

IVY: Right before our agenda item to get funded by, I mean, I don't know, \$10,000 to \$12,000 budget or something. And it also paid the center, the College of Liberal Arts, Arts and Humanities at the time. Because Dean Hain had to release me from full time teaching and he was gracious enough. Paul Hain was the dean that hired me and Kelly and we still love him. He's just great. And he allowed me to have it a half time administrative appointment, which was not what I was hard to do. So that that was a big deal. But right before us on the Board of Regents agenda was a ginormous amount of money, \$50,000, \$60,000 or something to redo the polo fields at A&M College Station. And then we were the next item on the agenda. And one of the gentlemen, board of regions raised his hand and started to balk. And Irma Rangel said, you just funded \$50,000 for polo fields at College Station. And you're not going to give \$12,000 to start a women's center. And that shut that up. And we got funded. It's a good story. Sorry. That is a good story.

WILLIAMSON: Yeah. Those are the kinds of things I'm hoping to.

IVY: Yeah. You can only hear from somebody who is there.

WILLIAMSON: Yes. Yeah. Good. Okay. So my next question is, you know, just kind of similar to that. I'm just kind of, can you talk about the committee developing the proposal? You know, what originally prompted the idea for the women's center?

IVY: Mary Wagenshein, Dr. Wagenshein in sociology, the former dean really spearheaded it. She understood the importance of underrepresented groups because, you know, her sociological background. And she had enough clout as a dean. And she could be very persuasive and very stern. And she was the force behind getting it. I'm not, I would not have had that kind of power or credibility because I was too new here. And I was in my 30s. I think I turned 40 the first year out of here. So Dean Wagenshein started all on and had a way of kind of just cajoling people into you need to be on this committee and we're going to try to do a task force. And because it was also women's center, a lot of folks were going to turn that down. You know, how politically poor would that have been for them to do that? And a female dean is asking them. So we credit her launching everything and having the clout and the relationships to do it. She, she, she was a key person. I was the second director. She was the first. So I ran things differently because my personality was different from her. But boy was she a pioneer.

WILLIAMSON: Okay. Can you talk about some of the goals and the issues that the center was expecting to address.

IVY: We, we also wanted, we wanted a position in that new building in the university center. And we wanted people to know we existed and we wanted to get support. Just in terms of people knowing who we were and coming to our stuff and, and agreeing to speak or, you know, Lynn there. Expertise and. We wanted as much involvement as possible. We also knew that the women's center would be on the chopping block for a whole bunch of people. That they would think we were tokenizing, even though we were 65% female student body. So we knew where to

be really, really careful, but we also had to have a big push and be seen. And so that's where Provost Sandra Harper was very key to, to all of that and to really kind of put us on the map. So we just threw ourselves into it with programming and, and, you know, we didn't have social media then. You know, we didn't have a website. So a lot of flyers went up across campus and probably a lot of emails. And we just tried to make our presence known and we were always battling being a safe space and welcoming space for men. And then we didn't talk about non binary or trans or other folks. We were just dealing with the male female situation. So part of the goal was just to keep the women's inner open and keep its services going and to become more known and to have more people involved in the leadership of it. The, just the participation just come into our events. We made a big push for Women's History Month. I'm not sure that they had one or there was not a central organization running Women's History Month. And that we thought that targeting March and Women's History Month and having as much program as we could jam into that three weeks because one, one week is spring break. That would, that was a huge goal. That was probably our biggest. External event or the way that we were. Well, it was internal to, but it was, it started building an image for us and what it was that we did. And we tried to be welcoming to men, but not pandering because it was very clear. This was about women's issues, women's communication, the importance of women to this campus and to the community. We also had a big goal to extend into the community and connect. Not just in terms of fundraising or scholarships for all of that. You hope that that comes too, but we wanted women in the community like Karen Urban. You know, I can name a bunch of names. Mary Rhodes was, was mayor at the time. You know, we wanted a presence in the, in the community and in the city. So we had a lot of goals, mostly keep fun in our jobs and funding our events, you know, and, and keep the communication going across the board and to get a board involvement and. A huge goal was to reach the students and that was always a challenge. You know, because here we are a bunch of, you know, professionals, faculty and staff and we're trying to do programming that attracts a 20 something female student on this campus. How do you do that? You know, and so that way a lot of those kind of goals just in the early startup days too. Then later on it became, you know, keeping it going. I mean, I think there's excitement at the beginning and your novelty, you know, and then the keeping it going all the way as you have found maybe to 2012 if that's when I went down. I remember going to the, a dean of students meeting and some faculty were on this group. And they were asking a lot about the women's center because it was just about to go down. It was just about to be. Unfunded and going away and I made a very strong as much as I could last pitch to that group for how important the center was and to keep it going. I was not successful. None of this war. So it was sad to see it go down. But, you know, also, son of the times. You know, things were changing in the culture. Things were changing on campus faster than you could blink