Dave Lonich: Good morning, it’s Tuesday, March 30, 2010, we’re in the television studios of California University, as part of the Women of Accomplishment program, in a series of interviews that are being done with Women of Accomplishment. And we have today a woman who has accomplished a lot in her life, and it’s Colonel Patricia J. McDaniel and we are really happy to have you here today.

Colonel McDaniel: Thank you.

Dave Lonich: I am really anxious for this opportunity to talk to you and share some of your insights into your career and personal life, your family and education. Your whole situations and try to paint this against the backdrop of American History that so many significant changes were going on. Thanks for being here with us today. Congratulations on all your magnificent accomplishments.

Colonel McDaniel: Thank you.

DL: Let’s go back and start at the beginning if you will, how did you get into some of the things that you choose to do in your life, can you tell me a little bit about your background, where you grew up, your family situation, and maybe we can see how you pursued some of your choices.

CM: I grew up in Pittsburgh, my father was a police officer, and my mother was a homemaker, and I was the 3rd of 5 children. There were four (4) girls and a boy. But, I am about nine (9) years older than my youngest sibling, who is the boy, so really my family was mostly 4 girls for a long time while I was growing up. We lived in Beltzhoover, which is in the inner city, and I went to Beltzhoover Elementary School. Where my mother had gone to school, and Knoxville Junior High. Now in those days, and I am African-American, I have, out of 4 grandparents, 3 grandparents were African American, and one grandparent was white. And of course I look like I am white. But as far back as anyone knows on my mother’s side, the only white influence was, we think was from slave bays, so we don’t know of any white relatives back on my mother’s side or ancestors. On my father’s side, my father’s mother was a white woman, her parents had immigrated from Poland. And her family disowned her when she married my grandfather, and so growing up then, I did not know of any white relatives. And Beltzhoover was a primarily African American community, so Beltzhoover Elementary School was a racially segregated de facto elementary school. And Knoxville Junior High was integrated but still the ways those schools went
if your neighborhood fed into those schools, that became, that entrance became kind of a black entrance, and the other entrance was a white entrance and so even though I appear to be white, I grew up in a neighborhood that my mother had live in, and people know my family from my mother’s side of the family, and so, back in those days, we were considered colored, I always knew I was colored, and I never really even thought about having looked like I am white until high school. So that’s kind of interesting.

DL: Yeah, because of the notion of a lot of African Americans of passing, that used to be a term used historically way back then, instead of living a life as if you were white, so what I think you are telling me is that it really never entered your mind back then.

[3:57]
CM: That’s correct for me, my mother had a brother that passed. My father had a sister who passed. And we saw that, we children, so now my mother’s brother was still in touch with the family, he moved away, and my mother’s family was interesting because there were 4 children, two (2) looked white, two (2) looked black. They weren’t dark skinned or anything, but obviously they were visibly black. And so one of the brothers who could pass, he would still be in touch with the family when he would come back to Pittsburgh, but one brother went to visit him and he would not even meet with his brother, so that influenced my child., my family, because we saw that, my father’s side, my father’s sister, passed, she married a white man, and never had any contact with her family again, and so that left a pretty big hole with my dad, to this day my dad is still alive, and I was talking to him about family history not long ago, and I asked him about her and, you know, you could tell it really hurt him that she left at seventeen (17) years old and they have never seen her again.

[5:13]
DL: Your parents still live around here, your father.

CM: My father is still alive, my mother passed away a few years ago. And he still lives in the same house that they moved in when I was six months old.

DL: By himself?

CM: By himself.

DL: That’s amazing, that generation.

CM: Yeah.

DL: So on top of these things that we mentioned before the interview, the gender, the race, obviously the family situation in your case, was probably, was a stronger, seems to be a stronger influence, are you still, you are in touch with your father, are you still close with your siblings? Do you still manage to keep in touch?
CM: I do see them, I try to get into Pittsburgh, well I try to do it a little more frequently, but sometimes I do, some years will pass, it may only be one or two visits.

DL: Yeah.

CM: Some years it may be more often, and I just saw him this past weekend since I came up here. And so I saw a couple of my sisters, I have a couple of sisters who have had an interesting relationship with our racial background, and one of them in particular, she has embraced that we have some native American heritage, kind of remote, but it is there. And she has embraced that. Now she has more of an ethnic we’ll say appearance than I, and so I kind of tease her sometimes, because she has the dark straight hair, and she will wear a lot of the Native American attire.

DL: Yeah.

CM: So she actually, she really looks the part. But we did not grow up relating to Native American.

DL: Yeah.

CM: We always knew in those days we were colored. My grandmother was very active in the social side of that community, they have clubs, Jack and Jill clubs (an African-American organization of mothers who nurture future leaders by strengthening children ages 2-19 through chapter programming, community service, legislative advocacy and philanthropic giving. We believe every child, with proper guidance and opportunity can be a leader), things like that my grandmother was involved in. So we think that was kind of interesting.

[7:11]
DL: Very interesting.

CM: Yes.

DL: And as I said, painted against that larger backdrop of history.

CM: Yeah.

DL: Especially since what was going on in the city, during the time you were growing up and all the major changes in the civil rights movement and everything else.
CM: And that touched up because, if you know anything about the way African Americans have progressed among ourselves, back in the old days, the lighter you were, that had more of a benefit, you had more privileges, things like that. And then we had the black power movement, where that became kind of a negative to be as light skinned as I am. And my father ran into that because he was a police officer, and he was very, he moved along pretty well. He had faced discrimination a young man on the Pittsburgh Police department, and then when he got in the Pittsburgh Courier, the black paper was one of his biggest proponents, but then as he got more senior, because he is light skinned, although my dad would have a hard time passing, he is still very light, the city, and in those days, they really pretty much had a quota system for the higher promotions, the city wanted someone that was more visibly black, and so he faced that too, and I am sure the stores have told many times over and over, but it really did have an impact on our family.

