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Ann De Falco

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Interviewee: Ann De Falco
Interviewer: Brendan Plann-Curley
Interview Date: July 10, 2019

Plann-Curley: This is Brendan Plann-Curley. I am here with Ann De Falco in the Birnbaum Library at Pace University. It is July 10, 2019. Ann, when did you start working at Pace?

De Falco: Hello, Brendan. Hi. I started working at Pace in 1998.

Plann-Curley: 1998. And who hired you?

De Falco: Elisabeth Birnbaum. Elisabeth Birnbaum was not related to the Birnbaum Library.

Plann-Curley: Right.

De Falco: Although on my first interview...

Plann-Curley: Was it called the Birnbaum Library?

De Falco: Henry Birnbaum Library back in the day, yes it was. She was the librarian in charge of the Circulation Department, and that's where my first position was, the four to eight PM. I was a brand new single mother at the time, and those hours were very appealing to me.

Plann-Curley: When you started you were working part-time at the Circulation Desk under Elisabeth.

De Falco: Yes.

Plann-Curley: Who was the Library Director at that time?

De Falco: Mel Isaacson.

Plann-Curley: Mel Isaacson.

De Falco: Yes.

Plann-Curley: And the University Librarian?

De Falco: Mr. Murdoch.

Plann-Curley: Murdoch. Because Birnbaum had retired by that point.

De Falco: Yes.

Plann-Curley: And the library had been named after him before that?

De Falco: Yes.

Plann-Curley: Did you ever meet him? Was he still a presence?

De Falco: No, I never met him, although I believe he had visited once during my time, my early time...

Plann-Curley: You started in 1998...

De Falco: ... and Murdoch as well. He did not frequent visiting here. It was a surprise when he did come.

Plann-Curley: He was based in Pleasantville.

De Falco: Yes.

Plann-Curley: Before you started working here, what did you know about Pace?

De Falco: Pace University. Well, I do live in the neighborhood as well. This is my community. It's called the Civic Center. I'm very active in public service. On the community board. I serve as well on the school boards in the area for CB-1, Community Board 1, which Pace is a part of. So, Pace had a Little School, and it was very popular in the community. It was a little pricey, but it had a good reputation, and parents were excited to send their children to Pace Little School. And they moved out, of course. They're on a small block off of Fulton Street, privately owned now. But it drew people to Pace.

Plann-Curley: The Pace Little School.

De Falco: Yes. Absolutely.

Plann-Curley: What did you say this neighborhood is called? The Civic Center?

De Falco: Civic Center.

Plann-Curley: Do you know the story behind that?

De Falco: That's ancient times when they zoned the city. We're actually part of City Hall. Just like today is a special event, the women's soccer parade.

Plann-Curley: Right.

De Falco: Congratulations to them. All parades happen at our front door step, so for generations we've been locking the front door when we have an event, although it would be nice to have a camera and access to all of our computers so we can watch events at City Hall since we're so close.

Plann-Curley: That's true.

De Falco: And actually they can be used in the classrooms...

Plann-Curley: That would be nice.

De Falco: ... as lessons and in the library, we have an archivist. We can have archived files of the events around City Hall because we are a part of it.

Plann-Curley: Right. So there's the University, City Hall, there's Police...

De Falco: Plaza.

Plann-Curley: Plaza.

De Falco: Right. Civic Center. The courthouses.

Plann-Curley: Right. The courthouses too.

De Falco: This is historic for courthouses. Visits. Famous people. Infamous people.

Plann-Curley: So, you knew of Pace because of the Little School. Did you have friends whose kids...

De Falco: Many. And I was young. It was in the 60s. I grew up in the neighborhood as well, in this community. There were no schools, no public schools. Actually, no private schools either. We had to go outside of the community for our education, and Pace was the only visible entity other than Wall Street. It was all about Wall Street. This is the first community that actually had elevator buildings back in the day, and it became popular. And then after 9/11, they rebuilt downtown with a lot of financial incentives for builders and rent breaks for people to move downtown. They made it very attractive for people to stay in New York City.

Plann-Curley: Your sister worked in the library as well. Which one of you started here first?

De Falco: I started first. Mr. Isaacson had a secretary, Yvette. Yvette moved downstairs to work for Acquisitions with Adele [Artola]. She had left, and my sister used to work in the New York Jewelry Exchange on Canal Street for many years. She was with one of the watch companies for many, many years there. Three generations of the Gelbers had their business on Canal Street. And she applied for the acquisitions position, and it was closer to home, so it was a nicer option...

Plann-Curley: Did she live across the street?

De Falco: She lived here as well, yes. Not any longer. They moved away, but, yes, she lived near as well. Some of us still do. We had Madeline [Ricco], and Elisabeth Birnbaum [former

Birnbaum Library staff members] who lived there as well. She's still there. I actually saw her today.

Plann-Curley: And Mrs. Q. [Quebenco] Didn't she live there?

De Falco: Yes, Mrs. Q., that's right.

Plann-Curley: So, your first position was the Part-Time Evening Circulation...

De Falco: Yes, Assistant.

Plann-Curley: Which other departments have you worked in?

De Falco: I then was transferred to the Periodicals Department, which of course no longer exists, and that was that same year.

Plann-Curley: Was that your first full-time position?

De Falco: Yes, it was offered as full-time. I started in February of '98. By September of '98 I was already in Periodicals. It was a full-time position, and the woman was leaving, and I was told that they were watching my performance, and they thought that I'd be the perfect fit for it. And they were right. Boy, did I love it. Periodicals was fun – new information, new journals every day, weekly, monthly, all topics: autism, chemistry, art, you name it. It was just so educational for me as well just cataloging all those materials. And because there were dailies, I was cataloging daily, weekly, monthly. We bound material as well. We would save what we spent our most money on and not just toss the journals in the garbage. We would bind them and they became part of our bound collection.

Plann-Curley: Was the bound collection inside this room as well at that time?

De Falco: Inside the CLR, yes. Well, now it's the CLR [Collaborative Learning Room]. It was inside what was called the Periodicals Department along with bound materials and everyday newspapers. Then we would sell some of the materials to universities outside of the U.S. We had a company that would come in and meet with me a couple of times a year, and we had prices for bundles.

Plann-Curley: So, things that you weren't going to bind and hold on to?

De Falco: Right, we would sell, and they would sell. Two companies would come and clean us out.

Plann-Curley: Was ILL [interlibrary loan] up here too?

