

Interviewee: Deborah Gavron-Ravenelle
Interviewer: Samantha Anna Song Naples &
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Abstract:

Deborah Gavron-Ravenelle was born in New Jersey in 1965 and raised in that state. Right out of college she moved to Worcester, but then resided in various other locations. When she married Bob Ravenelle, she moved back to the city, joined by their two dogs. She attended St. Michael's College in Vermont and majored in both journalism and political science. Working hard academically, she was thoroughly involved in the school community. Wanting to further her education, she attended law school and eventually became a lawyer for an insurance company. She is currently Chief Compliance Officer at Reliant Medical Group. Deborah balanced academic responsibilities and extracurricular activities, which paralleled with work and the community service organizations. In this interview, she explains her passion for assisting women and girls in the community, an important part of her life. Through multiple organizations, including the YWCA, the United Way Women's Initiative, and Girls Inc., she has helped young girls and women gain confidence and self-esteem. She accomplishes this by aiding the organizations with the fundraising that is necessary for them to operate and recruiting volunteers. She has dedicated her time and involved herself to make a difference in the Worcester community.

SN: Do you want to state your full name, including your maiden name?

DG: Sure, it's Deborah Gavron-Ravenelle.

SN: When were you born?

DG: When was... the year?

SN: If you want.

DG: So I was born in 1965 in New Jersey.

LH: Have you ever married?

DG: I am married, yes.

LH: And what is your husband's name?

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DG: My husband's name is Bob Ravenelle.

LH: Okay.

DG: And he is actually the dean of students here.

LH: Oh that's cool.

DG: That's why I knew to say, "Hey I'll meet you at Charlie's." [laughs]

LH: Oh okay, that makes sense.

SN: I was wondering how she knew where that is...

DG: Yeah. [laughs]

LH: And do you have any children, grandchildren?

DG: Nope. Two dogs.

LH: Well dogs are considered children.

DG: They are, you're right. We have two Portuguese water dogs. Guinness and Libby.

LH: Oh that's cool.

DG: Yeah.

SN: I guess do you have any cultures or ethnicities that has to do with your identity of yourself?

DG: I guess I'm fascinated with my Polish history. And that's really it, I think.

SN: So you are interested in looking more into that?

DG: Yeah, I'm fascinated with World War II and the Holocaust and just understanding what the people went through, the culture.

LH: Yeah.

SN: I think that is interesting as well. Have you always lived in Worcester?

DG: I have not. I lived in Worcester right out of college, rented a place with some friends and was there for three or four years. Moved to West Boylston and then got married, Bob was offered the job here and we moved back in 1998. So we have been here since '98.

LH: Where in Worcester do you live?

DG: We live—we're on campus. Do you know where north and south halls are?

LH: I think so?

DG: Do you know where the Living-Learning Center is?

SN and LH: Yeah-Yes.

DH: Okay, if you go to those back pod parking lots behind the LLC and there's three residence halls...

LH: Okay.

DG: We're the house on the furthest left.

LH: Okay.

DG: Yeah.

SN: Oh wow so you're really close.

DG: We are very close. [laughs]

LH: That's good.

SN: Where did you go to college?

DG: I went to St. Michaels in Vermont.

SN: What did you major in?

DG: I was a journalism and political science major.

SN: Was that what you sort of I guess dreamed about or...?

DG: Well I dreamed that I would be this renounced journalist and that I'd write a novel or two and I'd done none of that. I ended up—I graduated, worked in an insurance company in their law department, went to law school, and then I've been a lawyer since then.

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SN: I didn't know you were a lawyer.

DG: Yeah.

LH: That's really cool.

DH: Yeah.

SN: A lot of schooling to go through?

DG: Yes, yes it is.

LH: Do you have any challenges when you were pursuing your education?

DG: Financial. You know trying to afford—I mean it's nothing what you all have to go through now but at the time it was really expensive. So financial aid and just loans and grants and things like that. I think the biggest challenge was that and you know just the uncertainty and sort of, you know, you all feel awkward and you don't really fit in.

LH: Yeah.

DG: And how are you supposed to maneuver this whole process.

LH: Yeah.

DG: So I think what everybody experiences, but I think money was the biggest.

LH: Yeah I think money is probably for the most, for most people.

DG: Yeah and it's scary because to get out of school and realize that you have all these loans to pay and would if I don't get a job and yeah it can be very scary.

