

**NASA HEADQUARTERS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
EDITED ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT**

HARRIETT G. JENKINS  
INTERVIEWED BY JENNIFER ROSS-NAZZAL  
BETHESDA, MARYLAND – 5 AUGUST 2011

ROSS-NAZZAL: Today is August 5th, 2011. This interview with Dr. Harriett Jenkins is being conducted in Bethesda, Maryland, for the NASA Headquarters History Office. The interviewer is Jennifer Ross-Nazzal, assisted by Rebecca Wright. Thanks so much for inviting us into your home today. We certainly appreciate the time you've given us, and all the research that you've pulled.

JENKINS: Thank you for coming.

ROSS-NAZZAL: It's a great pleasure for us. I thought we'd start by asking you how you found out about the opportunity to work for NASA in the Equal Opportunity Program.

JENKINS: It was by chance, I normally say. My second marriage was to George L. Jenkins, Jr., who lived back here in Washington, DC area. We married in November of 1972. At the time, I lived in Berkeley, California, where I was employed in the Berkeley Unified School District. I finished out the school year there in June of the following year, 1973, and moved to the Washington, DC area, where my new husband lived.

I looked for education jobs in the area, of course. Everyone had assured me in Berkeley that I'd have no trouble finding jobs, but it wasn't that easy at all. I had not pinned down a permanent kind of position in education that I really wanted. But I had been called for an

interview by what was then the Commission of Education. That was before there was a federal Department of Education. The interviewers appeared to like my qualifications, and they asked me back for a second interview, which was supposed to have been the final one. It was for a key position with the Teacher Corps.

When I returned for that interview they apologized profusely and indicated that a Dr. William [L.] Smith, who had been serving in the role in the interim, lost his congressional funding for his adult education program, I believe it was, and that he had to keep the job. I knew Bill Smith, he'd been a wonderful helper from the Commission of Education to the Berkeley Unified School District, especially when we were desegregating the schools there. So after that news, I went over to his office and told him, "You took my job. You'll have to help me find one."

Of course he laughed, and that afternoon in his ride pool car was Dr. Dudley McConnell. He told him about me, and Dr. McConnell called me for an interview, and apparently let Dr. [James C.] Fletcher know—or they resolved the issue—and in February of 1974 Dr. Fletcher called me and offered me the job of Deputy Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity Programs at NASA. So that's how I got the job, by losing the one that I thought I was going to get.

ROSS-NAZZAL: What a wonderful chance opportunity to move into that position. What was your understanding of what you would be doing at NASA at that point?

JENKINS: Helping the agency to achieve the legal requirements of a federal agency, to abide by the law, to be able to achieve all of the aeronautical and space objectives that NASA was

accomplishing with an integrated staff. In my mind I would have explained that meant not just having all underrepresented groups of people there, but at all levels, in all kinds of occupations doing the job in an outstanding manner. In other words an integrated staff carrying out the work and the charter that NASA had. I thought that was very important. I knew a little bit about the reputation of NASA. I felt it was one of the best managed federal agencies. It certainly had an exciting mission and vision. I was surprised, and so I said “Yes” when Dr. Fletcher called. I, later of course, was fully briefed by Dr. McConnell. I had had a meeting with him anyway when he first interviewed me. I assumed that I would be helping the agency, Dr. McConnell and the leadership, implement and get an integrated staff to carry out the space missions with which they were charged.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Now before you came on board there was another African-American woman who was head of EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity], Ruth Bates Harris. Were you aware of the politics that was going on—that she was fired and there were congressional hearings?

JENKINS: Not that much. I tried to go back in my notes to see when I may have first heard about it. I don’t have anything that verifies a date. I just do not remember very much about being aware of what all had gone on. But I’m sure that Dr. McConnell, when we met and he briefed me, would have indicated what had happened to the previous holder of the position. He probably gave me a copy of the memo from Dr. Fletcher to the staff.<sup>1</sup> I assume you guys are aware of that. If not I’ll see that you get a copy. He sent out a memo to all of the NASA employees explaining why he had terminated Ruth Bates Harris. Have you seen that memo?

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. James Fletcher, “Memorandum to All NASA Employees,” 2 November 1973.

ROSS-NAZZAL: I believe I have, yes.

JENKINS: So I'm sure I was given that letter, because it had gone to all the staff, and that I'd been briefed. I'm absolutely certain that I was not told all of the details about whatever the personnel issues were that occurred, what had caused it. I don't remember knowing about those until there were some publications that had come out, probably even in the last decade, or hearing from others some of the nuances and the issues and the things that were going on.

I certainly gleaned from whatever information I was given—and from information I've learned since from staff and from people and from Ruth Bates Harris's record of involvement with the Tuskegee Airmen and other factors—that she seemed very enthusiastic. A lot of people at NASA and outside of NASA hold and have held and still do hold her in high esteem. It was clear she was respected for her courage in bringing the issue to the forefront about the underrepresentation at NASA. I did remember that she came to visit me, I believe, after I'd been appointed, in August, to the Assistant Administrator position. I remember her being gracious. We talked a little bit about some of the program initiatives that she had talked about during her tenure. I remember her wishing me well.

It was interesting. I'm trying to think when I knew about her returning to NASA after she'd been terminated. I wasn't even really up on that, until it really occurred. In my struggling through all these materials and things, I found a telephone book from 1975 that is the [NASA] Headquarters [Washington, DC] telephone book.<sup>2</sup> It has that folded sheet inside with the pictures of key persons at Headquarters to know and talk to, and ones that employees probably

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<sup>2</sup> NASA Headquarters March 1975 Telephone Directory with NASA Headquarters Pictorial Organization Chart.

call more frequently than others. She's listed in that, and it's in 1975. So apparently she was brought back on board and was a member of the NASA family at that time. Her title was Deputy Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs for Community & Human Relations.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Tell us about those first couple of days. How were you initially treated by people at Headquarters and at the Centers as you came on board?

JENKINS: I think everyone was waiting to see, "What's this going to be like?" Apparently the report that Ruth Bates Harris had written had been shared, at least it's my impression, with the press. So everybody and all kinds of people knew about it. I just set about doing the tasks that had to be done.

I suspect that some of the staff members were sorry certainly to see her go and were wondering what would happen and whether we'd have a good aggressive program, and whether NASA was interested in really making a change and getting an integrated workforce. Things were okay; the relationships were okay. People were professional about it.

I even tried to remember was there a difference in my role from February to August, and what it became in August. I don't remember any kind of unevenness or waiting to see. I remember people really wanting to get the job done. There were excellent programs that were being implemented. When I looked them over certainly Dr. McConnell and Ruth Bates Harris had some excellent ideas that they had initiated and were in place. So I felt I could help and wanted to get on with the work. That's what I concentrated on.

ROSS-NAZZAL: What was your relationship once you came on board with the Administrator and the Deputy, Fletcher and Low?

JENKINS: What you would expect from an Administrator and the senior managers that report to them, very cordial, very supportive, certainly willing to listen. Excellent in guiding and making decisions about the policies we wanted to implement, excellent ideas. I worked well with them and enjoyed it very very much. Not only that, Jim Fletcher would tell me that I was one of the best appointments he had made in his career.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Isn't that nice?

JENKINS: I thought that was very flattering, of course. His wife had called me after his death, and as I remember it invited me to a space-related event at the Cosmos Club down in Washington, DC. At any rate, she said the same thing, that he had told her that. So I assumed it was sincerely meant.

I worked most closely with George Low, the deputy. We had an excellent relationship. We launched excellent initiatives, and they were effective, and I count that as a very valuable experience.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You mentioned when you got there that there were tasks that had to be completed. What were some of those tasks that you were working on immediately as you got into the office?

JENKINS: I probably won't remember specific tasks. Dr. McConnell made a report to the Committee on Science and Astronautics about March 21st, 1974,<sup>3</sup> which summarized the accomplishments, told them about the various programs, initiatives in the EO [Equal Opportunity] Office, and what NASA's goals and intent were.

I think the aim of the office was to calm concerns, be quite clear on where the agency was, how they saw the problem, that they were indeed addressing it, that they were going to be initiating a variety of strategies that were intended to help move the agency forward. In this report Dr. McConnell talks about the goals of the EO Program: the removal of discrimination in fact and appearance, the implementation of affirmative action programs, and ensure the broadest possible participation of women and member of minority groups in NASA programs. He went on to mention that those applied to the internal EEO Program itself, which dealt with the civil service tasks, but also the contract compliance function of the office and those contractor employees. He also went on to talk about the minority business enterprise program, the research programs, the predominantly minority colleges and then even went into greater detail about the contract compliance program. The reason I mention that is because later on, the part of the contract compliance oversight that was in the EO Office was later moved to procurement, years later. I don't even remember the date, but it was a significant part of the EO responsibility at that time.

It was a calming effort, and one that was pledging continued efforts. Of course he talked about the internal Equal Opportunity Program itself, and some of the percentages of the minority hires, and some of the future plans in terms of EEO milestones, and also the extraordinary

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<sup>3</sup> Statement of Dr. Dudley G. McConnell, NASA Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity Programs, before the Committee on Science and Astronautics, House of Representatives, 21 March 1974.

coordinated recruitment efforts that the agency would undertake, the utilization of the cooperative education program and the upward mobility programs, and the establishment of the National Aerospace Fellowship Program, the identification of women and minorities for management development, the graduate internship in aerospace technology. These were programs that he was explaining that were intended to help achieve these future objectives and goals of the program. That was as early, you see, as March of '74, and I'd been called in for the job in February. So I felt that they had an aggressive, well thought out, well planned approach. I was delighted to be part of the team to try to help carry that out.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Some of the materials that I read talked about how you helped to integrate schools in the California area. Would you talk about what you learned in California that you then applied here at NASA?

JENKINS: Yes. It was an extraordinary experience. It really was a professional enlightenment that I had not gotten from any of my classes at the University of California, Berkeley on education. Berkeley, California, was considered by many as a very liberal place. It certainly had wonderful ideas. It was the seat of the University of California, Berkeley. You may remember in the '60s, I guess, the kind of upheaval and the Free Speech Movement that started on the campus there. Some people I believe would have probably been surprised that we would even need to go to an effort to have to desegregate the schools. At any rate we had an enlightened board of education that decided that desegregation was important. We also had parents in Berkeley that thought that was important for their youngsters.



To give you this feeling about the contrast, when I first graduated from Fisk University and went into Berkeley, I had a BA [Bachelor of Arts] degree with a major in mathematics and a minor in English from Fisk University, one of the historically black colleges in Nashville, Tennessee. I wasn't that interested, I don't think, in teaching immediately when I went out to Berkeley. Over the years—I don't remember exactly, but when I went to Berkeley and said that I'd like to apply for a teaching job, what they said to me was, "We don't hire blacks for the secondary level." This is the liberal community of Berkeley. "Well, I wasn't sure I really wanted to teach anyway." But after serving in two or three other kinds of jobs, I decided I would go to the University of California, Berkeley at night, take night courses in education, and get my elementary teaching credential. I did so. I returned in about February 1954 and said, "Here's my elementary credential." They hired me.

That's the kind of school system that they had at the time. When the board decided, probably the late '50s or the early '60s, that they were going to consider desegregating, the black schools were in the flatlands of Berkeley, and the white schools were in the hills. They did not have any blacks for a long time teaching at the secondary level. I believe one of the only few black teachers in Berkeley schools was a kindergarten teacher, Miss Acty. She was known of course throughout the community. She'd taught at college level. She had taught in other school districts, and here she was a kindergarten teacher in Berkeley. At any rate, a few parents started to go to the board.

They would say things like "Our children are going to be working in the diplomatic services all over the world. They need to learn how to get along with and be in the company of youngsters who are different from themselves. We'd like to make a request of the Berkeley Board of Education that a black teacher be placed at Emerson School." That was one of the

white schools, and the board complied. The first black teacher who went into a white school was June Long. She was an outstanding teacher and had all kinds of exciting educational experiences for her children.

The reason I tell you about that is because I had taught for three years in one elementary school, served as a vice principal in another elementary school, both of which had served mostly black students. So when the Board of Education decided to start integrating the administrative staffs of mostly all white schools, they appointed me to be principal at the same school where the parents had gone down and invited the board to integrate the teaching staff. So in a way the initiatives came from enlightened people in the community. After that of course, it opened up, and we spent years deciding and planning how we would fully desegregate the Berkeley school pupils and staffs. First of all we had one Berkeley High School, so all of the youngsters were on one campus there. We then created a West Campus of all 9<sup>th</sup> graders, and two junior high schools of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders where all the youngsters were geographically and proportionately assigned and had to go to those designated schools. Then we eventually desegregated the elementary K-6 schools. We were the first community to do it with two-way busing. In other words we didn't close the black schools and put all the burden on the black parents to go into white schools. The white children were bused to formerly all-black schools, and the black kids were bused to formerly all-white schools. So we were the first community to do two-way busing, I think.

