

Transcription of Pat Singleton-Young- Interview 6/6/16 at 10am in TV Studio – Coastal Carolina University

Introduction by Tomczyk

Hello, I'm Charmaine Tomczyk, director of the Coastal Carolina University history Project which includes interviewing individuals who have made significant contributions to the development and growth of the university.

Today it is my pleasure to interview Patricia Singleton-Young who has been a part of CCU since the 1970s. She graduated from USC-Coastal Carolina College, earned her master's degree then started her career here in 1979.

Pat is currently the director of multicultural student services. Her office offers social and cultural development opportunities for students, faculty, staff and the community through a variety of programming and student involvement. Previously she held other CCU positions of Director of Orientation, Director of Residence Life, Director of Counseling and Health Services and Director of Student Activities. In addition, she has also served as advisor to several student organizations at Coastal.

She held the first membership chair of the CCU Alumni Association when it was founded in 1976. While she has won many awards herself, many honors have been established in her name. An annual scholarship has been established in her name, the Pat Singleton-Young-Young Student Leadership Annual Scholarship, which is given to CCU students participating in on-campus multicultural programs and activities. Also each year the Patricia Singleton-Young-Student Advocate Award is given to a CCU employee who demonstrates extraordinary support to CCU students. Pat has served on literally hundreds of committees and task forces during her more than 30 years at Coastal. I'm privileged to spend time with her today and learn more about her Coastal career.

Interview

Tomczyk: Hi, Pat. Thank you so much for meeting with me today. I really appreciate your time and your willingness to talk about Coastal Carolina and your contributions here. You started at Coastal as a student I believe. What attracted you to Coastal as a student first and then as a career.

Singleton-Young: It's a long story but I'll try to make it short. I wanted to go to college. Didn't know how I would go to college. Didn't have the financial resources to go to college. Well, my father knew the Kimbels. Kimbel Library yes, the Kimbel gymnasium etc. He had a conversation with Mr. Kimbel about his daughter wanting to go to college. He then connected my father with his executive assistant who then met with me and took me through the process, helped me fill out financial aid forms, etc. then introduced me to Larry Biddle and Larry of course gave me a job in the office. So that's how I got to Coastal. A lot of people don't realize that the Kimbels were involved in getting me here.

Tomczyk: I certainly did not know that. Now the Kimbels owned Wachesaw Plantation and a lot of land down in Georgetown and were responsible for [around] Brookgreen Gardens and a lot of the land down there.

Singleton-Young: That is correct.

Tomczyk: Originally from New York I think they were.

Singleton-Young: I'm not sure.

Tomczyk: How wonderful you had that connection because you were from Georgetown is that right?

Singleton-Young: I was from Murrells Inlet in Georgetown County. And they lived probably less than five miles from where we were. But it was like day and night. They were living in a nice plantation home and of course we lived on the other side of the tracks as it were.

Tomczyk: They were always a very philanthropic family.

Singleton-Young: Yes, they were. . Very, very much so.

Tomczyk: I'm glad you were a recipient of that philanthropy in a way.

Singleton-Young: Yes, in a way, I got all the time and the guidance and the assistance that I needed to get to Coastal. Then I graduated four years later and then was here and they created a graduate assistantship. I had been very very involved on campus so they offered me the assistantship.

Tomczyk: When you say you were involved on campus, Pat, what sorts of things were you involved in because I'm imaging knowing your career in student affairs afterwards what kinds of things really attracted to you as a student when you were here that obviously contributed to your career later.

Singleton-Young: I was very very involved in student government. I was vice president and ran for President but there were some complications. So I was not able to hold the position as President. To be honest with you, I'll tell you. Ron Lackey came in and said "you graduated; even if you are in graduate school you cannot be president of this student government association." We tested the waters. Back then we just said "let's try. There was nothing in the constitution that said you can't do this. So there was this little coup if you will.

Tomczyk: And Ron Lackey was the counselor at that time?

Singleton-Young: He came in as the Dean of Students. Yes, vice president of student affairs, Dean of Students.