SN: Do you like your job now? Like do you enjoy it?

DG: I do, I do, it's sort of—I'm the chief compliance officer at Reliant Medical Group. We're a physician practice and I'm responsible for privacy, compliance, business at business, ethics, business integrity. It's a highly regulated field so there's always things to make sure that physicians are doing and not doing and staff and things like that so it's interesting.

LH: What do you mean by compliance? What does that have... like...?

DG: So in health care you have all these regulations that you have to adhere to and make sure that, you know, certain contracts and certain agreements. Don't violate this and don't violate that

and fall within this safe harbor, this exception, and there are requirements for different practices. Physicians need to have a license and they need to be board certified and they need to be you know have a license to prescribe medication. And then there are just ethical behaviors that you want the organization to adhere to, and there's privacy issues, and then there's sort of general legal issues that pop up, so it's a little bit of that but you're the conscience of the organization.

LH: Okay.

DG: So long-winded answer. [laughs]

SN: It's okay. It's good. Was there any specific person or event that influenced you into what you are doing now?

DG: No, I don't think so. No, I mean the sort of the drive and the motivation I think I got from my grandmother. The opportunity to get the job that I'm at now was actually from another woman who I met at the gym. We took a spinning class together and my previous employer was promoting men around me and I was getting very frustrated. So I approached her and just said, "Would you take a look at my resume, do you think I'm marketable, what do you think?" and she said, "Yes, I'll take a look at it." And then probably a month later she came back and she said, "You know, I've got an opening. It's an entry level position." I'd been finance as opposed to health care. So that was—that's something that I've taken with me is being willing to take a chance on someone so. So I guess yes, the answer is yes.

SN: That's interesting.

LH: So what was your first job?

DG: Probably babysitting.

LH: How old were you when you did that?

DG: Probably 12, 13. Yeah, hated it.

LH: One way to make money though.

DG: Yeah.

SN: Do you have any other jobs like after your babysitting, before your current job?

DG: I did, I worked in restaurants, I did cleaning, I worked at Friendly's [Restaurant] forever, which was a great job. Yeah I cleaned, mostly restaurants cleaning. Work-study job in college, I worked at the sports information office, so that was a pretty cool job.

SN: What sort of I guess, extracurricular activities or just activities in general-like were you a part of during college?

DG: During college?

SN: Yeah.

DG: I was on student council, like student government association. I was involved in the newspaper, the radio station. We had an Amnesty International group, another volunteer type group, I did that. Newspaper took up a lot of time. I did sports and then I became editor. Radio station we did the only drive time radio show at the time at St. Mike's, which was cool. So we would get news you'd get of the wire and you'd edit it and you had different folks that would be reading different stories. We had a—Bernie Sanders at the time was the governor, no Madeleine Kunin was the governor at the time and we would get to go to her press conferences once a week, which was really pretty exciting. So sometimes you get little tidbits of information that you'd see later or that night on local news and things like that. So that was a fun job to do. Did some yearbook, did admissions, yeah it's a lot.

LH: How were you able to balance all of your responsibilities?

DG: I don't know, I think, like a lot of people, the more you're involved in, the more you're able to balance your time. So I think [laughs] as best you could.

LH: What do you think of the positives and negatives of the job path that you took?

DG: What are the positives and negatives of the job I do now?

LH: Yes.

DG: Negatives, sometimes are the politics involved with jobs, the hours sometimes are a negative, but the hours are sometimes a positive. The politics is a big negative. The entitlement that some people feel that they're entitled to. You know you have some people that think they're—they don't need to follow rules, which is a little frustrating for someone who likes to have rules.

LH: Yeah.

DG: The benefit is your job is never the same and there's always something new going on and even if it's the same, there's something that changes within five or six hours. The job that I have allows me to be involved in every single aspect of the organization so it's financial, it's how is money coming into the organization, how are we building a strategic plan as to where we want the organization to go, three, five, 10, 15, years from now. What are the IT—meeting with the IT folks to talk about what they need to do, how do we ensure that whatever we're adding to make some people's lives a little easier meets all the requirements and not disclosing patient

information that we shouldn't be disclosing, how operations works, how do the front-end staff meet patients when they walk in the door, what are some of the challenges that they have. And being able to manage the five people come in and we've got seven people checking out and we've got a doctor yelling for something and a nurse yelling for something else and it's given me a little bit more empathy on the whole health care environment, which is always a good thing. Yeah.

