I mean, I have to learn, well, in terms of being a chair and starting off with the kind of challenges I had. The fact that I was a political scientist, but I had faculty representing seven different disciplines. So, the first thing I had to do, I had to be a good listener, I had to be patient, which is something that I've always prayed for and still pray for to this day because I'm not the most patient person in the world.

Dr. Harmon Martin: But, I think, you just have to be patient, and you also always have to work toward catching more flies with honey than with vinegar. And, I always say that was one of the ways that I moved my department of ethnic tribes, and if you studied African politics or any kind of politics where you're dealing with different ethnic groups, you know that... you know, developing nations, you have to move them toward nations or other things which is a very, very difficult process. It can be a very difficult process. But, and the other thing, you have to feel like I'm not always right, that they have good ideas. You have to make people feel inclusive, that they are part of. Now, I did something that I would not recommend other people do, it was just me and my understanding of the importance of food in our culture. Okay?

Dr. Harmon Martin: And my faculty, they'll tell you, I'm chair, I prepared lunch. Because you build such a strong sense of community around food. I'm from Louisiana, I like cooking Creole food. And so, when I needed someone to, each of these programs to get together and start drafting the program they, we were a sense of community, they worked on, you know, and they accepted the challenges, they accepted the criticism, the ways we could improve, because I always say, what are the ways we can improve your academic program? So, I think building a sense of community, if you can, I know that in all units it may not be possible, but you really have to recognize the self-worth of every individual in your unit.