[8:36]
DL: Yeah, and you just did such a great job of putting all that history in context, and as I said, all those changes in the value systems, and the way people looked at each other during that civil rights movement that starting as you were growing up.

CM: Right.

DL: Sort of coming to a culmination there in the late 60’s early 70’s.

CM: Right.

DL: As I said your life and your career just parallel on many major, major things and that really is significant. We could jump ahead, we could spend the whole hour talking about that.

CM: I know.

DL: I would totally enjoy that. What brought you here to California? Was it California State Teachers College?

CM: It was California, it still didn’t have the Teachers....

DL: It was Cal State, that when I was here.

CM: Cal State.

DL: I know that when I came here, when Cal U now, it was Cal State.

CM: Right. My dad, I don’t think I wanted to go to college. I’ll try to refresh my memory on that because it has been a while, but I remember getting a job in a bakery, and I didn’t, that was my first job, and I told my dad, my dad was really the strong influence.
CM: I told him I was not going to college, because he told me I was. So of course everything he said, I had to do the opposite. And he said oh yes you are. So he filled out an application to go to California and Shippensburg, and he filled it out, signed name, sent it off, and then I got accepted at both the places and then he did tell me I had to pick one. And so I picked California, because of the name.

DL: He gave you that choice, that was very nice, I can’t imagine him wanted to ship his little girl so far away, isn’t that neat the way parents did things back in those days.

CM: That’s right.

DL: That’s also another value system there.

CM: That’s exactly right.

DL: You couldn’t dare, kids would take you to court and sue you.

CM: I had two choices, Shippensburg or California. Oh I thought California sounds pretty interesting, so I picked that.

DL: Well that was certainly good for us that.

CM: Yeah, well thank you.

DL: You choose to come down here. Now I saw from your biography you were a history major.

CM: Yes.

DL: I was too, so I’m fascinated by that, why history? Of all the things that could have appealed to you, we didn’t have many females as history majors back in that day, again there was the gender bias against some things.

CM: I love history, to this day I love history.

DL: Uh huh.
CM: I did think when I was growing up, and I remember this because I walked to school, up hill both ways, and that was true, because you went up down, up down.

DL: In Pittsburgh?

CM: Right – So I remember in elementary school walking to school and thinking about what I wanted to do with my life, and I figured I would be a teacher because in those days you really didn’t have that many other options for girls, and my grandmother has been a nurse practitioner briefly and so I always liked playing with her little pill bottles, pill boxes is what they had in those days. But I know I didn’t want to do that and then I really didn’t know much else that girls could do, so I thought I would be a teacher and I loved history, so I thought the best job in the world would be teaching history.

[11:54]
DL: Yes it is – that is absolutely true.

CM: And I’ve always loved that, so I majored in education when I came here, and then when I joined ROTC, I thought well heck, I don’t need to teach I’ll just keep the history part and just go ahead and get the bachelors degree in history.

DL: Did you, there was a very solid African American history program here at California University during that time, do you remember taking any of those classes?

CM: I don’t remember that even being in existence, so if that was here, that was hidden because

[12:31]
DL: Wow

CM: I tried to take as many history classes as I could, my electives were even history classes.

DL: Yeah, well yeah, yeah. They brought in a young man from Philadelphia, Dr. Bowman, and he was..

CM: That name sounds familiar, yes.

DL: Yes, and he handled those, the history and some of the ancillary things like urban history and all that.

CM: I did take a history of cities, so maybe.

DL: Yeah, that was him, yes.

CM: Ok, ok yes and I loved that.

DL: I would imagine, I was thinking that probably with your background from the city and so forth.

CM: Yes.
DL: Ok, you are here, you enjoyed the time her obviously.

CM: I did.

DL: What do you think overall about the foundation that was laid, because you have quite a bit of education since, that we will talk about.

[13:20]
CM: When I mentioned that to a couple of people yesterday, when I was, before the banquet, I told them that I have been to a lot of different schools, I had lots of different professors in my day, the history department here at California State, California University was fabulous, the history and I event took a couple of political science courses, I loved that too, and those courses to this day, I tell my children, that about some of those classes, I said you know one of the fabulous classes that I had it was one of those classes here for my bachelor degree.

[13:57]
DL: Did you find that through the rest of your career, education and certainly in the military and even just in, as a person developing that, that was a major asset, the mindset.

CM: Yes.

DL: The learning process that you learned.

CM: It was a great foundation, and I think if I had gone to a different school where you have the huge classes and that type of thing, I would not have had the same perspective on life, it was a great foundation for me.

DL: Well that’s really good to hear, that’s very nice to hear. Was there any time, did there ever come a time when particularly your history background was, you found that to be an advantage or you used it in any particular way?

CM: The time that my history background was a wonderful advantage was when my little boy was watching The Liberty’s Kids Series on the Revolutionary War and that child knew every single thing about the Revolutionary War and it took everything I had to keep up with him.

[15:00]
DL: That is pretty neat.

CM: He was amazing.

DL: Normally we hear those things about Math, oh they can do that and that, and I had to keep up, but that’s really nice to hear that.
CM: It was amazing, so that really regenerated my interest in the Revolutionary War era. So I would get books and I would test him on all the things, he was amazing. He is 12 now, but when that series came out he was probably 5 or 6.

DL: So we have a historian in the making.

CM: I think so.

DL: Well alright, send him up here.

CM: That’s right.

[15:27]
DL: Ship him across the country.

CM: But other than that I think it really was just the foundation, it helped me that Liberal Arts education I think was wonderful for me. A lot of people will major in history and go to law school.

DL: Yes

CM: They don’t really relate that much, it’s just I think the way you learn to think.

CL: It is exactly right and I’m so happy to hear you say that because that is what we try to tell people it’s not just the facts it’s the thought process and you have done a lot to give us a great advertisement, maybe we will clip this out and it will be part of our recruitment for our history majors.

