

HISTORY OF KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY

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This writer first visited the Kennesaw campus on a hot summer day some three decades ago. I was attracted immediately to the pretty, yellow-brick buildings, glistening in the afternoon sun. Well-manicured lawns and newly planted trees added to the beauty of the academic site, carved a couple of years earlier from the old Frey farm. When I arrived in mid-afternoon the parking lots were almost empty and the campus seemed nearly deserted. The enrollment, of course, was much smaller than it is today. In Fall 1967 (Kennesaw's second year of operation) some 1,278 students took classes, less than one-tenth the current number.¹ The summer enrollment in 1968 was even smaller. With an abundance of classroom space, Kennesaw offered the vast majority of courses when students wanted them—in the morning and evening—and avoided unpopular afternoon sections.

Kennesaw dates its existence to 9 October 1963, when the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia voted unanimously to place a new junior college in Cobb County.² The decision was a response to the rapid growth in Georgia's college-age citizenry, especially in Atlanta's northern suburbs. Throughout the nation the number of young adults was increasingly dramatically, as the Baby Boom generation reached maturity. Everywhere, educators and politicians had worked frantically in the 1950s to build enough elementary and secondary schools for the new generation; now it was time to prepare for the onslaught into higher education. In 1962 Georgians elected a progressive governor named Carl Sanders, who pledged to place a public college within commuting distance of virtually every person in the state. So in 1963 the Regents created junior colleges not only in Cobb County, but also in Albany and Gainesville, with Rome, Dalton, and other towns just a few years behind.

While Gov. Sanders intended to build at least one new college in northwest Georgia, he did not plan on putting it in Cobb. In fact, he promised during the campaign to build it in Bartow County.³ The location of this institution in Cobb County tells much about the dynamic local leadership and the county's remarkable transformation in the decades following America's entry into World War II. A generation of brilliant community builders emerged in Marietta and Cobb County in the 1930s and 1940s. The most prominent figures of this group were James V. Carmichael, L.M. (Rip) Blair, and George McMillan, but one could add to the list names such as Lex Jolley, J.J. Daniell, Charles M. Head, and many others. On the eve of World War II, Rip Blair was the mayor of Marietta. His law partner Jimmie Carmichael had served in the legislature and was county attorney. As they looked for ways of bringing Marietta out of the Great Depression, they turned to one of Blair's old friends, Maj. (later Gen.) Lucius D. Clay, who graduated from Marietta High School in 1914, then from West Point four years later. An international hero for directing the Berlin airlift in 1948-49, Clay spent the 1920s and 1930s assigned to the army Corps of Engineers, where he helped with depression-era WPA projects and built the Denison Dam in Texas. In 1940 he was put in charge of an emergency airport construction effort for the Civil Aeronautics Administration. There in May 1941 he was able to help his Marietta friends build an airport with a CAA appropriation of \$400,000 to pay for the runways. The facility was to be primarily a commercial airport, but one the military could use too. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941, commercial aviation plans were scrapped and the modern new Marietta site, now named Rickenbacker Field, became essential for national security. By February the army announced that the property would be leased to the Bell Aircraft Company of Buffalo, N.Y., which would build a huge southern bomber plant. Bell Bomber and the army air base which shared the runways would revolutionize Cobb County.⁴

The 1940 population in Cobb was only 38,000, but that number changed quickly with Bell employing by the war's end more than 28,000 workers, over a third of them women.⁵ With Jimmie Carmichael serving as general manager by 1944, salaries far exceeded anything laborers made before in the depressed, under-industrialized South. President Lawrence D. Bell probably did not exaggerate much when he said, "I believe, and other people agree with me, that the B-29 in Georgia was probably the biggest and most successful single manufacturing enterprise in the country during the war.... My friends down there have repeatedly told me that the operation of Bell Aircraft

probably had more influence on the rebirth of the South than anything that's ever been done.”⁶

Bell Bomber closed after the war, but Lockheed took over the facilities during the Korean conflict. The largest employer in Georgia, Lockheed did for Cobb County in the 1950s and 1960s what Bell had done in the previous decade. The population swelled to 62,000 in 1950 and 114,000 in 1960. In the seven years immediately prior to the college's creation, Cobb's tax digest more than tripled. Transformed into an affluent, suburban community, Cobb suddenly had the people and resources to support institutions of higher education. As early as 1951 local leaders brought to Marietta an off-campus center of the University of Georgia, one of several around the state. A few years later they took Southern Tech away from DeKalb County, where classes were being offered in old World War II buildings at a former naval air station. The school needed a modern campus, and Cobb offered the Board of Regents more community support than DeKalb was willing to provide. The technical institute's Marietta campus opened for fall classes in 1961.⁷

