



### **William G. Bostic Oral Interview February 5, 2016**

SEAN PATRICK: We're going to produce this raw video so it may sound like a strange question, but can you please state your name, your job title, and please tell us how long you've been at the Census Bureau.

BOSTIC: My name is Bill Bostic and I'm the Associate Director for Economic Programs, and I've been here at the Census Bureau 40 years. Actually my anniversary date was January 4, 1976, so that...was never my original intention to stay at the Bureau for 40 years, but it's been a good ride, it's been a good ride.

PATRICK: How did you come to work at the Census Bureau and what were some of your early jobs here?

BOSTIC: So I actually came to the Census Bureau as a coop student from Bowie State. It was called Bowie State College then, now known as Bowie State University. And so, I actually worked on the monthly wholesale program when I first came to the Bureau. And it was fun. So, it was reviewing a lot of paper based listings, big listings, looking at month-to-month sales and inventory; and actually we did a project about the comparison of the inventory from month-to-month and then looking at 12 month comparisons on a year-to-year basis. So, that's what I did for probably the first 8 months when I came to the Bureau, but it was as a co-op student.

PATRICK: Maybe you can give us an impression or at least tell us how you liked working here from the late 70s, say through the 80s. I guess that was a different time.

BOSTIC: Well, certainly the environment was really paper-based, so we had no desktop computers.

PATRICK: When was this?

BOSTIC: This is in the late 70s. So when I came to the Bureau January 4, 1976, it was a very paper-based organization. We had a lot of employees that did a lot of analytical work, reviewing data on big paper listings that they would review, very paper driven process. People were very professional, very smart, and there were pockets of diversity. I worked in Business Division and so there were at least 3 or 4 branch chiefs of color in the late 70s and at least one branch manager, Dorothy Reynolds, promoted to assistant division chief probably in the early

80s. But, a lot of camaraderie and people were dedicated to the work that they did. That was very evident. But I think the one thing I kind of found odd after being here for 3 years, I didn't think that people really worked with a lot of logic and common sense. It was almost like thinking illogically at times in the way we kind of did things. I always notice that, as an observation. But I worked in the environment, got over it, and I kind of stuck to my logic and commonsense approach to doing my job. That's just the way I'm wired.

PATRICK: You talked about the paper-based, so maybe we'll get into some of the technology changes in particularly in your mind [inaudible]. What was it like though working at the Census Bureau during the '90s. What were you doing at the time, what were some of the changes that you saw happening [inaudible] technology.

BOSTIC: So, 1994 I was a branch chief at the time and the bureau was reacting to a budget cut from Congress, a \$30 million budget cut, based on the 1990 population census. They [Congress] didn't think we did a very good job, although we counted approximately 98.6 percent of the people.<sup>1</sup> I think we didn't do a good job of probably communicating the complexities of conducting the population census. You know 98.6 percent is usually an A plus grade. But they created three new positions: the congressional associates for demographic programs, for decennial programs, and for the economic programs. I was selected to fill the economic position. We worked together as a team and tried to be more responsive to Congress and be consistent as an agency how we dealt with Congressional requests. Certainly there was a critical need to educate them of the various Census programs. Throughout my entire career, right to this day, my thought is the Census Bureau doesn't have what I would call an identity crisis, the problem was that everyone thought all we did was conduct the population census every 10 years. So they weren't really aware of the economic statistics that we produced and the other demographic statistics we produced. So we worked together as a team, we went down on the Hill [Capitol Hill], we educated a lot of staffers about the programs that we did, etc, to be more responsive. And I was in that position for ten months. So we really started taking a hard look at our power users, those who could advocate on our behalf for funding of our programs, etc. So the early 90s, mid 90s, that particular situation was going on.

BOSTIC: I was promoted to be the Assistant Division Chief for Classifications, and the number one project for the Economic Directorate was the North American Industry Classification System, which we introduced in 1997. The project started probably late '93 early '94 ,and I came into that position in November of '94. Probably one of the best projects that I ever worked on, as we developed that system in conjunction with Mexico and Canada. It was the supply view of the economy that focused on the production processes and grouping industries with similar processes together. And so, that was really new, it was overhauling the Standard

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<sup>1</sup> Actual undercount rate was 1.8%

Industrial Classification system which we had used, which had become really outdated. This was really an overhaul of the industry classification system that the three countries' respective statistical systems actually use. Very interesting project, met a lot of really smart colleagues in Mexico and Canada, did a lot of travelling. That project took three and half years to complete. And then, I was responsible for implementing the new classification system into the '97 Economic Census. So those were two of the hot projects going on in the '90s that I worked on. Also on the population side in preparation for 2000 we had this sampling issue to contend with. That was a hot issue about doing a complete enumeration versus sampling, especially for those areas that were real hard to enumerate. So that's what I recall as another hot button in the 90s.