De Falco: Actually, I used to fill those orders. Any periodical requests in ILL were filled by myself and the periodicals staff. So, I would get all periodical requests on a daily basis, and then we would split them up according to who was working that day. And then when I moved

downstairs when they disassembled the Periodicals Department, they gave those responsibilities solely to ILL.

Plann-Curley: What kind of equipment did you have at that time?

De Falco: Reader printers. The old reader printers that were not digital and you could not save information on them. They would jam quite often. But we had a contract with a repair company for our copiers, and they would send someone on a regular basis to repair when they broke down.

Plann-Curley: This room that we're in now was the Periodicals Room. Do you remember when it transitioned to being the Collaborative Learning Room? Was it a gradual thing?

De Falco: No, Periodicals just changed like that [snaps fingers]. They brought Periodicals down to the circulation desk, so all tickets to borrow periodicals had to go through circ. Some of the bound material was boxed and stored. Some of it stayed on the shelf, some of it left the collection. And this has been an ongoing process for space. But even at the time, I don't want to forget that the District Attorney's Office would come on a regular basis to use our microfilm and our microfiche. And then some outside companies would come as well to read their slides. A lot of their payroll was on microfiche slides, and they would come in and read certain documents. So, it was much busier back in the day.

Plann-Curley: Yes. We don't get too many people from outside of Pace coming here anymore.

De Falco: No.

Plann-Curley: How did you feel about the transition from the Periodicals Room to the Collaborative Learning Room.

De Falco: Gosh. I love change. I like to roll with the change. I think we need to follow the needs of the students and their questions every single day and analyze that on a regular basis. Not because we're not doing a good job, but to serve them better and to have better use of our time here. So, the worst part of the change for me was when it was in the construction transition because I was downstairs, not working in the public area, and I am not comfortable behind the scenes. I just didn't want to catalog. I wanted to help serve people and help them find books. I helped Dr. Chapman [faculty member] today, who I've known for many years. He was frustrated today searching on one of the Apple computers. I'm not sure if he was not familiar with Apple or if their system was difficult for him. But it brings pleasure to me when our patrons get the service that they come for. You don't want to see anyone frustrated trying to get material that they need to get work done. I like to help all of my students get A's. I tease them about it. "How can I help you get an A. What do you need today? What can I help you with? How can we get that A?"

Plann-Curley: Do they come back?

De Falco: They tell me that they got those A's, they do! It's been shared many times. I get little notes on my desk sometimes if I'm not there. I've helped with ground projects before that have been very successful. One in particular that I can remember was about charter schools and the

truth about the funding of charter schools and what's going on with that. So, it was a very detailed project, and a lot of people don't know about what's happening with those public funds and how private entities are controlling what was supposed to be a public entity forever and how they're dissipating and people's public funds are being manipulated and the public spaces are being manipulated. So, what are we getting as citizens? What are your tax dollars paying for? But it is topics like that I'm privy to that I was raised knowing about. And I worked in a volunteer industry, so I had it with my grandfather and my grandmother who were in low level politics. And then I kind of followed through. I never wanted to run for office, but I was often asked if I wanted to be the downtown Democratic leader or work in the councilwoman's office or...

Plann-Curley: And you're really involved in community service.

De Falco: For many, many years. But I like being the chairperson of the committees because it gave me a middle position. I was able to work with the boards and the city and at the same time still be hands-on with the community and have those one-on-one conversations with the community about what's going on. I didn't want to be removed from it.

Plann-Curley: Talk a little bit more about that and your service award, the Jefferson Award.

De Falco: Yes, yes. I was nominated for the Thomas Jefferson Award for public service. It's the highest honor of public service achievable in the United States. It comes with a beautiful plaque and an essay contest. The winner of the essay contest was chosen to go to Washington to receive their award. At that time Obama was President and Mrs. Michelle Obama was our First Lady. The Thomas Jefferson Award was started by Jackie Onassis. She was the first First Lady to start this program looking to honor and recognize people in community service. So, it was really, truly an honor, and I don't know to this day who put my name in the hat for the award because it's usually a bunch of names that are reviewed and so many people do so many amazing things. I helped some, and I helped build schools and parks in the area. I sat on the committee with the Speaker of the House and the Board of the Department of Education with Dennis Walcott and just at the table when decision making about public school funds or parks were part of the discussion. I even went into architecture meetings in the planning stages and had some input on how I thought the parks should be and what hours they should be open and if they should have attendants or not. So, it was a beautiful journey. But the Thomas Jefferson Award was in 2007 or 2009, I don't remember, clearly [awarded for the year 2008-2009]. But I was surprised because I don't know to this day who nominated me. They have a little ceremony every year.

Plann-Curley: How is Pace involved in it? Are there people from Pace each year who are....?

De Falco: Yes, all universities have access to submissions. I don't think every one participates. I think it depends on your university. Yes. Because it's countrywide. You're in this pool. That essay contest is countrywide. You're up against so many people who do amazing things.

Plann-Curley: That's great.

De Falco: Yes, it is. You meet a lot of amazing people doing public service.

Plann-Curley: On the topic of that and downtown Manhattan – you’ve live here your whole life – talk about some of the changes to the neighborhood/

De Falco: 9/11 really was the big change. People say that all the time. It changed life for everyone. And when they sent therapists here at work and to my children’s school, they knew they were going to need to help others through this process. But at the same time, I was told that it’s also affecting them. So for the first time, the therapists that were sent to the places to help others, this incident was affecting them as well. I don’t think anyone was exempt from 9/11’s repercussions. Life changed. How we did business changed. What we did for business changed. International business changed. There was a lot of police presence, blockages of streets, no water, no lights. The Stock Exchange was down for a couple of days – I don’t think more than two or three. These wires above ground with these plastic covers that you can walk over, which were also very dangerous, because downtown was hot-wired on top of the streets. But there were fires burning underneath. And the pocket fires from 9/11 burned for months. Every time they cleaned out more debris, there was more smoke and little, low fires glistening underground in the subway system. And then we had Sandy [Hurricane Sandy, 2012] on top of that. Downtown is sinking. The more they build, the more we sink. And Uptown is a little higher. It scares me how much they continue to build knowing this. And the new towers are all 100 stories and up. There’s nothing going up under 97 stories anymore.

Plann-Curley: Right. After Sandy, the Seaport was wiped out, but they build it all back up again.

De Falco: I guess. And I hope they did it well. But the lighthouse on Water Street is where the land line ends, so anything after the lighthouse is landfill. I have family members who work for the Water Department, and they said when they went under the ground one time on Peck Slip and found a ship under there. They know there’s a ship under there. Already. Historic news.

