

INFORMANT: DR. DANIEL J. KAUFMAN
INTERVIEWER: JENNIFER STEPHENS
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NOTES: This interview covers the life and career of Dr. Dan Kaufman, the first president of Georgia Gwinnett College in Lawrenceville, Georgia.

Transcribed by: Dusty Marie Dye, University of West Georgia

THE INTERVIEW:

[Recording begins]

JENNIFER STEPHENS: Okay, this is an interview with Dr. Daniel J. Kaufman, October 21, 2013, in the Quiet Reading Room in the library. I'm Jennifer Stephens, serving as the interviewer. Welcome, Dr. Kaufman.

DAN KAUFMAN: Nice to be back!

STEPHENS: Welcome back, welcome back!

KAUFMAN: Nice to be back, thank you.

STEPHENS: We're here today to begin an oral history project. We have a lot that we would like to hear you just reflect upon, not only as your role here as president but also just who you are as a person. So, we're thrilled to have you and it seems to just make sense to start at the very beginning. The very, very beginning. So just tell me a little bit about where you were born and when you were born and some of those early years.

KAUFMAN: That's a rude question, I want you to know that, but...I was actually born in Fort Lewis, Washington. My father was still in the Army after World War II in October of 1946, so, I'm the leading edge of the "baby boom" generation. That generation that sort of lasts from '46 to '66, that twenty-year cohort now known infamously as the "baby boomers." I was one of the leading members of it, so...And then we live there for a couple years, and then my dad was still in the Army...We went to Fort Bragg, was our...No! We went to Wash...We went to Japan, as a matter of fact. Some of the very first things that I can remember are in Japan when I was two or three, so, my very first memories as a human being are of post-war Japan. And my father was there initially to work on General MacArthur's staff but then the Korean War broke out three weeks after we got there, so my father went off to fight the Korean War and my mother and brother and I lived in Japan for three years.

STEPHENS: And so you...Wait, your brother?

KAUFMAN: Mmhm.

STEPHENS: How old is your brother?

KAUFMAN: He's six years older than I am. He's the...He was born in 1940, so there's obviously World War II in between us.

STEPHENS: So talk about your family when you were younger. You and your brother and your mom and your dad there in the Army.

KAUFMAN: Well, we were just the two boys, but both my mom and my dad were from Brunswick, Georgia, south Georgia, down on the south coast. Both of their parents were from Brunswick, and so the family had a long history of living in south Georgia...and that was always home, no matter where we were in the world, Brunswick was always home. And so when we came back from Japan, we went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and then we moved to France, then we moved to Germany, where we lived for three years, when I was in...I called elementary school in those days...fourth...third, fourth, and fifth grade. Came back to Fort Jackson, South Carolina. My dad retired when I was twelve and we moved back to Brunswick full time, although we would stop into Brunswick every now and then when Dad was off on some assignment where he wasn't accompanied, so I grew up...spent a lot of time in the Glynn County public school system as a kid, on and off over the years. So it wasn't...It was always home. It wasn't strange because both of my grandparents lived there, all my grandparents lived there, my cousins, aunts, uncles all lived there. Each of my grandmothers had seven children, and so there were a lot of aunts and uncles and cousins. And so it was always home. But we moved there full time when Dad retired and I went to high school there and graduated from high school, Glynn Academy, in 1964. And when I was a junior, I read a book about West Point and thought it looked interesting...shows you what happens when you read...and applied to West Point and Georgia Tech, got into both, and went to West Point.

STEPHENS: What were your parents like?

KAUFMAN: Well, they were...You know, they had grown up in the Depression. They were Depression-era young adults. My dad was born in 1909 and Mom in 1911. And so they were 20, basically, when the Depression hit. So that was the formative experience of their young life, obviously, and that tinted the way they managed their money and consequently the things we did and did not do, because they, as most of the people of that generation, they were just very careful with their finances. Prudent, you know. If we bought a car, we paid for it, and if you couldn't pay for it, you didn't need it. And that's just the way they were. So, a very different model than perhaps...than perhaps today. But they were from small-town southern Georgia and my dad never went to college but ended up as a full colonel in the Army, which you can't do today, but in those days you could. He had joined the Georgia National Guard in 1927 and it was called up in 1940 when the Georgia National Guard was mobilized in preparation for World War II and then stayed on for twenty years, 'cause he said he didn't especially relish the idea of going back to counting pennies at the bank in Brunswick, so...He found the Army exciting, a lot of responsibility, and he was an officer, so it was...We enjoyed it, wandering all over the world. Mom was, again, very traditional southern mother, devoted her time and attention to her two sons. I'd like to think my brother took more of her attention than I did, but nonetheless... [laughter] That's probably not true.

STEPHENS: What does your brother do?

KAUFMAN: He went...He graduated from the University of South Carolina, was a...an Air Force officer...spent twenty-five years in the Air Force...and then retired and went to work for Boeing in Warner Robins. Now he's retired and living up in...just outside of Greenville, South Carolina, so.

STEPHENS: Did you ever have any sibling rivalry?

KAUFMAN: No, he was six years older than I was and so that...When you're a kid, six years is an enormous difference. It's a generation, essentially. And so we didn't have a lot of interaction except sitting in the back seat of the car as we were travelling across the country, 'cause my mom didn't fly, so if we were in the United States we drove and if there was an ocean in the way we sailed, so...But, other than that, no, I mean, because six years is just a huge difference for kids, so...We actually didn't get really, really close until we were adults.

