

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Tom Layzell

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Education is Key – General Interest Oral History project

Interview # EH-A-L-2019-022

Tom Layzell, the former Executive Director/Chancellor of the Board of Governors, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key – General Interest* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: May 8, 2019 Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential
Library, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Kathryn Mahaffey, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:39 / 1.65 hrs.

Session 1: Governors State Univ/Board of Governors Role in IL Higher Ed
Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on July 24,
2019.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield,
Illinois.

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Abstract

Tom Layzell, *Education is Key*, EH-A-L-2019-022

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Tom Layzell was born on May 24, 1938 in Taylorville, Illinois. He attended Millikin University, earning a bachelor's degree in 1960. After working for a year in his father's business, he went to law school and earned a J.D. from the University of Illinois at Champaign in 1966. After a year at a law firm he was hired as a research associate with the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) where he worked from 1966 to 1969. In 1969 a new University, Governors State, was created when Governor Richard B. Ogilvie signed House Bill 666 into law. Tom started working for Governors State in 1969, advancing to the position of Vice President for Administration. While at Governors State he earned a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Illinois in 1972. In 1976 he moved to the Board of Governors where his initial role was managing labor relations. The Board of Governors oversaw Eastern, Western, Northeastern, Governors State, and Chicago State Universities. In 1984 Tom was selected to be Executive Director of the Board of Governors. In 1986 the Board of Governors decided that the President of each University would report to Tom, and his title was changed to Chancellor. Tom served as Chancellor until 1995 when Governor Jim Edgar and the legislature dismantled the system of systems and abolished the Board of Governors. Mr. Layzell then became Mississippi's Commissioner of Higher Education from 1995 to 2003. In 2003 he moved to Kentucky where he served as president of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education from 2003 to 2007. At the time of this interview, he worked part-time with AGB Search.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Governors State University history; Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities; Illinois Board of Governors Degree Program; university faculty contract negotiations in Illinois; Illinois academic cooperative computer centers; Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities academic program reviews; Western Illinois University; Eastern Illinois University; Northeastern Illinois University; Chicago State University; Illinois Higher Education Reorganization Act of 1995.

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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