Tomczyk: He subsequently taught Philosophy of course and then this is where the Ron Lackey award for service comes from later on. So you really connected with a lot of the movers and shakers on campus before you became one yourself.

Singleton-Young: Yes yes yes.

Tomczyk: So you were VP of the student government association.

Singleton-Young: I wrote for the newspaper, the Chanticleer; Um...Wow, was involved in creating the African American Student Association, was a part of a local sorority. (7:00)

Tomczyk: Which one was that, do you recall?

Singleton-Young: I can't remember the name. It was local therefore we created, the group made up letters in hopes that at some point some national organization might be interested in us. We were just too small. The university was not ready at the time for more sororities.

Tomczyk: There was maybe 1500 students or 2000 students on campus at that time?

Singleton-Young: No, ma'am.

Tomczyk: Not even?

Singleton-Young: Not even, maybe 800

Tomczyk: Well. Numbers alone then you probably could apply for a national chapter.

Singleton-Young: Correct.

Tomczyk: Still, so you made your own.

Singleton-Young: We made our own. Also there was the complication of our being a part of the University of South Carolina so it just wouldn't have worked. It was like I said I was very involved, got the graduate assistantship; did that for a year.

Tomczyk: What did that entail Pat?

Singleton-Young: I worked in financial aid and I worked in career services. So I learned a lot about federal government and Pell grants and scholarship money, etc. and then I worked with the career counseling area, helping students decide what they wanted to do with their lives when they graduated.

Tomczyk: I was reading a early newsletter recently this was in the early 70s. where Career Services was doing mock interviews for students to help them get jobs.

Singleton-Young: That' is correct I was involved with the coordinator at the time in setting up and scheduling the interviews for the students.

Tomczyk: That was very progressive for the time. We think of that as something new. But I was surprised to see we were right there early on.

Singleton-Young: So after that assistantship, I was working on my master's degree of course. All of a sudden there was this position. They needed a n assistant director for student activities. And there I get the job in 1979.

Tomczyk Full time?

Singleton-Young: full time, benefits, the whole works.

Tomczyk: Was this the first position of that type on campus?

Singleton-Young: No, there was already a Director and this person was too busy so many things going on and at the time Dr. Bob Squatriglia realized we need help and again He saw me on the daily basis , involved and so I got the job as the first assistant student director of student activities.

Tomczyk: Wonderful. And then what did that entail because you had a director you reported to.

Singleton-Young: That entailed working with the student newspaper, working and the yearbook, working with student government. Very shortly after I just got there, the director decides to leave. So within a year of my being hired, all of a sudden I'm director of student activities.

Tomczyk: A promotion so soon.

Singleton-Young: So soon.

Tomczyk: Great!

Singleton-Young: Yes. At the time we were involved in of course opening up the new student center

Tomczyk: This would have been the mid-80s?

Singleton-Young: This was 1979 when we moved into the building. I think the dedication and everything came later in 1979. I don't know what happened to that plaque but it used to be in the old part of the student union now.

Tomczyk: The plaque was the dedication with the date?

Singleton-Young: Yes.

Tomczyk: So when you took this job than as director were you the one that then hired an assistant director since that position was open or did it all go to you.

Singleton-Young: It all went to me. In addition to doing the groups, SGA, the newspaper, the yearbook, student government, I also was responsible for the building itself.

Tomczyk: How do you mean?

Singleton-Young: Someone has to oversee the building: reservations, food in it, making sure that the janitors are doing exactly what they are supposed to do as far as cleaning, reserving space. Literally, I still do it today. Whatever building I'm in I tend to walk around and I go "You are no longer in charge" You know there are little things you see that should be done. Then I'll go "Oops, You are not the director of this building anymore".

Tomczyk: But that is so important for buildings that are used so frequently, like the student center. Almost 24/7 though it wasn't at the time You had to open and close late at night.

Singleton-Young: Yes, we did. We had a game room. everyone was saying "you had a game room back then" Yeah, Nothing like what we have now., but you know a couple of pool tables and place with a TV for students to watch TV and a card tables for those who liked to play cards.

Tomczyk: You understood the needs of the students. And at that time we were still a commuter campus somewhat?