STEPHENS: What is your most, sort of, pressing childhood memory?

KAUFMAN: Pressing or depressing?

[laughter]

STEPHENS: Both.

KAUFMAN: Um...I can remember when we lived in Germany we lived in a town called Giessen, and this was in 195...5...4 or 5...and they were still digging rubble out from the war, and so I can remember when I was...nine, I guess...seeing these destroyed buildings that still hadn't been cleaned up after the war...and there was an ext...a large number of...we call them "displaced persons," refugees, basically, German refugees, who...the devastation that even I can remember then, even almost ten years after the war, was astonishing. So I remember thinking, "Yikes, this is probably something we don't want to do very often." So that's the most sort of pungent memory that I've got...is seeing that devastation. The same was true in Japan. I can remember the Japanese people, the same thing, they had been...Of course, we had been bombing the homeland for four years...And the destruction, the devastation, all that, that went on as a result of the war, too...So that made an early impression...early impression on me.

STEPHENS: You think that seeing war that young...Do you think that changed the way that your future went?

KAUFMAN: Um...It should have led me in another direction, since I ended up being in the Army for 37 years, but it...What it did was instill in me, I guess, a sense of, that what matters in life is people. And I grew up in the segregated South. The high school I went to was segregated and every aspect of society in Georgia was segregated in those days, not just by policy but by law. It was the law. And as soon as you got old enough to sort of recognize what was happening, you sort of, at least I sort of figured out...that's not right. You don't treat people differently based on the color of their skin...That everybody has...If, in fact, we believe what we say, everybody has basically inalienable rights, and so, that I think...And I was...A formative experience for me is just, having gone to Department of Defense schools when we were

wandering around when my dad was in the Army, and they were all integrated, of course, and coming back to Georgia where the schools were segregated...everything was segregated...schools, restaurants, everything...It was a bitter shock.

STEPHENS: Do you think that you were sort of alone in the way that you saw things at that time?

KAUFMAN: Um...Not alone. There were obviously divisions. I mean, some thought it was the natural order of things and it ought to be that way...I mean, it was a very racist society. Others didn't. And so you sort of divided up depending on how you saw the world in those days, and so the people I tended to hang out with were those who sorta had my view of the world in terms of how you think about people.

STEPHENS: How 'bout sports? Did you play sports?

KAUFMAN: Yeah. I was a good, um...When we were all the same size I was a really good athlete, and then I stopped growing and everybody else kept growing, but...I was a very good baseball player. So I played baseball in the little league, Babe Ruth League, we called it in those days. Didn't play in high school because you couldn't. You played football. 'Cause I actually used to be able to run fast. But spring football interfered with baseball, so you couldn't do both. So I played football in high school and baseball when I could. Basketball some, although [laugh], since I stopped growing relatively early, it clearly wasn't going to be my game, but it was fun, you know, I played in high school, but obviously wasn't going anywhere in that. But, yeah, I was a good athlete and I liked, after growing up in a climate where you'd be outdoors all year, it was just a natural thing to do, 'cause we were always outside playing something...baseball or football or something.

STEPHENS: What about pets? Did you have pets as a child?

KAUFMAN: We usually had...We usually had a dog. In fact, I remember our dog named Dozo, which was when we were in Japan...I was two or three when we got it. Dozo wouldn't...He was still there when we left, so that was the first traumatic event of my life, is I had to leave the dog. [laughter] And then we had dogs on and off over the years, so yeah, yeah...

STEPHENS: Your best friend?

KAUFMAN: Um...They were...You know, you can get attached to animals, but my mom, being the very traditional southern woman, didn't allow pets in the house, so the dogs were outside dogs. They didn't live, like so many do now, inside the house. They were out in the yard. So if you wanted to be with the dog, you had to be outside.

STEPHENS: Tell me about your home in Brunswick. What is...What does that home look like?

KAUFMAN: Well, it's a...not surprisingly...it's a...sort of a one-story ranch house that was the architecture of the late '50 and early '60s, which was a major step forward in the South, because most southern homes in those days had...You know, they were made out of wood and they had a

tin roof and they had no central heat, much less air conditioning, nobody had air conditioning, and they had big, tall windows because the air conditioning system was you pulled the window up from the bottom and down from the top and the hot air went out the top and the cooler air came in the bottom and that was the circulation in your house. In the winter, you had a fireplace and then you had the stove in the kitchen. That was it. And so, by the late '50s, early '60s, when they started to build ranch houses, it meant we had...they were made out of brick...It meant you had central heat, which was new. Didn't have central air conditioning, originally...added it on later. So, the house itself was, from my perspective, was, you know, quite nice. But the best part of the house was...it sits on...it sits on a creek. We call it a creek, it sits on a river, on four acres on a river, so, you know, I could walk out in the back yard...we had a boat...get in my boat and off we went. And so it was a...You know, it's a great place to grow up. In fact, we still have it. We kept it because you can't by four acres of waterfront property these days anywhere for any price you can afford, so we still keep it, go down there about once a month. We renovated the house, obviously, but...

STEPHENS: What is the air like now? [laughter] The central heat and air there?

KAUFMAN: Uh...better than it was.