CM: Wonderful.

DL: And that was great. The next question of course and it’s an obvious one, the leap then from being a teacher, as you said, “I don’t imagine too many little girls growing up in the late 60’s early 70’s will sit there and think I’m going to be a full Colonel in the United States Army, what happened? Can you walk us through the process.

[16:23]
CM: Well it was right here at California University again, I joined ROTC program, I, the way that happened was that I had read an article about women in the army because those were the days prior to me coming here, and I started here in 1974, those were the days where lots of things were happening in the army, and so I had read an article, I was at the library, and I remember sitting there reading an article about women in the army, and I thought oh this is very interesting, so that was that and I came here to go to college and I happened upon Captain Larry Loftus walking across the campus, and this was, I had already, classes were already in play, I had already registered, we were taking classes and the add drop period had already ended. But I talked to him and I said “hey, tell me are women able to go into ROTC now”? And he said “yes”, and he grabbed me and walked me over and we added Military Science
1 to my schedule, and I said “isn’t the add period over”? He says “it’s no problem, we’ll fix you right up”. And now I realize that was his first semester, the first semester that ROTC started here and he was bumping up his numbers and he figured if somebody wanted to take MS 1 where there was no contract or anything, he was definitely going to put them in.

[17:42]
DL: Once again, in context this is fortuitous and historic because from my research, 1972 is the first year they actually allow women in and 1976 is the overall country, the first group of commissioned officers, women officers from.

CM: Right.

DL: From that so here, you in 1977 you are just right in there.

CM: And they opened WestPoint to women in 1976.

DL: Yeah, yeah.

CM: And I actually even thought about applying because I thought I would be so fun to be part of the first class, but then I thought well, I’m going to get commissioned in 1977 and I really could use the money.

DL: Yeah, yeah.

CM: So I didn’t and I tell my kids if I could go back, I would have applied.

DL: Uh, huh.

CM: But I will say that me joining the ROTC and that point, that was freshman year, and I was just taking Military Science, I didn’t really get too serious about it until the end of my sophomore year, and I was, I totally surprised the ROTC people when I came up and said I’m going to sign the contract. Because I was probably the person they would have never thought would have been oriented towards the army. But I found something in the ROTC program, I found my own voice in the sense that you know women were kind of, well we were held back so many ways and in the ROTC department they treated everyone as a cadet. We were all cadets, we all wore the same uniform, we all had to run together, we did PT together, we were all equals as far as the ROTC professors were concerned.

[19:30]
DL: I find this fascinating because once gain we have the two overlays in your, and I want to come back to another question, the race and gender, Harry Truman integrates the army as far as race in 1948, it’s not until 1978, 30 years later, that the army integrates in terms of gender, and yet you are saying that, that the transition almost seems seamless in terms of your experience at least in the ROTC program.
CM: and I will say that is one thing about the Military, when the Military gets an order, they obey. My dad was in whenever.

DL: That’s what I...your dad joined World War II?

CM: Yeah, yeah, well he joined after World War II, he’s 81 this year, so he was a little young for WWII, but he joined so he was in whenever they integrated.

DL: That is amazing. Two generations.

CM: Yeah.

DL: Wow.

CM: And it is, it’s when we face that battle with the, hopefully, the repeal of the don’t ask, don’t tell. Once that happens, a lot of people in the Military will fight, and fight, fight, but when they get the order, they comply. And that’s what happened with women, and so Larry Loftus and the later colleagues of his that came along, whatever their personal beliefs may have been, and I never did notice any over sexism, and I had noticed a lot of that in the armies though, so I could kinda of see it when it’s there. But they knew that the army wanted to emphasize training for women, equal training for women and that’s what we got. And it really, there weren’t very many of us.

[21:08]
DL: Yeah.

CM: When I went to ROTC advanced camp in 1976 from Cal U there were 2 women and the other one dropped out within the first week at Fort Braggs. So I was the only one left, although I didn’t know that when I got back, they said oh you’re it. So I mean, but it really was my first opportunity with being treated as a full citizen, and so I very much embraced the army and have ever since, obviously.

DL: Well yeah, that’s fascinating, again as a historic standpoint that positive reaction, I have another question, in, when, when you entered the program, obviously he knew you were a women, but did he know at that time you were African American, because of what we had said earlier in the interview that.

[22:00]
CM: Well, what happened is although I am the type of person who will tell everyone when I can.

DL: Right.

CM: Just because that makes life a lot easier, but it, in the military they don’t really gather a whole lot of demographic information on the non contract people, but as soon as you become under contract, then they get everything. And so at that point...

DL: Yes, yes
CM: I put my race down.

DL: Right.

CM: Now, Larry was fine with it and I think I explained it to him, but I have had an occasion in the army where some personnel specialist will see that on my form and they will take it upon themselves to correct my race. And I find out and then I have to go back and have them fix it. But for the most part, I just let people know up front and that makes life a lot easier.

DL: Why just talking to you, you are a very open person, and I would never have thought for a second you wouldn’t have told him. My thought was that once again what was happening during those days, and you mentioned that the quota system, and it was a quota system for everything.

CM: Yes.

DL: Police forces and hiring in general, minorities and women, though I could never understand how they could consider women minorities.

CM: Right.

DL: That never made sense to me. But you know, the two for one deal with you, you, besides having so much ability, it would seem to me that I was interested if that’s what he was trying to do too.

CM: I don’t think so because it really was a “came out of the blue to him”.

DL: Yeah.

CM: I actually..

DL: That’s, that’s...

CM: Because I came up and I said I’m signing up for Military Science 3 and they looked totally shocked that I would be one of the ones doing that. And because they really didn’t know, because the Military Science 1 and 2 students, you had a lot of folks there, that’s taking credit.

DL: Especially after the draft and...