LH: Cool.

SN: I guess, the choices that you made in your life, are you happy with those choices, or did you have a few things that you were like oh I should have done...

DG: A few regrets?

SN: Yeah.

DG: Bob and I talk about this a lot, the biggest regret I have is I didn't study abroad in college. So if you have the opportunity, do it! But that I have to say is probably the biggest regret. And when I look at it now it's probably not such a bad thing, I mean it's not, you know, I didn't—I don't know, it could have been—I don't know, what am I trying to say, in the grand scheme of things it's not that big of a regret. I mean I wish I would have done it, but you know other people have such bigger regrets.

SN: Where would you have wanted to study abroad?

DG: I don't know, I think I would have loved to have gone—well, I would have loved to have gone to Poland or some sort of central European country, but I would have loved to have gone to Italy or Portugal or Spain and, and anywhere.

LH: Have you visited any other countries?

DG: I have, I've been to England and Ireland. I've been to Nigeria. I've been to a lot of the Caribbean, Canada, Mexico.

SN: You like to travel?

DG: I do, I love it.

LH: How often do you travel?

DG: We try to take one vacation a year, like one big vacation.

SN: That's nice.

LH: It's cool.

DG: Yeah.

LH: Do you consider yourself active politically?

DG: Not as much as I wish I was. So yes, I think I could do more.

LH: Do you follow any of the debates or...

DG: Yes, yup.

SN: I guess this sort of ties in with the politics, community... you said that you've been active in college and I guess was there any more community or volunteer work that you've done. [???

DG: When we moved back to Worcester and when I started at Reliant I really became more engaged with Worcester community because I have been working in Marlborough and Boston and it was really hard to get back here but since then I sit on the board of the YWCA, which is right downtown, near the library and I sit on the board of Girls Inc. which is down by Worcester Academy, which you are probably familiar with that part of town, up near Vernon Hill, which is a pretty—it's a very sad depressed area, but they do a lot of really good work. The United Way has an organization that has a woman's initiative and what we do is we pool our resources and we look for opportunities to help young girls between say eight and twelve or eight and thirteen. So I sit on that leadership committee. We have a United Way Day of Caring which Assumption [College] always takes part of in the fall in September usually. So I've done that for the past eight years and was on the committee at Reliant for our giving campaign. I do a lot of work with the Reliant Foundation. So we have a foundation, which is geared towards helping individuals within the community who need assistance, whether its childhood obesity or breast cancer survivors and things like that.

SN: Oh would you want to I guess sort of go more in detail or in depth of the few organizations that were involved in?

DG: I think that the big three are the United Way, Girls Inc., and the YW. So the United Way, it's the Central Mass agency here, they do a lot of great work. Are you familiar with the United Way at all?

SN: I'm not...

DG: No.

LH: I haven't heard of it.

DG: I think one way to look at it is they are a repository, so they get a lot of money and then

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they share that money with different agencies who apply for funding. And the Women's Initiative is a group within the United Way, but we do our own funding so Girls Inc. could be asking for money to run a summer program, there could be something from the Worcester Public Schools they want to do a program for young girls and self-esteem or do a program on anti-bullying. So a lot of work that we do at the United Way and the Women's Initiative is geared towards helping and empowering young women. If you think of the YWCA, its main focus is to empower women and end racism. And those are the two pillars of that organization which as with all three organizations, its women empowerment that's very important to me. Girls Inc. does some phenomenal work with girls right up through high school and high school graduation. They have a program where they take—its leadership academy is a twelve week program and you are working with high school seniors and you do everything with them. You have an ice breaker—at one point we were rock climbing, you work with them on interviewing and how to present yourself when you are going on your college interviews and different types on leadership skills that they would need to be able to carry themselves in a very positive and professional way. It is a great group. So did that answer your question?

SN: Yeah, you're very passionate about those organizations.

DG: Yeah I am, they are great organizations.

LH: The YWCA what does that stand for?

DG: Oh gosh, YW... Young Women's Christian Association. Which to be honest I don't think I knew until I joined the board. Because there is you know the YMCA, which is the Young Men's Christian Association. But anybody can go to the YW.

LH: Okay, do you think that religion plays a part in what you do?

DG: No, no.