STEPHENS: Modern? [laughter]

KAUFMAN: Oh, yeah, so it's got all the indoor plumbing and all...It's been updated, so it's quite comfortable. But it still sits in that very special place. My dad liked to be outside, so he planted, as near as I can tell, about a thousand azaleas on that place that are still there. And so my avocation is to go down there and tend those azaleas, and so in the spring it's gorgeous.

STEPHENS: Is this the house that your grandparents also owned?

KAUFMAN: No. No.

STEPHENS: Okay.

KAUFMAN: No, he bought it right before he retired from the Army.

STEPHENS: How 'bout as a student? What kind of student were you, growing up?

KAUFMAN: Well, um...I mean, I was an A student, so, school was never much of a challenge. It was always fun. So, in that sense...

STEPHENS: Did it just come naturally to you?

KAUFMAN: Yeah. I actually used to have a pretty good memory. It's long gone... [laughter and chatter]

STEPHENS: But you can remember it.

KAUFMAN: And so, you know, I didn't spend...Once I looked at it, I had it. And so it...it really wasn't hard. And so I did well and I didn't have to work very hard at it.

STEPHENS: Any particular subjects that you just loved when you were younger?

KAUFMAN: Um...I liked math, actually. And that was only because I sort of got it. But then as I got older, I had a couple of extraordinary English teachers and so I got into literature, reading, and that sort of thing, and so that became sort of a co-favorite subject.

STEPHENS: Who do you think influenced you the most growing up?

KAUFMAN: Oh, I suppose, like all kids, probably your parents, but...'cause that's who you were with the most and because we moved around when I was a boy, you know...You didn't have that single set of influences. So probably Mom and Dad. But I also had two grandmothers. My grandfathers died when I was pretty young. My paternal grandfather died when I was in...when we lived in Japan and then my mom's dad died when I was eight, so they were...Like southern males did in those days, they died pretty early. But both my grandmothers...One grandmother lived to be 99 and the other lived to be 90, so they were always a presence in your life, they were kind of an anchor, 'cause they were always there, and so no matter where in the world we were or we were going when we were back in Brunswick we went and stayed at one of their houses, so that was always, that was kind of a bedrock, if you will. So, both of my grandmothers were just people that, when you think about the stability in your life, they were always there, as were Mom and Dad, so that's probably the four people who had the most endurance.

STEPHENS: Um, you talked about stability. Where there other qualities that your parents or your grandmothers had that [inaudible]...

KAUFMAN: Well, you know that the pop phrase "steel magnolia" comes to mind 'cause, as I said, both my grandmothers had seven kids and both outlived a number of them. That's tough when they outlived their husbands and had to bury three or four of their children, so that's hard to do. And so they were...On one hand they were the quintessential grandmothers and they always treated their grandchildren famously, famously well. On the other hand, they...There was no doubt who was in charge. [laughter] Yeah.

STEPHENS: How 'bout your favorite book?

KAUFMAN: Of all time?

STEPHENS: I mean what was your favorite book. Maybe it was reading...

KAUFMAN: It's hard to know, 'cause I did love to read when I was a kid. I started to read and read a lot of stuff. I remember, this is funny that...There was a series of books about Freddy the Talking Pig, and it was kind of science fiction in this pig could talk, but it was also, he was also involved in lots of adventures and human drama and all that sort of thing. And I don't know, there were six or eight of them in this series about Freddy the Talking Pig, and I found them in

the Brunswick Library when I was a boy and somehow I remember them. But I remember the Freddy the Pig Series, and then when I was thirteen, I think, I read *Gone with the Wind*, and that was an incredible experience because it was, in Margaret Mitchell's wonderful prose, kind of a description of being down south at a time when the south was beginning to change, just beginning to change. So I...that always stuck with me. And so, if I had to pick one, it's probably *Gone with the Wind*. But there are so many others that, you know, ones you love to read...When somebody asks you, "What's your favorite book?," your answer probably should be the first one, whatever it was, because it instilled a love of reading.

STEPHENS: Why do you think *Gone with the Wind* had such an impact on you?

KAUFMAN: Well, I...It was only because I...'Cause I was in Geor...I was living in Georgia, of course, had been...called myself a Georgian even though I never lived here. But it was the sort of drama of what happens when all the structures that you see disappear. I mean, the world literally was gone...the world of the antebellum South was literally gone with the wind. And so how do people and governments and entire societies adjust to complete change? And ironically, it happened at the other end of my career at the end of the Cold War because all the structures disappeared in remarkably rapid fashion and it was kinda interesting to see how societies tried to adjust to the world that was completely different than anything they knew. So in that sense it was really almost a harbinger of what was to come. But it's a great...it's a great examination of how people respond in situations of complete uncertainty.

STEPHENS: Do you think that has played into your sort of desire to create something out of nothing? To...

KAUFMAN: Um...I think what it did do was...You begin to think, "Okay, what happens when the things that I see disappear?" Or "What happens if things were different?" And I think that's really what attended all of us here as we were beginning to create Georgia Gwinnett College...is to say, "Well, we've always done it this way, but why? Why can't we do it a different way? Is there a better way to do it?" And so what happens when the assumptions that people make about what college has to be disappear? Then you have that opportunity for creativity and innovation that you were such a part of, and we're all part of here as we work at GGC. So I think that's probably where it comes from.

