

Interview with Marcey McCardell

Northern Michigan University Student

Marquette, Michigan

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START OF INTERVIEW

Robert Hendrickson (RH): This is an interview with Marcey McCardell a junior at Northern Michigan University conducted by Robert Hendrickson for Dr. Russ Magnaghi it is basically student impressions of Northern. Marcey having been a junior here, you've been here for a few years, you're a non-traditional student commuting all the time. What kind of changes have you noticed over the last three years, and just things to do for commuter students versus on campus? Anything that you noticed that have been changing for commuter students over the last few years?

Marcey McCardell (MM): Well, let me think. As far as changes for commuter students I haven't noticed a whole lot except for some of the parking lot changes that have been made recently. Which is kind of nice. Parking is always a problem at Northern. The thing that stands out in my mind is last year I had a knee surgery and I really had never considered the handicap parking for anyone on campus before, I had never thought about it. But there's a real problem in the Forest Roberts Theatre area and Thomas Fine Arts for anyone that has a handicap problem because when I had my knee surgery and was on crutches for 6 months there was nowhere to park. Or once I could drive and then park to get to class. It resulted in several tickets, of course [laughter] because you park where you gotta park to get where you gotta go. I mean if you're on crutches in the middle of the snow in the UP you're not gonna go trekking 3 miles across campus, I don't care you're just not gonna do it. So that's a problem. I came to Northern with the understanding that they were very accommodating towards nontraditional students. I have found that in some respects. My biggest problem I think is financial aid; I have a problem with turnover of people there. Which of course is just natural when you have a university of any size. But there does not seem to be a consistent policy in how they process things, how they relay information to you. When you're a commuter and you live off campus and you take out any type of loans, along with your financial aid packet, you rely on that money a lot more than if your living right on campus and they can hold your money and wait for meals or housing payments, and those kinds of things when you're right here. But when you're living off-campus you need that because your land lord isn't gonna wait, your gas monies aren't gonna wait, all those kinds of things. That's I think that they lose perceptiveness as to the problems that you have when you're here on campus. As far as other things on the university level, I have the opportunity to work for the Development Fund and so I've communicated a lot with alumni who've gone to school here, and there's a lot of positive things, up things too. The faculty that I deal with in my major, in the Art and Design Department, generally are really pretty encouraging for a non-traditional student. Pretty accommodating and work with you, they expect a lot out of you but seem to work real well with my needs. I like the changes in the UC center, I really like the new bookstore. It's a lot more accessible, and of course I like the student gallery that's a real plus! I don't think when I first

came to Northern I was a lot more involved in going to, I don't remember what department that was it used to be up on the 6th floor. It was 'Student Life' or what, where you go up and get the little apartment guides or whatever for off-campus housing for non-traditional students.

RH: Would it have been the Dean of Students office?

MM: Possibly. But there used to be the little newsletter that comes out on campus, the mailing that comes out? Do you know what I'm talking about? It's kind of like a flyer out in the mail every couple of months?

RH: Oh yes, I don't know the name of it though.

MM: It used to have a lot more geared towards non-traditional commuter students, which interested me and met my needs more. Lately it just seems to have a lot of things about living on campus, not so much living off-campus and what you deal with. There's a lot people that do live off campus that have needs that need to be met.

RH: You think that, well in the past there's been a lot of complaints between how the faculty and the students interact as if you noticed here especially in the past year or so with the changes in the UC, and the remodeling and everything, and active parts that President Vandement is taking in making changing. Have you noticed any improvement between faculty and students, them getting together?

MM: I think so. I've pretty well finished my liberal arts studies, so that closes me off from a lot of the different areas on campus and faculty that I would be associated with had I still had been taking my liberal arts classes. But as far as, I think that it makes it a lot more accessible for them, as far as the office changes they've made for students to be able to be closer to professors. Also it makes them more, professor more in sync to what's going on as far as in the mainstream. They're not so quartered off because everything seems to be centrally flowing a lot better over in the UC, I like that. I like the idea that President Vandement takes, pretty much a personal interest in what's going on. I've never observed him or run into him personally, in a proximity that he has not spoken to either myself or other students in the area and I like that. That impresses me that he takes the time to acknowledge those that are around him, and I think that's real important. You don't always get that feeling from administrative people. There seems to be a sincerity when he does talk to you and he's willing to listen and I think that's the biggest part. He may not be able to solve every little problem that comes down the pipe, but he seems to be obviously sincere about wanting to listen and hear about what's going on and I think that's been a big advantage for Northern. Especially because historically some of the problems that you hear about on campus or that people have had in the past, and I think it was a time for a new change and opportunity for someone who wanted to listen to and solve some of these problems and I think that's a really good thing. In my department, it's a pretty open department, small. I like that. It's one of the things about the art department that's a real plus and the advantage is that they are small enough to have an intimate knowledge of each other, as far as faculty and the students. We're not overflowed with students where they don't know who you are, kind of where you're going and what you're doing and there seems to be a real good flow of communication and I like

that. Especially since it's a field where you rely a lot on creativity and time and effort, that doesn't always show up academically on exams or those types of things.