LH: Okay.

SN: Were there any challenges that you engaged in during those organizations that you were involved in?

DG: Any challenges within the different agencies?

SN: Yeah.

DG: Do they give you an example of what a challenge might be?

SN: No... but.

[Laughs]

DG: No Cliff Notes? [laughs]

LH: But this is one of the one we brainstormed of during our history class so we don't have any...

DG: What are some of the challenges with the agency...?

SN: Or just.

LH: Any obstacles that you faced while trying to do those...

DG: No, well, my employer is very supportive of all the agencies and being part of the community because unfortunately they don't all meet before eight in the morning or after five, six, seven or eight o'clock at night. So there is time away from work, but they view that as a positive. So that definitely hasn't been a challenge. I think the challenge with all the agencies is just funding. And it's hard—I don't like to ask people for money and it's very hard for me to do that even though I am very passionate about the organization, it's still that people are struggling and it's not an easy thing to part with your money. So you really need to put that passion in and explain why it's an important opportunity to get involved in the organization. So sometimes what I'll do instead of asking for money I'll [ask] well would you like to volunteer. And then people volunteer and they say, "Oh yeah wow I should really—I should have my United Way donation go to Women's Initiative or something like that." So that's a challenge I think for me is fundraising for organizations.

LH: Any community service, what motivates you to do it?

DH: You know this is going to sound really deep but I guess I don't want anyone else to feel as though they aren't worthy and that somebody has their back. So I want everyone—I want all the young girls that you get to work with to realize that they have a lot of value and that someone really cares about what they are doing.

SN: That's really nice.

DG: [Laughs] Oh, thank you!

SN: To sort of let those girls know that there's somebody looking out for them.

DG: Yeah, yeah. Because we can be our own worst enemies. Right? Ggirls can be, women can be mean to each other so you need to stand up for each other.

SN & LH: Yeah.

DG: There's a quote, and it has to do with, oh...I had it now I've lost it, but there's something about the greater strength a woman has is to build up another woman. And so I think, I think that's really important. And not to think that everybody's—I mean I'm not very competitive, but I also feel as though there is a time and a place when you need to sort of put that aside and look at how you can help somebody else.

LH: That's really nice. What advice would you give to someone who is interested in joining some community services?

DG: Do a little research, which is the really awesome thing now is you can go online and read about everybody and anything but I would find out what it is you're interested in. Don't settle, because your time is really precious and it's special and it's just yours, so if you're involved in something and you know it's not a really good fit, it's okay to say you know what, this isn't a really good fit for me, I want to volunteer somewhere else. I think realizing that you can't nor should you try to do everything, and it's okay to be involved in one organization and really devote yourself to that and maybe find something else. But you don't have to get involved in 20 different things. Know what's important to you and get involved in that and know that it's okay, if it's not working out, it's okay to leave.

SN: That's good advice because some people may feel bad if they're in an organization and they don't feel like they are connecting.

DG: Yeah, yup. It took me a long time to be able to do that, and I've done that with books too. I would feel if I started a book, come hell or high water I am going to finish that book. And then you think to yourself I've just lost—I am never getting this time back. [laughs] And I just if it's not going to—it doesn't keep my interest, it's not something that I'm feeling as though I'm getting anything from it, I'm not going to waste my time.

LH: Yeah, it's not a good use of your time.

DG: You know, how many times have you been in a meeting, or maybe not, but you have been somewhere where you're listening to a lecture, well that's probably a bad excuse for an example anyways. [all laugh] But you just think, oh my God, I just lost two hours of my life. I'm never getting those two hours back.

LH: Yeah.

DG: Do you get to take out the parts where I sound really smart or not and not like, the other parts. [all laugh]

SN: I mean I think all of the information that we get is very helpful and I think it's just good to just learn a lot about other people.

DG: Was this what you thought it would be like?

LH: No, I thought it would be like, a little more formal and intimidating.

DG: Really? [all laugh]

LH: Yeah.

DG: Ok, did you think the same thing?

SN: I mean I kind of, I don't know. I expected, I guess, it to be more, I guess, put together. Like, I don't feel like, we kind of like, during class we kind of came up with the questions really last minute. I thought we should have done more. It's ok.

DG: That's alright.

SN: I think everything is going great.

DG: Yeah.

LH: Everything is going good.

DG: Good.

SN: Do you want to ask?