STEPHENS: How about...Were you a Boy Scout?

KAUFMAN: I was a Cub Scout, but because I was moving around, you know, I never just got...I never did get hooked up with scouting, so, no. I was a Cub Scout for a couple of years but that was it.

STEPHENS: 'Cause I know you're an ad...a great advocate to the Boy Scouts.

KAUFMAN: Yeah, I think...I think any, you know, any kind of structure that can teach adolescent males discipline and teamwork and respect for other people is probably a good thing. But, you know, I never had the opportunity to be involved in it very much.

STEPHENS: You've talked a little bit about your...the travels that you've done as a child. Did you like that travelling? Did it...Was it difficult for you, or...?

KAUFMAN: No. Well, it was 'cause it was normal, 'cause I had done it since I, ever since I could remember, and so it was actually fun seeing different cultures. By the time I was thirteen I'd...I say we lived in Japan, we lived in France, we lived Germany, travelled all over the United States, and so it was just sorta normal to be exposed to other cultures, and it does teach you that there are other cultures, that the world is different. It is a remarkably big, diverse place. And so you learn an appreciation, I think, at least I did, at a young age, for the fact that there are different people in the world.

STEPHENS: Um...was there any...

DAVID GABRELL (Tech): Pause!

[Pause for equipment adjustments.]

[Interview resumes.]

STEPHENS: Um...talk about how you got from Brunswick to West Point. What is that story?

KAUFMAN: Well...Again, when I was...My had had been in the army, I mean, it wasn't a complete mystery to me, although I didn't grow up wanting to go to West Point, I hadn't even think about it much until I was in high school. And then 'bout the time I...first part of my junior year, as you begin about what are you going to do in college, and in those days, if you were a white male and you wanted to be an engineer you went to Tech, if not you went to Georgia, and that was sorta it, unless you went out of state, but very few people did in those days. But as I began to think about where do I want to go to college, I had read this book about West Point...A place of impeccable character where people, living under the honor code and the honor system, just acted in ways that were frankly appealing because it was an honorable society. Not that others were dishonorable, but it was just an inherent part of the entire place. And the application process for West Point, as it still is, requires you to get an appointment from your member of Congress or senator because you don't just *apply* like you do with regular schools. So I did that. But I also applied to Georgia Tech, had gotten accepted, and had my roommate, who was one of my friends from Germany, as a matter of fact. We had kept up with each other, we were still childhood buddies, and so we were gonna be roommates at Georgia Tech, and I went to West Point and he went to Rice, so neither one of us ended up going to Georgia Tech, but...And, of course, it was a very different world in those days. There wasn't the pervasiveness of information like there is now. You sort of got the catalog and that was it. I mean, that's about as much as you're gonna find out about this place and I had never been there and never did. First time I ever saw it was the day I enrolled because you didn't travel like we do now. It was much more difficult. So, you had to make decisions in much greater circumstances of uncertainty because you just...you didn't have the access to information like we do now. So, I think it was a great adventure and decided that, well, I got the appointment from my congressman, and decided to take it, so...And, you know, there was no question of my going to college, it was just a question of where, so...

STEPHENS: Why do you think you picked West Point over Georgia Tech?

KAUFMAN: I think it was exciting, you know...It was just a prestigious place, but it kind of had this mystique about it. And...you know how young people make decisions. You don't have any idea what the criteria are, but...But, you know, it had a fine academic reputation, it was a great school with a fine academic reputation, so if... You know, back in 1964, I mean, and World War II had only been over 19 years, and so all of the great people of World War II were still around and a goodly number of them were West Point graduates, and so it had a cache, a presence in American society that's pretty imposing and pretty impressive, so I thought, yeah, if I can get in, I'll go, I'll go there, so that's where...

STEPHENS: What about your brother? What did your...What had your brother done?

KAUFMAN: He went to the University of South Carolina because we were, right when Dad was retiring from the Army, that's where we were, where he was stationed and we lived in Columbia. And when he graduated from high school...And so he applied to the University of South Carolina and is still an ardent Gamecock fan [laughter] all these many years later.

STEPHENS: What about your wife, Kathryn? When did you meet her?

KAUFMAN: Well, uh...Kathryn, of course, is also from Brunswick and her mother was the principal of the white elementary school in Brunswick, which was unprecedented because there were no women executives in education, and so for a woman to be appointed as the principal was really an extraordinary achievement, and so...But, anyway, her mom was the principal of the white elementary school there in Brunswick and as I...because we were...we would stop in there occasionally, I went to her school two or three times on and off over the years when I was in grade school. And so I knew her mom very well. And Kathryn and I, because her maiden name was Kennedy, and, you know, you put people alphabetical, and so, [chatter]...being Kennedy...so I mean we were always sort of right next to each other. So I've known her since I was a kid, but...And then we were classmates in high school, but we sort of travelled in different circles, and so, before I knew her...and she'd...We were in a number of classes together. We just...She went off to the University of Georgia and I went to West Point, and I went into the Army and...went to be in the Army...so, we went, really, our separate ways. Not that we were together, anyway. We were in high school. So, we were an interstate. We were just travelling on parallel paths that diverged for a while and...

STEPHENS: So...so when did those parallel paths come back together?