The preparation and the care that went into that process was absolutely unbelievable. I give credit to Dr. Marie Fielder who had come out of the University of Chicago [Illinois], was also on the University of California, Berkeley campus doing significant and forward-looking development of educational administrators. She worked with our board, our community, adults,

parents, teachers, administrators and students to help us prepare for the K-6 desegregation move. The sum total of all that effort was to say, “Hey, this is what we want to do, these are the reasons we want to do it, we need your best minds and concerns to be brought to the forefront. You can disagree with us, just bring us your concerns. We want to plan this so it will be successful, and we really want to hear from you.”

So listening to parents, listening to the communities, holding meetings all over town, I think is what created the success of that. I learned a lot from Dr. Fielder. I think Dr. Price [M.] Cobbs also worked with some of our people. He was the psychologist, and he along with another author [William H. Grier] had authored the very poignant *Black Rage* book—that was the title of it—in that timeframe.

So learning a variety of intergroup content about the different ethnic groups and their histories and how people feel, that was Dr. Marie Fielder’s expertise and strength. That’s why we had her in Berkeley teaching us intergroup education. Also watching the community interrelationships and the kind of people that you have, and how to look at people differently, get beyond the skin color and look at—I guess Martin Luther King or someone would say the “content of their souls” or something. “Get beyond the darn skin color and really start to listen and hear and relate to people,” was what I learned. I think that’s what I was able to bring to the EO position at NASA.

Interestingly enough, Hans Mark, who had served as the Center Director at the Ames Research Center [Moffett Field, California] and later as Deputy Administrator of NASA, told me that his wife had taught in the Berkeley schools, but I didn’t know it at the time. I have a feeling that Jim Fletcher and George Low may have talked to Hans Mark to find out, “Who’s this person from Berkeley? Do we have a Free Speech movement person?”

ROSS-NAZZAL: This radical.

JENKINS: Rabble rouser or whatever. Anyway they were very gracious and kind to me. So that's the kind of expertise that I hope I brought to NASA.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Were you ever a member of the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People]?

JENKINS: Yes, a lifelong member. I believe my uncle bought me a life membership, probably while I was in Berkeley. Then I checked on it a couple decades ago, because they still need donations so I keep getting these letters and requests. I said, "Could you check and see if I have a life membership? I think it's still operative." Yes, I was and am a member of the NAACP.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Tell us, once you became AA [Associate Administrator] of EOP [Equal Opportunity Programs], how you decided to go about integrating the agency. Obviously NASA had a very poor record of hiring women and minorities. So what were some of the first steps you decided to take?

JENKINS: Very importantly, Dr. Fletcher had testified before Congress that NASA had not been as sensitive to those matters during the Apollo era when the agency had hired many employees to build up the needed workforce for that endeavor, and he vowed to correct that oversight.

I understand why you're asking me what steps I decided to take, but I do really want to make sure that you understand that it was teamwork. The policies were being directed by the leadership of the agency. We were collaborating and planning together so George Low and I got along well in that kind of process. The business of, for instance, establishing an EO Council mechanism, while it was collaboratively done, it would have been George Low who said, "That's what we've got to do because the Deputy Center Directors have the operational power at the Centers to make things happen, you see." I would say, "Well then the EO staff has to be a part of that council too, and they have to be able to report directly to their deputies, the way I'm reporting to you." So it was a collaboration. When you asked me, it's like Harriett going off leading, and I just want you to know it was always a "collaborative line management-functional leader relationship," planning together what we felt was best for the agency.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Tell me more about this EO Council. You mentioned who was on it. What was its goal and purpose?

JENKINS: Its goal and purpose was to identify the problem areas; determine what were the proposed solutions, how to get them done, and how to engender engagement, but also provision of support and enthusiasm to get it done. So the educational part of the process and why things were being done was important. The extraordinary recruiting efforts of the various programs they were going to have to establish, which obviously some of them were planning, was going to take money. All were responsibilities that we wanted to lay in their laps, but we also wanted to involve them in the identification of the problem. You involve them in the identification. What are the options or strategies? Because they're individual installations and Centers, each is unique

in their own charters and the way they operate. What are your problems at your installation? How do you see those? What is your participation rate? If we make a statement about NASA such as, "A Center has increased female engineers," maybe that is not the same for you. Maybe your workforce is entirely different. You may have women at higher levels or minorities doing things that another installation does not have. So it allows you to really look at the nature of the issue in a very wise and careful way and to involve the people that you want to look at it, who eventually are going to be the ones who move and take the action.

ROSS-NAZZAL: What were some of the issues you constantly talked about? Would you meet every month or so?

JENKINS: We were meeting quarterly at first, and we did that for several years. Then less frequently and then I think it went to about two times a year. I do not know whether they still have EO Council meetings at NASA. I have not asked in a number of years, so I can't answer that question for you. I might one of these days ask somebody.

What we talked constantly about were: where the underrepresentation of minorities, women, and persons with disabilities had occurred in the various occupations and grade levels of their installations; what opportunities and strategies they may have in bringing about change; and discussion of any new programs or strategies that had been or might be most effective.<sup>4</sup>

ROSS-NAZZAL: You had mentioned that there were of course different Centers, and they all had strengths and weaknesses. Was there a pattern? NASA of course has what they call I think the

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<sup>4</sup> "Minutes of the NASA Equal Opportunity Council, 1974-1985," taken by Ruth Klein, Executive Secretary.

crescent, the southern Centers in Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Virginia. Was there a difference between those Centers and those say in California or the Midwest in terms of number of women? Number of minorities? Different positions that they were placed in?

JENKINS: You ask that question, and it was interesting to me that they were so unique and different that you couldn't make that kind of generalization about them. I even pulled some stats to show you why that generalization could not be made by me at any rate.

Although they were different in size and function, technical projects, location, budget and other aspects, each had underrepresentation of minorities, women and disabled individuals, especially in the scientific and engineering fields, that was the commonality. We didn't find a Center that had the correct number or ratio of people. I also wanted to give you an example of statistics. Now this was June 30th, 1974. At that time the number of permanent employees at NASA was 24,854. The number and percent of women working in permanent positions was 4,259 or 17.1%. That's for the agency, but now watch that percent. The women at the Headquarters workforce numbered 593 or 37.3%. That's Headquarters. At Johnson [Space Center, (JSC), Houston, Texas] there were 626 women, only 17%. At Kennedy [Space Center, Florida], there were 407 women or 17.6%, very similar to the percent at JSC, but the much smaller number of women was a larger percent of their workforce. At Marshall [Space Flight Center, Alabama] there were 672 women, but they made up 15.3% of the total workforce, the largest in actual number, but the lower in percent than the other three comparisons. So the largest number of women of those southern installations had also a group of women where they were the smaller percent of their total workforce. So it's all over the place, when you look at the data and the statistics in that way.

I was also going to say that there were 497 minorities at NASA or 2%, but there were as many as 11% minority, 175, in Headquarters, and one would say, “Oh that’s because they’re in the Washington, DC area, and there would be more minorities.” That might be true in that instance of minorities, but it didn’t check out quite that way for women. It’s all over the place. JSC, of course, had 70 minorities, but they were only 1.9% of their workforce. KSC had only 21 minorities, and they were about 0.9% of the workforce. Marshall had 31 minorities, and 0.7%. You could say that the southern ones did have exceptionally low percents of minorities, but I just think we probably cannot conclude or make a conclusion about the South or the locality, although I’m sure that certainly culturally it would have had an impact.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Tell us about the Center leadership and whether or not you thought that there was a difference. Were there Centers that were more willing to support these ideas about equal opportunity? Were there Centers that were more resistant to change?

JENKINS: I didn’t get that sense at all. I believe that most of the senior management at NASA would have been bright enough or wise enough after the business with Ruth Bates Harris not to be unwise in either, if they felt anything like that. I didn’t sense that there was a Center or a Center Director who was particularly against the program or being dragged to participate or anything like that. Also I have a way of operating where I try to show people what is the vision that I have of them, no matter what they may do or say. So I might have been putting on them my perception of what they ought to have been.



The one thing about it, really in this program you worked more closely with their deputies, you see. I knew all of them, and felt that they were very supportive of the program, and that they were interested in making sure NASA did a good job of correcting itself.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Tell me how many people you started working with in 1974. Did those numbers change over the years? Did it ebb and flow as time moved along?

JENKINS: It did change. I'd say it was 18 to 20 during those first years. The number grew to approximately 39 by 1992 that was because we added the Minority University Research. We had three divisions by the time I left. That had been a significant part of our effort in the EO Program. So it practically doubled.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Can you tell us about how the office was structured?

JENKINS: Yes. Certainly by the time I left there were three divisions. One was the Affirmative Action—I think now they call it the Affirmative Action and Diversity Division, but at the time I had the three divisions, one was the Affirmative Action and Evaluation Division, one was the Discrimination Complaint Division, and the third was the Minority University Research and Education Division.

ROSS-NAZZAL: As you started working with the EO Council, did you come up with quotas? Or did you come up with ideas of how you might increase the numbers of women and minorities at these Centers in fields that women and minorities generally didn't earn degrees in?

JENKINS: Absolutely no quotas! I want to emphasize that! We established goals and essentially those really came out of the self-evaluation process that was implemented in 1975<sup>5</sup>, and which was very important. I mentioned the establishment of the EO Council. The second item I think that had tremendously significant impact on the success of the EO Program at NASA was having the installations do the self-evaluations in 1975. I went back to look through that process, and it's absolutely remarkable in terms of what we asked the installations to do. We were aided in that process by Madison Smith who was the consultant. I probably didn't bring it in here, but I will look that up for you later. They were to take a look at their installation, see where the various minority and female groups were located. You always looked and monitored by looking at the scientists and engineers group, the professional administrative group, and we looked at the wage group. We also looked at promotions. We looked at participation rates in the highest levels. It's now generally SES [Senior Executive Service].

How many were GS-15s or GM-15s, meaning they had managerial positions, or GS-14s or GM-14s, and so forth and so on. Also what was the participation rate in promotions, what was the participation rate in training programs? Once Centers took a look at themselves, then they were given some processes to walk through in terms of listing what they found, and also making a determination on their part about what were going to be their opportunities. If they had no women and/or minorities in X positions and so forth, when did they anticipate they may have openings in the future? If they were not involved in some of the managerial tasks or educational programs and training, who were some of the ones that might be nominated or sent for that kind

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<sup>5</sup> "Equal Opportunity Programs Self-Evaluation Plan FY 1975," signed October 1974 by E.S. Groo, Associate Administrator for Center Operations, and Harriett G. Jenkins, Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity Programs, and addressed to the Center Directors and the Deputy Center Directors.

of training in the future? If they were in the lower grades because perhaps there just hadn't been the opportunity to promote them, when might those promotion opportunities occur? Do you automatically promote people after they serve a year at a certain grade? Or how do you make your decisions about when people move up the ladder? Are we applying that equitably to all of the groups in that particular occupational series? Of course wage grade has a different kind of hierarchy of supervisors, managers, or whatever they call them in the wage grade. So every installation had to look at his or her own installation and make that kind of determination.

Then they were asked. "You tell us what are the possibilities of your being able to hire in the coming next 12 months. What kinds of jobs? What will you undertake to do to ensure that you have a wide array of talented people to be able to go into those jobs? If you take a look at that, how many persons do you think you can hire? How many might be minorities or might be women? Where are you going to recruit?" Etc., etc., etc. Just to get them thinking about the planning ahead. They did that task, and they came up with figures.

Now I do not recall specifically how we translated their raw data; we estimated that from the opportunities identified by the Centers NASA would aim for about 40% of the scientist and engineer hires of the coming year being minorities and females, but it was not a quota. The individual installation did not have to deal with it. I've seen variations in that figure in certain ways it's been used.

So the main thing was what was the Center capable of doing? What did they pledge that they were going to try to do; and what did they think that they could accomplish? So that's the way we set the goals and timetables. We assured them that we were going to be monitoring. One of the other strong arms of the success of our program would have been the General Management Status Review. That's the senior level review at NASA Headquarters with the

Administrator, the Deputy, all of the key senior managers of all of the various portions of the agency. I would make the report in that meeting and would report on each installation. If we were looking for promotions, we would look at those for each of the Centers.

I wanted to show you what one of the viewgraphs might look like. This is one of the earlier ones. It's Equal Opportunity Progress. That would be flashed up on the screen. This is a more detailed chart which shows the number and percent of minority and female accessions, because sometimes they were either in co-op slots or something like that, and they were brought into permanent jobs. You see each and every installation being shown about the progress they made.

I will show you some other kinds of charts. So this is the whole report, which you see is multiple pages. This one they're doing the professionals and the nonprofessionals. They said the professionals are 40% minority and female. That was the goal that was being aimed at and the nonprofessionals 35% minority. So that was the goal, not quotas. The GS-14 and up here says 20% minority and female. That's what we were aiming for, and then we look at each installation and we see how well they were complying with those goals.