Next the local leadership wanted a liberal arts school, which could provide higher education for students interested in non-engineering fields. By this time the Regents were phasing out the off-campus centers. So local politicians and civic leaders went to work to replace the Marietta Center with a junior college. A twenty-eight-man steering committee was created, chaired by the editor of the *Marietta Daily Journal*, Bob Fowler. The committee's determination was made apparent when it pledged that the people of Cobb County would absorb a larger part of the start-up costs than any Georgia community had ever paid before. Pointing out that Cobb was one of the state's largest counties without a liberal arts college, the committee proposed that the governments of Marietta and Cobb County donate the land for a campus, pay all construction costs for the buildings, and provide roads, landscaping, and utilities. Based on this generous offer, Chancellor Harmon W. Caldwell recommended and the Board of Regents approved the creation of the new college.⁸

The steering committee had one more task to perform. The local governments decided to pay the construction costs by selling bonds: \$425,000 to be issued by Marietta and \$1,925,000 by the Cobb County Board of Education. Before they could increase their indebtedness, they had to submit the question to the voters in a referendum. So the steering committee went to work to persuade the electorate. When the election was held on 22 April 1964 a lopsided 88 percent of the voters voiced their approval. The issue carried in every ward in Marietta and militia district in the county. Part of the legacy of this institution is a record of solid public support from the beginning in all parts of the county.⁹

The campus was located on a farm once owned by J. Steve Frey, Sr. A grocer on the Marietta Square for twenty-nine years, Frey purchased a 321-acre farm in 1946, about the time he sold his store. The land ran from just east of today's I-75 to back of where the clubhouse would be built for Pinetree Country Club. His son, John S. Frey, Jr., recalled buying a jeep to reach the property, because the dirt roads in that part of the county had such huge ruts and would become mudholes in bad weather. For a few years, until the boll weevil cut into their profits, they grew cotton and food crops, with the help of a tenant, and operated a cotton gin in downtown Kennesaw.¹⁰

The Regents considered a number of campus sites in all parts of the county before settling in 1964 on this location. By that time the Freys had sold all their property and had no part in a controversy that soon erupted over their former lands. The dispute involved the western part of the farm, where Pinetree Country Club and Estates were being developed, and including about twenty-five acres of KSU's campus along Steve Frey Road. J.S. Frey, Sr., had entered into a deal by which the county recreation authority, between 1959-62, turned former farm land into a public golf course and swimming pool and paved and guttered a series of adjacent roads on which private homes were to be built. Then, in November 1962, the recreation authority secretly sold its property to a private corporation. When the deal became public the authority announced that it had done so to prevent being forced to integrate the swimming pool and golf course. Critics suggested another motive when it was revealed that some recreation authority officials had made a profit on the transaction, while the county lost money. At about that time the Freys sold the rest of their land (most of the campus of KSU) to the same businessmen. Then less than two years later those developers, including a member of the Board of Regents, sold the site for the college to Marietta and the Cobb school board for one hundred thousand dollars. The campus site was then turned over to the Regents. A Cobb County grand jury found no criminal violations in these transactions, but questioned the ethics of

several officials of the recreation authority, and specifically criticized the authority's attorney.¹¹

Despite the moral questions, however, even the critics seemed to believe that the state had selected a good location for the college. Part of the justification for this site was that it was accessible from all directions and was not far from Bartow County. While Gov. Sanders was not able to keep his campaign pledge to Cobb's northern neighbor, he could at least say that a junior college was being constructed within commuting distance of Cartersville. This property and a two million dollar check for construction costs were officially turned over to the Regents on 31 July 1964. The rest of the bond money was to be used for roads, grading, and utilities.¹²

The groundbreaking for the new campus occurred in November 1964. About that time the Board of Regents approached Dr. Horace W. Sturgis about a possible presidency at one of the state's embryonic junior colleges. A native of Pennsylvania, Sturgis had received a master's degree from the University of Georgia and a Ph.D. from New York University. He spent over two decades at Georgia Tech, rising to the position of associate registrar. Of the beginning schools, the one in Cobb County most interested Sturgis. So, along with his wife Sue, he decided to seek out the location. He recalled, "One December day...we drove out, and we had to make several inquiries.... It was snowing, I remember well. We'd drive along a little bit.... Finally we located a little signpost in the ground, oh, about eighteen inches long. It said, 'Future Site of Junior College.' No name. Just a college... For actual location [it was] on the hillside just in front of the Administration Building [on Frey Lake Road]. But the actual land around that was all trees; there were cattle grazing in the fields—this was a pasture."¹³

The following May the Board of Regents appointed Dr. Sturgis as the charter president of the Cobb County junior college. On 1 July 1965 he assumed his duties at a college lacking faculty, students, books, and buildings. The institution did not even have a name. The *Marietta Daily Journal* occasionally referred to Kennesaw Mountain Junior College, but the Regents had approved no official appellation. While ordering the original stationery, Sturgis decided to put "Marietta College" on the letterhead, reasoning that system institutions such as Columbus College and Augusta College were named after nearby cities. It occurred to him that people outside the area may never have heard of Cobb County, but perhaps knew of Marietta, as the home of Lockheed. An outsider to local turf battles, he innocently assumed that all citizens of Cobb identified with the county seat. Such was not the case. The *North Cobb News* printed a strong editorial against the proposed name. Soon a delegation of officials from throughout the county descended on Sturgis's office, with one of the mayors, Mary McCall of Acworth, telling him, "I don't know where you came from, but I don't like what you're doing." Sturgis dispelled the tension, however, with his willingness to reconsider. He did not like the name Cobb College, and he thought Kennesaw Mountain Junior College was too wordy. But the mountain, a site of an important Civil War battle, seemed the one prominent landmark in the county that everyone claimed. So the president suggested simply Kennesaw Junior College. That name seemed agreeable to everybody, and was soon approved by the Board of Regents.¹⁴