Plann-Curley: You mentioned that when you were growing up there were no schools down here, there weren’t many residents, it was just Wall Street.

De Falco: It was Wall Street.

Plann-Curley: When did that begin to change? Was it gradual?

De Falco: ’65, ’68, ’69. They started to build buildings down this way.

Plann-Curley: Residential?

De Falco: Yep. My plaza was the first, Southbridge, and then west was Independence Plaza, which is very similar in style. Both communities have parks and garages for cars and supermarkets attached to the building. They really made it a community, but they left out the schools. They left out the library. They left out the supermarket. We had these little accommodation supermarkets, really tiny, little supermarkets where you could get a few things, but no market. Seven years ago, they moved the market and took over space, and now the market is three stories. It’s huge. It has hot food. It has a basement. It has seating upstairs.

Plann-Curley: Is that the one on Fulton?

De Falco: It's a superstore. There's seating upstairs to eat, there's a first floor, there's a basement.

Plann-Curley: Also on the ground floor of your building there's a bar and a diner, too, right? Are there other businesses?

De Falco: Yes. Those have been there. We had a drycleaner. There's even a veterinarian.

Plann-Curley: Is there a daycare there?

De Falco: There's a daycare as well, yes. That's what communities were built for: you could have your needs met. But that's one of the reasons why I was on all of these committees. When I had children, I wanted to fix the world. I think it happens to a lot of parents. You can't just save your own child. You have to save everyone's child. There's no going at it alone. It's a village. You have to take the whole village with you.

Plann-Curley: So, a lot of your activism has been about getting more public services in the neighborhood, right?

De Falco: Specifically for children. I didn't concentrate on seniors. I haven't gotten there yet. Maybe one day I'll work on senior needs. But as a mother, not having a park to go to, I had to go west, and not having a school, I had to go to private schools. 234 [P.S. 234 Independence School] is on Warren and Chambers streets and they opened their doors to us but only after so much fighting and activist work. It took us years to be zoned for that school. We were relentless – we didn't give up as a parent group. And the schools that I helped build in the Gehry Building [New York by Gehry at 8 Spruce Street], Gehry gave back that school because they got a tax break on building on public space. My children were too old to go to those schools, but I stayed on those committees. I saw that through to fruition; also the one on Peck Slip. The post office moved out. My committee went after that. I was the chairperson for the Youth and Education Committee for CB-1, and Paul Hovitz was my co-chair, and the two of us went after all of these properties. We said, "Oh, no. We're going to bring that to the DOE [Department of Education]. We're going to have them control that property." We had plans. And the influx of people moving in and having families, it was proof that not everybody is single. Now the two schools that were built down here on the east side are already full, and there are more residential buildings going up. So, the DOE has to reorganize, but that's how you make things happen in your community. You go to your community board, you put it on the agenda, you ask them to invite city leaders in from those departments so that you can get work done. And we were effective. So, I would suggest that to anyone. Start and don't stop. That stop sign [the crosswalk near the 3 Spruce Street entrance to Pace University], I'm so proud of my stop sign. I had it painted between here and the hospital [New York-Presbyterian Lower Manhattan Hospital]. It was just before the school opened, and there was no talk of the street signage. So I had a meeting, invited the DOE in and asked them to please put the sign in. I said, "Not only is the school going to open.

There's a special needs District 75 school in that building on the floor as well. So special needs buses were going to come to that stop.

Plann-Curley: On the ground floor of the Gehry Building?

De Falco: Right, as well as the hospital's main entrance, which is in the middle of the courtyard. The Gold Street entrance to the hospital is the emergency entrance. And yet Pace was right across the street and people were using it as a walkway, anyway. So, you had all these pregnant women using the hospital, especially from Chinatown. This is a popular hospital for pregnant women that live in the area. There was no crosswalk, so I'm very proud every time I walk over it, drive over it, I actually have a little grin on my face because there's billions of people that cross it and it makes me happy that I was able to make it safer for everyone who walks through.

Plann-Curley: So, that was one of the things that you advocated for?

De Falco: Yes.

Plann-Curley: What was there before the Gehry Building?

De Falco: It was a parking lot, and the hospital used it, but it was public space that is assigned for public usage. It was not supposed to be sold to a private builder. So, when they sold it to Gehry under the Bloomberg Administration [Michael Bloomberg, mayor of New York City from 2001-2013], he got a tax break. He wasn't supposed to go so high. We fought over the 90 stories. We didn't win, and now if you notice, there's a trend. Ever since the Gehry Building got approved, all these 100 story buildings are going up like hot cakes. But we knew that once they passed it, City Planning, it was going to set a trend. That's why we didn't want to do it. But they gave back. Gehry gave back. He built the school, a state of the art school with a beautiful theater. It has perks that most public schools don't have. But it's a small school, which is nice as well. I'm not sure if it's over 400 children, but it's considered a smaller school as opposed to Peck Slip [P.S. 343], which is the old post office building that has many stories. It holds maybe 700 kids.

Plann-Curley: How do you feel that Pace fits in to the downtown community as a neighbor?

De Falco: It fits in. It could be a better neighbor, but I say that about everyone. Pace has the theater. I know a lot of residents use the theater.

Plann-Curley: The Schimmel.

De Falco: Right. The Schimmel Theater. I think there could be more usage of the Schimmel Theater. Pace is a rental space for events. It can be used more as a rental space for the community as well. The Community Board needs space every so many weeks. We rotate our monthly meetings, our full board meetings, so that community members can attend. And that's sometimes in the firehouse, it's sometimes in St. John's, it's sometimes at Pace, according to who can lend the space out. And you're creating future patrons. You had a Little School, and you're in the neighborhood and you have a theater. You're just creating future patrons if you

participate and open your doors when there are street festivals. It's nice to have a university in the neighborhood. NYU owns all of The Village. We have Pace downtown.

Plann-Curley: Do you feel that residents downtown generally have a favorable opinion of Pace?

De Falco: Absolutely, absolutely. I think being around students and education is always favorable. It's better than having bars, it's better than having clubs, it's better than...

Plann-Curley: And it's provided jobs as you were saying for a number of people who live in your building.

De Falco: Yes! Yes it has.

Plann-Curley: You mentioned 9/11 earlier. You were here on that date, right? You want to talk about that?

De Falco: Sure. It changed everyone's life. 9/11. The building shook. Vibrated. Literally. You could feel it like an earthquake. A deep earthquake. And a fast, 'shooka shooka'. The windows, the glass windows, and your cheeks, and the skin on your arms, literally penetrated.

