

ORAL HISTORY 87-108-07

Terry Yealy and Kim Bloom

Steve Lay, interviewer.

Series: University Focus series

Terry Yealy said as a result of Section 504 compliance complaint they have been moving towards greater access for the handicapped. They are giving better notification through their student handbook and notices they circulate twice a year. They have also removed physical barriers such as curb cuts and accessibility. A question about accessibility on campus. Yealy said it is a very accessible campus through ramps and elevators. There are people there to help them out. Yealy said she didn't have any problems and she has more problems than the average person in a wheelchair. There was a question about barrier removal. Yealy said it means that curbs have been cut out for wheelchairs and ramps have been installed or elevators added to get up flights. There was a question about wheelchairs being the standard for providing handicapped access. Yealy said not always. What they have had to look at other handicaps such as hearing or visual handicaps. This comes into play with student enrollment or student work applications. They need to make the application and enrollment process accessible for those types of handicaps. It would include such things as taping enrollment information or having braille information available. It needs to be made available quickly. Steve Lay asked about her limitations. Yealy said she has a larger wheelchair. Tables aren't high enough for her use. Doors have to be wide enough for her to get through in an electric wheelchair. Lay asked if accessibility has enabled her to work. Yealy said it does. If it wasn't accessible she would be able to use the buildings that she uses. The building she works in has multiple stories and if it wasn't accessible she would be able to do her job. Lay asked if there were any bottlenecks for her. Yealy said she hasn't found any building that is inaccessible. Kim Bloom said Constitution Hall is inaccessible and they plan to get a stairlift put in during the fall. They would like everyone to know if there is an accessibility problem they would like to make a reasonable accommodation so that a student or employee can be happy. Lay asked about someone wanting to take a class in a building that wasn't accessible. Bloom said they would be happy to move the location of the class to accommodate a student. The bookstore is providing a courier service for anyone needing the bookstore since it isn't accessible. Lay said the university is in compliance with the spirit of the law. Yealy said she feels that everything is in compliance and they do try to be helpful. Lay asked if she had any friends who have shared their experiences on campus. Yealy said she has a friend who is handicapped and he hasn't had any problems that couldn't be overcome.