

JOSEPH BETTENCOURT
Marist College
Poughkeepsie, NY
For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections
Index – Joseph Bettencourt

Project Name: Marist Heritage Project

Transcript: Yes

Summary: Yes

Photograph(s): No

CD#: 041

Name of Interviewee: Dr. Joseph Bettencourt

Main Topics: In the following interview, Dr. Joseph Bettencourt reflects on his past thirty-seven years at Marist. In the beginning of the interview, Dr. Bettencourt speaks of his educational years and the attainment of his Masters and Ph.D., as well as his continued research. Dr. Bettencourt's career in the Science Department at Marist College is outlined from its beginning in 1965 to the current time at which he is the Chairman of the Science Department as well as the Pre-Medical advisor and professor of many courses in the Science Department. At the end of the interview, Dr. Bettencourt speaks of the expansion of Marist College as a whole as well as the development of the science curriculum and voices his feelings concerning the current direction of the college.

Others present?: No

Interviewed by: Gus Nolan

Interview Date: 15 November 2002

Location of Interview: Archives and Special Collections Reading Room at Marist College

Recorder model and type: Marantz PMD 690

Length of interview: 58 minutes, 39 seconds

Number of disks: 1

Recording medium/format: Microdrive

Brand of disks: IBM 1GB Microdrive

Archival copy made: Burned to a gold alloy CD (MAM) and is held in the Marist College Archives and Special Collections. Saved as a .wav file at the highest resolution possible. CD copy is available for researchers.

Quality of original recording: Good

Restrictions on interview access or use: None

Transcribed or summarized by: Erin Kelly

Brief summary of interview context and recording contents: This interview was held in the Cannavino Library on the Marist College campus.

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<u>Time (00:00.00 ~ in hrs./mins./seconds)</u>	<u>Summary</u>
00:00.01 – 00:10.37	Dr. Joseph Bettencourt talks about his personal history. He reminisces about where he was born and raised, his parents and siblings and what they did with their lives, his grammar, high, and undergraduate schools, how he met his wife and when they were married, his children and what they're doing with their lives, his graduate school and the long process it took for him to receive his Ph.D. While he was working on his Ph.D. he actually started working for Marist, but it was for short periods of time and then he would leave to continue working on his Ph.D., and then come back again.
00:10.38 – 00:21.51	Dr. Bettencourt remembers how he heard about Marist College in the first place and why he began working there. He describes the courses he taught when he returned to Marist and began teaching full-time, and what his office was like. He also discusses some of his first assignments at Marist such as the freshman seminars and working on a committee for the library. He describes how he became involved in med-school and advising students who wanted to go in that direction and the success of the program over the years.
00:21.52 – 00:31.49	Dr. Bettencourt discusses the development of the biology department and some of the key people who played a major role in that development. He also discusses the physical development of the department with the creation of more labs and acquiring more equipment.
00:31.50 – 00:37.02	Dr. Bettencourt talks about the various committees that he has worked on over the years and he reflects on the creation of the core program.
00:37.03 – 00:42.56	Dr. Bettencourt describes some of the strengths and weaknesses of the college. He considers some of the key strengths of Marist to be its location

and its reputation. Some of the weaknesses are that he feels it's a stretch for Marist to refer to itself as a liberal arts college anymore, and he also feels that it's a problem that there is no science building on campus. He compares the students at Marist College today to the students that he began teaching 37 years ago, and he also talks about some of the differences between working at a parochial school and a public school.

00:42.57 – 00:47.16 Dr. Bettencourt talks about several of the administrators that he worked with during his years here, both the presidents of the college and the academic deans.

00:47.17 – 00:58.40 Dr. Bettencourt describes what he feels are his greatest contributions to the college over the years, which are mainly his curriculum development and his work with the students of the college. He also reflects on some things that did not happen that he wished had, such as a greater commitment to science. He discusses why he stayed with Marist for so many years, despite being offered jobs elsewhere. To wrap up his interview he talks about what he has been doing in the past few years, and when he might begin considering retirement.