Plann-Curley: That was early in the morning. You must have just arrived.

De Falco: Yes. I had early drop off for my children at school, and I started at eight in the morning. I had dropped them off at 7:45. They had played games before the line up of the other kids. It was designed for working parents. And as soon as I got in, I wasn't here but a few minutes. I just ran right back over. Gladys [Gonzalo] was here at the time, other people were looking through the windows. I don't even remember looking, I just remember going, "Oh gosh!"

Plann-Curley: Were you in here – was this the Periodicals Room?

De Falco: Yes. This was the periodicals room. We were already up here. Yes. This is where I felt the vibration. And I have no side windows, so I can't even see the Trade Center. You'd have to have an office that faced that area. But I just knew that I needed to get my children. I just knew that it was awful enough not to leave them where they were. So I ran back across City Hall, and there was all this smoke. Not the smoke from where the buildings fell, but the original black burning smoke that was billowing this way and it was getting worse and worse and worse. People were jumping from the windows in the building. Particles were flying. So, I remember with my children trying to stay on the south side of the street, running, so that the flying particles would hit over us. Just weird. And it was packed. I remember going in the opposite direction and there were no cars. It froze. There were billions of people on the street and cars could not drive. They were walking to safety. Everyone was evacuating, walking towards the bridge. So, I was walking with that. And yet officials and people in uniform and undercover people with badges were all running in the opposite direction, trying to run *to* it. So, we were in the middle of all that. Just *billions* of people in the streets.

Plann-Curley: Did you know that a plane had hit one of the buildings?

De Falco: When I got to the children's school I did. And they had them separated, because they were on Warren and Chambers and Greenwich [Streets]. And building 7 or building 9 of the Trade had gas tanks underneath. Several spots around Manhattan have fuel tanks underground. And I know there were explosions, and there was water filling up in the basement. The lights had gone out, so they were trying to get the kids away from seeing it as well. They pulled all the shades down, and they tried to bring them all into rooms that were opposite the viewing side. Parents were running and freaking out. The principal kept saying, and others, "Calm down, calm down, just get your children, find the room that they're in." I wanted to take other peoples' children, but I did not because I didn't know if parents were running there. Phones were not working. All towers were down in this area. What's really bizarre about it is, outside of this area – New Jersey, Connecticut, or even on 78th street – life was normal. No one was affected until later on, till it trickled. But they were having lunch like a normal day in certain places where...

Plann-Curley: But even in the immediate aftermath of the first plane hitting you lost cell reception...

De Falco: No television, no cell. Computers were down. Pace was actually down for a while because they had us come back to work. I'm not sure how they were contacting people. I don't even remember how I was contacted. I think someone saw it on the news channel and shared it with me because we didn't have TV. Someone that I had bumped into said, "Oh, I saw it on the news, Pace is going back." I'm like, "Oh really?!" They had no way of contacting me. No mail, no phone, no computer. So, when I finally went back, we still didn't have computers. So, we started back here with no computers.

Plann-Curley: How long was that? Was it approximately a week or so?

De Falco: A good week or so. Maybe two. I did speak to representatives on the Pleasantville campus. I had to call in my situation, my living conditions. I had no water and no light, and my children had no school, and I didn't know what I was going to do until officials came up and told us what was going on. So, Pace was very, very helpful. The Pleasantville campus was very helpful with my experience, but when I came back to *this* campus my supervisor was Adele Artola, and she wanted to know when I was going to "make up my time" when I used to drop off my children in the morning. School was on 14th street and there was no service past Canal Street. So I would have to take them, walk them to Canal street, get on some sort of public transportation to get to 14th street and then come back to Canal street and walk from Canal street back downtown just to get to work. Now if you were coming from out of state, or a different borough, they had special buses that would drop you at City Hall. So the people that actually came from an outer borough had an easier time getting to work than I did crossing three streets. I had to show ID, you can't walk this way, you can't go that way. And every day it changed. This street's working today, it's not tomorrow. And they were pulling debris from the other side, and first they were just pulling it and dropping it east, pulling it and dropping it east, two blocks away because they needed to get to the core of the problem, and they didn't have time to take the debris and disperse of it. So, then the debris was again picked up from our blocks and transported to places in Staten Island for reviewing and testing. And then we asked for the trucks to be

watered because the dust was flying around even more. And we asked them before they left with the debris to hose it down so that started to happen. A lot of diseases, a lot of people today have different kinds of cancers because of it.

Plann-Curley: Yes. So, how long did it take before there was any kind of normalcy?

De Falco: The February after, the children went back to their original school.

Plann-Curley: How old were your children?

De Falco: Four and five. Four and five. He was in pre-K; she was in first grade. It was his first time in school, because he was in pre-K for half a day. So, he was in his first full day experience. It was the third day of school. So, for him it was really difficult.

Plann-Curley: Do they still remember?

De Falco: Of course. The school brought in therapists on their own. They knew that they were going to have to talk to the children about how this was going to affect them through the years, and how to prepare them for the initial trauma and back to normalcy. We have a new normal. They called it the “new normal.” But my daughter’s class, they kept the grades – K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 – so my daughter was with her same group. She knew the kids in her group. So, she had a little easier time than he did. His was all brand new: brand new teacher, brand new students, brand new classroom. She at least walked in and said, “Hi! I see Elliott.” (Laughs.)

Plann-Curley: How has security changed since 9/11?

De Falco: Oh Gosh! Security has changed.

Plann-Curley: Both in the general area, or specifically at Pace.

De Falco: I think we became a policing city. Police park everywhere. Firemen are allowed to park on sidewalks anytime they want, and I think they took advantage a lot and still do. It needs to be corrected. I know there are some emergencies but they have too much privilege. Now that you can’t use the sidewalks, and it’s years later and they still have cars on the sidewalks that are not safe. And if you have a stroller or a wheelchair, you don’t have access to those sidewalks. But what really changed security here at Pace, was the active shooter!

Plann-Curley: And that was in September of 2017.

De Falco: Okay. We had no plan here. So, I know our Security Director was actually let go during that time. The schools are a huge target throughout the country, so I think every university was supposed to have a shooter plan. Now, there was no actual evidence here of any shooting at Pace University, thank goodness!

Plann-Curley: So what actually happened was that some student was wearing a belt that had some ammo on it or something. I guess it’s something you can buy at Hot Topic or something

like that. Some student saw him in the bathroom and thought that he was loading a weapon or something.

De Falco: And called 911. Did not call Pace Security. Called 911.

Plann-Curley: Right. So that triggered...

De Falco: So that triggered it. But it was, for everyone, a real experience. Although it was not a real shooter, it was a real experience. And a real drill. A live drill.

Plann-Curley: Because it was communicated to us as...

De Falco: To the whole community! What happened was, I wound up calling my supervisor, who didn't know, because I got a call from my family outside because of the school across the street and because of the hospital. I was told they had parents on lockdown in the hospital not letting them in the children's school, the Spruce Street School, because of the shooter that we had. She said, "There's a shooter in your campus. Do you know this?" And I'm like, "No one told me." Our Security was the last to know while the other school and the hospital were on lockdown. And it's a conversation I did have with Security later on, just because I felt the need to share. Every site needs an evacuation site. And when my kids were in grade school I had come to Richard Abbinanti, who was the Pace Security Director at the time. He was an excellent, excellent director. The man knew his stuff. And I asked him, I said, "Our school wants to know if we can use Pace as an escape site? In case there's an emergency there." So, it was agreed upon. And it went formally in the papers. So where would Pace's site be? Pace needed a site too. If there's an emergency, where do we go? But the thing is, with 9/11, everyone needed an evacuation site, us and them, so it was a matter of where was the safest place to go. So, we opened our doors. Pace opened our front doors to many thousands of people running.

Plann-Curley: On the day of 9/11?

De Falco: Yes, that really weren't ready to cross the bridge, or weren't strong enough to cross the bridge, or needed a bathroom. We opened our doors, and that was the right thing to do. But now when you're talking about the shooter incident, and I had that conversation with Security, and I said we should be neighbors with the hospital and the school. Our Security team should be friends, they should be speaking to one another, we should have a conducive plan if anything happens to these three entities. I'm not sure where it went, but I know as a community activist, and as a resident, as a human, because people come here and they work here, and they don't live here, and they still need the same safety as the people who live here.

Plann-Curley: Now today when you come to campus, you show your ID. Was that always the case?

De Falco: You did have to show your ID. If you walked in three days in a row, you didn't have to flash, but I did. I liked to flash, I didn't want to feel like I was sneaking in the building, but now you have to scan, which is also nice. We scan, you scan in, so they know if you're active, and they know if you're not. And if you have a guest, like always, you stop with your guest at the desk. You get a pass, the information goes into a computer, so they know who's in the

building, which makes sense. If there's an emergency in the building, they have to know who was in here. You can't just tell people, "Oh, go ahead. Go on in." That's when you have unaccountable human lives when there's tragedy.

Plann-Curley: So, swiping your ID is one of the new changes since the most recent renovation of this building and 41 Park Row. Have there been other major renovations that you can recall since you started?

De Falco: No, not at all. No. In fact, it was one of the pet peeves of the library.

Plann-Curley: This was a long time coming?

De Falco: It had not had any renovations for over 15 years. Like zero.

Plann-Curley: The library?

De Falco: Yes. We hadn't seen any funds come this way. And I also think it's part of the management team. You know you submit funding, project funding, and if it doesn't get chosen one year, you know, sometimes they drop it. But that's not what executive offices should do. They should continue to submit, and add changes, and continue to submit until their project *is* accepted, or have the data, the measurable data necessary to ask for the funding to make those changes. And I think we have it. I've done service for all my time here and I have all data to prove that this department is well needed and used.

Plann-Curley: Well, the library wasn't part of this most recent campus renovation. What's even changed?

De Falco: In the library?

Plann-Curley: I know we got new carpeting.

De Falco: New carpeting! And we got chairs!

Plann-Curley: And we lost some of our space.

De Falco: We lost space.

Plann-Curley: The Fishbowl was created.

De Falco: We lost space, yes we did, which is not really a good thing. I guess it's good and bad if it's used for the right reasons. I mean, the library could have managed that too and held conferences and book signings and other events in there.

Plann-Curley: Or even the room that we're in now [the Collaborative Learning Room] was renovated, right?

De Falco: This was renovated when they dissembled periodicals, when they knew they weren't going to use periodicals anymore. There was money put aside for this. And that was at the end of Mel [Isaacson]'s term, but I don't think that was a library decision per se. I think, yes, they knew they were getting rid of periodicals but it was a University decision. I think Pleasantville had a lot of input because they were always ahead of us in the changes that were made. They had a laptop system first,

Plann-Curley: The Pleasantville library?

De Falco: Yes, a rental system first, and then they brought it here.

Plann-Curley: And so the thinking behind this space was be that it would be a technology and collaborative...

De Falco: Right. Tech space.

Plann-Curley: Student space.

De Falco: We were so behind the times with technology and how we were serving our students with tech. So, this became our tech room. And they love it, just the way it's designed. The cubby seating, and having Macs and PC's in the room, having printing capabilities, teleconference rooms, a huge smartboard, another giant TV for group projects that all computers can interact.

Plann-Curley: So that was all lacking before this?

De Falco: Absolutely. I think we were a little behind the times. And we have calculators that we lend out, and it's a good thing. We have some chargers, charging stations became very popular, and now the one in the library has more chargers broken than working. It should be replaced. We should have a way to help them use their media. Because that is what they do today. All their work is on their media. They can't do their projects unless their media are working. We're a media society now! (Laughing).

Plann-Curley: You don't see a lot of pens and pencils?

De Falco: No! (laughing)

Plann-Curley: How do you think students view the library?

De Falco: I think they love the library, and the reason I say that is because it's packed all the time. Of course, during this lull time or Intercession you won't see that. In general, and I think we have the numbers to match that.

Plann-Curley: Even with the advent of these new spaces? [The renovation of One Pace Plaza and 41 Park Row, outside of the library.]

De Falco: Even with the advent of these new spaces.

Plann-Curley: There are more group study rooms and places across campus.

De Falco: I think some people don't like the new spaces, and some love the new spaces. But I think everything you need to get done is here in the library. You could research in the new spaces if you're going on the database yourself, but the books are here, the periodicals are here, the databases, all the computers are here. So, we make it conducive to helping. You get and target the materials needed to succeed. This helps students achieve their dreams. This is one of the steps. It's the heartbeat. My nickname: the library is the heartbeat of the university.

Plann-Curley: Yes, I agree with you. With that said, how do you think the faculty and administration view the library? Has it changed over the years?