Two early decisions were to select the school colors and nickname. The colors, black and gold, were taken from the black of the University of Georgia and the gold of Georgia Tech. The Owl became the mascot to emphasize high scholastic expectations. According to Dr. Sturgis, "The owl has the general connotation of being a bird of learning. You will see the wise owl....It seemed that it went perhaps better with academics than some others, and we were trying to make the emphasis on academics."

Campus construction was marred by one labor dispute after another. Strikes between September 1965 and November 1966 kept employees idle for eleven weeks and slowed work for thirteen more. A major cause of the unrest was that Thompson and Street, the primary contractor, hired union labor to construct the buildings, while Cobb County often used nonunion subcontractors in putting in roads, sewers, and utilities. With work running well behind schedule, the college started its first quarter in September 1966, using spare classrooms on the campus of Southern Tech. A number of administrative offices were located in the former Banberry Elementary School, while developmental studies were housed in the recreation center at Marietta Place, formerly a government housing project for Bell Aircraft workers, now a site of public housing.¹⁵

A total of 1,014 students registered for Kennesaw's first fall quarter—not quite as many as expected, but still a respectable number for a new school that lacked its own campus. The students put out the first issue of the campus newspaper, the *Sentinel*, edited by Robert McDearmid, shortly after the start of classes. Southern Tech

proved to be an ideal host, yet space was tight. Madeline Miles remembered working as secretary for two division chairs (humanities and social sciences) in a room the three shared with the registrar and his secretary. Charter employees look back nostalgically, however, at the closeness of that first quarter when faculty and staff throughout the college were in daily contact and where it was still possible to know most of the students.¹⁶

On 9 January 1967 the college started winter quarter on the new campus. At the time, only three buildings were completely finished: Science (now being renovated as the nursing building); Humanities (housing the Bagwell College of Education in 1998); and Student Services (the current Administration Annex). Plant Operations had been located temporarily in the Humanities Building; they had so recently left that the main office reeked of cigar smoke. The Administration Building was ready for occupancy just four days after classes began. Although the public typically entered the campus from Frey Road, the Administration Building faced Frey Lake (the back of the campus), because of an assumption that the still uncompleted I-75 would run west of campus rather than east. Maintenance Service (now remodeled as the Music Building) was finished on 18 January. The Social Science Building was not completed until 1 February. The original library (since renovated as the W. Wyman Pilcher Public Service Building) opened 16 March. The last of the original structures, Physical Education, was not completed until 10 June. Without a gymnasium for two quarters, the Physical Education Department held classes wherever they could. Dr. Grady Palmer remembered teaching tumbling in Social Science 121, with students starting their exercises in the hall and ending in the room's far corner. Classes tended to be noisy, and students were unable to take showers after their workouts. Nonetheless, Palmer asserted that students and faculty were good-natured about the situation.¹⁷

The only other building to be added during the junior college era was a new student center, finished in 1973. President Sturgis believed that the person most responsible for persuading the Regents to build the student center was James V. Carmichael, the man who played a central role in the 1940s in bringing Bell Aircraft to the county. A board appointee of Gov. Sanders, Carmichael brought the Regents to campus for one of their meetings. As a high school student, Carmichael had been severely injured by a speeding motorist, and throughout his adult life needed a cane and often a wheelchair. Now in his sixties, arthritis further afflicted him to the point that he needed three hours to dress in the mornings. After holding a day long board meeting, the Regents scheduled an early morning breakfast on campus to decide the fate of the student center. Describing Carmichael as a "brave, brave person," Sturgis recalled the elder statesman confiding in him that he probably could not arrive in time; "but who would be the first one at that breakfast next morning? Mr. James V. Carmichael. It was really a great, great effort." When Carmichael died in 1972 while the student center was under construction, the decision was made to dedicate it to his memory, the first KSU building named for an individual.¹⁸

From the beginning, the college offered Core classes which would transfer to senior institutions. The major exception was a terminal, two-year nursing program, which started in 1968. Kennesaw did not offer vocational or technical courses, because a vocational-technical school (today's Chattahoochee Technical Institute) already existed in the county. With Southern Tech offering engineering technology degrees, KJC's niche was in the liberal arts. In recruiting faculty, the college had an eye on the future. Believing that Kennesaw was destined to become a four-year school, the administration set out to recruit a senior-college faculty. Doctoral degrees counted for more than experience, and faculty hired without Ph.D.'s were strongly encouraged to finish their graduate work.

Community leaders were always determined to have Kennesaw offer bachelor and graduate degrees. According to President Sturgis, the first question he was asked in his initial meeting with community leaders was, "When are we going to be a senior college?" The chancellor and Board of Regents, however, envisioned Kennesaw as a permanent feeder institution for Georgia State University. The long range plan was for junior colleges to surround Georgia State from the north (Kennesaw), south (Clayton), east (DeKalb) and west (today's Atlanta Metropolitan College), with a diverse, cosmopolitan student body coming together for their upper level and graduate experiences.¹⁹ As was the case in creating the college in the early 1960s, the local power structure had to exercise all the political strength it possessed. Three local delegations visited the Board of Regents without success. The first group, consisting of legislators and Chamber of Commerce representatives, made its presentation in 1971. The spokesperson was State senator Cy Chapman. A second delegation, headed by Sen. Jack Henderson, appeared

before the Regents in 1973.

During the 1974 gubernatorial race a South Georgia politician named George Busbee came to Cobb County seeking support. Power brokers such as state legislators Joe Mack Wilson and A.L. Burruss pledged their assistance in exchange for a pledge that Busbee would do everything in his power to convert KJC to four-year status and complete I-75 through the county (at the time it stopped at today's North Marietta Parkway and did not resume until beyond Cartersville, making it necessary for motorists to reach the college by a series of two-lane roads). After the Albany Democrat was elected, he kept his word. The college conversion occurred in 1976, and I-75 was completed the following year.

In 1975 the third and next-to-last delegation approached the Regents. Spokespersons were a former legislator, Harold Willingham, and a retired president of the Arrow Shirt Co., Robert T. Garrison. The former played a central role in bringing both Southern Tech and KJC to Cobb County. The latter headed the KJC Foundation, an organization formed in 1969 to raise private funds for scholarships and other worthwhile academic purposes. Meanwhile, Rep. Joe Mack Wilson saw to it that the legislature put funds in the Regents' budget to finance the conversion. He was supported by the chair of the House Appropriations Committee, Joe Frank Harris, a future governor and KJC Foundation member. They put \$100,000 in the 1975-76 budget, and \$250,000 in the 1976-77 budget. The Regents did not request this money and were not happy that the legislature was forcing their hand. But the board knew it could count on financial support if they voted for the change.²⁰

In the meantime, students were exercising their influence. June Krise, an SGA senator and later president, helped organize a petition drive in which student activists invaded local shopping centers, gathering 10,000 signatures of individuals who wanted to see a senior college in Cobb County. The "Four-Year Kennesaw" committee also held a rally, distributed "Four-Year" T-shirts, and lobbied the Chamber of Commerce. By documenting a public demand for Kennesaw's conversion, the students proved helpful to the civic leaders in their negotiations with the Board. Personal contacts also played a role in achieving four-year status. Prominent Cobb countians argued Kennesaw's case to regents they knew. Dr. Sturgis, for instance, contacted the regent for the Seventh Congressional District, James D. Maddox of Rome, judge of the State Court of Floyd County. Another delegation was scheduled to present Kennesaw's case to the Regents on 14 April 1976. The KJC president was concerned that the board would again thank them politely and take no action. This time he believed that the college's friends deserved an answer. Maddox agreed and made sure that the matter was placed on the agenda where it would be discussed in full.

At the April 14 meeting Garrison again headed the local delegation. After he spoke, Reps. Burruss and Harris said a few words. The Regents discussed the matter for two hours. As Georgia's third largest county, Cobb made a compelling case that the growing population deserved a better educational system. Not only did Cobb lack a four-year college, but the service area of northwest Georgia was without a state-supported senior institution. On the other hand, the Regents were under a court order to further desegregate the state's universities, and they worried that a senior college in Cobb would slow the efforts to promote a multicultural, ethnically diverse academic climate. It was soon obvious that the proponents outnumbered the skeptics. At the end of the debates, Maddox made the motion to grant four-year status, with the change to take effect in fall 1978. The motion passed by a vote of eleven to two, and Kennesaw had become a senior college.²¹

For the next two years the Kennesaw family worked to prepare senior-level courses and programs. In September 1977 "junior" was dropped from the name, and the institution became Kennesaw College. Junior-level courses began in fall 1978, with senior classes initiated the following year. The first bachelor's degrees were awarded in June 1980. Having overseen Kennesaw's transition, Dr. Sturgis announced his retirement, effective 31 December 1980. The institution had just completed a successful accreditation visit from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The new library was almost complete. After forty-six years in education, Sturgis felt that the time was right to bow out. "We set out to build a quality institution and I think we have done that," the retiring president concluded.²²

After a national search the Board of Regents selected Betty L. Siegel, the first woman president in the history of the university system. Dr. Siegel earned her Ph.D. from Florida State University, followed by two years of post-

doctoral study in clinical child psychology at Indiana University. Prior to coming to Kennesaw, she was dean of academic affairs for continuing education at the University of Florida (1972-76) and dean of the school of Education and Psychology at Western Carolina University (1976-81). If President Sturgis brought dignity and credibility to Kennesaw, Dr. Siegel added energy and enthusiasm. At a time when the college's story was not well known, she devoted much attention to public relations, maintaining a full calendar of speaking engagements in the metropolitan area and throughout the country. She also worked to achieve a more inviting atmosphere on the Kennesaw campus. In a book on outstanding colleges and academic leaders, she was quoted as saying: "We must recruit talented, inviting, caring teachers and help them to create a nurturing, stimulating environment that exemplifies college-wide commitment to excellence in teaching...[and enable instructors to] possess the most accurate understanding available about the learners who pass through their doors."²³

Her management style put great emphasis on teamwork. Committees were established to discuss virtually every aspect of college life. The View of the Future Committee, headed by Dr. Helen Ridley, produced a major institutional self-study. Out of this effort came a number of innovative programs and services such as the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and the Kennesaw State University Freshman Seminar (KSU 101). In 1982 Kennesaw for the first time established intercollegiate athletic programs. Dr. Sturgis had not been philosophically opposed to athletics. In fact, in his early days he coached a high school basketball team to a Georgia state championship. However, he believed that the fledgling junior college lacked the resources to develop a quality program, and he was unwilling to settle for mediocrity. By the 1980s the college was in a position to fund a winning program. Dr. Siegel saw athletics as a way to increase school spirit and to give students and alumni an added opportunity to identify with the institution. Originally, Kennesaw was affiliated with the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), but in the mid-1990s it would join the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), competing in Division II.²⁴

In 1983 the Regents approved an academic reorganization plan, replacing the divisional structure with a system of departments and schools. The latter was considered more appropriate for a senior college, allowing students to identify more closely with the faculty and staff of their chosen discipline. Initially, there were separate schools for business, for education, for the arts, humanities, and social sciences, and for science, math, and nursing. In 1994 nursing would break away from science and mathematics and become a separate school. In the Siegel era the institution has had two name changes. In 1988 the word "State" was added to the name. The alteration followed a Regents' policy allowing two-year institutions to drop "junior" from their titles. The result was that nothing in the name of Kennesaw College distinguished it from the junior colleges. Moreover, scholars from other states often assumed that Kennesaw College was a private school. The term "state" solved both identity problems, implying both "public" and "four-year" status. The name remained Kennesaw State College until 12 June 1996 when the Board of Regents granted university status to most of the state's senior colleges. Shortly afterward, the four original schools became colleges, with nursing the sole remaining school.²⁵

The 1980s were a decade of tremendous growth for Kennesaw. In fall 1981, Dr. Siegel's first quarter as president, enrollment surpassed four thousand. By 1990 it topped ten thousand for the first time. Part of the increase resulted from the establishment of graduate programs in 1985. The first master's degrees were in business administration and in elementary education. The Board of Regents has been slow to add new graduate degrees, but in the 1990s additional programs have included the MBA for Experienced Professionals (1993), the Master of Public Administration (1993), the Master of Accounting (1993), the M.A. in Professional Writing (1995), the M.S. in Nursing (1996), and the M.Ed. in Special Education (1997).

Also spurring growth was the dramatic rise in upper level undergraduates. In the early 1980s many students continued to use Kennesaw as a junior college, starting their college experience here, then transferring elsewhere for their junior and senior classes. In the last decade the opposite has more typically been the case. Excluding the colleges defined as research institutions (UGA, Georgia State, Georgia Tech, and the Medical College), Kennesaw has the highest enrollment at the junior/senior level of any Georgia public university. In fall 1996, for example, 5310 KSU students were classified as juniors or seniors (49 percent of all undergraduates), compared to 4655 (or 37 percent) at Georgia Southern University. Despite the limited number of master's level programs, the graduate

enrollment had risen to 1195 students in fall 1996. This number was low when compared to research institutions, but behind only West Georgia and Georgia Southern of the state and regional universities.

Gradually, KSU's physical plant has expanded to meet the needs of a comprehensive senior university. Since junior college days, KSU has added the Sturgis Library (1979), Humanities Building (1979), Joe Mack Wilson Building (1989), A.L. Burruss (Business) Building (1991), Lex and LeoDelle Jolley Lodge (1993), and Science Building (1996). In 1993 the Regents purchased an additional thirty acres on the east side of the campus, where a new building is being erected to house the administration and the Bagwell College of Education. In late 1997 work crews began constructing a major addition to the Carmichael Student Center. Even before construction began on these structures, the university's total investment in land and buildings surpassed seventy-five million dollars.²⁶

The decade of the 1990s has been a time of controversy as well as achievement. Particularly troublesome was the public reaction to a course, "Renewing American Civilization," taught in fall 1993 by Congressman Newt Gingrich. A number of faculty members participated in developing the syllabus and worked diligently to ensure a high academic content. Dr. Gingrich holds a Ph.D. in history and was fully qualified to teach the course. Classes were interesting and provocative; and the administration, in good conscience, defended the course as an exercise of academic freedom. Nonetheless, the campus was not prepared for the intense criticism which Gingrich and the course generated. The central problem was that some of the congressman's political supporters donated two hundred thousand dollars to the KSU Foundation to purchase video equipment to broadcast the classes around the country. Gingrich's opponents objected that Kennesaw had sacrificed its impartiality by allowing a powerful politician to use the institution's good name to build a cadre of supporters for his conservative revolution. They pointed out that political contributions are not tax deductible, but charitable and educational contributions are. One could make a case that political activists used the course to write off their income taxes contributions which were political in nature. The Board of Regents prevented the course from continuing beyond one quarter and established a policy that state and federal elected officials cannot teach in the university system until after they leave office. In January 1995 Gingrich became the first Republican House Speaker in forty years. By that time he was being investigated by the House Ethics Committee, with the course and its funding a central focus of the probe. In early 1997 Gingrich admitted that he had made some mistakes and agreed to pay the House committee a three hundred thousand dollar fine to cover the costs of their investigation. As a result of the controversy, the KSU Foundation has been forced to spend well over one hundred thousand dollars in legal fees to protect its tax-exempt status.²⁷

A problem of more limited duration involved the College of Education. Kennesaw State had the best record in the state for students passing the Teacher Certification test on the first try. The institution had much positive feedback from local schools on the quality of teachers trained on this campus. Nonetheless, the teacher education program failed in 1993 to gain reaccreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. NCATE cited deficiencies in several areas, such as overcrowded classrooms and various curricular problems. The crisis led to an administrative shake-up, with Dr. Deborah Wallace brought in as dean. Faculty from throughout the campus served on newly formed committees, designed to increase collaboration among the various disciplines involved in educating future teachers. To reduce the student/teacher ratio, the large post-baccalaureate program was phased out. After a year and a half of intense effort, the education program was greatly strengthened and in April 1995 easily passed all eighteen standards for reaccreditation. Since then, it has been cited as a model for other colleges and universities.²⁸

KSU has recently been on the losing end of several federal court cases. In October 1996, without admitting guilt, the university and a nearby apartment complex signed a consent decree to pay twenty-five thousand dollars each to two African-American female athletes, who claimed they were forced to move to a section where blacks were concentrated to make room for a white coach. In August 1997 Dr. Candace Kaspers, a former chair of the Communications Department, won a \$275,000 judgment against the university for retaliating against her when she objected to a reorganization plan for her department. While Kaspers was never fired from the faculty, she was relieved in 1994 of her administrative duties and asked to teach full time. She refused and, instead, took her case to federal court. In the court of public opinion she argued that she was removed for trying to protect the jobs of the

only two Jewish members of her faculty. However, in the court room, the only issue was whether KSU acted arbitrarily in removing her for speaking her mind. A jury decided against the institution, and the administration decided not to appeal the decision.²⁹

In the meantime, top officials of the university have repeatedly cited Kennesaw's strong policy against all types of religious and ethnic discrimination. The university is particularly proud of its record in attracting African-American students and faculty. By fall 1996 a total of thirty-one black faculty members taught full time at Kennesaw State. Constituting 9 percent of the total faculty, these individuals were found at all academic ranks and in all colleges and schools on campus; 48 percent were tenured. While the percentage of black faculty has changed little in the last decade, the proportion of African-American students has shown a remarkable rise. In fall 1997 black enrollment for the first time surpassed the thousand mark, with an official figure of 1078. With total enrollment topping 13,000, the African-American proportion reached 8 percent. These numbers were up from only 275 black students (3 percent of total enrollment) just nine years earlier. The improvement is in part the result of demographic changes in Cobb County, where the number of African-Americans has been rising (from 4 percent of the total population in 1980 to 10 percent in 1990). At the same time, the university, through the Student Development Center and other campus offices, has worked diligently to recruit and retain black students. The campus has not been free of racial discord, and it falls short of the diversity of a downtown, urban university. But it increasingly reflects the racial composition of the nation as a whole and, for a suburban campus, has achieved a fair amount of multicultural diversity.³⁰

As KSU matures as an institution, it increasingly gains recognition beyond the campus for the excellence of its programs. The 1989 college edition of *U.S. News and World Report* singled out Kennesaw as one of five southern "Top Up-and-Coming Regional Colleges and Universities." For the next two years the magazine continued to list Kennesaw as one of the "best up and coming colleges" in the South and as "a rising star." The value of KSU's academic programs is evident in student performances on a number of tests. Reference has already been made to the splendid record of education students on the teacher certification test. Over 90 percent of the nursing graduates of the last decade have passed the licensing exam on their first attempt. Accounting graduates have the best record in the University System in the number passing the Certified Public Accountant exam on the initial try. Kennesaw has also excelled in the 1990s on the playing fields, with the baseball and softball teams each winning two national championships and with conference championships in other sports, such as women's basketball and cross-country.