CM: Right, but we would take it for credit and so out of all those Military Science 2 students, even though I got decent grades, I’m sure they didn’t think that I had a lot of promise. Now one thing I did have, was I could run, and so, but I really think that didn’t come about until after I because a contract cadet. So I think I was just out of the blue for them.

DL: That’s fascinating, now you obviously were a very enthusiastic recruit, you speed up your class schedule so you can...
CM: Yes

DL: Go to advanced training as a junior.

CM: Right.

DL: And then you went to Airborne?

CM: Yes, and so I did that, I became a junior early, then I went to advance camp in 1976 and that was the first year women did the same training as the men, and then, but at the time, so I come back to Cal U, now I get some respect because the other woman had washed out.

DL: Right.

CM: And then I,

DL: And probably a lot of men had washed out too.

CM: Yes, yes and then I decided I wanted to go to Airborne school and they were like oh no, you can’t go to Airborne school, and I said well I know they opened their Airborne school because I talked, and now I made friends at other universities, and they said well you can go, but you don’t want to go because they told me I had to do 5 chin ups from a hang so you had to start at a dead hand do your chin ups, and I couldn’t even do one, and so I worked and worked and worked, and finally before I saw, they told me I could go if I could do it, so I finally could do it and then I got to go to Airborne school, and then I get to Airborne school and it’s you really don’t have to do it from a hang. And then so when I got back from airborne school, I got so much respect.

DL: Oh, I could imagine, yes, yes, yes, as I said a lot of guys would not be able to do, wouldn’t be able to do those things.

CM: No.

DL: Would not want to do those things, jump out of a perfectly good airplane. As they used to say in those days.

CM: They still do.

DL: Oh I know, so during the course of your military career, did you ever have use for this paratroop training.

CM: That was unfortunate because when I really, when I was going on active duty I really wanted to do that. I wanted to, because I was so excited of being Airborne qualified. But they still had not fully
integrated women into the 82nd and any of the airborne positions at that point. Because I was commissioned in 1977 and I think they started in the early 1980’s. So I didn’t get a chance, and over the years I thought well maybe I’ll try and get, you know, just a little, some sort of assignment where I can make a few jumps, over the years that kind of faded, and then I started getting aches and pains.

DL: And I was just going to say, then good sense caught up with you finally.

CM: You know I don’t think I wanted to do that.

DL: Right.

CM: And then my husband who is former military, he was in the 82nd and he’s made hundreds of jumps. He only spent 4 years on active duty, that was when WestPoint had a 4 year obligation.

DL: Yeah.

CM: So he went to West Point, graduated in 1971, spent 4 years at the 82nd, left active duty. But he’s made so many jumps that he’s got an artificial hip now. So I think now maybe, yeah.

DL: Made the right choice. This seems like a great place to transition to your military career. As I said, just like we could do hours on your early life, that we do hours here. Let’s go through here very quickly in chronologically and pick out a few things that I would like to highlight about your military career, you were commissioned as a Second Lieutenant.

CM: Yes.


CM: Correct.

DL: And then where do you go from there and what happens.

CM: So I went to Redstone Arsenal, I first went to Fort McClellan for an officer basic course and, the I went, we had 4 women in my officer basic course out of about 40 students. And then I went to Redstone Arsenal which was right up the road from Fort McClellan, as a military police officer so I was a Lieutenant in a military police company and in those days they called it white hat duty which was law enforcement, straight law enforcement duty and that was as opposed to a combat military police company which would do the, be attached to a division and do most of their combat, technical military police stuff in a division. So this was just pure law enforcement and I did that for a few years at Redstone. And then I left active duty and went into the reserves. Now at that point, I went in the, I joined the unit that was, and the reason I left active duty was because, I think I was bored. I had all these expectations about the military and then I got to a unit where there, was the officers had, we lost our company commander, we lost, so he was a captain, we lost our captain, we lost, our first lieutenant took
his place, we lost him, another second lieutenant took his place, he was kind of a jerk, and it was just, it wasn’t what I thought, you know now I kept thinking of the military, it’s gonna be this fabulous experience, and it was kind of like I said, kind of boring. I liked the work, but the other officers were not up to what I thought was the par that they should be. So I got off active duty and I joined the reserve unit and it was a unit with Navy, Army, and Air Force and that’s when I saw all the professional top quality people that I knew that were in the Army, or military.

DL: Right.

CM: Or in the military, so I went back in because I thought you know that is, so it really was the, this just particular place, not the military. And so I went back on active duty and in those days they were starting a program called the Active Guard/Reserve Program, and it was active duty but you worked with the reserve unit, reserve or guard and in my case it was reserve.

[30:07]
CM: And so I went to a military police company in West Virginia, it was a company that had a headquarters in the bows of West Virginia, but it had a separate platoon in Wheeling, and so Wheeling being only an hour from Pittsburgh, that was perfect for me and I commanded that organization.

DL: How did your dad, just a thought came to my mind, how does dad feel about you being in the army but also being a policeman like him.

CM: Yeah, and I think that is probably why I choose military police.

DL: Oh ok.

CM: And it was very competitive to get, especially for women. I found out later that the year that I was selected, they said that there were only 2 from ROTC training chosen during that period. But I do think he thought it was an honor for him that I choose that line of work. He, his family was very, very law enforcement oriented, he had a whole lot of brothers, 4 of them became Pittsburgh Police Officers, a sister became a meter maid.

DL: Wow.

CM: My brother is a Pittsburgh Police Officer, several of my cousins are Pittsburgh Police Officers, and so that really meant something and I think the fact that I became a MP really, he was really all that.

DL: I’m sure.

CM: He is very proud of me.

DL: Well he should be.

CM: Yeah, yeah.
DL: My goodness gracious, yes.

CM: Thank you.

DL: So you are back in and now your military.