RH: You mentioned having problems with, you know having knee surgery and stuff and getting around. With the changes that have been going on at Northern and the work that they've been doing, do you think that once the changes, like in Gries Hall and Jamrich Hall where they're trying to make more changes and update the facilities, you think that those problems will exist for future students?

MM: No and I think that's real important. I know that people over in Cohodas were real helpful as far as elevator keys, things like that when I had my knee surgery. But where they're aren't elevators it doesn't do you any good. Like Lee Hall there are no elevators, so you're going up and down the stairs. I like the changes that they're going to make in Jamrich and Gries Hall and these other places, I think though unless they do something about the parking there's still going to be a problem. There doesn't seem to be adequate, just from my observations of course now I'm not using the handicap parking, but still from an observation point there is not enough handicap parking. You go to Forest Roberts Theatre, you have a lot of elderly people that go to the shows, go to different functions there. Plus, including students, and there's like 3 parking spots in front of Forest Roberts for handicap, that's all that there is. There could be great room over there in front Thomas Fine Arts there on the bottom, possibly in the back where there's faculty parking, there could be a couple of handicap parking spots. Because the elevator for Thomas Fine Arts handicap is in the back. Which, there needs to be some cohesiveness and forethought as to what they're doing for these problems because you have students who are permanently handicap. That are in wheelchairs or some other type of appliances that need these needs met, and I think that's a real problem. Especially it being that cluster of buildings. There's too much demand for the little area that there is there.

RH: Getting back to the commuter part of it, I know myself as a commuter student that I have to make an effort if I want to participate in campus. Because you just never what going on or anything.

MM: You never know.

RH: Are you, with you do you feel that basically you're here, you take your class, you leave?

MM: Exactly. That's when I was trying to mention with that whole newsletter thing. I felt more, in the very beginning maybe in my first semester first year my freshman year, I felt I little bit more involved. I don't know if it was a different people in charge of the letter or if there just happen to be more going on? But I come to class, I take my classes, and I go home. I'm not aware of what's going on. The North Wind doesn't seem to be real good about telling you what's going on [laughter.] There isn't, I don't know the school doesn't have much school spirit as far as I'm concerned. Not that I'm just out of high school and I need all that, but there are things that I'd like to be aware of what's going on, to go to and participate too. I feel like I come to Northern, I pay my money and I go to class and then I leave. I'm not sure I feel a real affinity to the school. A bond. Homecoming came and went and I was like "okay." I'm not even sure who won the game [laughter.] I think we did didn't we?

RH: Just for the record we did, win [laughter.]

MM: Okay, but I mean things like that and I think that's really kind of a shame because I'm paying all this money to a school that I'm going to spend five years here, and when I leave I've been here and I haven't even been in the dome. You know for a game or anything, I haven't gone over to those functions that are going on over there. Which of course, with my work schedule I work at night. But still I don't feel like I really know what's going on around.

RH: Well other students that I've talked to, and myself being included, the changes in the UC I believe have seen an increase in comradery for commuter students among students that live on campus, the faculty and such. Have you had a chance to get over there, or have you noticed anything like that?

MM: I've heard good things about it. I personally haven't participated in it because I have not had the chance to get over there really yet this semester, because it's been pretty crazy for me. But I have friends like yourself and others, who I have heard that there are these positive changes, who enjoy going over there, hanging out you know the Peter White Lounge. Upstairs the food court especially, you know get together. The ____ gift store or whatever, across from the bookstore a little convenient place there and some of those other things. I think I've heard some more positive things about, get togethers and people spending time together, and I think that's real important. I just myself have not had the opportunity yet to participate in any of that.

RH: Okay, well you mentioned working for the Development Fund. Could you explain exactly what it is you do for them, what is the Development Fund?