The other thing I was going to show you about the tracking process was we also tried to capture the most significant accomplishments by Center during the past year or the changes in the workforce during the two-year period. I was going to show you one of these that has these accessions for fiscal year '75, '76, and the transition. This is the minority and female workforce accessions for '75 and '76 and the transition. Here's a breakdown of the minority groups for that period of time. This is the kind of monitoring we used. Then they show you the total workforce. This is the total S&E [Science and Engineer] females by grade. You can see they're really all at the beginning stages of their careers, they were at grades five and seven and nine.

ROSS-NAZZAL: All secretaries.

JENKINS: Well, this is the S&E group.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Oh S&E, yes, I'm sorry.

JENKINS: So they've got a ways to go. The issue is will they move along and continue to fill those upper tracks. That's the issue. We wanted that to occur. That's the percent of minorities. This is total professional administration. It moves over a little bit more. You see a little bit more. Got up to 11s, 12s and 13s. When I was going through the stuff, and I'd forgotten that this occurred, when we were doing this kind of monitoring by installation, we noticed that women with a degree in biology, when they came into the federal government, were being placed at a lower level than women or men when they came in with a degree in physics or in engineering. When we spotted that of course the human resources people immediately agreed with us, and they corrected that right away. It was simply how people got entered at an installation when they came into the agency in certain professions.

We don't know whether it was that physics and engineering were perceived to be a little bit higher discipline or of higher priority for the agency. We have no idea, but it didn't appear to be intentional. It just was the way they were ranking people when they came into their first jobs in the federal government. So we felt that was a good correction.

ROSS-NAZZAL: How did you come up with a number of 40% for this specific group and then the 20% for management?

JENKINS: The goals were based on the Centers' self-evaluation processes and what they anticipated were going to be their vacancies and rates of hiring. When those were assessed in 1975-76, NASA established goals that the agency would strive for a 40% hiring goal for minority and female professionals, and 35% hiring goal for minority non-professionals. So the goals emanated from the self-evaluation study and from EO Council review and implementation discussions. When we looked at what people actually had the possibility of doing, and what they were willing to try to do, it approximately came out to those percentages. So we said, "Okay that's what we'll strive for as an agency. When we report out to Congress, those will be the totals that we use." That means it could vary between the Centers if they didn't have any openings. But we thought we could do that. So I think for the most part we met that most of the time or came near it. It was a guideline.

ROSS-NAZZAL: After the Apollo Program of course there were a number of RIFs [Reductions in Force] in the '70s. Was it challenging to meet these goals that you had set because there were relatively few openings?

JENKINS: It was challenging because the very disciplines that NASA needed were not overpopulated with minorities and women. We had to say we want you to strive to get a bigger share of the few numbers of people out there. So that means we've got to start communicating with them early on in their college careers. We've got to get relationships started to let them

know how exciting it is to work at NASA. We've got to help fill that resource pool. Got to start earlier than college. You've got to let young kids know, "Hey, it's exciting to work in space." See this. *Inspire the next generation*. We knew we had to get to young kids earlier. Get them excited about space. We didn't do that brochure, but that's been the concept at NASA all along. I'm not claiming that we started it or anything of the sort, but we had to remind people that often the interest or the spark or the talent that gets identified, which eventually ends up in the STEM subjects we call them: science, technology, engineering and mathematics, starts at an early age. Sometimes it gets turned off unfortunately, depending on the kind of teachers and education one receives. So we knew we had to support the Education Office of NASA that has relevant educational programs.

I used to brag that NASA not only was an outstanding space department but that it had a wonderful array of educational programs from the very youngest ages to the most seasoned and outstanding principal investigator [PI] research, and that not only did NASA know that that was important, but it was a part of their congressional charter to always be willing and ready to share the information that they gained about space and the environment in which we live and our whole understanding of what's beyond us. It had to be shared, needed to be shared with all of the broader educational community and universities. That means also with the other educators who are getting youngsters prepared. So we thought that certainly the mission of NASA was absolutely in tune with what we needed to do in terms of getting more minorities and women on board.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Go back to 1974 when you came into this position. Did you have an opportunity to visit the various Field Centers at NASA?

JENKINS: I had the opportunity. I don't remember making lots of visits, because we were busy getting the EO Council operating and the self-evaluation going. Certainly the ones that I did visit, I don't remember anything untoward or not appropriate occurring.

Not only that, when we established the council, we provided for the council meetings to rotate around the various installations, so that our whole group would be going and meeting persons at a different NASA installation each time. So the host Center Deputy could and did sometimes have special presentations that he would share with the group, or certain Center specific tours; or certainly could talk a lot about some of their extraordinary or successful equal opportunity programs or strategies that they used. So it was a good way for all of us to get to know the various NASA Centers' missions and equal opportunity programs, and how they operated and what things were like. Obviously a lot of people in that group had already visited some of those Centers, but I thought that was a very good strategy. It was a good way to let the Center itself see the EO Council group and what it was about, to have that kind of visitation to a site for our meetings, which normally ran about one or two days.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You mentioned you worked very closely with the Center Deputy Directors. Tell us about your relationships with the EEOs at the various Centers.

JENKINS: I had a close relationship with the EO Officers as well. They were very, very kind to me. I was their functional leader. I wanted to hear what they felt their concerns were at their installations. I wanted to make sure that I demonstrated and encouraged them to have good strong relationships with their deputies and the kind of frank input that they could give to the



planning sessions, the kind of trust that you build when you work with a colleague. So I wanted to demonstrate that. I don't remember talking about it a lot or anything like that, but just showing how it could occur. I felt that I had good relationships with them.

I also think they were very kind to me. I guess I see and hear from a few that are still around, not regularly, but from time to time. We keep saying we're going to have a whole EO Officers' group meeting, and we have promised that we are going to do that. We haven't done it yet, but we might soon.

ROSS-NAZZAL: How closely were you working with the heads of personnel or the human resources department at the Centers?

JENKINS: We felt first of all that that relationship was extremely important. So we had the agency head of personnel on the EO Council as a very important member there, so then immediately, as something came up about a personnel program or something, they could share the important know-how and information. They also could then get in touch with their personnel directors at the respective Centers. We encouraged the EO Officers not only to work closely with their deputies but also with their human resources people at their site and to establish good relationships. A number of the programs, such as the co-op program, and the numerous other programs that NASA has going are sometimes managed by the human resources personnel. There are also some other programs that are managed by what I call the technical offices. Those are usually some of the more advanced ones. They might be the predocs or the postdocs or even the principal investigator research assistants, you know what I'm saying. We encouraged those relationships. We needed to be talking to one another because they were going to help us find

other sources for recruiting rare talent. They could keep an eye on or advise in the best uses of the cooperative education program, which is a combination of education and employment process for the individual. They could ensure that we were carrying out the federal regulations. It's one thing to know the law, but you also need to know the regulations and also make sure that your agency is meeting all the requirements that are demanded by the personnel statutes.

Interestingly enough, I was reminded of it when I was looking for material for this interview. We originally were reporting to what was then the Civil Service Commission. Our affirmative action plans and what our efforts were in the agency were being sent to the Civil Service Commission. That entity was later called the Office of Personnel Management after the civil service reform, probably in the late '70s.

At any rate, after that, federal oversight of EO responsibility was transferred to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC], which I think is interesting. This may have occurred when changes were made to the oversight of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance. Regardless, the responsibility of the personnel implementation as it related to equal opportunity was given to the EEOC. So for most of my career we were sending off our affirmative action plans and annual reports to the EEOC. I've checked, and we certainly did send them at first to the Civil Service Commission, which later became the Office of Personnel Management.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Did you ever do any work with the Department of Labor [DOL] as you were working in this position?

JENKINS: At first when we had the oversight for the contractual employees of NASA, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance was a subset of DOL. It was the Office of Federal Contract Compliance with whom that small division in the EO Office was relating when I came on board. They were monitoring what was the minority and female makeup of the contractor workforce also whether NASA was letting and providing contracts to small and minority and female businesses and also the businesses of disabled individuals. That was really one of the major things that the original office was doing when I came into it. That responsibility later was shifted to the procurement office of the agency, and they had that responsibility.

That makes sense, because it was the procurement of contracts. From time to time, we would raise the question. “Well, how are the procurement contract participation rates for minorities and women? Are you guys ensuring that the contractors are also hiring minorities and women?” In some instances an individual installation or someone might say they did have a minority at a higher pay level in the contractor workforce than they had in their own, or something like that. It was interesting, very interesting.

ROSS-NAZZAL: I can imagine. The EEOs at the Centers, did they often come from the ranks of minorities or women? Or were there also white men who were in those positions?

JENKINS: The Equal Opportunity Officers were mostly minorities and/or women. There was a Caucasian woman out at the Ames Research Center, and another at the National Space Technology Laboratories (NSTL) [now known as the Stennis Space Center, (SSC), Mississippi]. Also, there was a male Caucasian at Marshall Space Flight Center, and another at NSTL, for short periods of time during my tenure.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Why do you think that that was the case?

JENKINS: Oh, because minorities and women understand the issues and the problems. As a matter of fact, normally I think managers want to select people who understand the problems and issues, understand the sensitivities. They don't need people making a problem because they are not multicultural in experience, knowledge, and actions. I think when they look at their staffs and say who am I going to place in that job, they will probably select someone who's a very good manager, who knows the installation very very well, but also will know the various ethnic groups, and how to get along with them, and have a demonstrated track record, both of working with senior managers and working with the various groups that one has to persuade. The EO Officer would have to convey the exuberant message, "Hey, believe NASA, they really do want talented outstanding people. You don't have to worry about getting your college degree and stopping off at NASA and having your career go south because you get into a sour work relationship." So I suspect that when they looked around and had to set up those kinds of positions, the talented minorities and women on their staffs were ones that came to mind right away.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You were showing us some of the charts that you had prepared for NASA. Did you ever go over to the Hill and have to testify or talk with say [Senator William] Proxmire, who was very concerned about NASA's record?

JENKINS: No. I think I remember once accompanying Dr. Fletcher and a team of senior managers up to a congressional meeting where he was testifying. I think I only remember being asked one question. I think he had his team there so if anything came up about NASA's technical programs, he could turn to the AAs there, and when it came up about EO he could turn to me if he needed to do so. I only remember being asked one brief question and giving an answer. My memory may be terrible on that. But I certainly did not make a presentation similar to the one that I told you about that Dr. McConnell had made in March 1974, nor that Dr. Fletcher had made on a previous occasion.

I used to quote him. I don't know whether I was quoting from what he told me orally or from what was written in the testimony. It seems to me early on that congressional committees—and there was one on the House side and one on the Senate side—had an interest in what NASA was doing to integrate its staff. “Reports on NASA's Equal Employment Opportunity Program” were sent to the Senate Committee on Aeronautical & Spaces Sciences and to the Senate Subcommittee on HUD [Housing and Urban Development]-Independent Agencies of the Senate Appropriations Committee. The latter committee was chaired by Senator Proxmire, and he required quarterly reports from NASA for about two years.

ROSS-NAZZAL: That's interesting. You would think it would be a different committee.

JENKINS: Right, yes, isn't that weird?

ROSS-NAZZAL: Yes, very different. Tell us about the Federal Women's Program at NASA. How did it relate to your charter in EOP?

JENKINS: It was an integral part. When I started with the small staff, in that first organization, the Federal Women's Program and the Hispanic-Speaking Program (that's what they originally called that responsibility—later on they just said the Hispanic Program)—reported directly to me and my deputy. I had two divisions, and the remainder of my staff were in those. So the implication, and certainly the way we operated, was that those two programs were matrixed managed. If you can imagine a matrix, we wanted those two positions to be involved in everything that we did. Overseeing, reacting to, ensuring that we had the very best ideas going on in the two divisions as it related to the Hispanic and Women's program areas of responsibility.

Those would rub off on all the rest of us too who were looking at various things. It was very important. There was a wide array of external organizations out there who were very interested in changing things positively for women so we tried to interface with those in as many ways as possible. I guess I didn't bring in the stack of stuff and the ways that we would interface with some of those organizations. I tried to put some of them down in here; FEW (Federally Employed Women) and SWE (Society of Women Engineers) would be some. There was a federal interagency organization of Women in Science and Engineering called WISE. I'll have to send you a list, if it is needed. There were so many women's organizations with which we tried to stay in touch.

At any rate we joined what I would call congressionally enacted organizations to take a look at what was going on with women. One of them, a significant one, was co-chaired by Ann

Reynolds and Jaime Oaxaca. I know I have the report in here somewhere. Before you leave I will look for it and try to find it.<sup>6</sup>

They put out reports which spanned three years: the first year, then the second year, and a final report. I remember that the Administrator of NASA would sign off on the formal reports NASA sent to that group so that it could be entered into the congressional record of the work. So there were a number of federal agencies and usually it always included in particular the major federal R&D [Research and Development] agencies, such as NIH [National Institutes of Health] or the National Science Foundation, or the Department of Energy, and/or the DoD [Department of Defense] research organizations, etc.

We felt very strongly that we had to be and needed to be successful in changing the profile of the agency as it related to women. Of course we were very encouraging of the broader recruitment for the astronaut corps and all that entailed; the issue of the various messages to girls that had to be changed. “Math is not impossible, or you don’t have to be afraid of it, and science is very interesting.” We would work with the Department of Education and encourage those kinds of involvements and messages and educational activities.