LH: Oh ok. Has there been any health issues with you or your family that has left like, a big impact?

DG: [laughs] It's kind of funny. I had open heart surgery right before Bob and I got married and discovered it because I had been having fainting spells and I was sure that I wasn't going to make it, you know. So we were engaged and I was thinking we should just get married before my surgery but I have been fine ever since. But that was my big scare. Didn't really have any broken bones, knock on wood.

LH: Yeah, that does sound scary. How long ago was this?

DG: Twenty-one years ago.

LH: Oh ok.

DG: Yeah. [faint rumbling] sorry that was my stomach. I didn't have lunch. [all laugh]

LH: I think we all are pretty hungry. [all laugh]

SN: I haven't had dinner yet. I feel you seem very young to have open-heart surgery.

DG: Well what they diagnosed me with was called Atrial Septal Defect and they typically find it

in babies. So if you have a heart murmur one of the things they test is for that and for whatever reason they never tested when I was a baby. So they found it when I was almost thirty and they said I could wait but it would probably get worse so I just did it then.

LH: I'm glad everything worked out.

DG: Yeah me too. [all laugh]

SN: You recovered?

DG: Yeah, recovery was, was really pretty easy. It was hot. It was a really hot, hot summer but everything is fine.

LH: That's good.

DG: What were the topics that you had to ask, or that you came up with? Obviously you did like, education.

LH: The ones that we came up with in class were about community service and stuff like that but the ones that we got here were like, general information like family, where you are from.

DG: Yep.

LH: Then there is education, work.

DG: Yeah.

LH: There was a section for political and community involvement. So it's very nice and organized.

DG: Yeah, that's great.

LH: It's very helpful.

DG: A little easier too. You don't have to come up with all the questions yourself.

LH: Yeah, definitely.

DG: That would take forever.

SN: I had to do that last semester.

DG: Oh did you? What for?

SN: An interview.

DG: Oh wow, how did that interview go?

SN: Good.

DG: Good.

SN: Yeah.

LH: This is the first interview I've ever done.

DG: Oh really?

LH: Yeah.

DG: Well good.

SN: Have you done a lot of interviews yourself?

DG: On that side of the table, yes. Not being interviewed, but yes. It's much easier over there.

LH: Are you responsible for anyone's health besides your own?

DG: Well I make sure that Bob goes to the doctor and we have two dogs so I would say yes to that, but yeah.

SN: How are we doing on time?

DG: Twenty of.

LH: Ok, so.

SN: I feel like it's going, pretty fast.

DG: Yeah.

LH: Yeah, I thought it would be a lot longer but yeah, it's going.

DG: Is there anything you didn't get an answer to or?

LH: We still have about; we have a few more questions.

DG: Ok.

LH: So.

SN: I mean, I guess it's kind of like changing the topic abruptly but.

DG: Ok.

SN: Were there like any major historical events in Worcester during your time here that you have experienced?

DG: In Worcester. We had the fire at the, what's the name of the building? It was the first year we moved back to Worcester. It was in December. The Cold Storage fire where five firemen died. That was pretty profound in the sense that we were coming, Bob and I were coming back from a holiday, wherever the holiday semi-formal here on campus is and we saw all of the fire trucks and found out later what had happened. We had friends whose spouses were with the fire department so not knowing for a day or so was a little scary and then I think what really hit me was when I was driving to work and that time I was working in Marlborough. I was around [Rte] 290 by Dick's and literally going down the hill on 290 from Dick's all the, almost to [Rte] 495 past the Solomon Pond Mall was just bumper to bumper traffic of fire trucks. Everybody coming into the city for the memorial service and it just gave me the chills because you saw—I knew obviously they weren't all from Worcester. They weren't all from Massachusetts. I thought that was pretty profound. I think being here. I was here, you weren't here last year. That's right, because you are first years.

LH: Right.