KAUFMAN: Um...I was...The last couple of months I was in Vietnam, my mother and Kathryn went to the wedding of a mutual friend and Kathryn approached my mom and said, "Where's Dan?," and then Mom said, "He's in Vietnam. He's coming back this summer." And Kathryn, being polite, said, "Well, have him call me if he makes it back," or whatever. Something like that. Something. And my mother, being ever diligent, liked Kathryn a lot, and assured that...Well, she...When I got back, it's a different story, but I wasn't quite ready for polite society, so I didn't call her for six months. I got home in July and called her in December.

We had our first date in 1970, so...that's how we got back together...is because...a purely accidental or serendipitous meeting between her and my mother at a wedding, so...

STEPHENS: So it was an arranged marriage. [laughter]

KAUFMAN: Well, yeah. Mom had had very strong ideas about that part.

STEPHENS: So what did you do on your first date?

KAUFMAN: Um...Well, when you live in Brunswick there's not a whole lot of choice, and so we went to the movie and then went out and had dinner and that was it. In small town southern Georgia, that's about it. And in December, you know, it's not cold, but kinda cool and dark, so that was it. But it was...And the rest of the story is, because it was right at Christmas and New Year's, when I called for a second date, she said no. She was teaching school in Orlando in those days and she said, "Nah, I'm going back to Orlando for a New Year's party, so, see you later." And we had made arrangements...I was commanding a cavalry troop at Fort Meade, Maryland...She came up and visited me in April, actually the next time I saw her...Easter. So we were three months between dates. [laughter]

STEPHENS: So when did you guys end up in the same city when you were actually dating each other?

KAUFMAN: Never.

STEPHENS: [laughter]

KAUFMAN: No. Never. In fact, as I tell the story, I had to marry her just so I...'cause I was spending so much money on plane tickets. 'Cause by then I was assigned at Fort Knox, going to a school there, and she was still teaching in Orlando, so I was schlepping back and forth and, you know...you know with those long-distance romances, so I'd see her probably every three weeks or a month or something like that...So we, I think...Not very romantic, but I think we were just having a telephone conversation and said, this is silly, why don't we put a stop to this?

STEPHENS: And get married.

KAUFMAN: And get married. And so...And this was in...'bout, oh...Probably August or September of '71. And because of my school schedule we got married December 29, 1971, because I was on break from Fort Knox. So we were never in the same city.

STEPHENS: And where did you guys live initially?

KAUFMAN: In Fort Knox in Radcliff, Kentucky. We had a basement apartment that I managed to find. And we were only there for like six months and then we went to Massachusetts, but, who cares? You know...we only [inaudible]...

STEPHENS: Mhm. Basement living.

KAUFMAN: [laughter]

STEPHENS: Tell me a little bit about the military. Did you plan to spend your career in the military? Was that always what you had in mind?

KAUFMAN: Nope. Now I will say, generally, I was open-minded about it. I mean, I never said, I'm absolutely going to get out when my commitment, which was five years in those days, was up. Nor did I say I'm going to do this for the rest of my life. What I said was as long as the Army continues to give me the kinds of developmental opportunities that I find interesting and challenging, why not? And so, they did, and so, after I came back from Vietnam, I commanded my cavalry troop and the Army sent me to graduate school at Harvard for two years, and then we went to...And so that was really the first place that Kathryn and I were really living together. We were married for six months when we got to Boston. And that was fun, you know, being newlyweds, living in Boston, and I wasn't responsible for anything except going to school, it was pretty easy, so, you know, that part was fun. And then I went to West Point to teach and that was...I got out of there in 197...I'd been in the Army for 10 years at that point and that's really the decision point based on the retirement system in the military services. If you're gonna go, you gotta go, because after that you're giving up too much of your investment in your retirement system. So, we talked about it and...had a couple of opportunities. I'll tell you that story if you're interested, but...

STEPHENS: Sure.

KAUFMAN: But then I went to the Second Air Division and I had fun, and so...The answer to your first question is, there were always interesting opportunities and growth and responsibility and all that sort of thing as I went along. And I got to do what I loved to do, I got to...I got to go to school, which was important, to graduate school, I got to teach, which I liked, and I got to play soldier, which I liked, too, so...If the Army kept letting me do things that I liked, why would I quit, other than the fact that we didn't make any money? Kathryn in mind, we don't...frequently...In fact, this is a true story: In 1978, we were home during the summer before we went to Fort Bragg, I mean, yeah, Fort Bragg...My two roommates from West Point who were working, at that time, for an oil company, they were travelling and were on a plane and stopped...a private plane...they stopped in Brunswick to refuel. And they called me that day and they were probably gonna come talk about some (inaudible) things they wanted to do. But I was out fishing that day, and so I wasn't available, and so they got back on the plane and flew away. So I figure that fishing trip probably cost me \$50,000,000 because one of them, at least, as you know the story, was one of the guys who cofounded the Boston Beer Company that makes Sam Adams Beer. But between the two of them, they founded an energy company that did very well, so...um...Kathryn has never let me forget that one. [laughter]

STEPHENS: [laughter] So I hope the fishing was good that day.