I’ve already mentioned the cooperative education program because it combines education and employment. There were aerospace fellowships. NASA had so much going on. It had teacher education programs, the Young Astronauts, the space camp. They had programs for the elementary grades,<sup>7</sup> junior high school, and for senior high school; and they had pre-college (bridge) and college level programs aimed to strengthen and increase the under-represented

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<sup>6</sup> “NASA and a Changing America: Outreach to Increase Our Nation’s Science and Engineering Workforce,” The NASA Administrator’s Report to the Task Force on Women, Minorities, and the Handicapped in Science and Technology, November 1989.

<sup>7</sup> “Living in Space,” *Operation Liftoff*, Elementary Space Program, A Resource Guide with Activities for Elementary School Teachers, Book I, Levels A, B, and C for grades 1, 2, 3.

groups in STEM subjects. They had a space life sciences training program. They had programs at the graduate level as well, graduate interns, and research programs.

So we were very, very eager that every single effort should be undertaken, when opportunities came, to bring in astronauts. Two different kinds of astronauts were selected beginning in 1978. NASA moved from the test pilot model to one that included the test pilots and mission specialists. We did everything we could to publicize that broader effort at all the universities and the various female and minority organizations that were out there that could be helpful. So we were quite pleased when Sally [K.] Ride was selected and became the first American female to be selected, and to fly in space, of course. We thought that was just great!

ROSS-NAZZAL: Tell us a little bit more about that, because that was such a tremendous achievement. Ruth Bates Harris had written that article that said only, I think, a female spider and a monkey had flown in space. No minorities had certainly flown. So tell us about your involvement in that process. When did that start to happen?

JENKINS: I was just continually urging the agency to integrate its workforce. Doing everything to do that. Certainly the visible portion of the workforce, which are the astronauts, you've got to do that; you've got to integrate that. So that had been one of our positions from the beginning. If you want to change the image of the agency, every time you recruit for talent you've got to make sure that everybody knows that one can apply and have an opportunity to be considered for selection whether you're male or female, or minority. There had been this history. I brought out Dr. Joseph P. Atkinson's dissertation—you guys have seen this big dissertation ["The National



Aeronautics and Space Administration Astronaut Recruiting and Selection Process, 1959-1978: An Administrative History”] I’m sure.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Yes.

JENKINS: I notice that we had access to another publication. This was not done by NASA. It’s called *Black Wings*. It was published by the National Air and Space Museum. It has the whole story: the various blacks in aviation, long before 1978. So it just didn’t make sense that we hadn’t had blacks in the astronaut corps.

Then of course everybody knew about the Tuskegee Airmen and the kind of resistance they had had, and the battles about who they were going to support during World War II and all that. So with all this history, one couldn’t keep saying, “Hey, you don’t have the capabilities or you can’t do this.” Dr. Joseph Atkinson confirmed in his doctoral dissertation that on each of two occasions (1963 and 1965) a black test pilot had been among the group of test pilots recommended by the Air Force to NASA for astronaut selection. Captain Edward J. Dwight, Jr. was not selected in 1963; and Robert H. Lawrence was not selected in 1965. Lawrence was a test pilot with the Air Force Manned Orbiting Laboratory program and later died in a plane crash in 1967 during a routine training flight.<sup>8</sup>

So those things had occurred prior to the big push. As a matter of fact when we started to push to integrate the astronaut corps, some people got in touch with us and said, “There were

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<sup>8</sup> Joseph Donahue Atkinson, Jr., “The National Aeronautics and Space Administration Astronaut Recruiting and Selection Process, 1959-1978: An Administrative History,” (PhD diss, University of Colorado, 1983).

black astronauts before. What happened?" There wasn't an excuse for not integrating the astronaut corps in the future. So that's what I think the agency believed.

I give plaudits in a way to JSC and to [Center Director Christopher C.] Kraft, and to [Flight Operations Director George W.S.] Abbey, and [Chief of the Astronaut Office John W.] Young, and Dr. Joseph Atkinson in particular, and [Chief of the Space Metabolism and Biochemistry Branch] Dr. Carolyn Huntoon—they knew what the issues were. NASA knew the agency had to change the national program in a way that was sound. When they decided to fly test pilots AND mission specialists, that broadened the knowledge and skills areas of astronauts beyond test pilot experience. It was very important to get a process that encouraged highly qualified people to apply that was fair, that could be seen and believed by everyone to have been fair in the way they selected people. I think they did a fine job. What was very important was they placed Dr. Carolyn Huntoon and Joe Atkinson on both the pilot selection committee and on the mission specialist selection committee. Those were very positive signs to us in Headquarters, watching the process as it went on.

I think it helped contribute to not only the work that the committees did but also in the belief of the public that a fair process had been implemented. Certainly we in the NASA family, I think, felt that too.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You shared with us just a few minutes ago that you reached out to women's groups. Were there other organizations that you reached out to to ensure that you would have a good pool of candidates from these underrepresented groups?

JENKINS: There probably were, but I probably do not have a list. First of all every single person who was a principal investigator at NASA who knew other principal investigators on faculties at their universities was alerted. We wanted as wide a dissemination of the information and the invitation as possible. So any body or any group that anyone would suggest could be utilized we tried to get in touch with or make sure they were on list to get the announcements. Sometimes we would brainstorm. Or somebody would remember an organization that we hadn't thought of, and then we'd make sure that they got the info. Because we thought as wide publicity as possible was absolutely a must!

People had to not only get the invitation but to think about the opportunity, if they thought they had a chance. To know that it was worthwhile going through the effort to see if they could be selected.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Nichelle Nichols [actress who played Uhura on *Star Trek*] was part of that effort. Were you involved at all in the decision to include her?

JENKINS: Well, according to Dr. Atkinson's dissertation, he came up to Headquarters, and we had a committee meeting of people to brainstorm what some of those recruiting processes might include. Out of that I think a list was made of the various organizations one wanted to make sure were contacted. It probably included such things as the wide variety of various minority organizations. So it would be AISES, that's American Indian Science and Engineering Society. LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens] and all of the various Hispanic groups. All of the black groups: NAACP, UNCF [United Negro College Fund], or the Urban League, or other organizations. *Ebony* or *Jet* magazines. It included a wide variety of women's

organizations. You see what I'm saying? All those outlets that represented various groups. Get that information out!

So that's the kind of brainstorming we did at Headquarters. Also amongst those ideas was the suggestion that Nichelle Nichols be utilized or help recruit, because she had already a public presence. She could bring that message in a way that nobody else could.

I didn't get any further involved in that kind of planning. So I don't know any details about how she worked with JSC or how they utilized her. I just know that they must have because I think on one or two occasions she either came to NASA or was at a NASA Center when we were having a meeting there or something of the sort. My impression was she was very happy to be involved, and wanted to be helpful. Anybody could offer ideas and suggestions, and we wanted good ones and things that would be effective. They were encouraged to do that even beyond that effort, because there would be other times when people had to be recruited. They were bringing on various groups of astronauts at subsequent times and we also wanted NASA to continue to exercise extraordinary efforts until we had an integrated astronaut corps.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Tell us about your relationship with Chris Kraft, George Abbey and John Young as the process unfolded.

JENKINS: Beyond what I said before, that was it. He was the Center Director. His deputy was on our EO Council. I would see him at the senior level meetings when the Administrator would call all of the Center Directors into Washington, DC, or we'd have a meeting of Center Directors and the key Headquarters managers. I was always at those meetings. The reason I made the earlier comment, if you look at that history and how it evolved, JSC had to go through some

careful assessments and evaluations to determine how they were going to move to a different phase and a different stage of astronaut selection and to do that wisely. I think they did that wisely, and I particularly liked the decision of their putting Huntoon and Atkinson on both types of astronaut selection committees. I thought that was very vital and important.

ROSS-NAZZAL: I'm curious. I don't know if you would know the answer. I read different reports that say there weren't enough women that were selected, so they had to go back to the drawing board. Were you involved in discussions about numbers?

JENKINS: No I would not have been involved in their deliberations at all. We would not have been. I don't know, and I can only imagine if that ever came up. It would have either have had to come up with the committee itself or with Chris Kraft reporting to the Administrator of NASA or whoever he was working with. Because it might have been—I'm trying to think what his name was.

ROSS-NAZZAL: [Robert A.] Frosch, the Administrator?

JENKINS: I don't know. I was really thinking about one of the technical associate administrators. [AA of Office of Manned Space Flight John F.] Yardley somehow comes to mind. There was a general in that office that he might have been talking to. I have no idea. I can only speculate and maybe I shouldn't even be doing that. I would assume that if that is true or if that discussion went on, it had to have been with the principals at some stage of that process. I just don't know. I don't have any idea whether that was true or not. Standing back looking at equal opportunity

and the way change is brought about—sometimes it is uneven. You just don't make the change overnight necessarily for all groups. It doesn't even sound like something that I would necessarily have raised.

When your question raised the issue of race, I went and looked at a listing that I got off of Google, and it's a listing of the various astronaut selections. What I noticed was while there were few blacks in that period, between '80 and '87 I think that you raised, except [Charles F.] Bolden, there were females coming on board.

There was a man with the last name of Gutierrez who was a pilot. I'm assuming he was Hispanic, but I don't know that for sure, might have been a Caucasian with the name [Sidney M.] Gutierrez. So I would probably, looking at that array, assume that they're still on track, and they're still bringing in women. So maybe minorities decided the space program or astronaut corps was not for them, and not as many applied. But that would have been my reaction to that. I don't remember being alarmed there'd been one or two or three selections of astronauts without any blacks in them.

I think I probably even would have counseled myself not to be disappointed or worried, because selected groups would tend to be varied, and there were fewer minorities out there that have the exact kind of training and the kind of readiness. So that probably would have been my reaction. I can't imagine how that would have come up with anybody at my level.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You had mentioned, of course, if you wanted to change the face of NASA the best way to do that is through the astronaut corps because obviously they're going out and talking with the public on a regular basis. How were these new astronauts used to tout the fact that NASA was becoming more diverse, and you should consider a position here?

JENKINS: Whatever was decided in their realm of responsibility, I had nothing to do with it. That's the way the agency works. I want the agency to be doing things on its own, not because Harriett had to sit here and punch at them or hold any kind of thing over their head. I'm assuming that a part of the astronaut program for all of its tenure has been how we will publicize the individuals themselves, what they've accomplished, what they do in space, what they're doing at the agency, and what impact that's going to have on the future. That has to be part of JSC's planning and public affairs, because they have to have rules about privacy, whether a person is going to feel like they're being picked on, when they become the first, how many meetings they have to have with how many groups. How do you cover the press? How do you respond to groups of the same ethnic or minority group? So I have always felt very confident and assured that JSC would do an outstanding job of the publicity of any entity coming in through that process, and with great respect for that person's time, and would not let them be abused or overused or get out on a limb that is not wise or something. I assume that both the legal office and all of the public affairs people have given great thought to that.

It was interesting when I went to look at some of the pictures, I wondered, "How did I get them and why?" I found there appeared to have been quite a bit of variation. It depends on whether you're a Shuttle team or crew. All they say on the back—which is interesting to me—is just their names. So you have to go to another site anyway if you want to find out more about them and pull up what they've accomplished and maybe what they did before they got to be part of that team.

So the public doesn't get much in some instances, but there is a lot of info via NASA websites. I have to assume that JSC has a good reason for why that's going on. Now there was

one. Thank heavens this one has names at least. There was one. Most of these pictures just had the names. So the people could call in and get them. I guess JSC doesn't know how they're going to be used so they put on minimal data. If a teacher wanted to go into the careers of astronauts, what they did before and after being selected, they're going to have to do extra work to find that somewhere. I found that fascinating.

Now if you take a look. See that one? Yes. See that? Now that was created and utilized by lots of women's groups. It was created especially to be responsive to the requests I bet you they were getting. See, they give you a little fuller explanation of them on the back. They're really presenting a message there. So I think they act wisely about what it is they need to communicate to Congress or their constituencies and various groups that have pressed them. Or maybe there have been teachers who say I really would like to have something I can put up in my classroom. I want to encourage my young girls to think about science or something like that. So I just give them credit for being able to make those decisions about how those things would occur.

When you'd asked me about the women's program, if you take a look there.<sup>9</sup> See there are two of those there. The intent, of course, was to get out publicity about the variety of jobs that people work in at NASA and how interesting they are, that they're all over the US. We put out stuff like that to go out to various groups and to any other people who want them, and to pass out at meetings. By the way what do I say in that one?

ROSS-NAZZAL: This brochure prepared by the Federal Women's Program Office of the NASA Office of Equal Opportunity Programs illustrates the diverse occupations of women throughout

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<sup>9</sup> "Women at NASA, Seizing Opportunities to Strengthen America's Future;" "Women at Work in NASA."



the agency. Women employees working in disciplines have made significant contributions to aeronautical and space accomplishments.

JENKINS: Very good.

ROSS-NAZZAL: I've seen the first one. I hadn't seen this one. How did you decide who to feature in these publications and why?

JENKINS: Probably by working with NASA Centers and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory [JPL, Pasadena, California] to have as many different NASA installations or as many different NASA occupations represented and/or as many different ethnic groups represented as possible. See that one?<sup>10</sup> I'll let you read it, and I'm going to ask you what you think of it. So watch yourself. (I'm teasing you.)

ROSS-NAZZAL: I was going to say I better start reading. There's a lot of detail. That's wonderful.

WRIGHT: What's the name of that one?

ROSS-NAZZAL: This one is "Valuing and Attaining Workforce Diversity by Year 2000."

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<sup>10</sup> "Valuing and Attaining Workforce Diversity by Year 2000," signed by Richard H. Truly.

JENKINS: We wanted to brag a little bit but push people a little and also show the contrast in kinds of positions there. So you see a disabled person in the middle. Did you ever meet Benita Sidwell by chance?

ROSS-NAZZAL: No, that name doesn't sound familiar.

JENKINS: She had held two significant jobs, personnel director out at Goddard [Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Maryland], and then a significant administrative position at Headquarters. Her picture is on the front. I believe that's Dr. Bernard [A.] Harris, the astronaut in the middle. This brochure is intended to send a message that diversity is important, that NASA believes that. We prove it by the people who work for us, that we've selected. We have exciting programs, and we have a vision and goals. We have policies of fairness. We expect our employees also to carry out these same things that we say as an agency. Not only that, we've accomplished things. We can show that these are some examples of accomplishments that we've made. These are the kind of people we have working for us. They're a percent of the workforce. There's a powerful message by Admiral Richard [H.] Truly, the Administrator at that time, in terms of the objectives of the agency and what we were trying to accomplish. So we really were attempting to inform and persuade the public about what's really going on at NASA. I'll let you keep a copy of that because it marked in a way a renewed resolve that was going on at the agency. Because sometimes you get weary of the same GMSR [General Management Status Review] charts, the same message over and over again. We need to do it. We really do want you talented people to come, and we wanted to imbue a renewal of spirit. So that was the purpose of that. Be very

open with people about what we were doing, what we were trying to do, and how we were going about it.

ROSS-NAZZAL: So you were happy with the outcome, the selection of Sally Ride and her group?

JENKINS: Indeed, indeed, indeed.

ROSS-NAZZAL: It was a great accomplishment at that point, I can imagine.

JENKINS: I'm trying to think whether I got very anxious between the time she was selected and the time she got to fly. I don't think I did. You see, the selection is one thing, but the issue is are they going to go out in space and show that they can be part of the team. She did that superbly, and that's great really.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You mentioned the importance of them actually flying as astronauts, not just being astronaut candidates. Did you use STS-7 and 8 to illustrate to Congress and to others who might have doubted that NASA wasn't committed to diversity or opening up fields to women?

JENKINS: No. In a way, I didn't feel they had to. My philosophy is you get a system turned and going in the right direction. Everybody does a fine job, everybody works hard at NASA, believes in high quality, results, and I think wants the agency to succeed. So you help them get on their way, but then you let them go do their job. You expect them to go do their job. You expect them to continue to accomplish things. Then I just watch and there they go.

No, seriously, I had no doubt whatsoever. I don't know how to explain it. It isn't a matter of holding someone's hand once they get into it. They can do it on their own. As a matter of fact it's important for them to do it on their own. When you do corrective mechanisms and strategies and you get the correction made, the system has to be healthy enough then to survive and thrive without the corrective mechanism having to be inserted into the process. That's my feeling about it. I was perfectly willing and happy to have the organizations and the processes and the procedures that they had going to operate and demonstrate they could do what we'd been telling the public they could do. I don't see myself as being a kind of whip, nor even a policeperson. The monitoring of the GMSR tells progress, but it isn't to whip a Center in public. It's for a Center to say that this is what we said we were going to do; this is the progress we did or did not make; and to share lessons learned and best practices. This is how well you've done. I don't think I have to beat them over the head, if they have made what they were supposed to accomplish.

Not only that, I show them what the rest of the NASA family is doing. They can see hmm, well, now they were able to do X and Y. Maybe we can think of some other options or strategies or something that we could do. When you asked your question about whether certain Centers had different arrays of minorities and females because of their location, at first I thought you might have been on to something, because when I looked and saw the larger numbers of minorities not only at Headquarters but also at Goddard in one of the subsets I looked at, I concluded later on that it was probably the nature of the work. I'm not sure that was a wise conclusion to make, but I'll have to go back and take a look one of these days. "Why," I thought, "would they have had more?" "Maybe they had more female professional administrative types in jobs because of the nature of the Headquarters office, that you may have

more need for those kinds of skills, where there were more women.” I haven’t had a chance to take a look at that.

ROSS-NAZZAL: I find your policy very interesting. I liked some of the things that you had to say about not being a police officer and embarrassing the Centers. That’s really telling of what was happening at that time and your relationship with the Centers. I think sometimes the Field Centers feel like Headquarters is telling them constantly what to do. So it sounds like you had a more relaxed policy.

JENKINS: I hope so. That probably is my style anyway. Almost invariably if something is not occurring where a person is saying they’re going to do it, I tend to believe that they meant it when they said they were going to try to do it. So if it didn’t get done, something must have happened that either they had not anticipated or they were not able to resolve or solve. It doesn’t mean that I’m overly soft on the issue or the expectations or goal attainment or anything like that. People who know me know that I won’t let people just get by with not putting in the effort. I stay after them, but how I stay after them will vary a lot in terms of the individual and the circumstances and what is the nature of the lack of attainment.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Can you give an example or two?

JENKINS: If I decided to go and talk to someone about hmm, what appeared to be the problem, maybe you’ve already identified it, if you had X number of opportunities and you weren’t able to find anyone, what do you think it might be. More than likely, if it’s a good manager, a typical

NASA manager, they will have speculated or figured out what might have gone on. Either they had an overabundance of people suddenly drop in on them, or they hadn't figured out where to find any. It's perfectly all right to say that to their minority EO Officer. "Go help me find some people." Or to call on us for help at Headquarters. That's what's in the back of my rationale for the way I behave and what I expect of others.

ROSS-NAZZAL: It almost sounded like there could have been some competition between Centers. As you were saying JPL has accomplished this but Marshall has not accomplished as much.

JENKINS: We have never said that. But knowing people who hold positions at NASA, it wouldn't surprise me at all if they were watching which Center has the workforce that's most like mine and how well they're doing. I'm pretty sure that JSC, Chris Kraft, and the other leaders there were probably very prideful when JSC had better stats than some of the other Centers of their size or in their location or anything else of the sort. I'm sure they would have wanted just to be recognized. What installation director would not have wanted that? You see what I'm saying? I would not know. Have you ever been down to Wallops [Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Virginia]?

ROSS-NAZZAL: No, never been to that facility, I would like to.

JENKINS: It's very tiny. When I first came aboard NASA, there used to be a very very unique and individualistic Center Director at Wallops. His name was Robert [L.] Kreiger. There's no doubt of the creativity, the strength, the intent, the wisdom and unique experiences that some of

these people have had who are sitting in these jobs. It always would be fascinating and interesting just to hear him talk, and talk about the NASA culture and what was going on down there. I was reading in the paper recently that Wallops is going to be the point Center for balloon flights and other kinds of things that NASA will be doing. So I don't know whether that means there are going to be many, many, many more flights down at Wallops or whether the Center is going to grow in size.

I can remember some of those earliest days when some of our meetings were down at Wallops. It was the first time that I had been off on an island, or a variety of islands, seeing an all-black-staffed cafeteria. The black staff obviously lived in that area, had lived there all their lives, and they cooked such interesting food. It was the first time I think I had sweet potato biscuits. So we all looked forward to going to Wallops and enjoying some of the food. These were all blacks from that Wallops area. There was also a historically black college down in that area, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, which had a beautiful campus. I hear it's doing quite well now and is member of the University of Maryland system. So there are interesting little spaces around the nation. This was interesting to see. Have you ever been down to NSTL in Mississippi?

ROSS-NAZZAL: Yes. Beautiful around there, with all the woods. It's a pretty area.

JENKINS: I digressed. Sorry about that.

ROSS-NAZZAL: That happens when we do interviews.

One of the folks that we had interviewed at JSC talked about a change that he remembered when women started coming on board, becoming engineers, having a talk about how to work with women, which I thought was very interesting. I wondered if this was something that your office promoted.

JENKINS: It depends. Then what did he say? What was he taught?

ROSS-NAZZAL: You know, he didn't say. He remembered going.

JENKINS: Did he say “. . . and I was enlightened?” Did it have those kinds of tips? Or did he say “Imagine having to go to a training session where I had to learn how to work with women!” Do you recall? What did you interpret was behind that message? [Laughs]

ROSS-NAZZAL: I think it was positive. He remembered who had gone with him. He actually brought me the memo that talked about what they were doing.

JENKINS: Did he say who the trainer was?

ROSS-NAZZAL: He did not, and I don't remember that the memo identified the person. I thought it was interesting, because that really pointed out this cultural change that you were overseeing at NASA. I'm just curious how that idea was approached with these men who had been working with men for so long, and how to work with women or people of color.



JENKINS: I'm a little bit amused about the question because we would hold some training sessions. We would also sometimes bring in trainers and use them ourselves and also tell the installations about them, if they wanted to use them. I have no idea who provided the training. But why it would have been important to make sure that managers understood some of the key issues were twofold at least. One was the cultural change. The second was how women feel themselves about how they should be treated when they're going into a place where there have not been women, and they are truly integrating the place for the first time. So they're bringing a different culture, different way of working. But most importantly not to have managers fall into the trap of really doing the impermissible thing or being accused of discrimination.

The training could have been as simple as, "You cannot treat your women professionals differently than you treat your male professionals (that includes in kinds of assignments as well as pay and work schedules, etc.). So if you need a cup of coffee ask the male professional to go get it." Or it could have been as serious as, "You have to be very aware that sometimes something you feel is quite friendly and that you would do with a male in terms of patting him on the shoulder or something of the sort might be abhorrent to a woman or be misinterpreted." Or, "You don't want to fall into the trap of being accused of sexual harassment when that is not what you intended." So it could have been the whole array of stuff and experiences that women have, and what we all have learned from these various things going on in the workplace.

Trying to get them to not see all women as clerks or secretaries waiting on them, versus a professional who's there to be treated in her professional capacity. Somebody used to make a joke about, "Can I go get you a cup of coffee, Harriett," or something like that. It would be a male probably trying to make fun of what we were talking about. I assume it could have been

that whole array. So I'm glad to learn that he at least thought it was valuable. The issue was to open their eyes to things they might not think about so there would not be a problem.

(I used to tell the story of a man who was working in a professional position and was sitting in one of the training sessions about equality of pay and assignments for women. He learned that his wife was not receiving as high a salary for her scientific degree and professional work as males were getting. He totaled up the cost of that discriminatory treatment for his family, and later would enlighten groups about what he had learned about the cost of discriminatory treatment on families.)

ROSS-NAZZAL: Your office was handling issues of discrimination within the agency?

JENKINS: Yes. We had the responsibility for handling all allegations of discrimination. We would oversee the precounseling and counseling aspects, and actually handle the formal complaints, including the investigations, and we would draft final agency decisions. We oversaw the process. For instance, the counselor would be part of the individual installation's staff, but they would have been trained to manage this discrimination process at their level. One of the first stages is the counseling phase where the installation counselors really sit down and help the persons clarify what happened to them, what occurred, whether they're going to go forward and file a formal complaint. Often that step spells out the issues and the status of whether it makes any sense for the person to go forward. Sometimes people elect not to proceed to the next steps after that informal phase.

If the person decided to file formally, the complaint came to our EO Office at Headquarters. We would oversee the assignment of an investigator, usually from outside the

agency. The investigator would look into all of the allegations and incidents, review relevant records or evidence, interview important witnesses, and would submit the investigatory findings to us. We would review those findings to ascertain whether federal rules or regulations had been broken. If the investigation was sufficient, we wrote a recommended decision. We usually ran it by the legal counsel for legal sufficiency for the agency as a whole before it went to the Administrator, who made the final decision. Most of the time he agreed with what we recommended as a decision, and he made that the final decision for the agency. So that's the way it worked.

NASA has a management directive that explains what the role of the Center Director is in that process. Essentially Center Directors have the authority at that informal stage before complaints are filed formally, before they come to the NASA EO Office. The roles of our office, General Counsel, and of the Administrator are also spelled out in the NASA management directive instruction.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Did you compare NASA to some other agencies as you were working in this position? I don't want to say you were competitive with these agencies, but were you trying to see if NASA was on par with say the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration], the NIH, or DoD?

JENKINS: Yes. As a matter of fact religiously we did. Sometimes the reports would be put out either by the Office of Personnel Management in terms of the makeup of each federal agency and department. Of course we would always look to see how we compared with that. Or info would even be put out by the EEOC, which drawing from its affirmative action reports would be able to

show you what each federal agency does in the professional and the nonprofessional positions. We all used the same kind of federal nomenclature for the kinds of positions.

So that applies across the federal government. What we were able to do was to compare ourselves with like kinds of agencies or other agencies. So yes we always did, and we wanted to be ranked highly. Don't ask me where we ranked, because I just don't remember. We monitored that. We all needed to help improve the resource pool out there of talented STEM-subject-trained persons. So we all had mutual needs and responsibilities. From time to time we would form organizations where we would get together to look at the lay of the land and see well, what can we do next. Can we press the president's scientific adviser? Is this the time to have our respective agencies plead with their congressional oversight committees to establish particular programs or anything? Those meetings and get-togethers were helpful and informative. Are there ways that we can join hands on certain programs? Do you have a program that some of our people can participate in or vice versa?

So we were usually members of numerous meetings of that type, where many of the federal agencies, particularly those that needed scientists and engineers or strong STEM subject persons, attended. As I mentioned earlier, the group usually included the NIH and the National Science Foundation, the Department of Defense, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; others were in the group also.

(I'll see if I can find, before you leave, the book that explains the kind of group that I've just described that was directed by Congress. I was thinking. Did it take two or three years? I have all three reports in various stacks in my room, downstairs, in the basement. So if I find it before you leave I'll show it to you.) (The document was found and is named in Footnote 6.)

ROSS-NAZZAL: Looking back after working at NASA for let's say a decade, how did things change? Were you excited about what was happening within the agency?

JENKINS: You mean about 1984? I came in 1974. I think so. I was glad of the progress that occurred. I wanted us to do more and better and achieve goals faster. I'm trying to think. When did Richard Truly serve? Do you remember what years that would have been?

ROSS-NAZZAL: I believe it was after *Challenger*.

JENKINS: The late '80s and early '90s.<sup>11</sup>

ROSS-NAZZAL: I believe those were the years.

JENKINS: I remember when we decided that the program with minority universities was—how shall I say—pale and lukewarm, and we weren't getting large numbers of principal investigators.

See what had happened, about a decade earlier when Hans Mark had been at NASA, he had gone and visited every historically black college and university where there was a principal investigator that had gotten a NASA research grant. There were always a few principal investigators sitting in HBCUs [historically black college or universities] or institutions that served significant numbers of minorities that were competing for and getting research grants. We were trying to increase that number. I remember Hans decided he would go to each campus

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<sup>11</sup> Richard Truly's tenure as NASA Administrator was 1989-1992.

and meet with each and every single one of them, and talk about what NASA was trying to do, and the steps we'd taken to encourage more involvement, more competition.

They would have to submit ideas and enroll in trying to be considered for getting the funding. If they felt they weren't as competitive as the principal investigators coming from the major research universities, they were encouraged to advise us and suggest ways the process could be more effective. What should NASA do to help them get to that stage? Out of those visits came the idea and the concept to establish the HBCU research centers. (We eventually talked about minority-serving institutions, because there were some universities like the University of Texas at El Paso which had large numbers of Hispanics. We wanted such universities involved.) One of the first universities that I visited after being hired by NASA had a substantial number of Hispanics attending. I was taken by Jurgen [G.] Pohly, the NASA University Manager, who was doing an outstanding job by the way, to visit the University of New Mexico at Highlands. We met faculty and saw some of the programs and research work they were doing out there.

At any rate, when Hans visited the principal investigators at minority institutions, many of whom he knew personally, and talked about a new strategy for increasing the number of minority and female researchers receiving NASA research grants, a concept evolved that we would establish a competitive process so participants would get the experience of what one goes through when they submit their proposals and do the research on their campuses. Such researchers sometimes start developing a cadre of young scientists and engineers who also can do personal research, and who will continue to do research during their respective careers.

Hans Mark and our team set up a committee that was made up of the associate administrator or his deputy of one or two of the NASA technical offices; two or three either

presidents or vice presidents of HBCUs who had significant research experience in the sciences or had a reputation for having gotten research grants; the NASA Minority University Manager, Jurgen Pohly, and I were included. So it was a relatively small group.

We came up with a strategy and a plan for establishing these research centers competitively, and articulated what they were intended to achieve. So I give credit to Hans Mark for his leadership in the matter and to that group for giving good advice to NASA. Those centers were evaluated I think after five years. Then they were continued for an additional five years and evaluated again. I do not know at this time what is the status of those research centers, or whether any of them continued beyond ten years of funding, or whether they are continuing to obtain NASA research grants. But that's what happened at that time.

I looked at something recently that showed there were very low amounts of money that were going into the program prior to that initiation; but after that initiative, the amounts continued to grow over the years. Then Administrator Richard Truly even increased the funds further for this program during his tenure. He and his Deputy, J. R. Thompson, did an outstanding job by working with the NASA technical managers to obtain more research funds for this effort. There still weren't huge amounts of money going into those grants made to minority institutions. They decided that the great bulk of the NASA research money was managed by the NASA technical offices, the AAs of aeronautics, space science, and spaceflight. He concluded that those AAs had to understand what NASA was attempting to do, had to sign on to that, get involved in it, and take responsibility for it.

They were absolutely right on target and directed their AAs to do that. The amounts of money and the number of principal investigator grants going to HBCUs went up. I won't be able to tell you today what the amount grew to in 1992, but I hope the amount has continued to

increase and is even greater these days. I've not been close enough to it for several years, and so I'd have to go and check with someone about what has been the rate and amount of increase. I give tremendous plaudits to Truly and Thompson for seeing how you get organizations who can really make the change do that and provide needed help.

That is so much healthier anyway than having it be an external process, or different from what is the normal process of getting a principal investigator to apply for and get a grant from NASA to go do the work. It's going to be so much healthier in the long run in terms of how people relate to NASA and what talents get interested in the research that NASA needs.

ROSS-NAZZAL: We have spent a lot of time talking this morning about minorities and women. But part of your job, I understand, also involved people with disabilities. Would you talk about that and how the Americans with Disabilities Act changed how your office handled that?

JENKINS: It made us more aware and made the agency accountable for making sure it understood the law; that NASA had ways that it was going to implement the law fairly, that it had educational programs to inform all of its people about what was to be done, and that it was willing to undertake the additional cost that might be required for amending the workplace to accommodate individuals with disabilities, and those with targeted (or more severe) disabilities, if the latter was possible and not too costly or burdensome to do. So we were active in that process and procedure of education and informing and keeping record.

The EEOC also had oversight responsibility to ensure that NASA's affirmative action efforts were applied to individuals with disabilities, including targeted disabilities, and to



veterans and to veterans with 30% disability.<sup>12</sup>

At that time when I was working in the program—I assume they still do have—we had persons with disabilities, and we had persons with targeted disabilities. Very frequently they were people where the disability was so life-threatening or severe—they're not in this first group—where it's probably assumed that almost any workplace could make reasonable accommodations if they're requested and were not prohibitively expensive. If that disabled person says I need X or Y. "I can do the job if you either raise my desk, or give me shelves that I can reach, or are willing to put in ramps." So there was an immense requirement for every installation to make accommodations at their sites, where they had to do their sidewalks and their buildings in terms of being ready to utilize employees with disabilities.

Interestingly enough, that responsibility of changing the site and the buildings was not under our direct administration. The various offices of buildings and operations also had regulations that they followed. Almost invariably, from where I sat, as the program evolved and expanded, there was always an attempt to be reasonable. The installation didn't have to make all these changes overnight. They could start with the most obvious ones where people, if they had a wheelchair or had to use a wheelchair or a walker or something like that, would be able to get to their job. That's when you saw many communities making these slanted exits from sidewalks and the curbs all around. Well, the same thing went on at installations.

It was almost like it helped wake up the whole nation in terms of some things that we needed to do that now would happen. We saw changes everywhere, but we hadn't seen those before that work to accommodate disabled workers and veterans started. Almost invariably a

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<sup>12</sup> EEOC defines targeted disabilities as deafness, blindness, missing extremities, partial paralysis, complete paralysis, convulsive disorders, mental retardation, mental illness and **genetic** or physical conditions affecting the limbs and/or spine.

Center was permitted to do what it could do with the funds it had. A Center would determine what was its first priority, and then next year it might be a different one. Often a Center had several years to make those accommodations to their facilities.

The numbers of disabled employees were always small. I think also that some persons who probably could have qualified for being disabled were managing without having to have anything special done for them, and that certainly was possible, and to be admired. I guess I do not know to what degree NASA has some very severely disabled persons and how they worked that out. But in 1991, there were 231 targeted disabled persons at NASA.

I can tell you that during my tenure we urged the inclusion of these groups, and we tracked and reported by installation and NASA as a whole the representation, hires, promotions, and losses of persons with targeted disabilities, as well as the disabled veterans (including 30% disabled veterans). I believe I remember hearing recently that EEOC was concerned that the overall hiring rates for severely disabled employees in the federal government has been decreasing.

Seems to me I remember also hearing a vague story decades ago about a disabled person who needed a filing system that was more amenable to his being able to do the work. I think he came up with some marvelous process that ended up helping a lot of people, including those who weren't disabled. I do not remember the details now. It was that sort of thing that always encouraged us. There was a name that we used at the time. It was one of the pluses that you got without planning necessarily for it. "Serendipity" I guess.

ROSS-NAZZAL: So I thought we would talk a little bit about the Anita [F.] Hill testimony for the Clarence Thomas hearings, and if she had any impact on your position in terms of sexual harassment training and education programs that you might have instituted as a result.

JENKINS: No. As a matter of fact I probably felt at the time we already had in place knowledge and awareness and prohibitions within our agency where what she was alleging he had done would not have occurred. I hoped. Otherwise I hadn't been doing my job.

By the time Anita Hill testified, NASA already had implemented training programs that would have made it clear to employee supervisors and managers that the sexual harassment of any employee was illegal, and if proven could lead to substantial corrective action or recompense. So that was one year before I left. So our programs had been going for quite some time. I was very startled to hear her testimony, because I could not imagine anybody working at the EEOC who would not be aware of what was inappropriate behavior, and that certainly would have been inappropriate if he did what she described him as doing. Unfortunately it's sad.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You left NASA in 1992 to take a new position to work on Capitol Hill. Can you tell us about why you decided to leave the agency at that point?

JENKINS: The Chief of Staff of Majority Leader George [J.] Mitchell, and apparently with the approval of Minority Leader Robert [J.] Dole, came down to NASA to talk to me, and told me that there was going to be a new Office of Fair Employment Practices set up for the Senate employees. That was a process that had been provided in the Civil Rights Bill of 1991, and it essentially was managing a process. If Senate employees alleged any kind of discrimination,

their allegations could be adjudicated fairly. You may not remember the kind of history before that in the previous decade, where on the House of Representatives side a woman had been sexually harassed by one of the members and had brought a case, and it was in the media for a long time. Then it all went away. So I don't know why the Civil Rights Act of 1991 provided for just the Senate employees alone, but that's what was created, and they wanted me to head that office.

So I thought about it, talked to the Deputy Administrator of NASA of course, also verified with the Administrator that he had no objection, or wouldn't feel that I was abandoning NASA or anything like that. I had a strong program. I had an excellent staff. So I decided to go up and do that for them.

I think I served about four and a half years as the head of that office. I was trying to remember whether, when I took it, I had assumed that the process would get started with Senate employees, and then would eventually apply to all of Congress. I'm trying to remember why I would have even thought that. Whether we just thought that we would be so good, or whether there had been some sort of inference that we start here and then it's going to spread. I don't know why I kind of had that feeling. Also I have asked myself did I think that I would return to NASA?

I guess I certainly didn't want to feel that NASA had an obligation to me to bring me back if and when they changed the program there or anything like that. So I went up, had a very small staff, much smaller than what I had at NASA. We did our task. It was a procedure that provided for the counseling, similar to what we did in the federal agencies and departments. We also would discuss alternate dispute processes with them. Then of course we did the investigations and decided whether the allegations had merit and whether there were findings of

discrimination. What we spent most of our time on, because I believe it's so important, was informing and alerting all of the Senate staffs to what was required of them. Why it made sense. Why excellent management practices and the treatment of staff in the long run was the best investment they could make, because they would avoid the kinds of problems, traps, and issues that led to complaints. Thus we spent extraordinary amounts of time doing managerial and supervisory training for the Senators' staffs. Sometimes their state staff people would come into the Washington, DC area, probably on assignments, and sometimes they would sit in on those sessions as well. Certainly if they wanted information from us they could get it.

We think that some sort of process after the problem that the House member had had years before caused the House to have something in place. We felt that if we did our job well, the process would be expanded to apply to all of Congress, including the Library of Congress, and the other congressional offices that support the House and the Senate in their political work. So we wanted to do a good job. I had a fantastic staff, and we did that work.

So we think we contributed to the Senate, and eventually all of Congress moved to a process that was similar to the process we had used with the Senate employees for over 4 1/2 years. While I was appointed by the majority leader and the minority leader of the Senate, the new office was to be overseen by an external board with the members appointed by the President and the heads of both congressional bodies. All of the employees of the Senate, House, and the other Congressional Offices were covered by the new process. We felt that we had proven our point and had done an effective job for the Senate; and that we had probably helped contribute to the future rights of all of the employees of Congress.

While we were doing our job for the Senate we also did in-service training for the Capitol Police. They would call on us from time to time to do that work. That turned out very nicely.

The people that I had working with me were persons with whom I had had experiences while in my job at NASA. My small staff included three attorneys, all of whom had stellar career experiences and accomplishments, and were excellent trainers; two of whom had formerly worked for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. We also had two stellar support staff.

I hope that the follow-on process is effective. We assume that it's going well, since we haven't heard of any complaints in the newspapers or anything like that. Anyway, our function was terminated, and Harriett came home to retire.

ROSS-NAZZAL: What a wonderful visit. That speaks volumes about your contributions and accomplishments at NASA to have the majority and minority leader approach you about this new position.

JENKINS: Well, it was the chief of staff of the majority leader, and also representing the minority leader, who came down to NASA to offer me the position. After I had agreed to take the position, my appointment papers were signed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate Robert [C.] Byrd, the Majority Leader George Mitchell, and the Minority Leader Robert Dole; the latter two both shook my hand and welcomed me when I arrived for work at the Senate. I do not know who would have told them about me. I haven't speculated about it. Maybe I should do that. Who caused that? I don't know whether it was someone within NASA. Proxmire wasn't around any longer. He had already left the Senate or passed away. I didn't make presentations on the Hill. That's a good mystery.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You had worked at NASA for 18 years by the time you had left. Tell us about the changes and the cultural change that you had instituted, and what you thought was the most dramatic change that you had brought about or witnessed as a result.

JENKINS: Not a thing. Not a thing. Wasn't my fault.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Not a thing. Wow, that's very humble.

JENKINS: No, no, no. Let's see. If I had to sum it up in terms of what I think my impact might have been, what would I talk about? I guess helping to show the NASA family that one can strive for and attain a talented integrated staff that will help them do their phenomenal tasks and achieve their goals and will make them proud of what they do. I guess I really don't think about the changes necessarily being attributed to me, because all along I've been striving to have this be a team effort where we're all helping each other do what we have to do. I think I'm feeling pretty certain about that.

I remember being quite surprised. Let's see. I would have been at the Senate office on the Hill when one of my former staffers called me and said, "We wanted to tell you that we're trying to get a program established in your name at NASA. We want you to check some of the language we've put in the document that we think will support that."

That was the first that I knew of it. I thought, "Are you guys out of your mind? Don't worry. It won't go far. But thank you for putting in the effort."

It was dear Bettie [L.] White who had managed the Minority University Program on my staff. She said, "I don't know, I think we might have a chance to get this through." To find out

that [Daniel S.] Goldin, the newest NASA Administrator at that time, with whom I'd only worked from about February to June when I left, was supportive of such an idea. I didn't even know if he knew much about me.

Whoever was putting this together had gotten him to understand and know about the United Negro College Fund Special Programs, which was going to carry out the contract. The program was approved. I was going to ask you if you have heard about the Harriett G. Jenkins Predoctoral Fellowship Program?

ROSS-NAZZAL: I have read about it on NASA's Website, but you can talk about it on tape.

JENKINS: What it does is promises 20 students per year that if they've gotten their first degree in any of the STEM subjects and are motivated and have the grades and the commitment and drive to get their PhDs, then NASA will help them in that process. NASA only helps them for three years and helps pick up some of the cost. Of course in some instances that's enough. In some of the institutions, NASA help doesn't pay the whole tuition, but it's for three years. If they haven't finished the doctorate by that time, it's supposed to be the boost to help them get on their way. The student also had an option, when the program was first started, of having an assignment at a NASA Center or JPL doing research during one of the summers, and for which they got some additional funds so they could travel to a NASA Center or JPL to enhance their STEM education and research experiences.

What has happened most recently is that NASA has placed this program as well as many other programs under the umbrella of NASA's Education Office Programs, and the agency now



has a one-stop shop for all of its educational programs, which you can get to online. All of the programs are listed and described.

Before this change, it was optional for the recipient to get in touch with a mentor and a principal investigator at a NASA Center. NASA is now requiring this and connecting those students up early with their NASA mentors and contacts. It's a wise idea. If you don't want to waste your money, you want to make sure you've got the participants tied to someone who's really going to be taking the time to help them understand NASA's programs and getting them started on some sort of research that they can do at that Center during the allotted period of time. So the program has been improved I think.

Beginning in year 2000, there were 20 youngsters per year selected except for one year where there wasn't enough money, and there were only ten. So it's about 210, although something that they sent me recently said 209, but I think it's 210 minority, female or disabled graduate students who have been aided by NASA in seeking a master's and/or PhD in STEM subjects. Most of them are seeking PhDs. So far that program since 2000 had yielded 87 doctorates and 45 masters' degrees in STEM subjects.

Part of my trip out to California and to the Ames Research Center this week was for this program. There were students from four cohort groups there, the ones who are finishing the program, those in their second and third year, and of course and the new ones. Well, just thumb through there.<sup>13</sup> You can see the quality of students that have been attracted to the program, and the schools they're attending, as well as the kind of research being done.

Then I had shown you this flyer. This was a student from an earlier publication; she has completed the program. I was going to see if she says so on here. She doesn't say, but she's

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<sup>13</sup> "2011 NASA Ames STEM Symposium, 25-29 July 2011," Resume Book, "*Renewing the Spirit of Innovation and Discovery*."

been out for a while. She's bright. She's in MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge]. Did you get to see this earlier?

WRIGHT: Have you met Danielle Wood?

JENKINS: Oh yes, yes. She was very good and comfortable in sharing things with the other students when she was invited back to speak to a new consort; she prodded them to accept challenges and to do excellent work. She was one of those special leaders you spot in the group when you get them together. She was very unique in her own way. I was so honored and very proud. So when you ask me what are the things I'm proud of, I have to selfishly say to be honored that way. You couldn't ask for a nicer sentiment or appreciation of what you've tried to do for 18 years, that's great.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Today we have an African-American Administrator.

JENKINS: Yes, Charles Bolden. He is so gracious. He was speaking to a very large group at a hotel. I don't know how he found out I was in the room. But he made some very gracious remarks, and I appreciated them very much. He acknowledged my being there. Even said I'd been his adviser. That's a tremendous compliment!

I thought his appointment to be the NASA Administrator was great! He has held significant leadership positions during his career and has a stellar record in NASA positions. When one watched him sometimes amongst the astronauts, he obviously was a leader. He seemed to be well liked by a variety of people. Sometimes you don't know if that's because

they're in the astronaut corps or whether it's because of their magnetism, or tremendous skills or accomplishments, or something else.

I knew there would be perhaps some people looking in from the outside, noting the first African American to be named NASA Administrator, but I'm assuming that people within NASA weren't surprised or shocked. There had been the appointment of a black male to the Deputy Administrator position a few years ago.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Fred [Frederick D.] Gregory.

JENKINS: Yes, Fred Gregory. By the way, did his tenure occur under Michael Griffin? Fred Gregory. Who was he deputy to?

ROSS-NAZZAL: Sean O'Keefe, if I remember correctly. Looking back over those 18 years, do you feel, with Charlie now at the helm of NASA, that you succeeded? Or did you feel you had succeeded much much earlier?

JENKINS: I felt I had succeeded much much earlier. If you plant the seeds and the program is going well, this will occur. It really will. It's absolutely amazing about it.

This reminds me, as a matter of fact, that we had created an Equal Opportunity Medal and an Equal Opportunity Trophy to be added to the panoply of NASA awards. The EO Medal was to recognize the extraordinary success of an individual who had led or contributed to significant EO progress within NASA, and the EO Trophy was to award the NASA installation that had accomplished the greatest EO progress.

ROSS-NAZZAL: I just had one other question, which I didn't put on the list, but I thought maybe we could talk about today. You're an African-American woman. You worked for NASA. Would you tell us about your overall experience working for the agency and any challenges you thought you might have faced as a woman of color?

JENKINS: I don't think I have had a single deleterious or bad time. You had a question about how had I been treated. So I made myself think back and put down something. The only thing I could think of was during those earliest days. As a matter of fact it might have been even at the first or one of the early EO Council meetings in 1974. It was that early along. The chair had made some sort of remark in the meeting, and I remember "tears" welling up.

The chair then stopped the meeting, and he and I went outside. We discussed it and resolved the matter. He said something about the tears or whatever. I told him the tears were anger that I was attempting to control. He apologized. We came back inside. So when we got back into the meetings the EO Officers hadn't felt very good about it. They thought I shouldn't show tears or hurt. I explained to the group that I had said to the chair and wanted them to know too that I had teared up because I was angry about what had been said in the meeting. Not that I accepted the derogatory comment or whatever it was.

I don't remember, but I think they all did accept that. Of course there were some who always felt that the NASA program should have been more aggressive or should have made progress faster, or should have been directed to do X or Y or Z. You see what I'm saying? Rather than building the knowledge, the awareness, the capability, and the motivation amongst

all of the subsets of the organization that had the responsibility to carry out the work to go and do it, and to be able to trust them to go and do it.

That's about the only time I can remember being emotionally upset about anything. I don't even remember what was said. When I think of the task that I had to do and the charter and what people said to me—and of course I took them at their word—I think it was one of the greatest professional sets of experiences I've had. [Cries] This time I'm not mad. I truly enjoyed it. I was treated so beautifully. I will remember many of the persons with whom I worked during that period who are no longer with us. (I apologize for crying.)

ROSS-NAZZAL: There's no reason to apologize. I imagine thinking back over those years and thinking about the people you worked with is very emotional.

JENKINS: I could mention every single one of the EO Officers. I don't know how long and to what degree you're going to be involved in doing your verbal records. If you have a chance—this shows you about the quality of people that were placed in the roles—try to get to talk to Clyde Foster. He may not have even been the first EO Officer that was appointed at Marshall but did have that role soon after I'd come on board. Unbelievable person. He lives in a small community called Triana, Mississippi. He was elected mayor of that place. He has the technical background to do the technical jobs at NASA. This is why I was saying a Center Director would look at what he needs in leadership, know they understand the Center, the technical jobs, and would want to put them in this kind of responsibility.

He is the epitome—the perfect person for that kind of thing. In his own community he found out that the children were smaller in height than the children of their comparable ages. He

asked that the water of the Pearl River that ran through their little community of Triana be tested. Found out of course that it was full of stuff not good. He worked that problem all the way to the federal government until they got some recompense, got that river cleaned up, and got some follow-on health steps for his community.

We learned about it while he was doing the job of EEO Officer. I think we heard about it because he was honored by the people who award the Senator Hart [phonetic] Medal to people in their communities for doing outstanding jobs for their communities, and that he was to be a recipient. Otherwise we probably never would have learned about it. Of course he was an outstanding EO Officer, very quiet but thoughtful, very excellent ideas and constructive person. So you'll enjoy meeting him. He's getting older now. There are a number of organizations honoring him. I have sent his name to The History Makers group in Chicago to make sure they get to him.

I'd see him of course at the EO Council meetings. Then we would ask him, "Okay, what's going on in Triana, Mr. Mayor?" or something like that. I found out that he had persuaded certain firms to bring jobs to his little community. At that time he had his citizens assembling telephones for a telephone company, probably located somewhere in the Midwest, certainly not in Triana. Years later when I saw him and I asked, "Oh, what's new, what are you doing?" he had created fish farms to help them grow fish to eat and to create jobs for members of his community. So he was such a creative problem-solving person. I never heard him raise his voice to denigrate anybody or anything. He has probably done many more things than I remember being astounded about while he was holding this job at Marshall and being the mayor and probably not getting any remuneration. I don't have any idea what he was getting in remuneration while he was the mayor of this little city. But he was certainly improving the lives

of the citizens. He had excellent strategies in terms of the EO Program. I'm sure that's why Marshall and NSTL were able to have effective programs. So if you get a chance to talk with him, please do so.

He was not feeling that well when I talked to him a few weeks ago. So see if you can get to him before he is unable to move around. He was talking more slowly and quietly. He always had been a quiet speaker.

Dillard Menchan has retired from Goddard Space Flight Center, but he had headed the EO Office for many years before taking a subsequent position, heading another function at that Center before he retired. I do not know whether Dr. Samuel Massenberg is still around. He was an outstanding scientist and head of University Affairs for Langley Research Center [Hampton, Virginia] but then also served on my staff at Headquarters when we established our Minority University Research Division, because he already was making happen successfully at Langley, what we wanted to do agency wide. Unfortunately a few years ago it sounded like he had been deteriorating in health. So I don't know if he's still around or anything. He may not be available or accessible. I bet you they have a fantastic record of him and his accomplishments within NASA at Langley Research Center. Has Langley been much involved at all in your history?

ROSS-NAZZAL: A little bit. We've done some on the predecessor agency for NASA, the NACA [National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics].