Singleton-Young: Yes, we didn't get residence halls until mid-80s I think 1987.

Tomczyk: So the students were on campus and in between classes they needed things g to do and this was a great place to go.

Singleton-Young: Yes it was.

Tomczyk: So campus was a small campus at that time. What do recall about working in that division in the beginning. I know you said a few things already. But what things did you implement then that might have changed or just went away over the years?

Singleton-Young: I can't think of anything that went away, but things that grew – if I might? Financial aid. Us getting more federal funding, creating a counseling center, expanding career services, the student Activities office expanding even more with more and more clubs. Student organizations that wanted to become a club at the time. I can remember getting up to 50 clubs and everybody was going, especially, the people at USC saying "You have how many clubs down there at Coastal? You have about 50?" At the time that was just amazing

Tomczyk: Because it required the student to take the initiative. You needed at least 10 students to make a club. They needed an advisor so they had to find someone on campus, and employee who would advise them. So 50 clubs

Singleton-Young: And we had faculty and staff who were willing to support them. Honor societies started springing up. ODK of course which you were involved was one of the earlier ones.

Tomczyk: Now these were national honor societies; chapters affiliated with the national organizations.

Singleton-Young: Correct. I remember the history department creating theirs. It just kept growing and growing.

Tomczyk: So your responsibilities and roles in student development obviously expanded over the years just like the enrollment did. . . Can you describe how your early work with minority students and now as Director of Multicultural student developed over those years?

Singleton-Young: It was easy back then to get the minority students involved because at the time of course I was director of student activities I was coordinator of multi-cultural relations, I was director of orientation. So the minority students saw me involved. I was constantly doing things. It was easy. They followed me. They were very very much involved in activities, etc. The first time I can I remember looking at demographics we were at about 4 percent minority students. At that time of course international students were not included in that mix. So we were looking at 4% We were looking at 4% which was not very good and for many many years were hovered about 4% to 8%

Tomczyk: And when you say *not very good* you mean in relation to the local population.

Singleton-Young: Correct. Also being compared to other state institutions. So over the years it has really grown. I think today we are at 25%. Of the 25 I think 19% are African American, then the other 6% are Hispanic, Asian and of course two or more races – students now categorize themselves as two or more races - so think 4% to 25.

Tomczyk: It is a phenomenal expansion. and that cannot be attributed only to the general enrollment increase it really has a lot to do with attracting students who are largely low income and making them aware, as you were able to do, of the financial aid opportunities and the social interaction they can have on campus not just the academic

Singleton-Young: that's correct. There was, not necessarily a campaign but more and more students were interested in Greek life. But not your traditional Greek Life, they were interested in the national Panhellenic Greeks. Those are your historically African American Greek groups. I spend a lot of time and energy working with local chapters to bring chapters here to Coastal. That attracted more minority students. I don't have the stats to prove it, but you could see the increase as we continued to grow. I was responsible for creating this brochure, if you will, which highlighted all of the opportunities available for minority students and bold and center you saw the Greeks. That publication finally went on the road – we call it “on the road” for recruitment. It went with admissions. That brochure is still produced today and goes out with admissions and that attracted more students to Coastal.

Tomczyk: When you say you brought Panhellenic to campus do you mean speakers, people would speak about it or actually chapters would be here.

Singleton-Young: The actual chapter, the local chapter would actually contact my office or I would contact them and I'd say we have an interest what can we do ask how we make this happen. For example Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Inc.

Tomczyk: which is huge on campus

Singleton-Young: Yes, and I am currently a member. They were very interested in being here at coastal. So I worked with the local graduate chapter who worked with their national office, planning, producing, turning in reports, etc. and of course a letter from the President at the time saying the university welcomes Greek Life and we will be here to support Greek Life and your organization in any way possible."

Tomczyk: And these are the kinds of requirements needed to get a chapter here. It's not just a phone call and you want to be a part and you pay membership and you're there. You really need to make the case that it will live here and thrive here.

Singleton-Young: That is correct because the national office had requirements in order for it to exist and we spend years trying to make it happen. I did the same thing with the Deltas and the Alphas; all those historically African American groups.