PATRICK: With all the changes that have taken place since you started, what stands out as the biggest advancement in how we perform our mission. And maybe particularly you can speak to [the economic] directorate.

BOSTIC: Well I think overall what I would call coming in the '70s and '80s there was a lot more assessment in how we conducted business and more recognition of individual performance. As we moved into the late '80s and '90s, we started to formulate more teams to get our work done. The importance of sharing information was a focal point as we started to move into the desktop computer era and leveraging email, and different ways to communicate, broader ways to communicate. So that started to move the organization forward in a different direction because the Census Bureau has a, really a long history of really bright people that worked here and these were innovators that really helped move the whole statistical system forward. And some of those innovators went into the private sector which is why we have Westat and some other private statistical organizations. So I think operating with more change, recognizing that we were far smarter collectively than individually. We started to leverage technology in a way that gave us more computing power, different methodologies that we could start to test, assess, leverage technology and slowly start to move out of the paper environment. I think it is still a challenge from time-to-time to get staff to think differently because the 2010 population census was still done by pencil and paper. In the economic directorate, we had started to move to an electronic environment, collecting information through the web and also our data capture which is iCADE (integrated Computer Assisted Data Entry), the system that we used in 2002, 2007, 2012. We refined that system by doing two population censuses for other countries—Bangladesh and Kenya. We were able to refine the whole optical character recognition capability in that system and now are looking to use it for the 2020 population census. I will always say in the economic directorate, we always did a lot of innovation because we didn't have the funding levels that, say the population census typically gets. The decennial programs get to design and test, modify, and test some more. It's like taking their airplane for a test flight, land, test flight again and again. We in the econ directorate have to keep our plane

constantly in the air and do our testing in a way we don't crash and burn. So we learned to innovate out of necessity from a funding standpoint. So I would just reiterate that the technological wave allowed us to do things differently. Under Tom Mesenbourg (Assistant Director for Economic Programs), for the '97 economic census, we introduced the North American Industry Classification System. We began to standardize the forms associated with the economic census. That really started to change say the front end of the collection process for the economic censuses and it really refined some processes and made us more efficient from that standpoint.

PATRICK: How would you characterize, and maybe we kind of touched on this, I was going to ask you how would you characterize the last 15 years in terms of the work place in how the Census Bureau performs. I feel like you kind of touched on that.

BOSTIC: I think what I'll add, in 1997, I know it was under the Clinton Administration, they really pushed partnerships, and that was really labor and management working together. So the Census Bureau created the Partnership Council which I was selected to participate on, and I did so up until 2011. Even with the change of administrations when we moved to a Republican administration, we still kept our Partnership Council, we were still very successful working together, collaborating and putting some things in place that helped support the organization as well as the staff. So that was pretty unique and I think it was a model that regardless, of administration changes, etc., that as an organization we were able to really still collaborate and agree on activities and events. That was helpful for both the organization and for the employees. And so, in 2011 I came off the council, and then in 2013 I was asked to come back on and the name changed from the Partnership Council to the Labor Management Council. We've been pretty successful because during that time we actually were able to come up with the AWS [alternate work schedule] schedule, we've come up with the 4/10 schedule that allowed employees to have flexibility, the telework policy, the transit subsidy program that employees get for using public transportation. So I can recall when bargaining in the management/labor environment was really contentious. And so, we were able to leverage a collaborative environment where we saw each other's interests and worked together as management and labor to really come up with some good initiatives and accomplishments that put the organization in a better place to be successful as well as looking at the best interests of the employees. So, I have been really proud to work on the Labor and Management Council.

PATRICK: Personally, I appreciate those things you mention.

[Laughter]

BOSTIC: Oh, thank you. We would hope that most employees do.

PATRICK: What are some of your most memorable experiences? Perhaps you have an anecdote, something to share, or just in general.