KAUFMAN: I don't remember, but it wasn't \$50,000,000 worth. You know, obviously, you've got to always go back and re...that die went uncast...but I just...I always loved what I was doing, and I got to be in the policy business, because I'm a political scientist by transient

education. Engineering, my undergraduate education, was all West Point (sure?) in those days, but...and so I got the chance, that when I was a (captain?), when I was 29 years old, I was working in the White House for President Ford, and that's pretty heady stuff when you're a 29-year-old-kid. And then...did the...and that's '76...and then in '77 I stayed on and worked for President Carter, so, you know, when you're basically a kid and having those kinds of opportunities, you think, "Wow...this is okay."

STEPHENS: What did you do for President Carter?

KAUFMAN: I was on his National Security Council staff...doing nuclear weapons. One of the skills that the Army taught me was to be a nuclear weapon deployment specialist.

STEPHENS: I suppose doing...[chatter between J. Stephens and Dr. Kaufman]

KAUFMAN: Well, one, you have to account for all of them, because we had, literally, thousands and thousands and thousands of nuclear weapons of all kinds, not just intercontinental ballistic missiles. The Army had nuclear artillery shells, we had nuclear landmines...I mean, we had...the United States Military had just extraordinary range and number of atomic weapons, nuclear weapons. And so managing all that was important. And we had begun to be engaged in a...in the...in a strategic arms talks with the Soviets and so that was the beginning of that, sort of the beginning of that process as we began to think about, "How do we really manage this?" So I did defense programs for President Ford and for President Carter 'cause what they (knew from) the defense business, so...It was, it was interesting stuff. A little scary when the, you know, you write a memo and the next guy who reads it is the President of the United States. You think, "Uh oh." [laughter] "I'd better...I'd better pay attention to what I do."

STEPHENS: You didn't...you didn't have spell check.

KAUFMAN: No, didn't have spell check in those days, so...Yeah. But it was fun. And so...But even then...And even then, going to, 'cause I said, I'm in and out, you know, when I left West Point I stopped and did special projects for the Secretary of Defense, then I went Second Airborne Division, basically was a paratrooper, and so those are very different kinds of experiences, but that was the attraction...was they were different. You didn't have to keep doing the same thing over and over and over again. Not like that, so...

STEPHENS: I want to go back to talk just a little bit about the Vietnam War. I'm assuming you were drafted.

KAUFMAN: No, we knew. I graduate from West Point in 1968 [Stephens: Okay.] which was the height of the war, and so we all knew which way we were going, so...drafted I suppose. [laughter] No. I actually...Well, we were all...We all got sent there when we graduated.

STEPHENS: Right, right. Talk about that experience, when you're heading over there and what you experienced there.

KAUFMAN: Well, you know, the first realization, 'cause you really don't think about it 'till you're on the plane heading that way...You think, "I could get killed doing this!" But, you

know, I was 22 when I got there and was responsible...I was in the 11th...I'm a cavalryman by military occupation, and so I was in the 11th Army Cavalry Regiment and I was a platoon leader and so I was responsible for 40 men and 10 armed vehicles, and that's a lot of responsibility in combat for a 22-year-old kid. So, in that sense, it was exhilarating. In the other sense, of course, it was horrifying 'cause you were somewhere finding vigilance. And so, you know, you live in the most primitive conditions you can imagine...we lived in the jungle for a year...and so you live outside...there's no electricity, there's no running water, there's no hot water, there's very little hot food...everything you own you have in a can about that size and you live on an armored vehicle. And so, at night we'd all take turns doing guard so you went for an entire year and never got more than four hours sleep in a row at one time...and so it's exhausting. You know, people that...for whom you're responsible...your soldiers get killed and wounded while you watch and that part is hard. You never lose that...never forget that...so that part of it is lifelong in terms of the effect that has on you. But it was a...it didn't take us long to figure out that our end of the food chain...things weren't going well...that the government of South Vietnam did not have the legitimacy with the people of South Vietnam that it needed to have if it was going to prevail. 'Cause the Americans, the American army couldn't, quote, "win that war" for the South Vietnamese. They had to do it. And the only way they could do it was by building legitimacy with the people, who said, "No, this is how we want to be governed." They didn't do a very good job of that, frankly. And so when the...after the Americans sort of withdrew in the early '70s, it was, you know, the immediate predetermined demand of the nation that just didn't have the resilience to support the people to survive, so...That in no way detracts from the service and devotion and bravery of the Americans who fought there. It just ultimately ended up...tragedy of not being successful.

STEPHENS: What did you learn through that experience with all that you saw? What did you sort of capture and bring back?

KAUFMAN: People do things you cannot possibly imagine, on the good side. People will perform acts of heroism and bravery for another soldier that you couldn't possibly order them to do it, but they'll do it, because that's who they are, that's the kind of thing that they do for each other. And that's why people...that's how people operate in those environments. It's not for God and country, it's more each other, it's more the members of your crew on the other vehicle, for members of your platoon. That's about as far as you could see in that environment. And so they do incredible things for each other. You also see...On the other end of the spectrum, you also see acts of incredible cruelty for innocent people who were killed and maimed in all the ways just to make a point, a political point, which also something that stays with you. But you see the full range of memorable human behavior.

STEPHENS: Seems like that that could either impact you in a...seems like that would really change you. It would really...as an individual...that it would make you...bitter or angry or more wise or...I mean, it would have impact you so deeply.

KAUFMAN: Well, what it teaches you is a lot about human nature, particularly about leadership, because...you know, I had to give orders that led us into harm's way, 'cause I got orders that led us into harm's way. But more important, what you discover is the power of inspiration...what you can do by being the kind of leader that people want to follow and that inspires people so they'll do it 'cause they want to do it, not because you order them to do it. So

when you think about what kind of leader do you become...that has attended everything that I have tried to be as a leader as I've gotten more senior and more responsibility at every level in terms of how do you deal with people, what is the...what do you see as your role as a leader. And mine always was the vision thing, as you know, because it inspires people. People want to be part of something important, something successful, something that they feel like are making a contribution, and you only do that through inspiration. So that's the lesson I took out of it...you know, and an appreciation for service and sacrifice by...Every one of my soldiers but one was a draftee. None of them had joined the Army. They had all been drafted, except my platoon sergeant, he was like me, he'd been around for a while, but...Actually not true. I hadn't even travelled a year when I got to Vietnam, so he'd been much more senior, but...These guys were just drafted and given six weeks of basic training and eight weeks of advanced training and sent to Vietnam. And yet they were remarkable young people.

STEPHENS: Who was your military hero?

KAUFMAN: Um...I don't remember, as a kid, having one. But as I got old enough to read and think about these sorts of things, Dwight Eisenhower emerged as a guy who I thought was a remarkable leader because of what he did in putting together and holding together a coalition of very fractious allies in a very diff...difficult circumstance, and so he ends up through the power of his, really, ability to inspire people, holding these characters together, and it...The more we know about their personal interactions, the more my respect for him is growing. And he was a guy, even when he was president, who gave the impression of...People always thought that Ike was kind of hands off, but in fact he was very much in charge and hands on. It's just his way of doing it that got things done without being all about him, which I always thought was admirable. You know, it was about getting a job done and doing what you needed to do, accomplishing your mission, not about who gets credit for it, and I always found that admirable...and I had...when I was a "plebe," a freshman at West Point...At the end of my plebe year...this was 1965, June of 1965, just before graduation...President Eisenhower was West Point graduate class of 1950...So, anyway, I was standing...There was a...His classmates had donated a fountain to West Point called the Eisenhower Fountain and I was standing next to the Eisenhower Fountain which was on a road, the only roadway at West Point in those days, when I saw a staff car coming towards me that had a little red license plate on it...when you're a general, you always use a little red license plate...and it had five stars on it. And I thought, "Uh-oh." So it pulled up, stopped by me. I'm looking around thinking, "I can't run now, I'd look...be a little obvious if I take off running." Out stepped Dwight Eisenhower, followed by his classmate Omar Bradley. Both of them were five-star generals, of course. So I'm thinking, "Aw, nuts." Thankfully, he came over, and, you know, the usual, "Who are you and where are you from?"...Could not have been more gracious, the two of them. So I had...actually had the opportunity to meet President...General Eisenhower when I was a kid. And then after the pleasantries I did my best about face and – phew-, off I went [laughter] having survived and thinking, "It's only going to go down from here, so I'm outta here." But that's the kind of people you sort of run into at West Point, so, I always remember that experience, but, even before that I had begun to have a sense for, 'cause, you know, you take a lot of military history at West Point, so I began to have a sense for what he had done. It was much less...publicized, perhaps, than the George Pattons of the world who were much more visible and make it more about them. Now, Patton did it deliberately because he

wanted to...that's how he went about trying to inspire his soldiers, but Dwight was just the opposite.

DAVID GABRELL (Tech): Pause!

(Discussion about time, topics, and equipment.)

STEPHENS: Um...tell me about your Purple Heart.

KAUFMAN: Well...I got it. My first one was...I was very good at finding landmines, Unfortunately I found them by running over them because in a cavalry unit, you know, you're out in front, you're looking for the bad guys. And so we were maneuvering through either jungle or certain parts of Vietnam where we were...rubber plantations...and our job...we were along the Cambodian border...and our job was to interdict the North Vietnamese trying to infiltrate down from Cambodia into South Vietnam and they were very good about planning that we...They had standard Soviet anti-tank lines and they were very good about hiding them and I was very good about finding them [laughter] so I ran over a bunch of them. So, the first time, we were chasing some bad guys and my vehicle, my track, ran over a landmine, clean, and it took...First thing it did was kind of knock me silly, sort of blew me up in the air and I just came back down in a heap and was in the vehicle, but, then we were chasing bad guys, so I got on...right on a vehicle, jumped on another one and went about another hundred yards and hit another one at the same time that the vehicle next to me hit one, and so I got shrapnel from that plus, as near as I can tell, the shock wave met right in the middle of my head, 'cause it sorta knocked me loopy, um...but I got shrapnel. And then in November 1969, we were looking for a major headquarters in an area called War Zone C, which is along the Cambodian border there, in between South Vietnam and Cambodia, and we found it. Because I was a platoon leader, my platoon was out front, and we ran into some ill-tempered North Vietnamese [laughter] units and I got...my elbow got...I got shot gunned...elbow got shattered by a bullet, so...As the commercial used to say, some days are better than others.

STEPHENS: Hmm...wow...Well, appreciate your service. So, tell me, after you left West Point...You're in Vietnam and you came back...Start from your, sort of your homecoming and where you went from there.