Tomczyk: We know now that all those groups do wonderful service work on campus and in the community.

Singleton-Young: That is correct. Most of the groups are founded on giving back to the community service to all mankind.

Tomczyk: You've invested a lot of time in multicultural services and you've seen it grow. What do you envision, Pat, for the future of multicultural services on campus.

Singleton-Young: It had the potential to just be amazing. Currently we need resources; human resources as well as funding. I believe the increase in staff can really enhance what we currently have and broaden the scope of what we do. In the past couple of years, it's not just African Americans, It's not just Hispanic groups, it's working with international office on certain programs. . It's LGTBQ. We do diversity training, we do Safe Zone training. So we're doing all of this but we can do so much more. I think the future will see all of these things continue to grow and provide opportunities to create and organize all these different groups. And really educate. We are all about education, right? That's why we are here to educate students about differences and about inclusion. The Coastal student is interesting today. There are times when you wonder if they really care about what is happening in the world. If they truly understand what social justice is. I see the office doing tons of programs centered around these areas to make our students more aware.

Tomczyk: While you were talking about that I envision students walking around campus with their iPhones and texting away and not looking up and seemingly disconnected. Do you think they are connected, that they have that interest in differences; cultural differences

Singleton-Young: I think they are too caught up in the instant gratification— as like you said – the cell phones, the music, the selfies, tweeting, the snap chat – what’s happening with your friend here. I think they are so consumed with all of that they are not necessarily aware of what is going on in the world. I think it’s our responsibility to provide those opportunities to teach.

Tomczyk: And that’s really what your area does the service and interaction that your office provides to students.

Singleton-Young: Correct.

Tomczyk: Well I have some final questions for you. I ask these questions of all I interview and they are general ones. What do you see as the biggest change in Coastal since you came on campus?

Singleton-Young: Of course it has to be growth in numbers and services, etc. That’s been a huge change. I think another change is, sometimes information does not trickle down. if you understand what I’m saying. Back then it seemed like everybody – of course you knew everybody – and everybody served on the same committees. So everybody was involved in that decision making if you will. I think today there is less than that. And I suspect it’s because we’ve gotten larger. I’m not so sure that it’s good but I guess that comes with growth.

Tomczyk: That is a major change and it brings with it its challenges. And that’s really my next question. What are the challenges you think Coastal as it moves into the future?

Singleton-Young: I really think there is going to be issues with athletics. It sounds strange but I am of the opinion that this move to the Sunbelt conference is going to be more difficult than people think it’s going to be. I don’t think we are going to get the State funding that we need. Dr. DeCenzo is already working with the Commission on Higher Education and the House and the Senate about expanding the football field and I think that’s going to continue. This move is not going to be as easy as some people think it’s going to be.

Tomczyk: Do you think that just the athletic challenge or are you saying as Coastal grows that interaction with the community and with government regulation, legislation, athletic conference requirements are going to be a challenge for us?

Singleton-Young: I think so. I think historically it’s always been a challenge.

Tomczyk: We’ve always had that challenge, haven’t we?

Singleton-Young: And I think it’s going to continue. I think another challenge we are going to have is bringing in academically qualified instructors, professors. . I think we bring in people who have PhD. Wonderful - you’re just coming out from your PhD. you know your subject but

you don't know how to make sure that students are learning. Are you able to teach and to make sure that your students are comprehending what you're giving them? It's been my experience with feedback from students over the years that it used to be a problem and it still is a problem. I applaud the University for creating CeTEAL.

Tomczyk: The Center for Effective Teaching and Learning.

Singleton-Young: Exactly. And the fact they are providing workshops to help new instructors learn how to teach how to convey that knowledge for students to learn.

Tomczyk: It's not mandatory. You self-identify. If a faculty member wishes to improve their teaching they have that resource they can go to. But there is no requirement, that says now you have your Ph.D., you know your subject area, *let's teach you some teaching methods and skills*.

Singleton-Young: You are correct. It is not mandatory. I hope in the future they will make it mandatory.

Tomczyk: For everyone's benefit.