De Falco: We don't provide as many books anymore in circulation. For reserve material, we used to have textbooks all the time. We cut a lot of that out. I think we should bring some of it back. I think a lot of professors had personal mailboxes back in the day and would lend out their own books that they would get from the companies, and literally some of them were for free. They would get the textbooks for free, they could put them on Reserve, so students can have two and three hour rentals. And even now you can take a picture of it. I know there are copyrights, but if you have to study, and you have to run and study, you can literally take a picture and read it on the train, and get your material in. But the library, there has to be one core place, a *friendly* place, a place where people feel accepted and differences don't matter and you can still get your work done and your resources. The computer lab has taken a lot of stress for us, a lot of work that would be here. We used to have Photoshop here. I don't know why they took it off our computers, so if you want to use Photoshop you *have to* go to the computer lab. And other programs that I believe are on Excel, some functions are not functioning.

Plann-Curley: Plug-ins for programs?

De Falco: Yes, they have to go to the computer lab and get service there, which I'm not sure. Then we're sending people away from the source, and we're sending them somewhere else. Yet if you have friends and you're working on a project, why are some here and some over there? So I think there needs to be more communication between the computer lab and what the library does, and if they're using these programs in their classrooms, then we should have them in the library.

Plann-Curley: And further complicating things, there is an electronic classroom in the library that's technically considered a computer lab and has the same software as the computer labs, which is different than what we have.

De Falco: Yes, it adds a lot of confusion. And also in the *map* of things, because students will say they need the computer lab, the library computer lab. There is no library computer lab. There's a library classroom on the first floor. But they'll be on the second floor. Because the computer lab is West 202 second floor. And some people think they can go to the second floor in the library, and walk across the hall.

Plann-Curley: Right.

De Falco: But it actually *is* walkable because the Writing Center is now in the emergency corner where they reallocated the emergency exits. And, I guess they had to meet code with us and them. But the computer lab *is* just across the hall. So maybe one day it will be accessible through the second floor where students *can* use it. Instead, you can't even use the same elevator. You literally have to take the middle elevator. You can't take the East elevators to get to the computer lab. But if you were in the East library you can walk to the second floor, from the second floor.

Plann-Curley: Right. Yes, it's a problem. If we ever do get that renovation, maybe that's something that they'll do.

De Falco: And I do believe there needs to be presence on the second floor, although I know my position is going downstairs to Circ. The second floor at the Birnbaum Library is huge and it fits thousands of students all at the same time, and with no presence, it's just not good business. I really feel strongly about that. Years ago, the Periodicals Department had the window facing the stairs. I'm not sure why they got rid of it because CLR could have been servicing from both sides – a window and a presence coming up the steps and actually seeing a staff member. There used to be a sign, "Periodicals Department," right at the top of the steps. And now once laptop service and calculator service goes downstairs, there will be no presence unless a particular person is manned upstairs, and I'm an advocate for it. I think it's necessary. I think having 2,000 unattended people on the second floor during finals is not a good idea.

Plann-Curley: How do you feel about collaboration and communication between the library and teaching faculty and other departments? Do you feel like the libraries do enough to promote themselves and to engage with faculty about our services?

De Falco: Yes and no. I think that Sarah [Burns-Feyl] and her crew do a great job. But I also think we can always do better, I always say that all the time. We can always do more. And they're not always costly. If you sit with the people who have the first-hand information, you can come up with very innovative ways that don't cost a lot to help others. Like visiting the classrooms more if you have the manpower in the library. If two librarians or three librarians are not at the [service] desk and in they're in their own desk area for 45 minutes, you don't even need a half-hour if you're doing a run-through on the second floor. If each person gave up thirty minutes of their desk time to help people find books on the second floor, help them research books, help with just questions in general. Even deliveries come up this way, because there's another office in the back where Technical Services went and ILL [Inter-Library Loan], and a lot of people come up the steps and don't know where to go.

Plann-Curley: Yes.

De Falco: A lot of little things go through the loops. It's like saying, "My child got slipped through the system." Are we on top of our game? Are we doing our best? I think we do our best. I think we can do better when we open up the questions to those who are firsthand.

Plann-Curley: Speaking of your children, one of them attended Pace. Isn't that right?

De Falco: Yes, my daughter Natasha.

Plann-Curley: Did she have a good experience?

De Falco: She had a lovely experience. She never worked here in the library. I never even asked. No one ever asked me if my daughter would like to apply for any of our positions. She applied in the Computer Lab, and she got a job in the computer lab. In addition to that, she applied in the Writing Center. She was a writing buff. From an early age, she was an avid reader and writer.

Plann-Curley: Did she major in English?

De Falco: No, but she probably should have. She was a Speech and Language Pathology major. She's now working for AARC [American Association for Respiratory Care] with special needs adults, planning to go back to graduate school, but feeling her field out, learning more about it.

Plann-Curley: When did she finish at Pace?

De Falco: Two years ago already [2017]. She finished her four-year degree. She'll be back, I know it, she'll be back.

Plann-Curley: Do you think she'll come to Pace?

De Falco: I think so, because they have a Speech and Language Department now at the graduate level. It's new.

Plann-Curley: On this campus?

De Falco: Yes.

Plann-Curley: That's one of the great benefits of working here.

De Falco: Yes, it is. It's one of the great benefits of working and retiring in an educational organization. We get lifetime education. So far.

Plann-Curley: Even after you've retired, if your daughter comes to graduate school...?

De Falco: Yes. There will be compensation. So far. They could change that over time, but most universities are like that across the board.

Plann-Curley: That's great.

De Falco: That's one of the benefits. Classes for yourself. Classes for your children.

Plann-Curley: Did you ever take classes here?

De Falco: Yes, I did for many, many years.

Plann-Curley: For personal enrichment?

De Falco: For everything. Both. To stay new and fresh with what was going on in present day life. [Laughter]. I laugh about it because CIS was one of the first. But I even took management courses later on because there were different management skills than what we were using 30 or 40 years ago. History was taught completely differently.

Plann-Curley: Did you take evening classes?

De Falco: Yes, I did. I took evening classes. It was fun. I enjoyed it. And then I took a few online classes as well. Blackboard classes. And they were lovely too.

Plann-Curley: Over the years, has there been anyone on staff in the library that you would consider a mentor?

De Falco: Mentor? Not really. I wish I did.

Plann-Curley: You've had a few different supervisors. Elizabeth [Birnbaum]...