KAUFMAN: Um...Well, there were no homecomings in those days. So I came back from Vietnam and commanded an army cavalry troop in the 600th cavalry regiment which was in Fort Meade, Maryland, which is right between Washington and Baltimore. So I did that for a year. And then the Army sent me to what's called the Advanced Course. It's a...It's where they train you to be a battalion staff officer to battalion commanders. So I was at Fort Knox for a year. And then, when I had left West Point...Because the faculty at West Point are primarily young military officers who the Army sends back to graduate school to get a master's degree and then brings you back to West Point to teach for three years and then sends you back to the army and that's how the Army educates its young officer corps and then returns them to the force, so you have a constant influx of graduate-educated officers all the time in the Army, which is a good thing. So, anyway...I had let them know that one of the things I'd like to do was go to graduate school, but because I had graduated in the top five percent of my class from West Point, they sort of

had... That was part of the deal, they sorta had to send me. So they timing was good. I mean, I'd been in combat, I'd commanded a cavalry troop, I'd done the things that I needed to do, so in 1972 they...base... I went to Harvard, um, for two years, to get a master's degree in public administration. Had to read for international relations, but the degree is in PA. And then, at the end of those two years, I went to West Point to teach. And so, if you do the math, I graduated in '68, I was back teaching in 1974, only six years later, and I taught in the Department of Social Sciences, which is a combination of political science and economics, and I taught international relations and national security policy. And I discovered that I really, really liked to teach, and did some research and did some work... little bit of writing, publishing... but, really I... you know, it's focused on a teaching mission, there, and so I really like it. Then, we left there and I went to another school in Norfolk for a couple of months and then went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and then was... getting ready to go to Europe... and in those days, U.S. Army had 200,000 stationed in what was then West Germany, and so, being a good cavalryman, it was my turn to go defend the frontiers of freedom there against the Soviets, and I got a call from West Point about another opportunity because the senior level academics at West Point are Army officers. In other words, the department chairs and those kinda people are lieutenant colonels and colonels... All of them have gone back and gotten a terminal degree, and so they go back and get their PhD and come back and provide the leadership and stability for the academic departments there at West Point. So I got a call and said, "Would you like to apply to one of these jobs?" And that was how I did, you know, was fortunate enough to get selected for it, so instead of going to Germany I went to MIT and spent two years there and got a PhD and then went back to West Point, taking charge of the International Relations program there. And then, after sort of running that program, I became department chair, and then after doing that for four years, I was selected to be the Provost. They call it the Dean, but it's, really it's the Provost, the chief academic officer there. So, that's what I did.

STEPHENS: How long did you serve as...

KAUFMAN: Five years as the Provost, yeah. Five years. And then retired from the Army. And... literally as the week before I left the Army, we left West Point, I saw the ad in the Chronicle of Higher Education for "Unnamed State College in Lawrenceville, Georgia." I still have it. I still carry it around. It's in my briefcase. I still carry the ad around. But Kathryn and I, we had, we were going to come back to the Southeast because, at that time, my dad and her mom were still alive, so we had elderly parents that we had to take care of and our daughter had gone to Furman and had settled in Greenville, South Carolina, and our son had gone to Davidson just outside of Charlotte and after he was finishing his army time he was going to come back to that, to Charlotte, and so we... you know, our family was going to be in the Southeast, and so where we lived was more important than sort of what I did. But I was in the hunt for... I liked academe and I'd been in the hunt for a couple college president jobs when I saw the ad for "Unnamed State College" and, you know, you put a pin in a map, of course, Atlanta's the perfect place for us to live between our kids and ultimately our grandkids and then where parents were back home in Brunswick, so I applied for the job and was lucky enough to get it. So that's how we ended up at "Unnamed State College."

STEPHENS: How do you think your role as a provost really shaped your desire to be a president, ultimately, the be the charter president?

KAUFMAN: Well, it was the perfect...It was sort of the perfect training ground, because a lot of the practices that we do here at GGC, we put in place at GGC, we did at West Point. Small classes, for example. Now, West Point's always done it that way. It's never been more than 15 cadets in a section. And so, one of the hallmarks of GGC, of course, is small classes. Focus on the teaching mission, same thing. At West Point, you know, you do a little bit of research and writing, but the focus is on the student, again, and ensuring the maxim that that cadet lives up to his or her potential. And so...and a college that was focused on the teaching mission rather than on research and other kinds of missions I knew would work. And I also knew because we had begun to hire civilian faculty at West Point...Congress made us...25% of the faculty are now civilians. That...I was astonished that there were literally, every year, hundreds and hundreds of PhD educated people who wanted to teach and be in a teaching institution rather than in a research institution. So I knew that the market would provide us with those kind of committed and dedicated teachers. And so when you begin to think about all of the practices that ultimately we put in place here at GGC, essentially all of them I got from my experience at West Point. And so it was the perfect preparation to start a college. Now, when I...If I had taken over...If I had gone to be the president of an already existing school, it would have been very different, perhaps, 'cause then you're having to undo a lot of cultures, change a lot of practices, and physical plant doesn't support that kind of approach, whereas here at GGC we built it to suit. As you know, here at GGC, form follows function, it doesn't determine it. So we decide what we want our academic facilities to be and then we build them that way. So I, from my perspective, it was the perfect preparation for what we ultimately did at GGC.

STEPHENS: Okay.

DAVID GABRELL (Tech): We have about ten minutes here if we're going to stay on schedule...

(End interview, Part I. October 21, 2013)