The athletes are good examples of the talent of students in their late teens and early twenties. Kennesaw, however, has increasingly become a nontraditional institution serving students over the traditional age. Including both graduate and undergraduate students, the median age in fall 1996 was about 25 and the mean 27. About 10 percent of all students were over the age of 40. The typical Kennesaw student juggles a host of responsibilities. Many are married and have children. Most have outside jobs. When the college started in the 1960s the overwhelming majority of students were male. Since the early 1980s over 60 percent have been female. The typical KSU student might be described as a woman in her twenties or thirties, who maybe had a little college training out of high school, then got married. With the last child off to kindergarten, she is back in school to prepare for a professional career. She brings with her drive, determination, and life experiences which help her comprehend easily the relevance of what she learns. She does classroom work of a quality which often exceeds the instructor's expectations and forces a reevaluation of how much students are capable of doing during a quarter or semester. In the opinion of this writer, the general level of achievement in many classes at KSU surpasses that of all but a few institutions of a generation ago.

Kennesaw is not alone in this transformation. In the 1990s only a few, elite residential schools cater exclusively to traditional aged students. In an era of rapid economic and societal change, just a handful of people stay in one job for a career; and those who remain current have been forced to become life-long learners. A commuter university with busy, accomplished faculty teaching equally busy and talented students, nontraditional Kennesaw, in many ways, has become the typical seat of higher education in the 1990s.³¹

As a state university, Kennesaw's mission is primarily to achieve excellence in teaching and service. President Betty Siegel has set an excellent example in service by her active involvement in public affairs. In the late 1990s she

served on the board of directors of four major corporations. In 1996 she headed the Cobb Chamber of Commerce. Like Dr. Sturgis twenty-one years earlier, she was selected in 1996 as the *Marietta Daily Journal's* Cobb Citizen of the Year. On a national scale she has served as chair of the board of directors of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and as a member of the executive board of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education.³²

While the faculty is better known for teaching and service than research and writing, some faculty members have gained regional and national recognition for their scholarly achievement. To cite a few examples, English professor JoAllen Bradham's *Some Personal Papers* won the prestigious Townsend Prize in 1996 for the best novel by a Georgia writer in the last two years. The October 1997 issue of *Georgia Trend* magazine listed Dr. Roger Tutterow as one of forty Georgians under the age of 40 who were rising stars in their profession. The chair of KSU's Economics and Finance Department, Tutterow was recognized for his role as co-director of KSU's Econometric Center, which forecasts business patterns for area corporations and local governments. Dr. Craig Aronoff, who holds KSU's Chair of Private Enterprise is nationally recognized for developing a Family Enterprise Center, which for over a decade has been assisting family businesses. Mathematicians Chris Schaufele and Nancy Zumoff co-authored an *Earth Algebra* textbook, which is used in college classrooms throughout the country to teach mathematical concepts by solving practical, environmental problems. Since its creation in 1988 the A.L. Burruss Institute of Public Service, under the direction of Dr. Harold K. McGinnis, has brought KSU about two million dollars in funded research projects, conducted mainly for local governments. Included are public opinion surveys on a host of questions, a Lake Allatoona Clean Lakes Study, and work with various law enforcement agencies. Chemistry professor Patricia Reggio has brought about a half million dollars of grant money to Kennesaw State for research she conducts with her students on cannibinoid activity at the molecular level. Indeed, in FY '96 alone, KSU faculty members such as Dr. Reggio secured over two million dollars in grants and contracts from external sources.³³

Throughout its thirty-five year history Kennesaw has been evolving. Faculty recruited today are typically far more experienced and accomplished than those hired ten or twenty years ago. Certainly, more is expected today of those who achieve tenure or promotion. At the same time, students are winning an increasing number of awards, and alumni are distinguishing themselves in the businesses and professions. Situated in one of the South's most rapidly growing and affluent areas, KSU should face a bright future as it continues to grow in quality and influence.

Notes

1. Office of Institutional Research, *Kennesaw State University Fact Book*, 1996-1997, 14.
2. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, 9 October 1963.
3. *Marietta Daily Journal*, 19 November 1964.
4. The prominent role of Lucius Clay is well documented in a file labelled, "Marietta, Georgia, 904-9-23, CAA Program," Box 22, Civil Aeronautics Administration Office of Airports DLA Correspondence File, 1941-1947, Marietta, Ga. to Boise, Id., Record Group 237, Federal Aviation Administration, National Archives II, College Park, Md. Also see *Marietta Daily Journal*, 22 May 1941, 4 September 1941, 16 October 1941, 27 October 1941, and 20 February 1942.
5. *Ibid.*, 22 November 1943.
6. Donald J. Norton, *Larry: A Biography of Lawrence D. Bell* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981), 133-41.

7. A History of Southern Polytechnic State University and the Marietta Center of the University of Georgia can be found in Hugh T. Atkinson et al., *Higher Education in Cobb County Georgia* (Marietta: Cox Printing Co., 1966), 39-88.
8. Application from Cobb and Marietta Governmental Agencies to the Regents of the University System for the Establishment and Operation of a Junior College, 3 April 1963 (copy in file labelled "History of the College," Deed File, Office of the Vice President for Business and Finance, Kennesaw State University); Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, 9 October 1963 ; Memorandum for Record by J.H. Dewberry, Director of Plant and Business Operations, Regents of the University System of Georgia, 20 February 1964 , included in Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Board of Regents, 3 March 1964.
9. *Marietta Daily Journal*, 23 April 1964.
10. John Steve Frey, Sr., and Sara Skelton Bozeman Frey, interview by Mary Boswell Cawley, 28 January 1988, Cobb County Oral History Series, No. 29; John Steve Frey, Jr., and Nina Chinault Frey, interview by Mary Boswell Cawley, 18 May 1988, Cobb County Oral History Series, No. 40, Bentley Rare Book Room, Sturgis Library, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Ga.
11. John Pennington, "Controversial Cobb Tract—Public to Private to Public," *Atlanta Journal*, 21 August 1964, 1.
12. Ibid.; Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Board of Regents, 3 March 1964 ; letter from Harold S. Willingham to Honorable Hubert Dewberry, Director of Plant and Business Operations, Regents of the University System of Georgia, 31 July 1964 (copy in "History of the College," file).
13. Horace W. Sturgis, interview by Thomas A. Scott, 13 November 1986-19 February 1987, transcript in possession of author.
14. Ibid.; *Marietta Daily Journal*, 23 July 1965 and 29 July 1965; *North Cobb News*, 29 July 1965 (a copy of the editorial can be located in the college scrapbooks in the Sturgis Library vault at KSU).
15. Horace W. Sturgis interview; *Marietta Daily Journal*, 22 October 1965, 8 November 1965, 3 March 1966, 12 August 1966, 14 September 1966, 3 October 1966, and 24 November 1966; *Atlanta Journal*, 1 August 1966; Horace W. Sturgis to J.H. Dewberry, 16 May 1966; Dewberry to Sturgis, 17 May 1966 ("History of the College" Building Notes file); Roger E. Hopkins, interview by Thomas A. Scott, 15 August 1988, transcript in possession of author; *Sentinel*, 3 October 1966.
16. Ibid.; Madeline M. Miles, interview by Thomas A. Scott, 28 May 1992, transcript in possession of author.
17. Ibid.; C. Grady Palmer, interview by Thomas A. Scott, 17 August 1988, transcript in possession of author; *Sentinel*, 2 February 1967; Ralph E. Slay, Architect, Bothwell and Associates, to Frank C. Dunham, Associate Director, Construction and Physical Plants, Regents of the University System, 28 September 1967, ("History of the College," Building Notes file).
18. Sturgis interview.
19. Sturgis interview; Hopkins interview; George H. Beggs, interview by Thomas A. Scott, 3 August 1988,

- transcript in possession of author; minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Regents, 14 April 1976; *System Summary*, April 1976.
20. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Regents, 12-13 January 1971, 10 October 1973, and 12 March 1975; Joe Mack Wilson, interview by Thomas A. Scott, 1 April 1988, Cobb County Oral History Series, No. 19; Robert T. Garrison, interview by Thomas Allan Scott and Mary Boswell Cawley, 12 June 1987, Cobb County Oral History Series, No. 5; *Atlanta Constitution*, 3 October 1975.
 21. Diane C. Thomas, "Kennesaw: The Little College That Could," *Atlanta*, 17 October 1977, 50; Sturgis and Garrison interviews; *Marietta Daily Journal*, 18 April 1976; *Atlanta Constitution*, 15 April 1976; minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Regents, 14 April 1976; *System Summary*, April 1976; James D. Maddox to Charles A. Harris, chairman, Board of Regents, 22 March 1976, Horace W. Sturgis files, in possession of author.
 22. Kennesaw College Catalog, 1978-1979; Sturgis interview; *Atlanta Journal/Constitution, Cobb Extra*, 4 September 1980.
 23. J. Wade Gilley et al., *Searching for Academic Excellence: Twenty Colleges and Universities on the Move and Their Leaders* (New York: American Council on Education/Macmillan Publishing Co., 1986), 141.
 24. *Report of the View of the Future Committee*, Kennesaw College, May 1982; Sturgis interview; *Fact Book*, 4, 7 .
 25. *Ibid.*; Betty L. Siegel to Chancellor Dean Propst, Board of Regents, 16 April 1988 ("History of the College" file).
 26. *Fact Book*, 4-7, 14, 19-20, 116..
 27. *Atlanta Constitution*, 13 August 1993, D-4; 15 August 1993, G-7; 2 September 1993, A-1; 3 September 1993, F-1 and F-6; 19 September 1993, F-8; 14 October 1993, B-3; 18 January 1997, A-1 and A-9; 22 January 1997, A-4.
 28. *Ibid.*, 19 October 1993, G-2, 24 November 1993, B-3; *Atlanta Journal Constitution Cobb Extra*, 20 April 1995, p. 15.
 29. *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, 26 October 1996, C-3; 22 August 1997, C-1.
 30. *Sentinel*, 7 January 1998; *Fact Book*, 36, 94.
 31. *Ibid.*, 37-38.
 32. "Betty Lentz Siegel, Ph.D.," <http://www.kennesaw.edu/about/siegel.shtml>.
 33. *Atlanta Constitution*, 2 May 1996, B-1; *Georgia Trend*, October 1997, p. 46; Office of Sponsored Programs, *Honor Roll of Faculty Initiatives*, 1996.