



## **Oral History Interview of Anthony Eonas**

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**Interviewed by:** Christine Perry

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### **Interview Summary**

Anthony “Tony” Eonas, Suffolk University Professor Emeritus, discusses his forty-eight-year career at the university in the Marketing and Business Law and Ethics Departments. He discusses his early life; including his transition into academia after working in sales, then teaching at Northeastern University and Bentley College. He discusses the evolution of the business school, the camaraderie of the faculty, and his focus on developing students. He recounts one of his major accomplishments, securing the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation for the Sawyer Business School which elevated the reputation and ranking of the school. Professor Eonas also reminisces about his travels, both internationally, on behalf of Suffolk, and also across the United States, on regular motorcycle trips. He talks proudly about his family, and shares memories of his friends and students at Suffolk.

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### **Subject Headings**

**Eonas, Anthony G.**

**Suffolk University -- History**

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**Interview Transcript Begins**

**CHRISTINE PERRY:** We are here in Sargent Hall, third floor, Room 325. It is October 21, 2019. We are getting ready to conduct an interview with Tony Eonas, of the school of management. And this is part of the oral history project for the archives. So, Tony, thank you for coming.

[00:00:25]

**ANTHONY EONAS:** Thank you for having me.

**PERRY:** Any day. Okay, let's get started. Probably a good opening question would be, can you tell us what years you worked at Suffolk?

[00:00:34]

**EONAS:** I think I can. I started in 1971 and ended in 2019. Chronologically, that's forty-eight years. Didn't quite make fifty. Close, yeah.

**PERRY:** Very impressive. So, during that time, can you talk a little bit about what jobs you held, what the titles were, some idea of that?

**EONAS:** I was hired into the marketing department during the first semester I was here. They started having chairs of departments, and Bob Waehler made me his first chair in marketing. Did get a few hairs up on a couple of people's necks. And I was surprised. He announced it in our faculty meeting, and he hadn't even told me about it, no.

**PERRY:** You say that it raised hairs on people's necks. Why was that?

**EONAS:** Because there were other people teaching marketing also. And I was the new kid.

**PERRY:** You were the new kid on the block.

**EONAS:** Yup.

**PERRY:** Interesting. Okay. So that was what you were hired as. Throughout the years, did your job titles change?

**EONAS:** Yes. That lasted for four years. And when an opening came up in the Business Law Department, I asked Ben Diamond if I could enter his department and leave marketing behind, and he said that was fine. So, I ended up joining the Business Law Department and have been there ever since.

**PERRY:** So, when you joined, was your title assistant professor? Okay. And I'm going to guess, did you stay assistant professor the whole time you were there?

[00:02:36]

**EONAS:** No, I became an associate professor at some date. But everything had a request, so I never requested the full professor. Professors held the senior positions of associate professor and senior professor. Really didn't seem to be any advantage, so I just never did it.

**PERRY:** Okay. Now, you moved from marketing into the business department. I would guess in order to do that, you had to have a law degree.

[00:03:11]

**EONAS:** Yeah, I had to receive a law degree. But then I was also—at the end of my career, I was asked by Dean O'Neill if I would be chair temporarily, a few years ago. And “temporarily” ended up to be nine years as chair until the day I ended. So, I enjoyed it, chair of two departments, start and ending.

**PERRY:** Excellent. So, do you have a sense maybe how your role changed over time? Certainly, you started off in marketing, and at that point you were a professor in marketing and then you moved to business law, so I would guess that would kind of be one change. And also, the chair position—

**EONAS:** The chair was kind of natural. I'm a bigmouth, and I would take charge anyway, so, or try to. But I always felt that my challenge and goal was student teaching, period. So, really, it didn't matter. And in the first few years—I didn't think of that as — if we needed someone to fill in the class because of someone being ill or something else, they'd throw us the book and say, “Tony, take this management course.” Well, okay. Or, “Corman, take this finance course.” Okay. Even though they were not in our departments, we were willing to step in and do any course that needed someone. That wouldn't go over today.

**PERRY:** No, no, it's a lot more specialized today. You don't have the opportunity for things to be as interchangeable as they were back then. Can I ask you, what led you to Suffolk? How did you get into this line of work?

[00:05:17]

**EONAS:** Well, when I was getting my MBA at Northeastern, one of my good friends was the registrar at Bentley College, getting his MBA. So, I thought it was a pretty good deal. I looked at the professor's schedules and what they did and everything else, said, “That's not bad.” And I like being at school. It didn't matter. Even when I was in first grade, I couldn't wait to go to school, and even when I was out of public school, I wanted to—yeah—go to school. So, I got my former boss— [a] professor in the department of Co-op and Advising had a position open, in fact. And I said, “Well, how about giving me the position?” He said, “Okay.” I took a real cut in pay. At that time, I was a sales engineer, making pretty good money. But like I said, I just like the idea of teaching. And actually a few years prior when I took one of those preference tests, they said I should either be a teacher or a social worker. I guess I was neither, so I said oh, and I go become a teacher.

[00:06:41]

So, he hired me. He had been my instructor and coordinator, and he had become the dean of that department. So, I said, “Okay, Tony, he'll hire you.” But then, I went through my MBA with Joe [inaudible]. He said he didn't have a marketing professor at Bentley. They had just a couple of years prior moved out to Waltham. So, they needed one, and I interviewed for it, and they said,

“Sure, you’ve got it.” So, I was now a marketing professor, the *only* marketing professor at Bentley College at that time. That is also part of the story when I interviewed here at Suffolk. There was an opening at Suffolk, and I thought I’ll maybe try that.

They said, “You know, we have a couple big classrooms that seat fifty people. You may have to teach a couple of large classes.” I said, “Oh, really?” I said nothing. But at Bentley, being the only marketing professor of a required course, I was in the lecture halls with a hundred to a hundred and ten. I had four full classes of a hundred and ten, and an elective of forty. So, my average was about four hundred and forty students a semester. When they said I might have a class of fifty, I internally laughed. So, it was really a piece of cake, yeah.

**PERRY:** So, you applied here to Suffolk and you were hired as a faculty person in the marketing department. Where did the law degree come in?

[00:08:40]

**EONAS:** I had already applied to Suffolk Law, nights, the evening program. And I was here, taking my law degree, so when I completed it was when the opening came up in the law department. Prior to that, they had always used adjuncts in the law department, and this was first—besides Ben Diamond, the first full-time law professor. So, I applied, and having worked here with Ben for four years, he knew me, I knew him, and he said sure. He hired me on.

**PERRY:** Fascinating. It is very interesting. So, you left Bentley and you came to Suffolk. What were your impressions in those first days of working here at Suffolk? And what struck you as different, maybe, from Bentley? And what did you like?

[00:09:43]

**EONAS:** Well, Bentley had become a campus school. And where I had gotten my undergraduate and master’s degree at Northeastern, which was a commuter school— at that time, everyone commuted. And Suffolk was not foreign to me as a commuter school. I liked the idea of the school itself. Even though my undergraduate degree was engineering—so I guess I didn’t know what I wanted to be when I grew up. But it just worked out that the job opened up. To tell you

the truth, Bentley was going for university status, and I didn't qualify without a PhD in marketing, so I would've had to have been on my way out eventually. So actually, a couple of the administrators at Bentley told me they knew of an opening for Bob Waehler here at Suffolk. And they sent me down and recommended that Bob hire me as a marketing professor here.

**PERRY:** So, it worked out on a number of levels.

[00:11:02]

**EONAS:** Very many levels.

**PERRY:** That's interesting, interesting. And do you remember when you first got here? It was a commuter institution, so you were used to that. But is there anything else that struck you about being here at Suffolk as opposed to—or was it just sort of similar?

[00:11:23]

**EONAS:** To me, it was similar. It was the same type of student body that commuted and came to school.

**PERRY:** Smaller classes, too. That worked out well for you. Over the years—and there were many—can you talk a little bit about maybe some of the lessons that you learned, working here at the university?

**EONAS:** Well, for one thing, what you learn is things never change, and each class has its own personality. And it doesn't matter how many years in and out. The class itself has a personality. And having three kids of my own, too, after a while I learned kids have their own personalities also. And my children are not that much different than the ones I was teaching. I looked at them the same way, I always looked at them as—even in the MBA programs I was teaching, I thought they were my kids. One thing—I was raised with one word, and that was “respect.” My mother was a very bright woman, never said never. It doesn't matter what color people are, what ethnicity they are, what religion they are. It only has to be that they are good people. And you teach everyone respect. And that stuck with me forever, and I've tried to live up to that.

**PERRY:** So, you carried that into your classes.

**EONAS:** I think so.

**PERRY:** Yeah. So that lesson you learned from your mom?

[00:13:16]

**EONAS:** Oh yeah. My mom was a real single mom. Father died when I was six. And she had to raise the three kids, two older sisters and I. And that's, I think, why I get along with women so well. I was raised in a house with three women, and had a lot of respect for their abilities and capabilities. And, actually, I didn't say it—over the years, I had several women students and faculty members ask my advice on how to handle—some—what today would be uncomfortable for people, so they kind of asked my advice and I held their hands through some tough times.

**PERRY:** So that was another lesson you learned.

**EONAS:** Oh, I guess so.

**PERRY:** How to do that sort of thing and be helpful. When you think about being here at Suffolk and being here for as long as you worked here at Suffolk, what did you enjoy most about the work that you did?

[00:14:29]

**EONAS:** Actually, it was a couple of things. I loved working with the students. I loved their personalities. No matter what their personality was, they're always different, and I just enjoyed that part of it. And, actually, being with my colleagues. We used to have more meetings, functions with people we worked with. And as the school broke further into departments and hired in new people and new credentials and all, that broke off, and we no longer had the camaraderie that we had as faculty and administration, and all. So, that's the part I miss.

**PERRY:** Yeah, that is true. I saw that over the years, too. And so, your sense of what was one of the most enjoyable parts of working here at Suffolk was the relationships you built with your coworkers?

**EONAS:** Like Black Russians Christmas week. Is that part of this thing? Mary Hefron, Chris Perry, and Tony Eonas and Ben Diamond, on the last day of classes before Christmas break, would enjoy sharing a—was it Black Russians? There wouldn't be another soul on the campus. We did it for several years, and it was rather enjoyable. Rather enjoyable.

**PERRY:** There was lots of that type of stuff going on, and it was wonderful. Definitely.

[00:16:18]

**EONAS:** I think that's why we became that close. We started out at the beginning together.

**PERRY:** Absolutely. When you think about people that you have worked with here at Suffolk over the years, who—and it doesn't have to be just one person—who do you think had the most profound effect on you in terms of personal and professional development?

[00:16:44]

**EONAS:** That's pretty easy for me. Number one, it was Dean Bob Waehler. Fantastic individual, wonderful, who had faith in me and made me his first chair, and who—had a nice, close relationship with him. And then Ben Diamond and I became very close. He assisted me and mentored me and was chair of the department for many years. Ben had a history here of over thirty-five years. And then would've been—most recently during my illnesses, Bill O'Neill has been utterly fantastic. I mean, he's been terrific. I could not have asked for any more or better treatment than Bill has rendered me. In fact, when I had my—we'll talk more about it later—my double aortic aneurysm, Bill had one of those candy stripers for retired people in my room at Mass General Hospital for a week or two. And he somehow pulled some strings, and they had one watching over me.

**PERRY:** That's remarkable, absolutely remarkable. So those three had a real profound effect on you, in terms of the time you spent working here at the university. Yes, I know all three of them and they're exceptional people. When you think about your time here, what were some of the most significant changes that you witnessed and you experienced while you were an employee?

**EONAS:** Well, with the business school, it had to do with splitting up, and trying to get space between the law school and liberal arts and business, and making it an entity of itself. And it worked, and we started out going for the AACSB [Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business] accreditation, which is the top accreditation for business schools. And a little story about that is the ones who got it going were Professor Corman and Tony Eonas. Of course, Corman will never give me any credit for being part of it, and if you knew Corman, you understand. In that instance, what happened is Joel and I put together the first application, first proposal, sent it into AACSB. They inspected us, came back and said it was the finest application they had seen for the first time, but they weren't going to give any school the accreditation the first time.

[00:19:51]

The next year, I didn't go on the committee again, the committee of two. And the next committee gave their application with some slight changes, and they were awarded, just the second application, with the AACSB accreditation. And many schools found it very, very difficult. Joel and I had both hired with the eye of what type of academic people they needed for what they're doing. So, we spent several years knowing what AACSB would be looking for and filling those positions and filling those niches, and so it worked out. A lot of people weren't too happy with the requirements, but it was necessary that if we were to be competitive in the Boston market that we would have to have that accreditation.

**PERRY:** I remember that whole exercise and all of the work that was involved with getting that accreditation. I didn't realize it was you and Joel, the movers and shakers behind it.

[00:21:08]

**EONAS:** I'm talking about myself more than I ever have, I think, so I don't think I tooted my own horn that much.

**PERRY:** Yeah, you were very quiet about it. He wasn't [laughs]. If I remember correctly at the time, it wasn't surprising because we had heard that no one got accreditation with the first go around. But it was also surprising when we got it the second time because that was pretty rare, we understood, that a school would go back and, the second time, would get it. That seemed like you were jumping through a lot of hoops a number of times before –

**EONAS:** They were surprised how prepared we were. But to me, that was simple. As an industrial engineer and as an engineer and marketing person, I said, "What do they need?" and we just dug up what they needed. To me, it was a simple exercise of marketing, or something.

**PERRY:** That's why it was good to have somebody like you leading the charge.

[00:22:17]

**EONAS:** Well, it worked out.

**PERRY:** You could put that together relatively easy. So, the next question is what do you consider to be your most important contribution to the university? I would think that what we just talked about –

[00:22:29]

**EONAS:** That was one of them. And being steady. I would probably average one missed a class a day every five years, even though I've had plenty of surgeries and stuff. I would always arrange them into break, planning breaks and stuff. But I just thoroughly enjoyed it, and committed to my students, and wanted to make sure that they would be successful. And I always—one little thing, almost every semester in class, I would pick that kid that sat in the back row, never said boo, never talked to anyone else in class, no one would talk to him or her. And I'd say, okay, and make it a point of using their name—even though with all those students, I never could—I can't remember my own name now. If you ask me to sign something, I have to pull out my ID. But I

would just, in most classes, pick out someone who was in the back corner or back somewhere and just seemed to be alone in the class. So, I would try and reach out to them. It worked out.

**PERRY:** It certainly did. So, your contributions are you got AACSB accreditation for us, and what's that old joke about half the battle is, you show up? You always showed up, you always showed up.

**EONAS:** I always looked forward to it. There are many faculty members that go into teaching because they don't like people, I've found. And they could hide, teaching— from being out in public. I guess people figured—a couple of things, you asked questions like—memorable experiences.

**PERRY:** Yeah, that's my next question. What's your most memorable experience?

**EONAS:** Looking at it, my most recent one—I was awarded the Heritage Committee a couple years ago. That was wonderful.

**PERRY:** That is huge. They only hand them out to not too many people.

[00:25:03]

**EONAS:** No, so someone recognized what I was doing sometimes. But also, every level awarded me at least once Best Faculty. The MBA students, student government, graduate student government association, the undergraduate -- the night division used to give an award, too. So at least once, I received the Outstanding Professor Award in the early years as faculty grew. And then I also received the Dean's Service Committee Award when they started that a while back. Then it was a big stampede. Our faculty just grew and grew and grew.

**PERRY:** Yes, along with the rest of the university, definitely.

[00:26:03]

**EONAS:** But I figured every once in a while—and when I’d ask what would I get for it, they said, “Nothing.” And then years ago, the dean told me—boy, did I realize I had a dean –

**PERRY:** Which one, Brennan?

**EONAS:** Brennan. Dean Brennan told me, “You know, you have the most students per semester in the business school.” I said, “Yeah. Does that mean I’m going to need some more money?” “No, no.” I didn’t take this job for the money, that’s for sure.

**PERRY:** Yeah, that weren’t paying by head back then, no.

**EONAS:** So, I don’t know how many years—it was probably over a dozen with Brennan that I knew—that I carried the heaviest student load in the School of Management, year after year after year.

**PERRY:** Yes, you were always known as a very popular faculty person, and that was pretty common knowledge.

[00:27:08]

**EONAS:** Well, that’s good.

**PERRY:** Yeah, it is good. It’s not good; it’s *great*. So, I particularly like this question: what advice would you give to our current university leadership after all of your experiences here at the university, the time that you have put in? What would you like to say to them? What do you wish that they knew?

[00:27:31]

**EONAS:** Well this also ties into one of the questions you had, what would these interviews in the Archives do? And what it is, is everyone comes in here—new faculty members, new administrators—try and reinvent the wheel again. It’s one thing—I look back and I’ve been over

these things time and time again. This will establish some sort of a timeline or history of what we have done over the years. It isn't always new.

**PERRY:** So, if you could talk to the current president –

**EONAS:** Oh, I have. She's very open.

**PERRY:** She's lovely. So, what have you told her when you talked to her?

**EONAS:** Oh, I haven't got a —since president, I really haven't been available to do much talking. But prior to that—I met her first when she came as provost. She needed an attorney to do a real estate transfer from where she was, so everyone said, “Ask Tony,” so I did it, yeah. So, I got to know her on a person-to-person basis—very small one. And I had done that for a couple of people. Actually, I think three presidents I did little legal things for when they first came here. I just didn't think of it when I was doing this here—no, doing this here.

**PERRY:** So, over the years, were you giving them advice? Were they asking you anything about it?

[00:29:21]

**EONAS:** I think they were always open if I had any, and they'd talk to me about it. A little vignette about Dave Sargent. Everyone would ask me—maybe once every couple years or three years, I'd have a question for Dave. I'd make an appointment with Dave, and, say—about coursework, about schoolwork, about something positive for the school. Never anything for myself or anything else. And Dave would say, “Oh yeah, if Tony says we should do that, we're going to go that way. Go ahead,” like adding a course or two, or something academically. And I had several faculty members say, “How do you ever get to see Dave Sargent?” I said, “I'm never asking for me, that's one thing. And he knows it's something that has to be done when I do ask to see him.” So, I didn't ask often, but when I needed to see him, I would get an appointment right away. Never told them my secret, though.

**PERRY:** Never told him the secret?

[00:30:41]

**EONAS:** No, the other faculty, how did I do it, yeah.

**PERRY:** I think sometimes people didn't realize it was probably a lot easier to get into see him than they ever thought it was. You don't get in to see him unless you asked, and most of the time, you just have to call and make an appointment, and he would happily see you. But there seemed to be a sense sometimes that—

**EONAS:** But there were the group of faculty that wanted to see him every month or every other week, and forget it. It was impossible for them to get in on a regular basis.

**PERRY:** So, when exactly did you retire, Tony?

**EONAS:** Well, I didn't ask to retire. It was the last day of finals, December 2017. I was at home getting ready to come into Boston, and I told my wife, "I think you'd better call 911."

**PERRY:** Really?

**EONAS:** And so, she did, and it ended up that I was flown into Mass General. If I had something happening, I wanted to come into town. So, they flew me in, and it was actually weeks before I even knew what was going on. I think I must've been in an induced coma. But double aortic dissection, which is going into the heart. So, they ended up having to change a valve in it, and all. So, I was still planning on coming back after that, once I got straightened out, but—

[00:32:40]

Oh, also, all they had to do was find someone to proctor the exam. And I had the template for the corrections all done. So, someone just had to correct it following the template and IBMs and the computers. So, that was the last day I had responsibility that academic year. So, then I was

thinking of how to get back, but the episode killed my kidneys. So, I ended up—and I thought I'd maybe someday get out of it, but it isn't the case like that—I ended up having to take dialysis three times a week, and it looks like I'll be doing it the rest of my life. But if it were not available, I wouldn't be here to say so. I'm glad I survived that much of it. But then, I had an incident. That was fine, I was figuring how to work my schedule, and I was recovering pretty well. Things were going strong. Stupid coffeemaker spit steam in my face when I opened it too soon or whatever, and I fell backwards and broke my hip, spent eleven weeks in a wheelchair. That destroys all your muscle mass. Forget it.

[00:34:14]

And cracked the hip again—not again, but cracked the hip. So that pretty much did it. And then listening, watching the TV with the commuter reports, and you regularly drive into Quincy from Brockton and taking commuter Red Line—I said, “Thank God I don't have to go through that any longer. It's a good thing that I'm pretty much going to retire out.” But I couldn't have continued with all those things going on, although I was trying to figure out how to do it. Yeah. I still intended, and I didn't realize I was only a couple of months from my eightieth birthday. And everyone would ask me, “Aren't you retired?” No, why should I be—I'm not retired. I like doing what I'm doing—I love doing what I'm doing. And I never really intended to retire from it. It's kind of forcible retirement.

**PERRY:** Your health will do that.

**EONAS:** Yes, yes.

**PERRY:** So aside from dialysis, what have you been doing in retirement? Is there anything that you're enjoying?

[00:35:25]

**EONAS:** All the doctors' reports. I do have a piece of land and an old farmhouse in New Hampshire. I've got seventy-two beautiful acres, woodland acres, and an old house, so I've been working. It's the old house that kept me busy for years. So, I enjoy that, getting up there, and I

enjoy the woods. I won't say what I do in the woods, but I enjoy the woods. And, my kids and their friends have all enjoyed being up there. I think there must be twenty kids that have keys to my place. But it's always been enjoyable. And, then, my wife loves the beach, but we don't have too much opportunity to get to the beach. So, we will be able to do certain things. Oh, things I didn't mention—

**PERRY:** You can do it now.

[00:36:27]

**EONAS:** No, I didn't have to because when my kids were grown, we started the international trips. So, where I didn't have any kids to worry about, take care of, I said, "Hey, you need someone to go on the trips. I'm willing to go and my wife is willing to go." So, we ended up with about—one of the professors couldn't make the Prague trip, so I ended up stepping in at the last minute. I said, "I got no kids, I'll go any time." So, I ended up going to Prague about four times with student groups. I'm Greek; I speak Greek fluently. I dance Greek. So, I had four trips to Athens or to Greece with the student body. Then, the professor that was to take the graduate group to China was pregnant, and she couldn't. They told her, "You can't take that flight." So, there I was in the last week or so before they were leaving. I jumped in and took them to Beijing and Shanghai. And then I went to a couple conferences in Hawaii. Oh, I taught in Senegal campus, so that got me to Africa. We did a semester in one full week.

**PERRY:** