

Interviewee: Julie Orcutt  
Interviewer: Jolene Jennings  
Date of Interview: November 8, 2006  
Location: Worcester Public Library  
Transcriber: Jolene Jennings



**Abstract:** Julie Orcutt was born and grew up in Worcester, MA as part of a loving, Catholic, multigenerational family. The three generations of her family lived in the Columbus Park neighborhood in Worcester. Julie, her brother and her parents are graduates of South High School in Worcester. After high school, she attended Nichols College in Dudley, MA as a commuter student majoring in marketing. In this interview, she speaks of her supportive home life, her Italian grandparents and how her family has had a positive influence on her life. Julie has worked at the Center for Women in Enterprise (CWE) and is currently employed by the Central Massachusetts Convention and Visitor's Bureau in MA. She has done volunteer work for the Special Olympics and the Nazareth Home in Leicester, MA. Julie's long-term goals are to get her Master's Degree and to own her own business.

JJ: I have the bio sheet from JO. Julie this outlines your family and where you live. Can you talk a little about yourself and about growing up in Worcester and where you were born and attended school.

JO: Both my parents grew up in Worcester, went to South High School, where I also graduated as well as my brother. I also live in a neighborhood called Columbus Park and it is a pretty small neighborhood that has been there a long time and my mother grew up and so never left the neighborhood. My grandmother still lives in the house where she raised her kids in, and my aunt lives right below her, so we all pretty much live on top of one another.

JJ: So how long has your family, is this the Orcutt family?

JO: No, it is actually the Soucy family.

JJ: How long has the Soucy family lived in that area?

JO: I would say 1953, the 50's. So over 50 years. My father grew up in Worcester too, on Couding Street, which is by Heard Street area, close to the Auburn line.

JJ: So were your parents both born in Worcester?

JO: Yes. And most of my immediate family lives in Worcester as well.

JJ: So Soucy is your mother's maiden name?

JO: Yes

JJ: It is helpful to see the family tree-and connect women in history, so seeing the connections in their experiences, background, etc-it's nice to have the maiden name, because so many women take on the husbands name-so the woman sort of loses her identity-who her family was. I think it is important to know her maiden name. So then you went on to the South High School?

JO: My parents both graduated from South approximately 1972 or 73. My parents actually met in high school and got married, bought the house in the neighborhood; it's an old house-about 150 years old.

JJ: So they bought it as an older home.

JO: A very old home-and they did a lot of work on it.

JJ: So were you in the house when they were working on it?

JO: Yes-both my brother and I were there-my brother is older than I am.

JJ: Did you actually help with the work in the house?

JO: I remember helping, but my brother probably did a little bit more than I did.

JJ: Did you paint or help clean?

JJ: Oh yeah-I did plenty of cleaning! My mother had me clean our kitchen when we first moved in-it was nothing special. That is where I first learned how to cook with my grandmother and then my parents did the kitchen over.

JJ: So then your grandmother was in charge of the kitchen?

JO: Yes, 'cause my grandmother lived so close.

JJ: Was she downstairs or in a separate house?

JO: She lived in a separate house-literally less than 5 minutes away. She would walk down every day when we were still babies. My mother didn't go back to work, she stayed home and took care of us. Once we got a little bit older, my grandmother watched us after school and during the summers we were with my grandmother. She took us on picnics.

JJ: So your mother actually stayed with you through the pre-school years?

JO: Yes-right! I think once my brother and I got into kindergarten, she went back to work part-time as a dental assistant. She works in Worcester at the same office on Park Ave. She worked part-time so she still picked us up from school. All through kindergarten, high school-she came to our school programs.

JJ: When you finished with high school, where did you attend college?

JO: I went to Nichols College in Dudley, MA.

JJ: What made you decide to go to Nichols in Dudley?

JO: Well... I had stayed local when looking for colleges – within Massachusetts. Was not really sure what I wanted to do, but wanted to stick with a business type school. Nichols was a small business school with a good reputation, and fairly close to home too.

JJ: So could you go home on weekends?

JO: Actually, I didn't live on campus. I lived at home and commuted. My parents bought me a car so I could commute.

JJ: Did they buy you a car when you graduated from high school?

JO: Yeah-not a gift I would say. My parents have always been good to me too.

JJ: Have you been good to your parents?

JO: Yes (laughter). I commuted back and forth for four years, and I also, I believe my freshman year of college or senior year in high school-I started to work at my mother's dental office.

JJ: Was that your first job?

JO: Yes. I used to baby-sit previous.

JJ: So your first job was babysitting kids in the neighborhood?

JO: Yes.

JJ: And then you went into work as an office assistant at your Mom's work? How old were you?

JO: I was probably 16 when I started working there. I did it all; the filing, the phones, calls/answering, checking patients in/out.

JJ: Did you like it?

JO: Yes. I liked it, I mean I worked with my mother every day, but never had trouble with that.

JJ: Do you have a good relationship with your mother?

JO: Yes. A very good relationship.

JJ: So you enjoyed the work?

JO: Yes, it was a lot of fun. There were 2 male doctors and the rest of the staff was all females.

JJ: So the females were not doctors, they were hygienists?

JO: Yes-they were not doctors. The females were hygienists and administrative staff. My mom was the office manager too. It was a lot of fun working with the ladies I worked with-all throughout college too-at least 5 years I was there. I worked up until I graduated from college and started at the Center for Women & Enterprise (CWE) after college.

JJ: At the Center for Women & Enterprise you came in as the Program Assistant, and shortly after that you started a new job. Where and what is your job now?

JO: Now I am at the Central Massachusetts Convention and Visitor's Bureau and I do the membership and tours and marketing for the organization.

JJ: And your major in college was?

JO: Marketing and I minored in management. So I am doing definitely what I went to school for and more, learning more within the travel/tourism industry. It exposes me to a lot of different people too.

JJ: Different people? So you enjoy meeting different people?

JO: Yes. Just two weeks ago we met with people that were International Tour representatives from all over the world in Boston; met with people from Italy, Argentina, Mexico, Ireland, Japan.

JJ: So you don't even have to travel – they come to you?

JO: No-I don't have to travel. They came to us to learn about Central Massachusetts, and what we have to offer, and what we can do for them. We find out what they are looking for. They can take small or large groups to the area, and there are certain things they expect when they come to a travel destination. That was great-I loved it.

JJ: Do you speak any other languages?

JO: I don't, I know basic Italian.

JJ: Does your grandmother speak Italian?

JO: Yes. Both of my grandmothers are all Italian-so they speak. I took French in middle and high school, but I didn't speak it on a regular basis-so I lost it. I would like to take a Night Life course to learn Italian.

JJ: Where do you see your future in your career-where do you want to go-what is your dream?

JO: I would like to own my business some day. I would still like to do that. I like the unique specialty shops that have gifts you won't find at Wal-Mart or Macy's. So I have to work for a while more to gain experience and what I need to do so that I know I'll be successful.

JJ: So you know how to market products or services, but do you see yourself importing things or creating your own items?

JO: I would say some of both. I would probably go to trade shows in New York or purchase from California. California has the corner shops where they have the fancy note cards-you pay a little more for it-but- I guess you are buying it more for the emotional attachment and the experience of it. And then I would probably put a flair of my own style to it too. I would definitely like to do that.

JJ: How far away do you think that is-that you would consider starting your own business?

JO: I would say to be realistic-maybe 10 years. 7-10 years. I have only been out of school for a year now, so.

JJ: Wow, it's only been a year?

JO: I know-only a year.

JJ: Do you see yourself staying at the Visitor's Convention Bureau for the next 10 years-or going elsewhere to gain further experience?

JO: I'll definitely be at the Visitor's Center for a while-but maybe something in-between there and starting a business.

JJ: Because you are young.

JO: Yes. Very young, and I'm always the first one to tell myself that I have a lot to learn, a lot to see, so I am very open to hearing about other people's experiences about running their own businesses. I know I've spoken to people before that have had a specialty type shop and it has not been so successful, so I guess I would want to do it right, and so I would want to take my time with it and not just have it be a one time shot-I want it to be successful. I would hate to have to invest so much time into it-and not be a failure but.

JJ: Yeah- Well, I think we all want to be successful.

JJ: Do you think you might continue your education?

JO: Yeah. That is a good question. I would like to get my Master's Degree. I remember in college, my marketing professor, who I really enjoyed-he would say to me "Why don't you work for a little while before you get your Masters? You'll get a lot more out of it". Because I know a lot of kids I went to school with who went right into it and I think they did it because they thought they would make more money. "I'll have my Master's degree, so I'll make more money" and I know that is not the case at all with them because it is more about your experience and your attitude. Just your work ethic. But I would say I don't want to go too far, wait too long before I get my Masters. I have already started to look.

JJ: Would you get an MBA?

JO: Yes. I've looked into Nichols because they have on-line courses, which is nice, but I still like the classrooms.

JJ: Yes, I think you miss something in on-line classes. It's a nice feature for a class or two, but I don't think taking a complete degree on-line is beneficial. You need to learn how to communicate with people face-to-face in the business world.

JO: So I looked at Nichols, since I graduated from there, I know what they have to offer. So I would consider going with them-and would take night classes.

JJ: Is that the only school you're considering?

JO: No, I would definitely look into other colleges too, because it might be a different, because I did go there for 4 years-I may want to get a different approach.

JJ: Yeah. It is always a comfort to go back to where you were, but it's sometimes nice to challenge yourself. You talked a lot about your grandmother, so I know you're close to her. How has your grandmother and your family influenced you in your life?

JO: I would say they have had probably the biggest influence in my life. More my parents, I am extremely close with my mother's mother because she did-we spent a lot of time with her when we were younger.

JJ: What is her name?

JO: Josephine Soucy (maiden name was Bisi). She actually came from Connecticut. Her family came from Italy and they bought a farm in Glastonbury, Connecticut-she grew up there. She is a very hard worker-came from a hardworking family.

JJ: What kind of farm did they have?

JO: Cows-animals, they sold their livestock for milk. They made cheese-the farm was their income. She came to Massachusetts; she met her husband and left her family in Connecticut to move here with her husband. She made a big sacrifice to leave; she came from a big family of brothers and sisters.

JJ: They all had big families back then.

JO: I'm still extremely close with Josephine, my mother's mother. My father's mother too, she lives in Worcester but I'm more close to Josephine.

JJ: Did she teach you how to cook?

JO: Yes, she taught me how to cook, make the bed; she was very much into cooking-making things from scratch. Very thrifty too-never wasted anything. She saved everything. I'd say I could use this box for something. I think she has definitely taught me to be that way, to be frugal. Nowadays everything is so wasteful-everyone gets rid of everything-disposable. I know I'm only 23; I'd like to think I am a lot different from people my age because of the way I was brought up.

JJ: Sure, we are all influenced by people around us. I had a similar relationship with my grandmother-but mine rubbed off differently-she taught me how to spend. (laughter)

JO: Definitely, my mother's mother Josephine she is the saver and my father's mother is just the opposite-she gets rid of everything-she says, "What am I going to keep it for?" Same generation, but very different.

JJ: Usually when you come from the generation-the Depression-you are one extreme or the other.

JO: They both came from similar ethnic backgrounds-big Italian families. Josephine grew up on the farm and my other grandmother (Lucy), she grew up on Shrewsbury Street in Worcester, so, but my parents have definitely been the biggest.

JJ: So both your parents, as a role model, you would say, both your parents?

JO: Definitely, both my parents. I am extremely close with my mother. We have a lot of fun together. You know, she has definitely brought me up to have pretty high morals and standards with everything.

JJ: Is it just the person she is or is there a religious component to it?

JO: The person she is and yes, I am Catholic.

JJ: So you were brought up Catholic?

JO: Yes, I was brought up Catholic. I am still a practicing Catholic (chuckle). Yes there is a religious component, which I believe has helped me. My dad too, I am very close with. He was always just as involved, well not as involved as my mother, but always at my games.

JJ: So what kind of games did you play-sports?

JO: Field Hockey like in high school. When I was little, I danced for a long time. Both my parents attended my recitals. I've gone on vacation with just my dad to Florida.

JJ: What was down in Florida?

JO: It was actually my spring break and he asked me if I wanted to go to Florida together. He took care of me and I had a BLAST with him-so I am very close with both of my parents.

JJ: That's great.

JO: I still live at home.

JJ: Because it's nice there!

JO: It's nice! And my brother still lives at home and he will be 25. They are very good to us and both me and my brother like to think we are good kids.

JJ: Do you see yourself continuing to stay there through your Master's Degree before you move out? Or are you feeling itchy to get out?

JO: Well it's funny (chuckle) one of my friends just bought a house and she had mentioned to me "Do you want to move in with me" and I said "Well you know I'm not ready to do that yet". Only because I have been working full-time for just a year-so I still want to save more and I don't have any particular need to move out. Like there is nothing at home where I need to get out of there. But it does cross my mind, I do think about it. Just to have the freedom to live on your own. I know it wouldn't be easy because my mother still does my laundry, and

JJ: Laughter- And your grandmother cooks.

JO: Yeah. I do help at home a lot and stuff like that but it would definitely be difficult.

JJ: So what do you do at home to help-you help out with what?

JO: I mean, my mother still works about 32 hours a week, or whatever. My brother works and Dad works full-time. So I'll go home and start supper if I get home early enough. I do plenty of cleaning on a regular basis. I do give my parents some money every week-



not that I feel I have to-or they don't expect it-they didn't ask, but I feel it's the least I can do for them-as far as that goes. And my brother too, he gives them money as well.

JJ: So do you know how to do laundry?

JO: I do know how to do laundry, and I am a very good cook, umhh, but...

JJ: I remember my mother never taught me how to do laundry. When I left the house, I didn't know any of those basics things...cooking, she just never taught any of us kids how to do it. It is amazing how important those basic things are for survival when you go out on your own.

JO: Yes. I definitely know how to clean. My mother, I don't know if it's an Italian thing, like she goes crazy cleaning-and she expects us to continue the same. We have to take our shoes off, some of those things people...I will say, "Well, Yeah I started my fall cleaning or whatever" and they say, "You do cleaning?" And I say, "Yeah, I have to".

JJ: Well that's good.

JO: But I feel very lucky to have two parents that are very happily married, I still continue to be very close with my family. My aunts & my uncles. I am the only female in my family-I have all male cousins and they are all older than me. They are great, they are all like older brothers, very protective of me.

JJ: Do they all live in the Worcester area too?

JO: They all live primarily in Worcester; one lives towards the Cape, one lives towards Sturbridge, but they all live in Massachusetts pretty much. The only family I have some that live in California and Connecticut but pretty much everybody is in Massachusetts.

JJ: We are trying to cover some of the major issues that they covered at the First National Women's Rights Convention in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1850. So those are some of the things we are talking about, that were of interest to women back at that time, so it's like a correlation of what is happening today. So one of the other topics we have not discussed yet is health. Are there any concerns about health for you, the community, your family-any issues you see that you think are important to acknowledge?

JO: Yes. I think unfortunately now, especially now with kids, they are like obese. It kills me to see a young girl chubby or overweight because, when I was younger, I went through a chubby stage.

JJ: You're thin now.

JO: Yeah. I was chubby for a little while. Girls, kids can be so mean to one another too. That's what bothers me-sometimes I know that in some of the schools they have cut out physical education and stuff, and I think that is not right at all. I mean kids now, I know

it's a toss up, I know safety comes into play-I guess they can't go out and play in their neighborhoods-I don't know how safe they are anymore-but you know they are all on the computer, they have cell phones and I guess when I was younger, we were outside all four seasons. My dad would say, "Get outside". We were never sitting in front of, well yeah, we watched TV, but now they TiVo some of the things that are on the television too, it's too bad because kids are easily influenced, and when kids see stuff like that they think it is okay and acceptable. Umm.

JJ: What do you think about the young girls having plastic surgery to remove their weight?

JO: I think that's ridiculous. I think it is sad and I think a lot of it comes from how you're brought up at home. And, unfortunately, I know some kids don't have a parent or parents that can help them.

JJ: And also, you had mentioned school cutting back on outdoor activities.

JO: Kids need to be active; they need to be outdoors doing physical activities.

JJ: What do you think about the foods we eat today-how that influences it.

JO: Yeah. I'm definitely the kind of person that doesn't like to place the blame on everyone else-I think everyone is responsible enough to make their own decisions. But, I know that there is a lot of junk food out there that is definitely not healthy for them.

JJ: Well you said you were a little overweight when you were a kid. Was that a normal weight or did you feel you were not active enough for your age?

JO: No. I was active. I danced for like 12 years. I think I just went through a chubby stage. I'm sure I ate junk food that I wasn't supposed to, but, my mother, though, she didn't buy stuff.

JJ: So you just thinned out naturally as you aged?

JO: Yes. Believe me, my mother was in the dental field-so she did not buy gummy bears or stuff like that, so I don't know.

JJ: So there wasn't too much candy. I actually saw that my sister was like that as a child. When she was tiny and then when she turned between the ages of 9-12, she got really heavy.

JO: Yep.

JJ: She than naturally just thinned out after.

JO: Yes. That was really me too. Both me and my brother. fifth, sixth and seventh grade like, 3-4 years, where we got chubby. I always had great friends. I still have the same friends I went to elementary school with. One of my friends Katie, I've know for my entire life.

JJ: It's great to have relationships like that.

JO: Yep. In high school-I still have the same friends-I'll introduce my friends as we went to elementary or high school together and people will say "Did you go to school with her" you know, they make a joke out of it. But, I wouldn't change it any other way.

JJ: So all your friends that you went to school with that you stay in touch with, they still live in the area?

JO: Yeah. They still live in the area. All pretty much in Worcester.

JJ: What do you think made that group of people want to stay in the area? Because a lot of people will leave where they grew up and relocate.

JO: A lot of them ...their families were from Worcester. A lot of them went to college. Worcester State, Assumption, Holy Cross, all very successful girls. A couple of them are teachers, one is in medical school, one works for a big insurance company.

JJ: So did they have a very supportive home life?

JO: Yep. All of them came from two-parent homes and grew up in smaller neighborhoods and are all very successful. Now they still live in Worcester, some still live with their parents-most of them still live with their parents. So, people will talk about Worcester, they will say negative things, but I grew up here, my family came from here, and I know that my parents are very successful, all my friends are very successful. It doesn't always have to be where you came from, it's what you make of it, you know what I mean? If you work hard, if you want to be successful, you know you are going to work hard for it.

JJ: There are a lot of really great colleges in the area.

JO: Yeah.

JJ: So you really value your relationship with you girlfriends?

JO: Yes-absolutely. We have girl nights all the time (chuckle). We all know each other's families really well too. So I can't complain about that. I mean I met people in college too but I'm definitely extremely close with my friends.

JJ: So that's really the only health issue you think about?

JO: Yes, you know you really worry about breast cancer too.

JJ: Is there any kind of family history?

JO: I don't have any family history, but I do know people that have had to struggle with it. There is a girl I just found out who is a very, very young-a girl who is just 26 has been diagnosed with breast cancer.

JJ: Is that a friend of yours?

JO: A mutual friend. It's unfortunate.

JJ: It is, it is very young.

JO: It's scary you know, women's health issues, there is so much that you could have-that you might not know about. I guess you just have to take care of yourself the best that you can, physically, emotionally, mentally-everything. I know that mentally can have its wear and tear on you too-and that's not good.

JJ: Have you see that first hand or through friends?

JO: Through friends and yeah, my grandmother that I am extremely close with, she had started to go through panic attacks-anxiety. She was like in her 80's and just all of a sudden she couldn't deal with certain things.

JJ: Was this after an event – did something trigger it?

JO: Yeah. I think so. She, my grandmother, her son that is 60 years old-still lives at home with her. She is 83 years old, and she still pretty much takes care of him. It is very frustrating and about 3-4 years ago, we found out that she signed everything over to him pretty much. So it had a very bad effect on the family.

JJ: Her anxiety was from that?

JO: Her anxiety WAS from THAT. She is a very, very trusting person-and she trusts him and I think probably she didn't know what to do and the anxiety probably brought about the decisions she was making.

JJ: Why do you think he made that decision to do that?

JO: Ummh. I don't know.

JJ: He hasn't talked about it at all?

JO: You know, it's been definitely a family hot topic issue.

JJ: Well is she safe still in her home?

JO: Yes. She is very safe. I guess maybe from his standpoint, he was never married, he doesn't have a family, and she is the only thing he has. They are very close, the two of them, so I think maybe he got a little scared of what was going to happen to him maybe.

JJ: When she passes away?

JO: Right. Right.

JJ: That's understandable. So anxiety has been in the family.

JO: Yes. I think a lot of people now too, anxiety.

JJ: Stress

JO: YES! Stress is just (sigh). Especially now, I mean so many people work themselves to death. I know I work crazy too, but I don't ever want it to be the death of me or to really get extremely overwhelmed where I just can't handle it, because, I don't know, I just think there are things more important in life besides making yourself crazy like that. I mean of course your work is important, it is the majority of your, not your life, but I don't know, I think sometimes people need to take a step back and take your time a little bit more with things because I know what stress can do to people. I know what stress can do to people.

JJ: It's true; I don't think people can see it eating away at them. They don't realize. It's definitely a work-life balance.

JO: Yep. I mean I'm sure everyone is at fault for it-nobody is perfect. Everyone has their own things that they try to work on as people in general. I guess it is just a continuous thing, you know, you're just trying to be a good person. Things that matter to you the most. For me it would be definitely my family, my friends and my career too is definitely important too. You know I want to be, I'm not afraid to say, "I want to be successful" and make money and you know.

JJ: There are different components to success. One of the last topics I wanted to cover with you if you have time is community/volunteer or political involvement. Where are you in this area?

JO: As far as the Community involvements, I try to do races-running. I've done some for the Special Olympics, Fire Fighters Fund in Worcester. The six fire fighters who died in the Worcester fire-they do an annual run event every year. I try to do that.

JJ: I think they passed away in December-so when do you participate in the run?

JO: They do the run in March/April. It starts on Pleasant Street and goes around to Park Ave.

JJ: So you do the running-and what makes you choose these groups that you volunteer for?

JO: With the Special Olympics in particular, I like the organization. I think it is a good cause. I guess I have a special place in my heart for the special needs kids too-because the high school I went to, we were the special needs kids too. Some of the classes we had with them, like a computer class, and I just always. I don't know, something about them. I volunteered in high school too, at Worcester State College, they would always have a craft fair for them. And I think they are just so sweet and innocent. If a little bit I can do can help-I would do that. And there is a place called Nazareth Home in Leicester, and it's an orphanage for young boys-and I think the Catholic Church runs it-and my mother's father had started going there-and I just go up and bring them some clothes-my mother will bring them toothbrushes and toothpaste.

JJ: I've never heard of them.

JO: Yeah. It's a, they probably have only 20 boys there-it's a small group

JJ: Boys of all ages?

JO: I think probably no older than teenagers.

JJ: Interesting. So you bring stuff up there.

JO: Yes. They appreciate it sooo much. Just little things like that. I love animals too. I had volunteered with Pet Rock Festival, they put it on every year. It is a fun event. I am open-if someone comes to me with something-I am open to getting involved-dependending on what it is. I'm not going to do everything.

JJ: You're a philanthropist. But you love to run in addition to taking part in involvement with the charity. When did you start running?

JO: Fairly recently.

JJ: As a young adult then.

JO: Yes. Definitely after college. I didn't do any of it in college. Probably in the last 2 years.

JJ: So what made you decide to run?

JO: I don't know-I guess a friend of mine had done the races-and he said, "Why don't you just come?" So I had done a run. Tim Murray had a run, so I ran it with him too. So

for my own physical desire, and it makes you want to do it more when there is a cause. You feel like you're contributing, being a part of something.

JJ: You work out too?

JO: Yeah. I go to a gym-Baystate Gym in Worcester at least 4 times a week, as much as I can.

JJ: That's great.

JO: My gym was mostly a male gym, lifting weights, and they opened up a women's side recently. When I used to go before, I would just use the treadmill and you know you don't feel super comfortable but I would go anyway because it didn't bother me.

JJ: What are your interests on politics? What's happening today, what do you think about the Republicans in the House and in the nation in addition to Massachusetts?

JO: Ummm. I try to follow the local, I mean state politics and everything. I think probably how I believe politics-wise is my parents influence on me. I definitely have my own opinions on politics. I mean I'm more on the conservative side, but I look at each politician delegate, just to see what they have-what they're going to do.

JJ: So their issues are important to you, not just their party?

JO: Yeah. I feel like I have to consider how they believe and what they are going to do-how is it going to affect me? I try to look at it at that standpoint. You know again, I am young, so ..

JJ: Are you a registered voter?

JO: Yes. I just voted.

JO: You know, I think now in the world, in the war in Iraq and everything, I do think that we should have been there.

JJ: You think we should have been there? Why?

JO: I just think that if we hadn't gone in and stepped in to their government, I think things would have been worse. You know, I don't think anyone is for war-nobody wants to go to war. But I think there are times where you do have to step in and help a country, help people that are within the country.

JJ: Why do you believe we went to Iraq? Why the United States went to Iraq? What the benefit was.

JO: Umm. I do believe we had to go. As the President, I trust his judgement, I think that sometimes the public, I think we don't need to know as much information, not as we should, but they know more the government. It's a touchy subject I guess.

JJ: So, you trust his (President Bush's) decisions?

JO: You know, I trust him, I respect him- I would never.

JJ: And that is George W. Bush you mean?

JO: Yes, I respect President Bush, I would never badmouth any president. You know, I have my own beliefs in political parties. Again, for the most part, I .. politics is tough because no matter who it is, Republican or Democrat, sometimes, I don't know, who do you believe? So I really try to think about myself as a citizen of the United States, how is it going to affect me-my family,businesses.

JJ: So do you think by going to Iraq, the United States is safer and that we actually helped another country?

JO: I think the United States is safer.

JJ: From ???

JO: From four years ago.

JJ: From terrorism?

JO: Yeah. I mean I think it's terrorism, unfortunately, it's scary, but I mean I'm not going to-it's not going to deter me from being afraid to travel or you know meet people from other, I'm all about giving somebody a chance. If you're willing to work hard and you know, work just as hard as I do, then I think that that's fair.

JJ: What do you think about the newly elected first black man as Governor of Massachusetts? Do you think that he will work hard for Massachusetts?

JO: I hope so (chuckle).

JJ: You mean Duval Patrick?

JO: Yeah. We'll see what he can do. I guess to look ahead in the future. I guess his decisions, his changes will affect me. So I guess it's something to see what happens.

JJ: Thank you. Is there anything I missed that you wanted to mention?

JO: No I mean. I think that in general, I don't know why I keep going back to my family, but it's like I feel like the person I am today is, a lot of it has to be how I was brought up by my parents and all so I do take credit for my decisions that I have made on my own-



not necessarily my parents decisions. But they definitely guided me I think in a good direction.

JJ: Do you think that they gave you the confidence to go out and deal with peer pressure so that you could make your own decisions?

JO: Absolutely. I think that they have trusted me and you hear the news, you hear the stuff that goes on with young girls, getting in a very unfortunate situation. Whether it's getting wrapped up in a bad relationships, or really bad situations ..

JJ: Like pregnancy?

JO: Right, pregnancy, disease, all kinds of things. It's scary, very scary for females I think-they have to be so careful what they say, what they do, their reputation, but for me I take it as I'm going to prove you wrong, and I'm going to be better than that, I'm going to work harder. I don't let it bring me down or think "Well they'll just assume I'll do this or say that, ".

JJ: Society you mean?

JO: Yes, society. I don't want to be stereotyped any certain way. Whether it is good or bad! You know what I mean-I'm going to do things because I think they're right, and I believe in them. I think a lot of it is how much you want, you know, how much you want yourself to progress, move up in business. Business in general is very competitive, I know women don't get paid as much as male executives-still. And I don't, that doesn't bother me, not that it doesn't bother me, again, I will work just as hard as a guy will.

JJ: Do you think, is it okay, if you're doing the same job as a man and he is getting paid more than you?

JO: No, I don't think it's right.

JJ: Do you believe it happens?

JO: Oh yeah. I'm sure it happens. I don't know what, I guess I do know why. You just have to-you can't let negative things or influences bring you down. I mean I look at it differently than some women may.

JJ: You're going to just be successful no matter what?

JO: No matter what. No matter whether male or female-I want to do it for myself. I don't want to do it for the wrong reason. It makes it probably more difficult, but.

JJ: I actually sat in on a seminar the other day though, where the speaker said the minimal amount if you worked the same position as someone else, through your lifetime, I think it was 20 years. The other person, the man, would make \$700,000 (seven hundred thousand

dollars) more than you in the same position over 20 year period. In a lifetime or with a higher degree level-it would be 1.2 million. Does that bother you?

JO: (Laughter) -It bothers.

JJ: When you think about the dollar amount.

JO: Yes-the dollar amount. I don't know, I think that it's going to change. I am hopeful for the future for women that are in business and that are in top management position.

JJ: In any position.

JO: Yes, any position.

JJ: It doesn't matter what level of work you're in-if a man and woman are performing the same job-the level of pay should be equal.

JO: Yes, it doesn't need to be an executive or anything like that. I think things will start to turn around.

JJ: I agree. Thanks, Julie. I just wanted to ask you for your consent both verbally and in writing. This is a consent form that I need you to sign that says you agree to the recording, and that we can use the recording for the Worcester Women's History Project and that you are giving the recording to them. Please fill those out.

JO: Yep.

JJ: Thank you so much.

JO: Thank you.