MM: Well the Development Fund is the area on campus that raises undesignated funds for the university for scholarships. Different areas like Washington Internship Programs, Student Leadership, those kinds of, faculty research projects. What you do is, I'm a floor manager for student callers, so I call on the phone myself plus I help callers call to raise money for the university, and manage them, and help them out. Basically what you do is you call alumni, and you talk to them on behalf of the university and ask for money, large amounts of money. You start out asking, \$150 gifts, and it's amazing the things you can learn about the university through talking to these people and it's kind of fun to hear about the things that went on when they were here. Also you get the flip side of that, you get some of the complaints of things that have past here, happened in the past here at the school. So I've worked there, this going on my 4th year now. I started in '91, and now it's my fourth year. So I've been pretty familiar with what has kind of gone on here in the university as far as like the hockey rink scandal and President Appleberry when he left [laughter] people being upset with him. All those kinds of things, you hear a lot about those things. Of course you can't just go by word of mouth about what people say but it's really funny, I have noticed a tone of change in the alumni in the last year, softening more towards some of these things that had happened in the recent past. Since President Vandement's gotten here and President Appleberry's gone. But that's what I do, I help to raise funds for the university. And I'm taking a pride in that, that's be real important to me. But I think that's another thing that frustrates me is I spend time doing that, and then when I disgruntled about something on the university it bothers me.

RH: Do you, you mentioned you hear about different things as far as like the hockey rinks or whatever. Do you, have you noticed an increase in support from the alumni since the university started this program, or has it been more disgruntled now that they have another avenue for voicing their opinions or?

MM: No, it seems last year, well we raised nearly \$300,000 last year. For just a specific campaign, it's called the "Commitment to Excellence Campaign." Of course the Development Fund does hire out for the radio and TV station here on campus. Now there are various colleges on campus to raise money for them, so we do raise a considerable amount of money. I think as far as the alumni are concerned, there's been more of a positive vein in support. Two or three years ago you would have had a lot more complaints on the phone about the same specific thing over and over again. Now when you get a complaint on the phone they're usually pretty individualistic, incidences that happened particularly just to that person and not a wave of something that's going on. So I think the alumni are becoming a lot more supportive. I think that Paul Sumi's [spelled phonetically] group and the Alumni Association have a lot to do with that. With their pushing the horizon and writing a lot of current articles about what goes on on-campus, and sending those out to the alumni. I think some of the positive changes in the University Center, that alumni enjoy that when they come home for Homecoming and those kinds of things I think are really important.

RH: You've mentioned the fact that being, you know disgruntled yourself in, you're here you take your classes you go home and that's about it. You don't really know anything going on, do you feel that once you graduate, which is coming up fairly soon, that you would be open to this kind of prospect? Do you feel that Northern has just not answered your needs enough to fill that affinity that you mentioned lacking earlier?

MM: You know; I've thought a lot about that [laughter.] And I've, if I hadn't have had, or I was not having a positive experience in the Art Department, I mean I get frustrated just like everybody does with their department. You get frustrated just because it's overwhelming. But I am basically really happy with what I'm going to be doing when I get out of here and the preparation of it. And I feel a kinship and I would, I really feel like I would support the university. Overall it's been more of a positive experience than a negative experience. And I think maybe a lot of that comes from working in the Development Fund where I've worked and seeing that the money does go to positive areas on campus. I mean I know where it goes, it's not just being dumped into some pool and somebody is buying a computer out of it or whatever. I think I would be able to support the program. Not with the money, not large or huge amounts of money I'll be paying off student loans till I'm 94 but.

RH: What are some of the more interesting stories that you've heard talking to alumni on a regular basis?

MM: Let's see, I'm trying to remember. One gentleman I talked to, he wouldn't give any money to the university because he failed the writing proficiency exam 3 times [laughter] like how? And so of course he didn't get his degree, he went to school for 4 years and didn't pass the writing proficiency exam. I'm not really sure exactly [laughter] how that could happen, but I guess so.

People get upset with Public Safety, thousands of dollars' worth of parking tickets. You get those kinds of things. I did get a chance to talk to Mr. Hedgecock's son, the Hedgecock Fieldhouse and that was quite an interesting experience for me. Mr. Hedgecock, we had called and approached him about giving money to the Commitment to Excellence Campaign and I felt really bad at that particular time because he was unwilling to support the program, in the beginning he did end up giving un a \$25 pledge. But there was great remorse as to the effort that his father had put here on campus as the coach at that time, several years, this has been like 30 years ago right after World War 2. His dad had come home from the service and was coming through school here and unable to get any kind of financial aid whatsoever. Student loans or anything. That really bothered me, because his dad had put such an effort here in the school. What can you say to somebody? I had nothing, I couldn't say anything to him. Then he brought up and was talking about all the years that his dad and mom had put in taking athletes into their home and feeding them and doing for them. Something about the basketball team flying out to some tournament somewhere and a bunch of money going towards the basketball team, and here they'd been supporting football for all these years. I just felt very inadequate as to what to say to the gentlemen. It's things like that when they come across the phone, some of these people had been here in the early days when it was still like Northern...the teaching college that you just really don't know what to say. Because these people have a genuine, have much more of a genuine interested in a school then I do. They remember the days of getting together, and the old bonfires, and Homecomings, and dances. Where everybody knew everybody, and you were related to this one and that one, things like that. So it's kind that old '50s and '40s kind of time frame, and early '60s. It's real hard to relate and to be able to answer their questions or their concerns.

RH: Is any of the alumni you've talked to, I realize more than likely you have to keep the conversations short. But has anyone ever talked about the way campus used to be physically?

MM: Oh yes.

RH: As opposed to way it is now, the buildings or what used to be here and what isn't?

MM: You know it's water under the bridge, but boy when they tore the Longyear last year that was a rough one. That was a rough one because people were very unhappy, you know Kaye Hall was gone, it was no longer here. Pierce was going, Longyear was the last of the buildings that had any historical or architectural significance to these people as far as being here since the very beginning. They talk a lot about missing the old way, not that they aren't happy with the University Center, they aren't happy with Jamrich, and West Science, and the library, and the additions made to campus, because they're necessary. Campus is going to grow; you're going to need more buildings. But they miss the nostalgia and part of the fact of it being the old campus. They wonder why it couldn't have been up kept through the years and incorporated into the campus, a lot like other universities have kept some of their buildings, their original buildings. A lot more of them bring it up then you would realize.

RH: I'm not surprised. What are some of the things that you've listened to or you've heard, other than Longyear and things that haven't been able to do anything about? What are some of things

that have come up in your discussions that you have been able, something that you might have been able to do something about or that, pass on have the administration do something about?

MM: Well, a lot of good things that have been happening lately is Brian Enus [spelled phonetically] he's in charge of job placement here on campus. There seems to be a lot of, not a lot well, yeah I'd say a lot! A lot of student that are probably in their mid-30s, alumni that were students, that are making job changes. They've either been laid off, or have come to a point where they need to make a change and their taking advantage of talking to Mr. Enus. Either getting a direction, we're more than happy to refer that, them to him and that's been a good thing. A lot of times alumni want to be able to get in contact with an old professor, or do networking through other alumni. Someone that they've gone to school with, some one that they've heard of in the horizon, we can do that for them by getting in such with Paul Sumi or his group, and then they follow up and they get in touch with these people. That's been real important, it's been a real bridge builder for them to be able to contact one another and be able to network in those manners. You feel kind of a real good satisfaction after you do that. The other day one of the callers, a new caller on the phone, asked me: "Is there anyway, I've got this gentleman on the phone, I just had him on the phone a minute ago. He really wants to find an old roommate of his that graduated in 1950 something together. And he hasn't talk to him for years, is there any way we do that?" And I said, "well sure!" So I went and I looked him up, and here he was low and behold on the alumni directory. So she called him back and told him how to get in touch with him, and he was just ecstatic. Sure, that took a little bit of extra time but there was just a sense of satisfaction out of that, and the fact that he knew that someone at school cared enough to go ahead and do that for him and I think that's real important to go that extra mile and do that little bit. I think that's part of the satisfaction of your job. Let's see, there's been other things as far as people wanting information on campus. Wanting to talk to one of the coaches or get in touch with somebody at the bookstore different things like this, find out about their transcripts, find out about records, those kinds of things. A lot of times we've been able to help them in that way. It's been important.

RH: Marcey, a lot of people are under the impression that President Vandement has said himself that one of his goals, like I've mentioned earlier, is to bring the faculty, the administration, and the students together. In past years it's been like everyone's been going their own separate way. Opposed to that one of the favorite words around here, catch phrases, is the old "Northern shuffle," back and forth and this whole "do battle in Cohodas." What's your take on that? Do you feel that President Vandement has made headway on that or none at all? A lot? Do you feel that students are getting anywhere with the administration?

MM: Well I think he's probably making headway everywhere but the Financial Aid Department [laughter.] I don't mean that, I'm not talking about the money end. I'm not talking about how much money you get; how much you don't get. What I'm talking about is the fact of just basic human relation skills. I'm a person, they're a person. When I go in somewhere and talk to someone I try to be an adult, be polite, concise, ask for what I need, give them the information that's possible. But I don't appreciate being treating in a rude manner, or given abrupt half answers. If they don't know what's going on with something, I wish they'd just please tell me

instead of just leave it hanging somewhere because that, my ability to take out a loan or to have my financial aid packages like every other student on campus is whether or not I have the opportunity to get my education and to pay them. They're not going to get paid if they aren't any students here. If it weren't for accounts receivable and Steve Biack [spelled phonetically] down there in 109, I wouldn't still be in school. He has always bent over backwards and been more than receptive to help me. Just to give you a brief example, you can walk into financial aid at any time and get 5 different answers. Last year I went in in May and had filled out a deferment form each semester, for my student loans. I do this to make life easier for myself and also if I fill them out early enough in the semester it makes life easier for financial aid. So in January I went in and filled out 2 deferment forms for my subsidized and my non-subsidized student loans. Which would have been applicable for the winter semester of 1994, that January to May. So here I start get default notices from my lender, wow! You get a little shook up when you're getting default notices when you want to go back to school in the fall. I called financial aid and they're telling me that they didn't have my deferment forms. Well so I went back in and I filled out two more deferment forms, thinking well its error, it's subject error that can happen. Called my lender, told them that they'd be sending the deferment forms on, there must have been something that has come up. So a month later, here it is towards the end of the semester. I get another notice; you're going into default. So I went in, got another deferment form, I was gonna fill it out. I asked him what had happened to my other forms. First of all, they told me that I hadn't filled out all those forms. Then they told me they had taken the first two forms and applied them to the previous semester, so I had two duplicate forms for the previous semester when they should have gone to the next semester. Then they finally found that I had the two original forms, the other forms I had spoken to them about, after telling me that I didn't have them. They found them in a basket, they had been sitting there for two months in a basket on somebody's desk. Now I'm not saying it's a personal thing towards me, but the manner in which that I was spoken to through all of this was not pleasant. That's my issue.

RH: [Laughter.] I understand that. Marcey we've talked about changes around campus, working with faculty, students, administration, the Art and Design Department, and different things coming up and everything. I'm curious as to how did you chose Northern? What's the path of Marcey McCardell to Northern Michigan University? [Laughter.]

MM: [Continued laughter.] Let's see here, okay. Well to be frank, I was going through a separation and had filed for divorce, and my parents have retired here in the Upper Peninsula. I came up from Tennessee and I had planned to go to Arizona State University where my sister was, to go out there to go to school, or go back to Arkansas to go to school. Northern was my absolute last choice, I had never even thought about it. My dad said to me "had you thought about going to Marquette?" Marquette where? Marquette what? I'm thinking Marquette, the college down in Milwaukee? [Laughter.] I said "Oh! Marquette, Michigan." So I came up one day and toured the campus, I went over to Cohodas and talked to a few people. There was someone kind enough over there, unofficially, to just take me around and show me around little. Talked to me a little bit about the campus and meeting nontraditional students' needs. Going through a transitory period in my life anyway, it was a transition of going from married to single, having to rebuild a life on my own. It appealed to me a lot the way that they approached the

acceptance process in the school and the philosophy of working with non-traditional students with special needs. So that's how I ended up here. I don't regret my choice, I get frustrated. Just like everybody else does. Basically I don't regret my choice, I just hope that Northern's reputation continues to be solid, strong, and grow and develop in that way because when I leave here I want my degree to mean something. I want it to be worth something, and that's my main concern is that as a university it has a good reputation and it continues to build strong in that way. I would really, I'm looking at it as a stepping off place because I don't plan on just finishing with a Bachelor's Degree, I want to go on and get my Masters. I'm not sure where I want to end up, as far as educationally, so I need a good firm foundation and that's what I was looking for here. As far as faculty working with me and administrators basically overall, all in all even putting my little disgruntles aside with financial aid, I've been real happy because they have worked well with me. That's been a good positive experience. I think a lot of that has to do with that I am a non-traditional student, I can see differences as far as people working with me and being more patience. Or maybe it's just because I'm not having a screaming fit and in a panic over things. As a younger student who's just away from home for the first time and is here doesn't have a clue as to which way the wind is blowing. I think my experience has been more positive in a lot of ways, then I can see some of these younger students when they get very frustrated with what goes on and not knowing how things are handled. They're kind of tossed with the wind, whichever way it seems to be blowing that day.

RH: Well, a lot of the controversy in ties with Northern has been its role, since well there's been since President Harden the 'right to try' philosophy. Transitioning to the university but also for the community college aspects. Now we have Jacobetti, the Jacobetti Center with vocational training and such. What's your take as student on all this and the fact that you think it is, why do you think it could mean something? Do you think all of these different directions Northern appears to be going, do you think it is hurting or affecting your status as in a degree?

MM: I think the diversity of it scares me sometimes, because I wonder if it will weaken the university's stance as far as spreading itself too thin. Sometimes I think Northern tries to meet all needs, you can't slice a pie too many different ways without shorting somebody. That does concern me, I don't see it happening as of yet but I can foresee that it would be a situation and a problem. I would hate to see that because it would affect my degree, the validity of my degree.