De Falco: Yes, I did. I had Elizabeth, I had Adele [Artola], I had David [Almodovar]. I didn't find any of my supervisors really very helpful in terms of what I could do to better myself here in my career. Adele and I struggled a lot. In my early years, we had a wonderful relationship, and I used to ask for work quite often and say, "Oh, I found this," or, "How can I work on that?" I worked on union lists and updating records that weren't properly in the system, like a delimiter was off – technical stuff. She didn't really want to start new projects. She would find other little projects to do but not really want to work together on things that I was discovering.

Plann-Curley: Did you ever do Millennium [integrated library system] training?

De Falco: Exactly. I don't think we use Millennium properly at all, and I think we need to speak to them regularly about how to get the daily statistics and what else we can use Millennium for. There's no 'back' button. You can't be on a screen and go 'back.' What do we do?

Plann-Curley: Did you ever suggest...?

De Falco: Absolutely I did. I wanted to go on workshops. I think I was too gung-ho – for lack of a better word – for her, too aggressive in wanting to do things.

Plann-Curley: But there wasn't that much...?

De Falco: No. No cooperation to do it or to try to find something better. There were no discussions of how to better the department. I started to have those conversations with David when I first started in the CLR and we had weekly meetings at my suggestion, and I kept an email log, like a secretary, about the topics we discussed and ongoing problems, and ones that

were resolved. It was one chain email. Every week I would just add onto it. You could see where we started and ended. I still have them. After time, he stopped having those meetings. I guess his time was needed elsewhere. Maybe it wasn't as important, but then those conversations about what do we do with the department and how to make it grow... I have a lot of student needs to this day. The renewal of laptops is a concern. Lending things out overnight is a concern. I really feel we should have a four-hour rental instead of three-hours, which is shorter than the class time. I advocated for it to match class time. I also believe we should have a 24-hour rental, and we should have a three-day rental, accommodating people's needs over the weekend. You would have a different set of rules and protocols for each one but be more conducive to what their needs are. For a lot of students, four hours is not enough. They're still doing their projects.

Plann-Curley: And you feel like your supervisors weren't always receptive?

De Falco: No, they didn't even want to hear it. They would just say, "No, we're not doing that." And then we don't replace calculators, and I wind up with only two scientific calculators during finals when there are eight people who need them. How do you make everybody happy? They have to get their own calculators, I get that, but what happened to our service? Chargers were always a big need. But when people started to need a different type of charger, suddenly we didn't have the right one. But should we have some chargers? Should we have a way to help people whose laptop dies? I say help everyone. Just help people.

Plann-Curley: Would you say generally that professional development opportunities and opportunities to advance in the library during your time here have been...?

De Falco: Difficult. But Pace made it easy where they had workshops I could go to, but they weren't always applicable for my position.

Plann-Curley: HR offers these. Is that what you're talking about? Staff Development?

De Falco: Yes. And they're wonderful. I've gone to some of them. I've participated over the years. But then I need ones that were more directed to what I was doing. They wouldn't have a Millennium workshop for me. They wouldn't have a workshop about how do we serve the needs of students who keep asking these specific questions like whether we have an interview room for one person. They don't want a group study room. We have group study rooms. What do we do when a single person has to take a video conference call? We don't have that capability.

Plann-Curley: Do you feel like there's been a lot of turnover in the library staff as a result of that culture?

De Falco: I think when Rey [Racelis] took over, changes started. We saw even cleanliness in the library went up a little bit. He was open to more change. So was David. David did some beautiful changes. He would move some furniture around, and then six months later try it another way. I think we needed that, but I also think we needed more of it. I think we need more of it on an individual level where the circulation staff is able to participate in some of what's going on and meet with the librarians that work the service desk and share our experiences. We're kind of separated and we don't communicate, yet we experience the same concerns.

Plann-Curley: Have you felt a little marginalized at times or not part of the larger conversation?

De Falco: I just felt like there were some more important things going on, like things were more urgent. And really that's kind of my philosophy through all these years: that other stuff is more urgent. Money is probably needed more in those departments. Time is probably needed more in those departments. That's my assumption because there was no real conversation. Yet service is so vital. Service is how we retain patrons. It's why people stay. It's their experience that makes them stay. What experience are we offering?

Plann-Curley: We're also not unionized. Was unionization ever discussed among staff?

De Falco: Yes, we had a union back in the day, and our upper management said we weren't allowed to advocate. It was one of those under the table discussions. Upper management wasn't for the union, and I remember Adele Artola saying that the money that Pace spends on the union could be spent on us, and obviously that's not what happened, and she's no longer here. But unions have a reputation for supporting people, and they did. They do. They can get expensive, and they're not always 100 percent kosher, but that's something else to investigate. That's a different topic, but it doesn't mean that what they were doing was not helpful. Union and non-union is another conversation.

Plann-Curley: How was that decided?

De Falco: It was voted. It was voted down.

Plann-Curley: Would that have been just for the library?

De Falco: No, it was campus-wide, even adjunct professors because adjuncts didn't have a vote.

Plann-Curley: I think adjuncts [at Pace University] are unionized, but full-time faculty and staff are not. I don't know if you know the story behind that.

De Falco: Right. They weren't allowed to vote on unionization of full-timers, but they had their own group.

Plann-Curley: And they voted 'yes.'

De Falco: Yes, that was amazing. That's some good work. I want that leader.

Plann-Curley: You were talking about how students will come back to you and say, "I got an A in this class. I'm doing well. Thanks for all your help." Is there one particular student who stands out to you.

De Falco: Yes. Jordan.

Plann-Curley: Jordan Gonsalves. I remember him.

De Falco: He's a special kid. Gosh, he's brilliant. He was an honors student.

Plann-Curley: Didn't he give the address at graduation?

De Falco: Yes, and I was part of that, and that's what makes him even more special. He would come to me and chat. He wanted changes in the library, and he would come to me and say, "Ann, I'm having a meeting with the Provost and the library about changes."

Plann-Curley: He was involved in student government.

De Falco: So many committees. He was an advocate for so many things. Brilliant boy. He would say, "What about this?" I would give him the protocols from the community board and how the Robert's Rules [Robert's Rules of Order] worked, how to get an item on the agenda, how to get the data to support it. I helped him through the process, and he would come and say, "Ann, we got another meeting, and it was successful." He would always come back and thank me. And this time he was writing his speech for graduation, and he said, "There are five of us submitting our speeches for graduation and mine has to be really good." He came to me and we did some edits together, and then he came back to say that he was chosen. I felt so honored that I was able to support someone.

Plann-Curley: He was chosen to be the one speaker out of five people competing for it?

De Falco: Yes, and I gave him a few edits. He wrote it, but I gave him my two cents, and maybe it was the two cents that helped him get over that edge.