CM: Yes and I’m back on active duty and, now I had gotten married, right when I was getting off active duty and that may be part of, you know as I say, I was kind of, I didn’t think that the officers were as professional as I thought, and then I was getting married, and then I was going to be a mother, and so all of that played into it too. But I did miss it and so I came back on active duty.

DL: After the, after your child was born?

CM: She was born in 1980 and I came back on in 1981, although I was still in the reserves, so I was telling somebody about the maternity uniforms, they didn’t ever have maternity uniforms.

DL: Was it?

CM: For us.

DL: Up to 1975, they kicked you out.

CM: Right, so here we were, I was pregnant on active duty and we would wear the name tag so you could wear civilian clothes and a name tag, so she was born in 1980 and I came back on in January of 1981.

DL: I would never, that is a question I would never of thought to ask you.

CM: No one would.

DL: About maternity clothes.

CM: I know, but it really was interesting because ok she was with her, no maternity uniform, the next child was born in 1982, by then we had cute little, so you had these maternity pants or skirt and then you had a blouse like this, but it had a tunic over it so you would unbutton the buttons as you progressed, so you had this blouse on underneath with your buttons all open. And that was their version of maternity uniforms. So that was hard, so when the next one, by then, we started getting real maternity uniforms. But you know you think about something like that, the army just wasn’t ready. But anyway I took command of that, that was a detachment, so I had command of that and then from there I went to, I went to the officer advance course at Fort McClellan again, the military police and that course again, about 40 officers, we only had 2 women, but interestingly, because you have more attrition I think with the women, down the hall we had officer basic courses coming through and they had about 15 women per course, so we could see things changing.
CM: And after that, I went to recruiting command, I commanded a recruiting company in Chicago. And then I was supposed to go to Panama, but I happened to meet a female general at a banquet with recruiting command, so I thought well, since I am a female and the only other female officer in the room, I thought I should go up and say something. So I did, and she asked me where I was going, I told her I was going to Panama and this was right before the Noriega thing.

DL: Yeah.

CM: I would have been down in Panama during this Noriega thing, but she said you know I have a premiere assignment for you because, unbeknownst to me, Texas A & M needed a female officer because they had a uniform corp of cadets and they had at that time, a segregated women’s outfit. And they needed a female, so she nabbed me, and so I ended up at Texas A & M. And then when I got there, I was there for 3 years and I met my, now husband, and he talked me into getting off active duty and going to law school, so that’s how I ended up.

DL: And then you’ve been in the reserves.

CM: Yes, I have been in the reserves, yeah.

DL: And you have been part of the judge advocate generals.

CM: After law school, what you do is, you apply for, it’s a new appointment, you don’t branch transfer. So I had a new appointment into the JAG Corp, you don’t lose any time in the service, or anything like that, but at that point there is a severance, you sever your relationship with the military police and new you have this appointment in the JAG Corp, and so once I became a JAG, then I took all the reserve JAG assignments, and then I did some active duty here and there, I did active duty at Fort Hood, at Fort Sam Houston, just with the JAG Corp. Because when you are a lawyer in the army, as a Captain, you learn your skills, I was not a Captain in the JAG Corp, I was a Major, I came in as a Major and so I wanted to get all those skills, so I did some active duty here and there even as a Major to try and catch up. And so that really worked for me, because I was able to take trial defense jobs, where we defend, anytime a soldier gets in trouble, their entitled to an attorney.

DL: Sure

CM: And so I did a lot of that, and whenever, again, fortuitously for me, we created, we in the army created separate trial defense organization in the reserve, the active duty had already had it. Took us about 15 years later to get this, so once we had that, I was able to take one of the commands, of a very large trial defense organization in the army, and then, after I did that, my last year on active duty, my last year in the army I spent on active duty as the chief of the trial defense service, and that is a, that’s a
top job for an army colonel for an active duty army colonel, and I was able to do it as a reserve officer, so.

DL: You, as a result of that, those assignments, I saw record, you did spend time back and forth overseas, huh, you had to go.

CM: Yeah.

DL: You went to the combat zones.

CM: Well, as a chief of trial defense service, we, we have lawyers all over the world.

DL: Right.

CM: So, even people in the combat zones get in trouble and need lawyers, so we have offices in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and so as the chief of trial defense I went everywhere that my attorneys were. So I went all over the world including those combat zones.

[37:19]
DL: And you mainly handled defense work from what I saw.

CM: yeah, that’s my love, and of course being a military police officer.

DL: That’s what I...

CM: To being a defense attorney.

DL: That’s what clicked in my mind.

CM: Right.

DL: I would have seen you on the prosecutorial side.

CM: You would think so, but I also have at my bottom, a respect for the disadvantaged, and I believe that, I definitely believe in our system, our legal system, and that everyone needs a defense, and so well I’m very, very loyal to the defense, especially our soldiers.

DL: That’s what they say, everybody hates lawyers, until you need one.

CM: That’s right.

DL: And so yeah, that’s very nice that you are there.

CM: Yeah.

DL: You found that obviously fulfilling, that type of ...
CM: Very, very, very much.

DL: That type of work, while we are on this, it seems like you have found your, you talk about being a lawyer, that love of your life, in terms of, but you have so much education, so you have so Masters degree, could you talk me through why you opted to do all those things, I find, I just find that fascinating as a teacher.

CM: Well, I think the first Masters degree, that was my MBA I got from Wheeling, it was Wheeling College when I went, now it is Wheeling Jesuit University.

DL: Yeah.

CM: That was because in the army, the army always tells people you should really get a masters degree, it makes you a better thinker, it makes you more of an asset to the military, so they only had a degree, a MBA that they offered, and I was stationed in Wheeling. And so I thought, I can do this, even though I did not have a business background, I had to take Calculus and Statistics and Economics, and Accounting just to get in.

DL: Oh yeah,

CM: I know.

DL: That’s a major.

CM: But I thought, I can do this.

DL: Well obviously you did.

CM: I did, even though it was very challenging, especially the Calculus because I took Calculus from a guy who didn’t speak English very well, and I could not understand anything he said, and this was back in the day of blackboards, and he would write everything on three blackboards, and I would just write everything down and go home, and I spent 20 hours a week learn, teaching myself.

DL: Calculus.

CM: Calculus, but it was that sense of accomplishment, that I can do anything, and that’s something that I learned early on in my ROTC days that I could do things that I never thought I could ever do, jumping out of airplanes, out running all the guys, I can do what I want to do, and so I was not going to accept defeat on this.

DL: Yeah.

CM: This MBA. So I ended up getting that, and so then of course, as far as the army is concerned, you’ve done everything that you need to do, masters and you are set. But when I was stationed at Texas A & M,
since I was on the faculty there, as an Assistant Professor, you can take classes, pretty much for free, they were $17 a credit.

DL: Yeah, right, right.

CM: And I thought well, that’s such a waste if I don't take advantage of that, and so I took classes in there, and got a Masters in Public Administration, which I thought was more relevant to me anyway. And then the other Masters Degree is from the United States Army War College, and that’s just.

DL: Just a second before we get to that.

CM: Ok.

DL: I want to just follow up a question on that, were you anticipating a post military career in some type of public admin.

CM: I was, I knew I was going to go to Law School after.

DL: Oh, ok.

CM: After the Army, I just did that, the MPA was because, I do like to learn,

DL: Oh yeah, yeah.

CM: I like to learn, and I thought it would such a waste not to take advantage of this free degree. But the Masters in Strategic Studies was that, if you go to the War College, their accredited, you get the Masters Degree. And so...

DL: If I had my chronology right, once again it’s another milestone that your career coincides with that in 1994, though the edict of Secretary of Defense women were allowed in or near combat zones, I don’t, the language is so legalistic that I don’t know, it was like he lowered the risk situation, so in effect women were allowed to, and that coincided around the time that you were, went into this, did that have any impact? Or was it just a coincidence?

CM: No, that’s just coincidence. The Army has I think has not been totally honest about, the Army knew women were doing combat type work back in Panama. I mean women, Military Police that were in Panama, there were female Military Police offices, female military police enlisted that were doing comb..., what we would consider combat in action. Even now the Army says, well we don’t have women in the combat army, but as we all know, women are in combat situations.

DL: Harm’s way, oh my.

CM: That’s right, that’s right.
DL: Oh my.

CM: And so I just, I shouldn’t say that the army’s not being honest, but I don’t think the army has gotten to the point where it’s willing to go to Congress and say hey look, here’s the situation, there’s no more front lines, we can’t draw a line anymore and say hey women aren’t going to go up here or any units that are up here, it’s not even possible. And Congress the same way, they don’t want to address the issue and so we have this status quo that you know, we all know that women are in harm’s way, and the Army’s been that way for a while.

DL: See, as I was doing the research, I wasn’t, you know, I’m glad for your insight, but it was seeming to me, I was getting some kind of inconsistency there about when they would allow women, first of all they weren’t allowed to train with weapons,

CM: Right.

DL: And then, they were allowed to carry pistols, and all this like, like.

CM: Right.

DL: Always a half way kind of measure.

CM: Right

DL: Measure of thing, without acquiescing to the fact, as you said people are really in danger, but back to the original question, I, was, the opportunity to go to the War College, which was another sort of Military accomplishment.

CM: Right.

DL: And, then not so coincidental, because you never really planned any career in any sort of Military strategy, or combat, I mean.

CM: No, I, the War College, even though they will send JAG Officers to the War College, they know that we’re not going to be the ones writing the theater campaign plans.

DL: Right.

CM: But they do want lawyers to know how to do that because we are the ones that are going to give advance to the commanders.

DL: Yeah.

CM: In that kind of situation.

DL: That’s right, that’s another insight.
CM: Yeah.

DL: That I wouldn’t have got, but that’s really fascinating. So by then, you already had your Law Degree and were practicing so...

CM: Right.

DL: This was sort of just another kind of icing, another thing on there.

CM: And also, to make General Officer you have to have the War College.

DL: Yeah.

CM: And so I was on track to make General Officer. And so then I needed to do the War College.

DL: Right.

CM: And so when I got selected for the War College, I knew that was, ok now I am on track. As I turned out I did not get selected to become a General Officer, but I do attribute that to, partly that we have only 2 reserve JAG Officers and they each have tenure for certain period of time and my tenure did, my time in the shoot did not coincide with the openings. Otherwise I did think I had a pretty good shot.

[44:55]
DL: What well, yeah, it would seem like with all your record and everything, it is sometimes I guess being in the right place.

CM: Uh um.

DL: At the right time and we all..

CM: And not to undersell the folks that are doing it but..

DL: Oh no, no.

CM: And, you only have a few opportunities, it’s not like the infantry where they might have 300 General Officers and so you have a little better chance, with the JAG we had 2.

DL: Did that kind of have influenced your decision that it was time to retire, from the..

CM: Oh I would not have retired they, but what happens is that if you are a Colonel, you can stay for 30 years.

DL: Right.

CM: And then they give you the boot, and it was called a mandatory removal day.
DL: Ok.

CM: So I hit my mandatory removal day, but I was on active duty, so I was able to stay 31 years because...

DL: Ok.

CM: I, they give you an exception if they mobilized you so, so they give you the time of the mobilization and then they give you a little time on the end to sort through your affairs.

DL: In the time we have left, I would like to touch on something, just a little bit more personal, but I don’t see how it can be any way separated from your military career and that’s your family. To me raising 5 children would take a tremendous amount of courage and effort and a full time job in of itself and yet you did that in conjunction with all these other things, all the going to school, and defending your country and defending soldiers that got in trouble and everything else, could you tell, obviously your children have inherited your love of education, your oldest child has just received a PhD, that’s fascinating. Could you tell me a little about your kids and in particular, again the personal part is, we already touched on some of it with the pregnancy clothes about how you managed to juggle that with your military career.

[46:40]

CM: I think that my idea, when I went into the Army, we, the role models that we younger women had been in the women’s army corp, and they had, they didn’t have the advantages of getting married or having children.

DL: Right.

CM: Or anything like that so, we were forging new ground. But I grew up in the women’s movement too, while I was here at Cal U, there was active women’s movement group, now that I remember, I can’t remember the name of it, but I was involved in that and it was the, “we can do anything” thing, remember the lady who brings home the bacon and fries it up in the pan, and she’s wearing a business suit.

DL: Yes I do.

CM: Well I...

DL: Helen Redding.

CM: Yeah, so I thought, I can do anything. And so I did not want to fall into a stereotype of, I had to, not have children, not get married, not wear make-up, I wanted to be a woman, but also be an Officer. And so I decided that I was going to live my life. And I had been, of course having children was part of that, and luckily for me, the Army had reached a point where you can have children.
DL: Yeah, right, yeah.

CM: In the army, so I had the 2 children and my husband then didn’t really want more children, but I always wanted more children. After we divorced, then my new husband, he didn’t have children so I thought oh great, we can have children, we’ll have 2 more and so we agreed, we were going to have 4 children.

DL: And this...

CM: And we had a surprise 5\textsuperscript{th}.

DL: The 2\textsuperscript{nd} husband is the man you are referring to who was the military.

CM: Yes.

DL: Graduate from West Point, and then you met him while you were...

CM: Teaching at Texas A & M.

DL: He’s a professor?

CM: Yes.

DL: And what...

CM: He’s a Political Scientist.

DL: Ok.

CM: He’s at the Bush School, they have the George Bush School.

DL: Yes.

CM: Of Public Affairs, Government of Public Affairs, or Public Service at Texas A & M. And he’s still at Texas A & M, we live in Austin, which is 2 hours away, but he teaches a couple days a week. And so he’ll work at home the other days. So yeah, we, so, we have 3 children together, and I have 2 children from my first marriage.

[48:57]

DL: And then, there’s a divergent ages, I mean you said you have one now, you have one that just got a PhD, and you have one that’s in 6\textsuperscript{th} grade.

CM: 6\textsuperscript{th} grade.

DL: So, that must be a challenge?
CM: Well the older children were very helpful with the younger children.

DL: Oh ok.

CM: And I did go to Law School, Nicole was 10 and Michelle was 8 when I remarried. And I knew I wanted to get pregnant right away, so I got off active duty, go to Law School, actually I was on active duty in Law School, when the Gulf War started. My ETS (expiration term of service) date was October 15th, if my ETS date had been October 30th, I would have been stop lossed.

DL: Oh wow.

CM: I was so lucky, because I had given up, I had turned down commander manager staff college, I was accepted, I turned it down, I said I was getting out, I was going to Law School. I am sitting in Law School when all that happened.

DL: Oh yeah.

CM: So, but I was also pregnant, so that I could have that child at the end of my first year of Law School. And, that, she came right on schedule. And then the next plan was to get pregnant my third year, and then have that child right after, and then he came.

[50:12]
DL: Very organized.

CM: on schedule.

DL: Keep it on a schedule like that.

CM: That’s right.

DL: Gees.

CM: So that worked out great.

DL: Yes.

CM: And the older children were a lot of help. They had to move around a little bit in, when they were young. But this worked so nice for them, that I got off active duty because they were able to have friends.

DL: Oh sure, yeah.

CM: And the younger children were able to live in the same area. And yeah so,

DL: And the youngest one you eluded to was a surprise, were you still on reserves or were you, I mean..
CM: Uh, actually I was still in the reserve status, but after he was born I took a tour, an active duty tour of Fort Hood. So I remember driving up there, it’s about 70 miles from our house, so I would go up every day because I was breast feeding, and I would do the breast pump in the car and at lunch time.

DL: This may be one of the first times in an interview that I have had anybody mention that. This is groundbreaking. This is really good.

CM: But the kind with the battery thing.

DL: That’s good for future historians, so they’ll be able to look this up. Technology.

[51:13]
CM: Actually on that subject, this is a funny story, I had, in the old days, when I was breastfeeding Michelle, who is my second daughter, so she was born in 1981, you didn’t have the portable breast pumps that they have now.

DL: And you wouldn’t dare talk about something like this back in those days.

CM: Oh my gosh, well I ran, I went to a hospital supply store and rented a big (showing with hands) breast pump, which is what they had in hospitals. Because nobody had, you know they didn’t come up with those things for working women yet, and so I’m going for a 2 week course and I want to pump the breast so that I can still keep my supply up while I’m gone, and so I get off the airplane and I’m carrying this big, looks like I have a generator. So I was a Captain, no a Lieutenant, and this Major, he’s like oh can I help you carry your stuff, and so he carries this breast pump. So he carries it all the way for me, and at the end he says, so tell me what was that anyway, some sort of generator? I said oh it’s a breast pump, he turned 20 shades of red.

DL: I would imagine, that’s what I said.

CM: And I saw him years later at Fort Riley, years, years, years later and he sees me and says (pointing), you’re the breast pump lady.

DL: Isn’t that anecdote itself, tells us a heck of a lot about the way things and values have changed.

CM: Right.

DL: It, it’s incredible, incredible, so your children grew up with, from what you’re telling me without that typical “army brat” kind of situation.

CM: Yeah.

DL: So you were able to give them a sense of stability, along with doing all this service to your country. As I said what accomplishments.
CM: Well, I am proud, I am very proud of them and they are proud of me because my daughter Michelle she emailed me last night, she said, “I am so proud of you”, and you know I forget about that, I don’t even think about that very much, but ...

DL: We all tend to do that.