Singleton-Young: For everyone's benefit. We can't just assume that because you have completed your doctorate that you know how to impart knowledge to make sure that the students learn.... A former employer who was my supervisor, we talked about retention. Her thing was an it continues to be so real. Learning is the key – not just teaching but learning. If the students are not learning then your teaching is ineffective.

Tomczyk: And learning to learn

Singleton-Young: And Learning to learn. Correct.

Tomczyk: So what do you think is the most significant event at coastal that changed you or had had an effect on you during your time here. Three decades plus a lot of events that happened on campus. If you could pick one or maybe two that really affected you.

Singleton-Young: How about two? The thing that really impacted me was when the Student Government Association decided to name an award after me. They saw me as a student advocate. So every year now an award is given to a faculty member who the students deem an advocate. It's the Pat Singleton-Young Student Advocate Award.

Tomczyk: How wonderful and that blends so nicely into your own values of learning at Coastal. Perfect.

Singleton-Young: And the other would have to be when some former Leadership Challenge students decided that they wanted to create a scholarship. So there is a scholarship out there in my name. That is just wonderful. That has had an amazing effect on me. That says to me to continue to do what I'm doing. And obviously it is impacting students. Those are two things that affected me personally over the past 30 years.

Tomczyk: And both of those things that also have possible affected the faculty and staff at Coastal as well. As you think about your time at Coastal Pat are there any specific events here or impression you wish to recount, or specific memoirs or impressions you wish to share, in conclusion.

Singleton-Young: I would have to say the fight for independence, if you will. When Coastal decided we are truly not getting any benefits by being a member of the University of South Carolina so we need to cut the cord and become our own University. I remember the day when Governor Campbell on the steps of the Singleton building came and signed the document making us an official university. I was so pleased that day. There were so many nay-sayers. You were here too when all of that was going on. Look at us now.

Tomczyk: There was a lot of controversy that said should we really separate? We are so little but others saw the potential of our growth. We don't want to be held back. We can do it.

Singleton-Young: We cut the cord and we never looked back. I'm very very happy that I was a part of it and continue to be a part of it. Something else that was really amazing for me. I am a sports fan. And that has to be when we were sitting in the rain at the first football game. I sat there saying "Oh my goodness I'm sitting at football game - a Coastal Carolina University football game." It was just amazing. This makes us a college in a sense. Of course we had basketball and baseball but there was something about that stadium. I remember sitting there in the rain and thinking this is really happening, I'm really a part of this.

Tomczyk: The seats were full, weren't they? I was not there that day but I heard it was packed. The enthusiasm was electrifying and contagious.

Singleton-Young: Yes it was - yes it was - rain and all

Tomczyk: That made more student involvement, not just on the field, cheerleaders, band

Singleton-Young: My son, Ryan, he was involved in the band in its early days. It was just wonderful. As you said Dancers, cheerleaders marching band, drum lines, all of that and you're sitting there thinking Wow. This is happening. And of course what happened last week.

Tomczyk: The World Series championship for baseball.

Singleton-Young: I watched the entire series and I'm not a baseball fan. But I watched the entire series because it were our students.

Tomczyk: You remember on the newscast – I watched it too and I'm not an athletic fan, but something captivated me with that team. The students were so connected as a team. That is so characteristic of Coastal, don't you think?

Singleton-Young: It is -- very very connected and Gary Gilmore has done an unbelievable job. And you can tell it. There are some of my students who were former students who played

baseball and they are always talking about Coach. Gilmore. It's Coastal. We made those connections. The students connect. They leave and they remember Coastal.

Tomczyk: Coach Gilmore had small beginnings on this campus. I know during the broadcast on ESPN they told the story of his trailer when he came here and had a little trailer as his office.

Singleton-Young: Yes, I don't remember seeing the trailer because again I wasn't a baseball fan but I've heard about the trailer. He's come a long way.

Tomczyk: As you have, Ms. Pat. I want to thank you again for talking with me today about your experiences and your contributions to Coastal because I truly believe that Coastal would not be the great place it is today if you were not here and contributed to it and its students.

Singleton-Young: Thank you very very much, Charmaine. Thank you.