Plann-Curley: Were you at the ceremony?

De Falco: No, I didn't go for his year.

Plann-Curley: I heard it was good. I wasn't there either. Don't they broadcast that live? Have you ever pulled it up on your computer?

De Falco: I don't think I have access. I think our IT team would have to enable it on my computer. But I do believe we should have a camera outside of the building that streams to everyone's computer, to make it accessible whenever. Historically, this is who we are. This is what we're doing. I even think we should have a room with one TV in the library or the Fishbowl with it on so students could watch it as well.

Plann-Curley: Yes. Any highlights in your career that you want to talk about?

De Falco: Just service. I love service. I love helping people. I teach yoga as well. I do that as my side job, and that's how we teach our classes. We say, "How can I be of service? How can I be of better service just by teaching the class?" And I feel that way all the time. I felt that way when I was doing community service when I first had my children. How can I be of service? How do I make this better? You don't make it better by fixing yourself. You make it better by fixing

everything around you. Doing your best. What is my highest purpose? For me, I was my saddest when I was not in public service, when we were doing the transition.

Plann-Curley: You are a people person.

De Falco: Yes, absolutely. It's nice to be able to see those faces, these young people that come at 17, 18, 19 every year. We get older, but they're always 17, 18, and 19. It's Ground Hog's Day everyday here at Pace. I like being an asset to these young people from all over. It's their first experience out of home, their first dorm experience. Some have been living on their own. Some are from out of the country. International students who have traveled some. It's soup to nuts, but the biggest joy is helping that person get what they need done.

Plann-Curley: And seeing them succeed.

De Falco: That's the success of the day. If I can't help someone in a day, then I didn't do my purpose for the day. I have to help someone.

Plann-Curley: Do you ever hear from students after they've graduated?

De Falco: Always. Little notes on the desk. Little emails. Some people are truly amazing. You'll meet a lot of amazing people in your life. There's a few sour apples in the bunch, but there are extraordinary people in this world, and you meet them when you get to your next evolution. With every evolution, you have somewhere to look at and say, "That person was able to help me through." That's why when you asked about a mentor, I always wanted one. Ellen would be one. Ellen is a brilliant woman who was very supportive.

Plann-Curley: Ellen Sowchek, the [University] Archivist.

De Falco. Ellen Sowchek, archivist. She is smart about many topics, but she wanted to be a group person and collaborate on things. I also had Marijo. Marijo [Russell-O'Grady] is the Dean of Students, and her son and my children went to the same grade and middle school. I would run into her every now and then or give her a visit when there were things I wanted to chat about like the local community or school or Pace. I felt like I had a little bit of a mentor there. She had some say. I would talk about how Human Resources was handling something or what we should do for our staff, how to be more active with one another in different departments. Years ago, our food service provider used to give us coffee and tea in the morning, and you were able to meet people from all different departments. It was in the faculty dining area, but we don't have that anymore.

Plann-Curley: Was that on the B-Level.

De Falco: It was right across from the library.

Plann-Curley: It's now on the B-Level. At that time, it was on the first floor.

De Falco: Right. The library floor. You met people from the mail room. You met them from different sections. You met professors, and it was nice. It brought us together in a way. It gave a face to a department, but we don't have that anymore.

Plann-Curley: Do you ever go to Administrative Staff Council?

De Falco: Not really. Because my position involves desk and service and I don't have any help at the desk. My one break is my lunch. If I needed a break, I had to get someone to cover. It was never easy to ask David for coverage, and it should have been. I should have been able to go to different campus events because we're allowed to go to them, and they're actually learning experiences, but I didn't have that pleasure all these years. I'm even almost embarrassed to ask for coverage because he might get mad. But I think that free coffee, that little bit of time in the morning from eight to nine-thirty brought so much unity to the campus.

Plann-Curley: They're probably just looking at it as an expense.

De Falco: I looked at it as a team builder. You lost a team building entity that did not cost a lot of money, and they are always asking for inexpensive ways to boost morale on campus.

Plann-Curley: Even the library staff doesn't get together all that much.

De Falco: No, and we should, and not just to give our reports, but to share.

Plann-Curley: Casually.

De Falco: Like, this is going on in my department or put something up in the staff room. Like, this week *this* happened in Reference. This week *this* happened in CLR. We have an art show up here annually now, and this room is used often by other departments, and it would have been nice to post about who is using the CLR.

Plann-Curley: The room has a lot of potential. There's a film screen and all kinds of stuff.

De Falco: We have the staff. I think this reorganization is wonderful. I congratulate everyone in their new positions. I'm excited to at least see the tail end of it on my way to retirement.

Plann-Curley: It sad that you're leaving when a new chapter is starting.

De Falco: I still feel like I got to see it. I got to see the change.

Plann-Curley: And your input is valued.

De Falco: That's wonderful. I want to be invited back. I said, "Please, hold on to my retiree email." When the library does have that renovation or you have a group function or a party, I'd love to come by and say "hi." We're family. I spend more time here than I spend with my own family. Our relationship here should be one of comfort, a place where your soul feels comfortable, a place where you feel protected, and I think we need to provide that for each other.

We do great work here in this library. We have a lot of satisfied patrons. Imagine if we were able to work together more and share what was going on in our departments.

Plann-Curley: It's a good staff that largely gets along with one another, too, and I understand that that wasn't always the case.

De Falco: It's wonderful. It's younger, too. The older folks like myself are starting to bail out. It's a new generation. Absolutely, a new generation of changes.

Plann-Curley: Any last words?

De Falco: I really appreciate the opportunity to speak about my experience. It was very fitting as I step out. I also did the women's summit.

Plann-Curley: Another career highlight?

De Falco: Yes, I would say that. In closing, that would be the other thing. It wasn't planned. Another student that I help quite often.

Plann-Curley: Was it called Femmepowerment?

De Falco: Femmepowerment [Summit]. Pace has it annually. I was invited to speak this year, and I was like, "Wow. How fitting on the year of my retirement." I did that in March or April.

Plann-Curley: That was in one of the new rooms.

De Falco: Right. The new conference room. Beautiful room. That was a nice closing, and this is another nice final word as I step into my August [2019] retirement.

Plann-Curley: This is the first oral history recording in our new project.

De Falco: Very nice. I've been here 20 years. It's my 20-year anniversary. Many of us have been here way longer, but for me it's 20 years.

Plann-Curley: Congratulations on your retirement.

De Falco. Thank you. Thank you for this opportunity.

Plann-Curley: Thank you for your time.