DG: There was a scare last year that someone had come on campus, there was a, I forget if it was a bomb threat or what it was. That was really disturbing but in a multitude of ways. I remember Bob was at a conference and at the time we had one dog, so Guinness and I went for a walk in the morning as we usually do. It must have been Columbus Day weekend. It wasn't really cold out and it was the fall semester and it just felt odd that there was no cars in the parking lot. Really, "When are all the students coming back?" and I thought maybe I was confused. "Maybe they are coming back today" and I started walking around and I got the Campus Security Office and it was just really eerie and creepy and I turned around and went home and I never checked my phone before I left and what I discovered is had I turned the corner and gone past Charlie's there would have been all the news agencies there. They had evacuated campus and I get here and Bob said, "I knew you were safe because you weren't on campus and I figured if something would happen like public safety would come up and get you." Like what! [all laugh] I mean my hair was on fire. I couldn't believe that I was here so then I had to go on with my day and I left. I exited campus and I think people were a little surprised to see me leaving and, again, there were all the media out there and you weren't allowed on campus until they did a full sweep so I had to go around. So I thought that was pretty interesting.

LH: Yeah, definitely. Sounds scary. When you hear about all these different things going on.

DG: Yeah.

LH: You would like to think that it wouldn't happen here but you just never know.

DG: Yeah.

LH: So I didn't know that there was a bomb threat here last year.

DG: Yeah, don't tell your parents. [all laugh] so there was that. There was a storm a couple years ago and I forget exactly, maybe three or four years ago where, out more towards Sturbridge and Southbridge there were, in Charlton, there were tornadoes and micro bursts that set down but here there was just an eerie glow to the sky. I remember, I remember my office overlooks, it's on the fourteenth floor, it overlooks City Hall but I'm high enough so I can also see the mountains. So I see the Mount Wachusett and I remember the sky was an orangey, like a orangey brown and it was kind of green and it was really, really windy and I remember there were all sorts of alerts going on the radio and on TV you could hear the sound, you really shouldn't, you know, get to cover, tornadoes in the area, so that was a little disturbing.

LH: Yeah.

DG: I had a friend of mine whose home was actually picked off his foundation.

LH: Wow. Yeah, we don't usually get tornadoes around here.

DG: No, not like that. So yeah, that was three pretty significant things.

SN: Yeah.

DG: And the ice storm.

LH: Oh yeah.

DG: That's another one. The ice storm was very impactful, and obviously the blizzards last year was.

LH: That was a lot of snow.

DG: I would say those three are pretty significant.

SN: I just think it's cool to hear about other people's experience. Oh I guess this sort of ties in but is a bit more general. It's like, you have any memories of significant historical events?

DG: Well I was in college when the Challenger [space shuttle] exploded and I remember watching it on TV and I was getting ready to go to a press luncheon. St. Michaels hosted the Vermont Press Association and we would have a teacher speaker every year and that year was, he wrote Gideon's Trumpet. [Anthony] Lewis I think was his name but that was an unbelievable experience. Let me check to see what his name was because, that was but the whole experience, it was like twentieth, thirtieth anniversary or something like that since the space Challenger.

SN: Yeah.

LH: Yeah, I'm not sure.

DG: That was pretty remarkable. Anthony Lewis is the author, he spoke. Obviously 9/11 was another event where, I was working at Fidelity Investment at the time and I was in a meeting and I came out of the meeting and was told what had happened and really couldn't understand because at the time it was still thought it was human error, sort of a malfunction, technology, and then as the day sort of unfolded, we started hearing more things. My college roommate's husband worked near the Pentagon so that was frightening trying to find and being able to reach out to people you couldn't. You know, cellphones weren't working. We couldn't call. We were in a lockdown and I remember driving back on campus and ran into a former student now working, I think, in Boston, and he just, he was walking and I stopped the car and just said, you know, "Brad, are you ok?" and just that brief sort of dialogue that he and I had and it was the simple, you know, I was sitting in the car and he just very simply said, "Take care" and sort of walked away and just that, that human touch was really, I think, important and I'd been watching the whole day unfold and not really knowing what to make of it all. I think when the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma was bombed. That was something else that was really just a little surreal. You know, a lot of what has been going on recently. We were in Canada, Montreal, Quebec when the Newtown Shootings occurred and being asked by Canadians or other people that were travelling to the United States, "How are you?" I think being abroad anywhere when anything happens is really interesting. We were in Nigeria, or were we in Paris, when the whole Tiger Woods, when his whole persona imploded and you're realized he wasn't the nice guy you thought he was. The issues with women and all of that.

LH: Yeah.

DG: And just, to get the whole take in a foreign country to watch all that unfold. Sometimes we are really over the top here. It's interesting just to be there and watch that. Yes, so I think I have given you more than enough then you probably asked for.

SN: Through tough times, what has kept you going?

DG: You know, I think, I think recently it gets harder to, rationalize things. When you're younger you feel infallible. Nothing's going to happen to me and now you realize that anything can happen at any time. A colleague of mine just lost her husband and you realize that, you know, to you fifty sounds really old. I think what has really been important is my friends, my brother more so because, well we fight like cats and dogs, but we developed a strong relationship. Well obviously Bob, he keeps, he's very even and level headed, you know. Sometimes I go off on one or the other so it has a very calming effect.

LH: How do you define success in your life and has that changed over time when you were younger?

DG: Yes, I think early on success was just all about, you know, title and money and it's not that it's still not that, but I think that because I would be disingenuous if I said that, but I guess I'm

also looking at whose lives I have impacted and how I impacted them. If I had been a positive influence and I think about if something were to happen, what would they say about me if I were gone, and I would like them to say good things obviously. [all laugh] But you want them to remember you for good times that you had with them or you make them a special meal or you brought them some flowers or something like that. I think that's success too. Being able to balance it all, which is hard.

SN: Based on your life experiences, I guess, sort of, what you are doing now with your organizations, what advice would you give to woman today and in future generations?

DG: I think the same thing I said before is find something you feel passionate about and do it and don't feel bad if you want to get involved in something else. Paying it forward is huge. You need to find someone you can share things with and have them realize that the best thing I can do is just be present and share things with other people and I think the other piece is that even the simplest of things sometimes means the world to people and don't sell yourself short by just calling from the phone and saying hi or now sending a quick text with a little smiley face or something. Baking cookies, you know? Offering to help someone in the sense of you have something and they need it, you give it to them. I think those are good pieces of advice. Don't take yourself too seriously. [all laugh] And keep a sense of humor. [all laugh] Oh, don't drink cheap wine [all laugh].

SN: Ok.

LH: Duly noted.

DG: Yeah, or cheap wine's ok. Just don't drink bad wine. If you don't like it, don't drink it.

LH: Good advice.

DG: Do you mind? [laughter]

SN: I was thinking about this question that, now that we are working to tell a fuller story about the history of woman that has been recorded in the past, what should we include?

DG: Wow. Be sure to include, I think as many woman as you can. As many diverse—and diversity isn't just skin color or ethnicity or religion but it's socio-economic class, education. I think asking women to be open and honest about what they are talking about and it's ok to make mistakes when you are talking, and asking if you could rewind that knowing that you won't but... [all laugh] You know, I think inclusion and making sure everyone feels that they have a voice and asking them what matters to them. I bet if I ask you what you are really passionate about or what matters to you would be very different from another first-year student that could be from the very same town that you are from.

SN: Yeah.

DG: That's a great question.

SN: Yeah.

DG: What would you think of?

LH: I would probably say like, the same as you, like, get like a well diverse amount of points of view because every single person has their own point of view.

DG: Yeah.

LH: So it gets, it gives you a nice, well-rounded version of how the world works.

DG: Yeah, because everybody is going to look at the experience differently and remember something differently. I mean, I bet if you had siblings and you asked them about an experience you had, that you all had, you all will have a different take on it. [all laugh]

SN: Definitely.

DG: Wait a minute, no; it was a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. No, no, it was a grilled cheese.

[All laugh]

SN: I guess the last and concluding question is. [laughter] Is there anyone that you would suggest for future interviews?

DG: Now is there criteria that they live in Worcester or work in Worcester or anything like that?

SN: It could be.

LH: I think as long as it involves Worcester somehow I think, so, but I'm not one hundred percent sure.

DG: Ok. I have a colleague. Her name is Linda Kukola and if Charlene is listening to this and if she wants to reach out to me I would be happy to get them in touch with each other. I have another who is just one of my dearest friends. Suzanne Largist and she actually has a great— Linda works in Worcester, she doesn't live in Worcester. Suzanne grew up in Shrewsbury, grandparents lived in Worcester. She and I actually lived together in college. She lives in Worcester now. She taught in Worcester. She now has a teaching position out in Springfield. I think both them would be a great addition and a great person to, great people rather, to share their experiences with the community. Yeah, I think they'd be great.

LH: Thank you.

DG: Thank you.

SN: Thanks for getting interviewed.

DG: Thank you. [all laugh]

SN: Seven o'clock. Very good timing.

DG: Wow.