CM: Yeah.

DL: With our families.

CM: Yeah.

DL: By the way, what rank was Daddy when he got out of the service?

CM: He was a Captain.

DL: Oh good, so let me outrank Daddy, so you could pull that on him too, that’s good.

CM: That didn’t work very well.

DL: I was in the Airborne.

CM: I tried.

DL: That’s what I was going to say. Airborne, different mentality there.

CM: He developed this salute for me, and we have a pool, and so one day, he was so mad at me. He thinks I give orders, when of course, as a mother, you are really just running the household, well he flipped upside down in the pool and he did this (saluting toward her backside). That was his salute for me.

DL: Amazing.

CM: He’s pretty funny

DL: What stories, absolutely. Once again, the changes in relationships, between husband and wives,

CM: Yeah

DL: And so many kinds of things, what are you doing now with your life? In retirement, what a joke.

[53:53]

CM: Well, I’m retired from the Army, but I am working with the Department of Veterans Affairs, as an attorney in procurement law. And I never did procurement law at all, I have supervised attorneys who have done contracts for the army, I supervised administrative law office and we had contracts as part of
that, but that’s completely different than what I am doing with the VA (Veterans Affairs). And so I am learning, I am on the learning curve, I’ve been doing that now for about 18 months. And it’s, it is a new world, the, we have federal acquisition regulations that is about that thick (holding fingers about 3 inches apart). And it would be like never doing tax and then all of sudden now you have the, all the income tax regulations.

DL: Yeah.

CM: And so you really, it’s an intellectual challenge, it really is. And the reason I took that job, I was very happy in another job that I had, actually I was working for the Army as a civilian, because I got to help soldiers, but this job was 10 minutes from my house, and it pays more, and at this point I thought I better focus on my family a little bit more.

DL: You seem to have done that, kept that balance very, very well.

CM: Thank you.

[55:09]
DL: In terms of focusing on your family. We’ve talked to Veterans, and they’ve deployed and everything they go through, but you’ve done, seems, a remarkable job there. I was just going to ask if there was a lot of travelling in this job? Though it doesn’t seem.

CM: Yeah, this job no, no.

DL: That’s great.

CM: Now, my last job in the Army I was gone all the time.

DL: Yeah.

CM: All the time.

DL: Yeah.

CM: I was mobilized, so I was already gone, and then as part of that, I travelled all over. So I am actually enjoying not having to travel.

DL: I would, yes, after done all this, so when, when’s your book coming out? Have you started on it yet?

CM: My daughter, the daughter that just got a PhD, she always says mom, you should do your memoirs, she is memoirist.

DL: Yeah.
CM: She said you should do your memoir, and I thought oh my gosh, I always thought my mother should do a memoir.

DL: Our parents should, right, that’s true, but now you’re the mother.

CM: I know.

DL: You need to do it, just exactly correct.

CM: Maybe someday I’ll get with her.

DL: I am urging you to do that as a historian.

CM: Thank you.

DL: Your story, and as I said, especially as we overlay it against the backdrop of so many changes that were going on, it just enlightens a lot of perspective. Are there any other anecdotes or any other philosophies that you would like to share with us as, that’s kind of putting you on the spot I know but I always like to sort of finish up the interview with that in case there’s something I’ve overlooked or

CM: I will say this...

DL: There’s something you’d like to share.

CM: One thing I am very proud of and that was, when I told you I got to Texas A & M and they were, they had, they were still segregated, the women were segregated.

DL: Yeah.

CM: In their own unit, they had a women’s unit for the Army and Navy, because that has all services there, they had a corp at that time of 3,500 cadets. And then they had a unit for the Air Force, and I was the tactical advisor for the Army unit, W1. Those women looked to me to make changes, and I was only a Captain, and I worked for a Lieutenant Colonel and my ultimate boss was a Colonel, and my Colonel did not want women to be integrated into the corp, but I saw it not only the fact that segregation was wrong and it was something that we’re not going on active duty, but it also limited the leadership role, so if you were a woman in W1, you had an oppor, you only had one opportunity to be First Sergeant, and one opportunity to be Commander, and so you could only have one woman at a time. And so I talked to my supervisors about that, they thought, they didn’t see anything wrong because they had all gone to Texas A & M, and that’s the way it was when they were there, and finally I was not able to make any, get anywhere with my chain of command, which is what the Army teaches you.

[57:55]
DL: Oh yeah.

28
CM: You go to the chain of command, and so I went to, I was appointed to the faculty senate on the status of women, a subcommittee, and so I talked to them, and I got them fired up, and then, so then, that of course that helped because, they got, they made resolution that we need to go this way, and I went to the newspaper, the local paper.

DL: Oh wow.

CM: My colonel was so mad at me.

DL: I’m just going to say, that would not have been...

CM: He had me standing at attention and he’s yelling and screaming, you will never talk to the press. So he didn’t know, because I had given them the back story, and I had given them some on the record stuff so he would not figure out that I was the one who gave the back story, and he said, “did you say this, did you say this”, and I said “Yes”, this is the stuff that was on the record.

DL: Yeah.

CM: And he says, “and you will never talk to them again”, and I can’t imagine if he know that I gave them the rest of that.

DL: Oh yes, right.

CM: But he told me, “they will never be in my old unit”, well they are in his old unit today. And so that’s something I looked at as women there, they relied on me and I felt that I had to come through for them.

DL: And you did.

CM: And I did, so I am very proud of that.

DL: Well, you have a right to be proud of so many things, this has been one of the most pleasant and fascinating interviews I’ve ever done.

CM: Ah, thank you.

DL: I thank you for being with us here today, I thank you for representing Cal U.

CM: Thank you.

DL: So magnificently, and I thank you so much for your service to your country.

CM: Thank you very much.

DL: We are really blessed to have people like you.
CM: I appreciate it.

DL: Thank you very much.