JENKINS: When I went out to Ames I got to see Jack Boyd. Do you know enough about Ames to know Jack Boyd?

ROSS-NAZZAL: We know Jack Boyd.

JENKINS: It was just such fun seeing him again. I don't know if I know. For a while I knew Robert Lawrence. He's in this area. He's one of the younger EO Officers. He was at the former Lewis Research Center, now Glenn [Research Center, Cleveland, Ohio]. He was very active.

Jay [J. Albert] Diggs is another name you should put down. He was at the Kennedy Space Center, and was the EO Officer for many years there. I believe he is still around and healthy.

Now does anybody know whether Hans Mark is still at the University of Texas at Austin? He used to be on the faculty.

WRIGHT: I think he's still there.

JENKINS: It's been a while since I spoke to him. So I am glad that he's still there. There are two young members of my staff who are very knowledgeable. I think one is Bettie White—I mentioned her name before—who had the responsibility for the University Affairs Program and helped build it into a very strong program that it became. The other is Mary Anne Stoutsenberger, a staunch member of the staff. I always think of her. Bettie also served in the Federal Women's Program. She launched many interfaces with scientific groups for women while she was on my staff and then also did an outstanding job when she moved to the Minority Universities Research responsibilities. Mary Anne Stoutsenberger also has been very active and also played a significant role with tribal colleges. Sometimes we forget those institutions and don't think about them in terms of outreach. She served in a variety of actual leadership and



support positions and has been a staunch supporter of all of the EO programs. It was the two of them, Mary Anne Stoutsenberger and Bettie White, who came to take me to lunch on yesterday for my birthday. They stay in touch. We periodically say we're pulling the whole family back together again, plan to do so, but haven't quite accomplished it yet.

Another member of the EO staff, who started serving in the NASA EO office before I arrived, was Oceola Hall. She was a consummate manager, helping us launch our Federal Women's Program, managing our Discrimination Complaints Division flawlessly for many years, and then serving as Deputy EO Officer before retiring. Alfonso Ludi was an exceptional Hispanic Program Manager, and was followed in the role by Orlando Gutierrez. Lewin Warren who served as my deputy was a caring manager, and an excellent supporter of the EO Program and the whole staff.

ROSS-NAZZAL: I was going to also ask, if you don't mind, if Rebecca had any questions for you.

WRIGHT: Just one. When you came to your leadership position at NASA, so many laws and so many new regulations were coming in place. How were you able to keep up with all that the federal government was asking you to comply with? What programs were in place for your own training?

JENKINS: I was a little bit familiar with some of the overall federal civil rights laws. Remember, we had been studying desegregation for a long time and had proven that we understood what would be the legal corrective things to help change our communities. We had obviously followed the Supreme Court decisions. Watching to see to when degree de jure segregation

would really be made moot because we knew that de facto segregation had hung around so long, and people just did it almost unconsciously to maintain things with which they were comfortable despite the fact that they put other people, other groups of people, down and demeaned them.

So that had been part of the background in which I'd lived for most of my life. You watch the papers, you watch the Supreme Court decisions, you watch the court decisions and the ups and downs and the interpretation of different regional judges. One tries to see where the lay of the land is going, if it's going to suggest minimal change or have significant overall impact. You try to read and be informed. I was fortunate enough to have lived part of my adult life in a state where—we used to brag in California that we were a very innovative state. At that time we were envied. We had the best university system in the world. We had some concerns that certain governors tended to change that. But it really was a wonderful place to be and such a change for me from Ft. Worth, Texas, where I was born and grew up, and from Nashville, Tennessee, where I had attended Fisk University. Although there was prejudice, and some places where blacks were not served, or allowed to live, California was so far above the South in its treatment of minorities, and one could see some improvement over the years in its negative characteristics. Additionally it was such a vibrant state, with marvelous creative questioning, changing, and growing. I used to tell people I bet I was the only principal or director of elementary education that had fourth graders picketing outside the school because the Free Speech Movement was so strong in Berkeley at that time.

I felt somewhat comfortable and familiar with some of the laws we would have been expected to implement. Then you get the regulations that apply to your functional area. You make sure you try to be as knowledgeable about those as you possibly can. You also make sure that you're aware of the internal laws and regulations of the particular federal agency you're

working with. NASA has a wonderful system of its management instructions in which they spell out everybody's role. I guess the issue must have risen in some of those early days (1972-1973) where NASA saw fit to explain exactly what the role of the Administrator was going to be as it related to equal opportunity, what the Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity's role was going to be in relation to that, and what the Center Director's role was going to be in relationship to that function. So it was quite clear where the responsibility and the line authority was, and retained, and what was expected of them.

So I think clear managerial directions backed up by the legal requirements of either federal law or federal regulation is absolutely essential. I felt very fortunate at NASA that I was supported by the General Counsel, and our staffs worked well together. We had at the time, I think, one lawyer on our staff. (You would be pleased to know that the lawyer, Brenda Manuel, has risen in the ranks to head the office and is now the Associate Administrator for the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity Programs for NASA.)

When some of the Supreme Court decisions started to come out (where one regional court would hold one thing and another regional court would rule entirely differently), I felt I needed to strengthen my legal knowledge and background. I went to school at night at Georgetown University [Washington, DC] and got a law degree. NASA picked up the bill for that, and I was very, very appreciative. I think also that the agency was very, very kind and supportive of me in other ways.

We would press that minorities, women, and the disabled needed to be selected for the amazing array of training opportunities that NASA supported. There were numerous educational programs; there were skill-training programs; there were managerial training programs; and there were executive training programs. We thought that women and minorities should be involved in

all of those. So there were programs that were like sabbaticals that you take at universities, where you could go for a whole year to Stanford University [California] or MIT and work on research or get additional degrees. There were a number of NASA top managers who, in addition to their science or engineering degrees, had gone and gotten their MBAs [Master's in Business Administration]. I was sent to the Harvard [University, Cambridge, Massachusetts] Advanced Management Program, a semester long program by NASA in 1978. So I was treated very, very well by NASA. The agency continued to help expand my education while I was there working for them. I enjoyed and appreciated that very, very much.

WRIGHT: Thank you.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Would you like to review your notes? I'm sure we could keep picking your brain all day. See if there's something we may have overlooked, or something you wanted to talk about.

JENKINS: I'll see if there's anything in here. I hope you have a feeling about the nature of the program and what we were trying to do and what we tried to help the agency with. I'll just go real fast through here.

ROSS-NAZZAL: You can go fast or slow, however you like. I think as we talked we touched on those questions. But if there was something we overlooked. Or if there's something else you thought, "You didn't ask about this and I think people should know."

JENKINS: One of the things in those earlier days is that—and I can't document whether NASA asked for it or not. There is a group in town that is congressionally mandated. It's called the National Academy of Public Administration. They were invited during those early days to make a study of our EO Program and long-range planning. They named an eight member committee that came into NASA on June 7, 1974. The National Academy of Public Administration Panel was chaired by Dr. James A. Bayton, Professor, Department of Psychology, Howard University [Washington, DC]. We worked with that panel, and they gave us good ideas to help augment and strengthen our program.

The academy members are fellows who have been elected by other academy fellows to join that important and accomplished public administration group. Several years later, in 1986, I was elected by the academy to be a fellow, and I joined that year. I'm sure it was because they had observed what we were trying to do at NASA and had noted the progress we were making.

I showed you one set of charts, but I had a favorite set that I was going to show you. I don't see it now. I wanted to show you how sophisticated my reporting at the GMSR became. I can't believe this. Let's see if this is it. Maybe this is one example. I not only got pleased with myself, then later on thought you had to be out of your mind, Harriett. Imagine yourself sitting in a GMSR. I'm just going to show you the wide variety of ways that we monitored progress.<sup>14</sup> First of all what you're looking at here is a program summary where we're talking about the workforce integration of minorities and women. We're watching managerial, supervisory placements, accessions, promotions, net increases, average grade increases, targeted disabilities,

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<sup>14</sup> NASA Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, "Agency and Installation Progress Towards Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Goals During FY 1991," Dr. Harriett G. Jenkins, Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity Programs, Institutional General Management Status Review Meeting, NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC, November 20, 1991.

disabled veterans, integration of feeder programs and so forth and so on. Over on this side the participation in a wide variety of other parts of the program. Here are your recognition awards, whether that's well integrated; discrimination complaint processing; Minority University activities; community outreach; regulatory oversight interfaces and reporting requirements that we have to meet and do; and managerial leadership, support, participation, accountability; then equal opportunity or requirements of our office.

This was a report card where you could get green, yellow, or red. This is for the agency as a whole. That's just one of several pages that has a lot of data on it. This overall report card—which looks pretty good for that reporting period, there are only about four yellows, most are green—is built on a whole bunch of data. There, the managerial, supervisory placements. There's the issue. Here's the status of each of the significant appointments, promotions and so forth, and the participation rates of all these subgroups. This one is the kinds of jobs into which people were placed. They're underlined if it's a hire. The other is they were promoted into an additional responsibility. You get to see the makeup of these particular ones. They placed people in positions like the comptroller of Kennedy Space Center, the Assistant General Counsel of Commercialization, President's Commission on Executive Exchange, and so forth. So that kind of look at what their tasks were was important.

Similarly here. Workforce integration of significant appointments, tracking those in front of the senior management of the agency. Science and engineering accessions and conversions shown. By the way we have little bars. So if they hadn't got time to read all the stuff, they can get a signal by looking at the code there. This one is the professional administrative accessions and conversion. Another color chart by Center that says hey, how good are you doing in those 15 and SESs above; in S&E and PA [professional administrative] positions; and with disabled

and 30% disabled veterans. You'll see the three reds and the yellows. You see at a glance the agency is doing pretty good. Still has some Centers that are not making progress at this time. One of those is a small one, SSC, I notice. Poor things, probably losing staff. So that was the kind of information about Centers' tasks and accomplishments that we gathered, assessed, and reported.

This one, the number of hires, blocked by Center, by group. So you get to see your nonminority women, blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians, Asians, so forth and so on. The science and engineering workforce, the professional administrative workforce. Here we're telling you things, whether they were promoted at the rate of their representation in the lower grade from which they would be promoted. Each of the five groups are shown. Net increases for each of 8 sub-groups are shown in green for six major areas that are tracked. Here we use bar charts to show you the change over period of time per group. Here this is the SES. GS or GM-15s, 14s, 13s and 12s so that you can see your agency as it relates to nonminority males. This one is nonminority females and blacks. So you can compare groups within the agency. So that kind of bar chart was used.

A different bar chart here. These are promotion rates in color. Different one here where we're giving the picture and the slice from many different ways so people can tell at a glance. You might wonder, "Hmm, what's going on there?" Apparently there had been an SES appointment, a promotion of a black into an SES appointment. That's amazing. This one is of another promotion rate, the PA, a black, isn't that interesting? Then I really like this chart. This is the ants, bees or bees, ants, whatever people say. You can look! That looks pretty good! The green is good! It shows you net gain in all of those areas in all of those major occupational series: manager, supervisor. Down here you get to a nonprofessional group. They lost ground.

By the way these are nonminority males here. Went down by 28. So the Caucasian group was getting smaller as the others grew, and so we want to know that as well, because see, there are some people who say “Hmm, see, I’m being discriminated against.” So we tell the whole picture. Line graph with similar data showing you the amount of increase.

So that’s what my reports were like in 1991. They would try to give an efficient and effective manner a picture of what was going on in the NASA Centers. I always liked that one because you think you only had two or three groups that you were hiring. It was because of small numbers of American Indians. Just so small they barely show up on the top of that stovepipe.

So I think one of your questions was how do I know whether things have improved or not? That’s why I knew. I’m kidding. It took me about four, five days to find this. I said the poor things are hiding from me, because they probably got tired of all the things we were putting them through. The backup charts are simply the actual numerical data for those previous charts.

I do not know why that chart is on there, or why I would have put it on there with it so hard to see until you get close up on it. It’s talking about the agency S&E workforce from 1974 to 1991. I hope you can see the ascendancy that we’ve improved over that period of time. There are a few other charts in that package that reflects NASA’s progress from 1974 to 1991.

WRIGHT: I bet you were glad when technology made it easier to do charts.

JENKINS: Indeed. Indeed. As a matter of fact, I suspect there were a lot of people who would say I don’t want to look at those charts anymore. We thought it was important. Here’s a government agency. It’s very technical. Certainly knows about checking measurements. So



there's absolutely no reason why we can't get them information that's precise and meaningful and accurately assessed. You have to make sure you're looking at the right things in the right way at the right timeframe. So I think I've done all I should do. Probably held you much too long.

ROSS-NAZZAL: No, we came here to spend time with you this morning.

WRIGHT: Very appreciative of you letting us take up so much of your time.

JENKINS: Well, I've enjoyed meeting you, Rebecca and Jennifer. Appreciate the way you've gone about the interview. I look forward to seeing your write-ups. Because I know your notes are so fantastic I won't even share with you my notes that I made. I'll just compare using your's.

ROSS-NAZZAL: Well, we appreciate it. Thank you so much.

[End of interview]