RH: Okay. We've been basically going on a theme of change in the university, or changes to students, faculty, administration, and departments and such. I know that all the departments are trying to upgrade and remodel everything. In your three years here do you notice many changes in your department, in the Art and Design Department, for good or bad in helping you and other art students?

MM: I haven't really noticed many changes. I know that their moving in from Birdseye, physically from the building over to Thomas Fine Arts. We have a good solid program, I'm real happy with it. We acquired a bunch of Mac computers last year from AT&T, the university did, which was for a me a major benefit because as an art student that's what we use and that was great it was super. But the thing is, I like the freedom that I have in the art department. Of course there is a vein that you always follow, there's things that you're required to learn, things that you

need to do. But the fact that your expected to do a lot work. I kind of get a kick out of people who aren't in the art department that think it's a 'Mickey Mouse' kind of major. "Oh yeah, it's just Art and Design, no big deal!" [Laughter.] But you know it's not. There's a lot of work behind it, a lot of theory, a lot of things that are required. So as far as faculty changes we really haven't had faculty changes, we lost one professor that I know of in the last year, the last couple of years. Only because he was temporarily filling in for someone else. So I only had him for a summer class. But it's been pretty stable, and I like that. I think as maybe, as far as departments are concerned, we're lucky in that respect in that we have that stability of faculty. That's not been changing, that seems to function real well, to work real well, they are all very interval and they work well together, very different. I can look at them and think, like Eileen Roberts, Dr. Roberts. She's top notch smart in art history as far as I'm concerned. I loved, her classes are tough, they're not easy by any means. But in my mind, she's really, she sticks out in that respect. Other professors, they can come to my mind for like illustration or for theory or different things you know. I appreciate them for what they've given to me, although my specialization is environmental design. My advisor has been more than cooperative and helpful in that respect. So I think as a thing that has been beneficial to me. I see that there are some departments because of cuts on campus and a lot of those kinds of changes, there's not that consistency in their department. There's been a turnover, I don't know how that affects them. It would bother me, if it were me in my department. So I'm really grateful that we haven't had that. Of course like we have the new art gallery, and new programs, and more receptions, and more showings, and those kind of things like that in department which is like very beneficial to us. But as far as major policy changes, there hasn't been any that I am aware of.

RH: And what physical changes?

MM: The new art gallery in the University Center, the Student Art Gallery. Wonderful! Wonderful, it's fantastic! Which really gives students an opportunity to display their work. Before we had Studio 236 upstairs in the University Center, it was nice but it was a classroom! It was a classroom that was turned into a studio. Functionable, it was very functionable. But as far as showing off one's work to its best advantage, it didn't. It wasn't visible and open to the rest of the university, where I think that other students can see that the art department is an integral part of the university and that art students are contributing all the time as far as their work being valid and important, and actually completing things. You read about North Wind now at NMU, I don't think it's a mainstream, there was a lot of your everyday people up to 236. But where it's located now right across from the bookstore, it's an integral part of the transit system, so to speak, through the university center. So I think it's been a real opportunity for student who are in the art department to hear comments and feedback on their work, see the response from the general body of the students and faculty here on campus. So I think it's a real advantage.

RH: You're saying it being there, earlier this month there was a full front page article in the North Wind about certain art in that gallery [laughter.] Obviously you're saying that in 236 there wouldn't have been that problem

MM: No, they probably would have never known about the mushrooms, or lack thereof [laughter.] Yes, in 236 I think there would not have been an article of that substance in the North

Wind. Probably a small article on page 3 or 4, because it was not a focal point. It was up on second floor away from everything, people were not noticing it. Maybe that's exactly what the university needed, was that article. Art is in the eye of the beholder, in a lot of respects. So I guess as a layperson that would be the easiest way to interpret that. I have my own mixed feelings about the show. I feel like the artist had a right to display his work, and to express himself. Of course personally that's not something I would have chosen, a medium, to display. A work to display in that particular medium, I wouldn't have done that. But that's just my own personal feelings so, that goes from art to into personal and I think there's a lot of gray areas there. It gives the university an opportunity to see what's going on, they would never have that opportunity otherwise to know. Look at the, it caused all those comments and articles in the North Wind, a whole page. A center part with the opinions and the letters to the editors and everything last week. So it got people thinking, it got them wondering you know what is going on in the art world. And what better things can you ask for? It was a stimulant and it was important.

RH: Earlier this, in the past year, this summer while the University Center was still under renovation, in another part of the University Center they did have a gallery of sorts. Is that still in existence or are they going to be using it, or is it just basically for the transition?

MM: I'm not real sure, the transition is right now they're just using that new student gallery with the glass, which I think is going to be the best bet. I think they may use the other one for private shows now and then. But I'm not sure, it's not being used right now. We do use the Lee Hall gallery continually because there are a lot of artists that come in to visit the campus and bring their work and that is the official gallery for an invitational artist or faculty, exhibits, or graduations, the graduate students that exhibit their work. So we will always have the Lee Hall gallery, which is a very professional setting for work.

RH: You mentioned moving from Birdseye and, just for the record the Birdseye building is located on the Big Bay road approximately a quarter of a mile from campus.

MM: Right.

RH: I know that past, from other conversations with you, that it is a difficulty.

MM: [Laughter] Yes!

RH: You mentioned moving from Birdseye to Thomas Fine Arts. Are they locating all of the art department in Thomas Fine Arts? Are they going to use other parts of Lee Hall other than the gallery?

MM: Well they've talked about, there are still classes going on out in Birdseye, it's a show shift movement and there's still the ceramics out there yet and some of the physical aspects classes, woodworking classes and metal work out there. But they're moving, they're shifting and moving over here. Some psychological aspects in those classes are moving and drawing classes, or whatever. I have heard talk that they want to utilize some of the buildings behind Lee Hall and remodel and incorporate them into, along with remodeling Lee Hall, incorporate them into an art

center more as far as having a lot of the art classes together there. I guess back where I believe is custodial type, machinery equipment buildings I have no clue.

RH: Are you referring to the Ripley Heating Plant?

MM: Right.

RH: Okay

MM: But that's like long term down the road. But there's been talk of that. I think that's real important because I think the art department is too spread out across the university. You have Birdseye, you have Lee Hall, and then you have Thomas Fine Arts, and that's quite a distance. I would like to see the whole body of the art department within one building, a lot like science like over in West Science. That would be the ultimate unique experience to have it all together. Such is the advantage of the theater people, they have basically all their things right there together. So I think that to be able to converge it together all in one place would be the ultimate.

RH: Okay, on a different subject. Being a commuter student off-campus I know that some students have expressed the fact that not only be disadvantaged and not knowing what's going on on-campus, but there is just a general disassociate or dislike for students in the community. Do you feel in the last few years that you had any experience with that and not really being accepted by the community because you're a student? Or have you had just the opposite?

MM: I've had the opposite, I have felt very, that the community has warmed up. I've never had a problem when I've gone into a store or anywhere that the reason has come around that I'm a student, for some reason if I'm in a business or whatever. The opportunity has come up that I'm a student. Although I have seen the more traditional students have some problems. Maybe it's just groups, and large groups, or the age or the impetusesness of youth [laughter.] I have no clue, but I have not had a problem and I think the community welcomes the university in a lot of respects. But then again I think I have an advantage because I'm older and I'm not the normal student. I think that makes a big difference.

RH: Is there much connection between the art department and the art community at large in Marquette?

MM: Yes, very much so.

RH: Could you elaborate on...

MM: I think that, I haven't had a lot of personal experience with that because I'm to the part of my program where I'm still a student and I haven't gotten to the point of really displaying my work. I'm not, my art is different as far as like I'm not an illustrator or a pastellist or a painter. So my projects are different as being a designer but Marquette is a very, has its own little art circle and the art department and the people they're in are very involved in the art community. You have Art on the Rocks, you have different art, you have many art galleries in town and all these people are affiliated with the university in some matter. Either an alum, or a friend of the university, or friends of the faculty and work together. I think that's been a real advantage to Marquette as far as culturally.

RH: What specifically in the art world, you mentioned you're not this and you're not that, what specifically is your field, your art? Basically what is it?

MM: Okay my specialist area, my specialization is environmental design. What that is, is it's a designer, interior and exterior. I would like, my ultimately what I would like to do is work with like an inner city planning group or a parks service working with historical homes and buildings, and the restoration of them. That is my ultimate goal. I will be able to, because of my CAD classes and technical classes and things, could very easily work with an architectural firm. The nice part about, and that's ultimately what I will probably do is work with a firm to accomplish the means to ends, is I don't want to go on to architectural school, I don't want to do the complete technical end of things. I like the designing end, the artistic end, the color, the texture and the different mediums that are used. So therefore that's what I want to do. I have the advantage of having a lot of, by the time we get out of school, a lot of graphic imaging background, a lot of CAD background. So I think it's the best of both worlds as far as a good environmental degree. On my own aside from that I'm taking other classes and I really have an interest in doing pastels. So I think as an artist you always have many different areas, but my area of specialization is that.

RH: A concern with universities in general, and especially Northern considering its location in the Upper Peninsula, is that there's not much in the immediate vicinity for you to work, for a person to work in in any degree. For a student once they get out of the university spectrum, you know some people find their niche. From what you just described it sounds like Marquette will be an ideal place for environmental design and working with the old buildings and such, is that your base impression or a future chance or?

MM: It would be ideal if you could get the community at large to back you. It seems to be that for some reason people have been in a hurry to get rid of the old, and chuck in the new. Which is a shame, right now you can see Longyear was a perfect example. They were quick to get rid of the building although there were health reasons and that because of the pigeons and all that, and I can see that. But years ago restoration and preservation should have been important. There are some fine buildings in town here that could be restored and made into some good money making possibilities because it's a tourist community. You have seasonal, in the winter you have the skiers and the snow people and all the winter sports. Then in the fall you have the hunters and their families, then of course spring and summer you have tourists galore for camping and travelling and sightseeing and all these things. So as a community Marquette would be very open to something like this, whether it will become a reality or not I'm not sure. I think that if you're an artist and you're working in a design field such as mine you need to be prepared to leave the area. Although I would like to see more going on here in the area, you need to be prepared for it because there's not an active movement going on right now.

RH: In personal conversations that you and I have had in the past, it has been basically especially with the lack of commuter student involvement in the university it's been the attitude of "let me get my degree, let me get out of here, maybe I'll support the university maybe I won't." Especially with the family connections and stuff, do you feel that if given the opportunity you would want to come back to Marquette to work in your field?

MM: Having been raised in the South, although my family is from up here, I had thought a lot about going back immediately, leaving and getting the heck out of Dodge as quickly as possible [laughter.] But I thought about it and it probably would be a possibility had something opened up I would stay for a while. If I could see something positive. I wouldn't stay here to design new homes; I wouldn't stay here to work on anything that was relatively new and modern because I have an interest in the historical aspect. Unfortunately, Northern doesn't have a good, have a lot of background in the historical restoration aspect, so I will need to go school somewhere else to finish that in my Masters. But if there were something to open up here in town, and internship of some sort, I think that yeah I could be swayed to stay. There's an appeal, a pull I'm not sure exactly what it is. It's family, and something else I'm not really sure. It's probably that something else that all the alumni talk about when I talk to them on the phone. It's something, maybe it's that big lake out there [laughter] I'm not sure what it is.

RH: Okay, in the last few minutes that we have here, what do you as an outgoing student, non-traditional student, commuter student, all these different titles that we give everybody. What do you see that the university need to do to accommodate people in the future like yourself?

MM: Well I think when a new student comes in to campus they need to sit down, I think you need someone, an advisor right away. I'm not talking about just an advisor as far as classes. If you're a non-traditional student coming to Northern or any university, there's been something in your life that has spurred you to come to school. A divorce, a death, a life change, a necessity of some sort. So you have more needs than just academic. You need to know how you're going to support yourself, you need to know basically how speedily you can get through school, what the requirements are gonna be. All these different things, we need something an overall advisor to sit down with you. If you're gonna apply for student loans and financial aid you need to know how quickly you're going to have that money, how much money you're gonna have to put up on your own. You're gonna need to know basically how to acquire the classes that you need. If you clep out of what you can clep out of. Something more than just an advisor that's gonna tell you "well take these courses the first semester." Like when you come in to register they help you just "well what do you want to take?" I'll take this, this, and this. You go to financial aid and you fill out your form for your student loan. There's no idea of the process, how long things take, what needs to be done. I think as an entry student into college, especially as a non-traditional student, that you have so many other pulls on you and you don't have maybe the family support to take care of you or whatever. The excuse or the convenience of living on campus and knowing where your next meal's gonna come from, or that you have that roof over your head and you don't have to worry about that month to month payment, that you need to know the process of things. I think that's the big problem is non-traditional students do not have the overall knowledge in the beginning of knowing the processes that they need and the hoops they need to jump through.

RH: Okay, is there anything else that we haven't covered that you can think of that you would want basically left for posterity on this recording. Anything covered, uncovered, about Northern that you've noticed in your three years here.

MM: Don't cover the sidewalks. [Laughter.] No, I mean there's nothing like that breeze, that you know is cold is cold as it gets in the wintertime, there's nothing like that breeze that comes in off

the lake. I think to keep the campus friendly and as simplistic as possible, otherwise it'll lose its charm. I think that's part of the charm of the Upper Peninsula is the freedom that you feel on campus and if people can remain in a friendly manner and small enough that personal needs are met, I think that's been a real important thing here on campus.

RH: Okay, thank you for your time this evening.