BOSTIC: Well, when I came to the Bureau and it was May 1977 that I actually came on full time employment as I had completed my coop tours. I was working on the 1977 Economic Census. It was a project called DE2, but it was basically doing an evaluation and assessment of the 1977 economic census questionnaires' content. We worked with the research and methodology division, I think it was Statistical Research Division, and we went out to conduct company interviews for the 1977 Economic Census. They selected 500 establishments in the retail, wholesale, services, construction, and manufacturing sectors, and we did these interviews about the data that they provided. Was it a book figure? Was it an estimate? How did they interpret the survey questions? They wanted staff that wasn't working on the economic census and I was in a branch called the Cross Surveys Branch where we worked on some census projects and we worked on some current survey projects. So I got to travel all over the country and I probably did maybe about 250 of the 500 interviews. So I was on the road quite a bit. I got to see the country, and I thought that was really neat. So that was a great project. I mentioned the NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) work that we did with Canada and Mexico. I thought that was a great project too. I was Chief of Foreign Trade Division and I got to do quite a bit of international travel associated with that particular position because of trade reconciliation projects with other countries. It's probably the only job that I ever said that I really liked, was the Foreign Trade Division Chief job.

PATRICK: In hindsight would you do anything different?

BOSTIC: No, I really wouldn't. You know, I took ownership of my own career. I worked on projects that I thought would give me exposure. I always think it is very important for one to get exposed to different projects, to work with different people. But the flip side is the exposure allows you to showcase your skillsets. I really got to do that when I was in the Congressional Associate position because I worked with division chiefs, associate directors from the decennial and the demographics directorates as well as the economic directorate. I got exposed to people that I wouldn't normally have because we've always been very silo-based and worked within our own particular directorates. We didn't do a lot of sharing as we do now. So that's another viewpoint what is different today than in the '70s, '80s, and '90s. It was very silo-based even up through most of 2000 until Dr. (Robert M.) Groves (Director, Census Bureau) arrived in 2009. So the Congressional Associate position, which I was only in for ten months, I got exposure to work with all three directorates. So I really got insight about the demographic programs and insight from the decennial operations. So that was great. And I took training. I always think it's important to mentor and coach staff too. But most important you have to take ownership of your own career development, what's important to you, but you should seek mentors along the way, some things you shouldn't do alone, and so talking to other people

about your career aspirations, what you would like to achieve, volunteering for projects, you really want to set yourself apart from others because as you start to move up the ladder the competition gets a lot stiffer. So I don't think I would do anything different. I've had a good run here. I've been blessed to be in a position to really influence people and the direction that the agency is going, so that's a pretty unique position to be in.

PATRICK: What would you attribute your professional success to?

BOSTIC: I was always willing to work hard and I always thought, as a minority, that I needed to be better. That equal would get me so far. And that was just my mind set. But also, I wasn't afraid to venture out and do jobs or assignments or projects that were difficult. Figure you get to learn, you get exposed, and for me personally I always wanted an opportunity to either fail or succeed. And I've been pretty good, and I have a very good track record of being successful along the way. I've also had great people that worked for me over the years, so the one thing I recognized the higher you go up the chain you're not really doing the work. So it's really important to value your staff and the people that work for you. You have to find out what's important to them, how can you help them along the way, provide opportunities, and as a leader you have to have integrity and credibility. Because your staff makes you or breaks you when it's all said and done, so your message and your actions need to be consistent. Integrity and credibility is all I have when it's all said and done. I always tell people I have good intentions. Given that I'm not perfect, I sometimes fall short even in my good intentions. So I try to listen because sometimes people take your actions or statements, they interpret it in different ways, sometimes negatively. And I always thought it was important to apologize to people when they interpret an action or statement in a way I didn't intend. I always attempt to explain my intent, this is what I was trying to do. And that style has worked well for me. I believe in holding people accountable. We're here to do the job, serve the American people and I think you're supposed to put in an honest day of work for pay. From that regard I'm still old school.

PATRICK: Is there anything else that you'd like to say for this video?

BOSTIC: Well, the Census Bureau has been good to me, and I like to say, "I've been good to the Census Bureau." I've had a pretty exciting career. I think I've worked on a number of different projects, different subject matter. People ask how could you stay in one place for 40 years? The Bureau has such a wide variety of different topics and subjects and programs that you can work on. It's been fun. So when I reflect back on my own career, I think I made some good choices. I think I've helped people along the way. Certainly people have mentored and coached me when I was coming up through the ranks, and I think it's important that you give back. I always say 'reach one, teach one.' And again, I have been fortunate in this position to influence the direction of the bureau. I think it's important that we are taking the steps that we need to

remain relevant as an organization. We have some challenges but not something that we can't overcome if we work together and if we leverage all of the talent in the organization. Certainly, couldn't ask for more employees to be dedicated and committed to the Bureau, and I think the people that work here really like what they do. And that's a lot to be said for any organization as we have to value our staff. So it's been a good run, but it's coming to a close.

PATRICK: I understand. Ok, well that was the end for the video portion.

DAVID PEMBERTON: We want to be sure to ask you about one of the areas of the economic side, which is Shirley Kallek (Associate Director for Economic Fields).

BOSTIC: Shirley Kallek. [laughs]

SHARON TOSI LACEY: So thank you for your time today Mr. Bostic. We want to follow up, you touched on the theme of mentors and mentees and we wanted to ask you if you could tell us a few of the influential people who assisted you in your career, who were influential in shaping the direction of your career.

BOSTIC: Sure. My first branch chief, Caesar Hill (Chief, Cross Surveys Board), was a mentor to me. I came into his branch as the co-op student. He was one of the few black branch chiefs in Business Division and the Directorate. He really had a lot of influence, but it was sort of a rocky start. [laughs] The funny part, I had a supervisor in Caesar's branch and a lot of times she would run counter to some of the things that he wanted done. And so we (my other 2 branch colleagues that worked for her) had a powwow. She supervised us, and we were having some issues, so we had a heart-to-heart discussion. I made this statement as I was getting ready to go to the restroom, so I was by the door, so I said you know we didn't get here overnight and I don't expect that we will get to some of the issues and resolve them instantaneously or overnight, but we do expect some change. And if you can't resolve it then we'll take it to Caesar. If Caesar can't resolve it, we'll take it to his boss, and then I left. Well, she took what I said as a threat and went down to Caesar's office. And he called me into his office after lunch, and he said did you say these things? I repeated to him what I'd said to her because we're having these issues. [I told him] "You would say 'we're gonna do this' and she said 'we're gonna do that' which countered what you wanted done as the branch chief. We would bring those issues up to her and say, 'Well Caesar says we're gonna do this,' and she would say, 'I heard what Caesar said.' Caesar then asked, 'Did you say something about going over my head?' I said, 'Well I did say we'll bring it to you to resolve and if not [laughing] we go to your boss.'" He didn't like that at all. But the result of my meeting with Caesar was that he took us, the three people she was supervising and put us under another supervisor. So, Caesar and I got through this rough spot. I think he picked up that I wasn't afraid to speak out and that I did respect him, and I wanted to follow through with what he wanted to accomplish, etc. He actually took me under his wing. He gave me a lot of exposure to different projects and really

helped me along the way. He would actually mentor and coach me. I can remember him pulling me to aside, and speaking of Shirley Kallek, she would bless (approve) every promotion from the entry level to the career ladder to supervisory managerial positions. Sometimes she would put a freeze on promotions for a small period of time because of budget situations. So my promotion request went forward during a time she opened a three week window to submit promotions. There was another employee's promotion going forward at the same time, but her manager was pushing for that particular individual's promotion request to go first because she was going for her [grade] 11. I was going for my grade 12. I had said to Caesar [that] I didn't understand because this individual and their branch chief had really stopped speaking to me, you know we'd pass in the hall and I'd speak and they wouldn't say anything. So I said, "I don't understand what's going on." So he then told me, "Both of your promotions are going to Shirley and they think that because you're already a grade 11 going for your grade 12 that your promotion should wait until after this employee's Grade 11 promotion is approved." So he said, "You are experiencing employee jealousy." And it's like, really? [laughing] So he really taught me a lot about perceptions, he taught me about how one is perceived, how they dress. When I first came to the Bureau, I didn't wear a shirt and tie, because I had an uncle that used to work in Human Resources here at the Census Bureau. I asked him about the typical dress code. I often wore a shirt, polo shirt, sweater, etc. My uncle said, "Some people wear jeans." I said, "Well you know I don't do jeans as work dress." During the 1977 Economic Census, DE 2 project that I had mentioned earlier, about doing these interviews, etc, my assistant division chief asked Caesar [whether] I dress the same way going out to these interviews as I dressed at the Census Bureau. I actually wore suits [to the interviews]. I knew visiting companies as a Census Bureau representative required business dress. So I can remember Caesar, my branch chief saying to me, he says, "Look I'm going to tell you this, you do what you want, but impressions, perceptions, image are viewed differently depending on who you are if you know what I mean, etc. You might want to consider wearing a shirt and tie here at work." And from that point on I started wearing shirts and ties, I actually started wearing suits. So, he schooled me along the way about an organization's perception and culture, etc. He was very influential. Jim Aanested, who was my assistant division chief that I worked for as a grade 13 section chief and as a branch chief, was very influential. He taught me how to prepare when I was going to ask for additional resources, anticipate the questions that were going to be asked, what the benefits were, what the risks, etc. He really taught me to prepare and gee... from time to time I used to think it was overkill [laughing] you know, because sometimes we'd go over it and rehearse and he'd ask me a question, etc. And I didn't necessarily have the answer but he'd give me the context of why he was asking the question. I really learned to prepare and anticipate most questions, some of the basic questions that you can expect from senior management. Tom Mesenbourg, the one thing that I recognized from Tom was that sometimes Tom could have his mind locked in on a certain position of something he wanted to do. But if you gave him evidence or data and presented a business case that was counter to what he was



thinking, he was always open to changing his mind. I thought that was a pretty unique skill to have when you listen to evidence or a business case that had data and metrics. Actual proof that may not be the best direction to go, then he was able to change his mind and wasn't stuck on just his way. Some people I worked for, come hell or high water this is where we're going and this is my decision, done. There was a young lady named Amelia Sharpe (Cross Surveys Branch) who was in the same branch when I came in as a co-op student. She had been there two years prior to me coming into the bureau in Caesar Hill's branch. She also helped me with the culture, expectations and really laid the foundation to help me be a good professional. You think about people that helped you along the way, you realize how important it is to give back and help others. But those four people probably were the most influential in my career.

LACEY: You talked about, among the other projects you worked on, the NAICS, the creation of that. Can you talk a little bit, give us a little more history and detail, your role in it, how it came about?

BOSTIC: Given that the economy was changing and moving more to a service oriented economy, the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) really didn't reflect, business services or have one solid concept that the SIC was based on. Matter of fact, business services, not elsewhere classified (SIC 7399) probably was the biggest 4-digit industry in Sector SIC 73, Business Services. Jack Triplett, was the Chief Economist at BEA (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis), and I think I got his title right, led the NAICS effort for the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). He was Chair of OMB's Economic Classification Policy Committee, which consisted of membership of BEA, BLS (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics), and Census. There needed to be an overhaul of the Standard Industrial Classification system as it had become outdated and did not reflect the services and the intellectual property transformation process taking place in the economy. And then, a collaboration with Statistics Canada, and the INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía), which is Mexico's Statistical Agency, began in early '90's with white papers that highlighted that the SIC really lacked a conceptual foundation. Canada's and Mexico's respective classifications had similar flaws. And so, the three countries started talking about the production process, that we should group like industries together if their production process was similar. So, during this time North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) discussions had begun too. I think NAFTA was implemented in June 1994 or thereabouts.<sup>2</sup> So it made sense that the three North American countries had begun such work. So, the project created a lot of economy sectors subcommittee groups for each country. For the United States, some of the major statistical players, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, BEA, Social Security Administration, Internal Revenue Service, BTS (Bureau of Transportation Statistics), EIA (U.S. Energy Information Administration), NASS (National Agricultural Statistics Service), etc. These three country subcommittee groups were necessary

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<sup>2</sup> NAFTA took effect January 1, 1994.

to work on various economic sectors. There was a manufacturing sector working group, there were several services working groups such as finance, insurance, education, professional services, workgroups, transportation, retail, and wholesale workgroups, etc. Once I became the Assistant Division Chief for Classification, the direction I received from Jack Triplett, and Carol Ambler, (she was the SES (Senior Executive Service) that was leading the Census Bureau NAICS development effort) wanted me to focus on the services workgroups, working with these subcommittees. So, I did a lot of traveling to Canada and Mexico with these subcommittees and helping negotiate different sectors, sub sectors, industries and concepts, etc. I think there were 31 agreements for various sectors and subsectors that were agreed upon by the three countries. These agreements became the skeleton framework to develop the NAICS system. So after the three countries agreed, we had to then sit down and put the meat to the bones, which was really come up with the definitions of all of the subsectors, plus each country used additional industries under the three country comparable industries to reflect its own national economy. In addition, we had to come up with the index of business activities for each industry. The work was really detailed. It was really nuts and bolts. A lot of meetings, a lot of traveling. When we'd get information from Mexico we had to get it translated. When they came here I had to arrange to have translators come in to our meetings. The United States took the lead because of a tight time constraint we were faced with [in] implementing NAICS in the 1997 Economic Census. We developed 70 percent of the 1,100 plus industry definitions and thousands of business activity items for the three countries. So it was a lot of negotiations and I really gained a lot of respect for my other colleagues in Canada and Mexico. They were very intelligent, very in tune to some of the new emerging service industries. They were very dedicated and committed to the projects. So it was one of the best projects that I worked on but it was very exhausting work under tight time constraints.

LACEY: Do you think that the Census Bureau has a particular culture of its own, separate from other government agencies? And if so, can you describe how you see the culture of the Census Bureau.

BOSTIC: I think the culture here is...people are very dedicated. Work very hard. I think the demographic directorate from a subject matter standpoint, as Enrique Lamas (Associate Director, Demographic Programs) likes to tell me, it's probably the most interesting directorate. I think the decennial directorate, I think their culture is that if you haven't done a decennial, then no one outside of their directorate can tell them how to. I'm not saying it as a negative but it has been a culture over the years. It may be somewhat different now because this is the first time that I can remember that most of decennial senior leadership to date came from the economic directorate, 3 SESes that worked for me. And I'd like to say that the economic directorate is probably the most innovative out of the group. So the movement ever since Director Groves came here was to breakdown the [silos] and start working together and sharing

expertise. I think that approach has really opened our eyes, I think, for the various directorates as people started to integrate, work on different projects has helped move the culture in a different direction. While we are making strides, we still have a way to go to master a matrix environment. I think when I first came here, it was like information was power so people were less willing to share along the way. And so, you know you had to really work hard, and observe, and talk to people one-on-one to gain a lot of information. There were people that did share but what I recognized and observed that people who held information thought that was an advantage to help them move up the career ladder.

I think along the way that the one thing that the Bureau still needs to consider is a technical career path for employees. We've done probably more the last 10-15 years in promoting employees to the grade 13-15 for their technical expertise but it's been more of an informal approach. You have teams, and you need technical expertise on teams and special projects and then we have the path for those who demonstrate and show that they have the skillsets to be supervisors and managers. I think sometimes in the past we took our best technical people, because that was the only path for them to get promoted, and we made them supervisors and managers. It wasn't always a good fit, they didn't always necessarily have the soft people skills. So it's almost like taking your best salesman, and you think they're going to be a great sales manager and the skills are completely different. We have done ourselves a disservice where I like to say we made very competent people incompetent by really putting them in positions that they just didn't have the skillset. But certainly we need technical expertise. So the more we move in a team environment, we recognized that your technical expert didn't always make the best project manager or program manager. So, we are starting to figure that out from a culture standpoint. But I think we'd be better off if we just have a formal path to allow employees to have some expectation from a career development standpoint choosing this path versus that path. I think the Bureau has always found a way to get the mission done regardless of what the odds are. We pulled together; there have always been some heroes along the way. I think we need to do less of the heroism and do a better job of utilizing all the talent and resources in the organization. And I think we're starting to do more of that. I can always remember Director Groves says that we only have 25 people in the organization because we would always get the same 25 people to do all of the big major projects.

I can remember one time in my career of meeting with Harry Scarr, who was a Deputy Director [of the Census Bureau], and Ev (Dr. Everett M.) Erlich, ESA (Economics and Statistics Administration) Under Secretary, and four of us who belonged to the Census Bureau African-American Managers Group (AAMG --now an inactive Affinity Group). We were reacting to a major reorganization in the Bureau in early 1994 or thereabouts, and we didn't think that the minorities were being included in the reorganization at senior level or Grade 15 positions and leveraging all of the talent in the Bureau. We wanted the organization to be successful to and

we wanted to contribute to that success. An example that I used was that for the 1990 population there were a number of employees, and especially minorities, that go out and implement the plan of the pop[ulation] census, go out in the field, etc. Well when I was in the Congressional Associate position I sat in as an observer and the topic was canvassing minorities in the 2000 Census, but there weren't any minority staff in the room. And so, I used that example. Gee, we send so many minorities out in the field to conduct the 1990 population census, they could tell you what worked and what didn't and so why wouldn't you include them from a lessons learned when we look to start planning for 2000 Pop Census. What was the goal, the objectives and what worked and what really didn't? I said you're not leveraging all the talent in the organization, and we want to see the organization be successful. After that meeting, I got invited to a lot of meetings, more than I could really handle. [laughing] So then, I had to say there are other minorities that probably have this talent that you could use because I'm only one person. Culture wise I've seen more diversity within the agency, and we're starting to leverage and use more of our talent. But we still have a way to go.

PEMBERTON: I would like to mention a couple of people and see if you have any particular recollections of them. If you don't, don't worry about it. I'll begin with Shirley Kallek.

BOSTIC: Shirley Kallek. Yes, I remember her wholeheartedly. Somewhat used to be intimidated of Shirley [laughing] because I can remember attending a meeting as a GS-12 analyst with my branch chief, Caesar Hill, and there were division chiefs and assistant division chiefs present as well. He introduced me to her as one of his employees; I was shadowing him for this particular meeting. She came into the meeting, and Shirley was a big chain smoker, she was putting out a cigarette and lighting up another one and she was, man, she was just ripping some people in the room. I can remember easing my chair back slightly hoping that she wouldn't be able see me [laughing] but she skipped over me tearing into the next manager/executive sitting next to me. But Shirley was very, very smart. She knew our processes, etc. But, she was somewhat intimidating. I can remember a request from senior management of the division to become the inventory expert for asking the same questions for two sectors the Business Division was responsible for. We were introducing new inventory questions and we did these cognitive tests for retail, wholesale, and (Industry Division's) manufacturing sectors. I said, "Nope not going to do that," and one of the ADCs (Assistance Division Chief) says, "Why?" I said, "Because that means I have to interact with Shirley, and Shirley's going to holler at me and I'm going to holler back and I'm not going to have a job.

PEMBERTON: How about Roger Bugenhagen (Assistant Director for Economic and Agricultural Censuses)?

BOSTIC: I remember Roger. Roger was one person that I thought handled Shirley very well [laughing]. He had the demeanor, he had the poise. Roger was always sort of laid back, very

smart, intelligent, and he knew his stuff. I never saw Roger sweat. He was cool, calm, and always collected. I remember us sitting in a meeting with him, he was Chief of Industry Division at the time, and he said this meeting is over because I have a golf outing [laughing]. And that was that. I have fond memories of Roger. He was pretty sharp. I can remember being in his office for a meeting. He was the assistant director of the directorate, and I remember there were some names up on the board. I can remember asking Roger, "What's the names on the board Roger?" He said, "Just make sure you don't get your name up there." [laughing] I said, "Done." [laughing] Roger was a good guy and a very good leader.

PEMBERTON: I understand that he was actually a mentee, if you will, of Shirley Kallek.

BOSTIC: Yes, and I understand he also had a big influence on Tom Mesenbourg. I remember Tom speaking at his farewell reception, and he spoke highly of Roger's mentorship to him.

PEMBERTON: Fred (Dr. Frederick T.) Knickerbocker (Associate Director for Economic Programs).

BOSTIC: Dr. Knickerbocker. Ah, fond memories of him. I can remember when he called me into his office and he said that I was the nominee for the MCD job, the Manufacturing and Construction Division chief job. He said to me that he wasn't strong armed into selecting me and that I was a diversity selection. And he said I was going to have to deal with it. So I told him, I said no, if you weren't strong arm into selecting me and all I did was throw my name into the hat then you are going to have to deal with it. [laughing] I said to myself boy I guess that went over really well and not even officially in the job yet. But he and I ended up having a great working relationship. We had this situation that happened with the Semiconductor Association. So we were introducing NAICS into our current economic survey programs and we published the semiconductor industry as a separate data cell in the M3 survey (Manufacturers' Shipment, Inventories, and Orders—the monthly principal economic indicator for the manufacturing sector). The Semiconductor Association saw the Census Bureau's published semiconductor data and that our report implied semiconductor new orders measured the health of their industry. Well, they went off. (Craig R.) Barrett was the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) for Intel at the time. It hit the newspaper that he didn't know that they were in the M3 survey, which is a voluntary survey. Intel had a lot of influence with the Semiconductor Association. The Semiconductor Association had a statistical committee where 16-17 of the largest semiconductor companies were members. When Intel said it would not participate, then these other companies stopped participating in the M3 as well. So I'm Chief of the Manufacturing and Construction Division, and I said that we weren't going to publish the semiconductor data, that it makes no sense. We're going to have all this imputation and no one will believe its accurate data. So the chief of staff for Secretary (of Commerce) Donald Evans and Kathy Cooper, Under Secretary at ESA, were both involved in trying to get the semiconductor companies to participate in the M3 survey. Also, E.R. (Elizabeth R.) Gregory

(Associate Under Secretary of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration), was the communications executive for ESA was involved as well. The president of the association says, "We'll give you the data instead of Census getting it from the individual companies directly and have Census come out and talk to us about this proposal." Well ESA (mostly E.R. Gregory) didn't really think Census should go to California where the semiconductor association was located. I said, "Gee, we need to go because if we don't and it gets in the paper they offered a proposal and invited us to discuss the proposal and we ignore them, then we're going to be the ones that look bad." So Dr. Knickerbocker, Associate Director for Econ(omics) at the time, says, "I agree with Bill." I said, "I know from a policy stand point that we're not going to accept the data from the association." So myself and my assistant division chiefs who oversaw the M3 survey program flew out to San Jose, California. The president [of the Semiconductor Association] and at least 12-14 people from various semiconductor companies were present at the meeting. So the president of the association says, "You need to just take the data from us," and I said, "I'm not out here to discuss that proposal. However, I'm willing to try to reach an agreement of getting the semiconductor companies reporting back in the M3 survey." So he left. So I asked about information about sales and inventories, so it was quite clear they could give us sales. So what I said to them was, "Look, if I go back to Washington, and we can't negotiate something here given the indicator programs have been voluntary for 60 years, we may make the determination to make these surveys mandatory. If so, we won't be negotiating, you will give me what I want." Well I knew that ESA had tried to make the economic indicators mandatory before and it failed, but they didn't know that. I said, "This is what I'm willing to put on the table. You give sales, inventories we will aggregate it at a higher industry level and not show the semiconductor industry separately, and we will take reporting new orders off the table." They caucused for about 25 minutes with us out of the room. The Chair of the association statistical committee said, "OK, but can we have five months where we can look at the data from the individual companies to see that it makes sense and really portrays an accurate measure of the health of our industry." If the five months was fine they would start reporting back in the sixth month and we want to do a press release, etc., with the department and so forth. I said, "Fine." So I came back to Census and briefed Dr. Knickerbocker, who had told me to be tough, but be diplomatic. That's what he told me. I said I was both. I have a lot of negotiation skills from the NAICS project [laughing]. So my assistant division chief started telling the story of what I was able to negotiate. So Dr. Knickerbocker looks at me and says, "How did you do that?" So my assistant division chief said, "He godfathered them, he gave them an offer they couldn't refuse!" [laughing] So I told him about the whole mandatory threat of economic indicators and he patted me on my back. He said, "Good job and all these other people, the Secretary, the Undersecretary, we had involved we should have sent you to negotiate from the very beginning." And mutual respect built with Dr. Knickerbocker from that point on. We had a great relationship going forward. I think, when it was all said and done, I proved to him that I was up to the job and I could do the job exceptionally well as a senior

executive. There were some things I think he learned about my skillset and leadership capabilities along the way. So it became a good working relationship.

LACEY: Thank you for your time. We don't want to take up any more, we've already taken up an hour of your time that we promised you. [to Pemberton] Do you have any wrap up questions?

PEMBERTON: I have a quick one.

BOSTIC: Ok, let me try to make a quick answer. [laughing]

PEMBERTON: From my observation, one of the most important things that the Econ Directorate has done in the last maybe 15-20 years has been moving to iCADE (integrated Computer Assisted Data Entry). iCADE is a data capture application. You know a lot more about it than I do, but it is an upgrade, if you think of FOSDIC, and I know that there were people in the Bureau that worked very hard on that program, a broad program. Econ was the first part of the agency to adopt, it was my understanding, that innovation.

BPEMBERTON: I have spoken to several people involved, Econ had 400 or 500 data forms. The decennial side was considering 'Could we adopt this?' And they don't have anywhere near the complexity of the forms that you have, and I know that they're considering that now. But what I'm interested in, how did you folks decide to go from the older data capture device to what became iCADE. And the corollary is you kept it in-house, whereas the decennial out-sourced it.

BOSTIC: Well Tom Mesenbourg was behind that. So we talk about Paul Friday (Senior Computer Scientist) and Bill (William L.) Peil (IT Specialist), they were the brains behind developing the application and Stephanie Studds (Chief, Office of Innovation and Implementation) and Sam(Samuel) Rozenel (Sr. IT Lead, Innovation and Technology Office) were instrumental in bringing in outstanding computer scientists and engineers and business analysts that helped make iCADE the state of the art application it is today. I told them that we really needed to bring in FTEs (full time equivalent or "permanent" employees) because we were using a lot of contractors to support it. Also, Tom was just willing to take the chance and use it. We started small and they refined it with each census from 2002. We got involved with the Kenyan and Bangladeshi population censuses by partnering with the demographic directorate. Those two projects enabled the refinement of the OCR (optical character recognition). You know, you're right. We in Econ were willing to use it. The thing about the decennial is that the oversight can be overwhelming that's involved but iCADE was a proven system. There was no doubt about that. It started as a prototype, we refined it and we were willing to use it because it saved us money big time, it was far more efficient and it starting moving us towards that electronic environment of capturing images. So that's just been the Econ way. You know we were willing to take risks and try new things along the way. We've

always been willing to do that. So you know some of it I think it's just the leadership. It's about taking some calculated risks, being bold. Tom was always pretty bold. Some of my leadership style of taking calculated risks and being bold I really learned a lot from him in that regard. It's just the Econ way.

PEMBERTON: Thank you.

LACEY: Thank you very much.

BOSTIC: Sure. My pleasure.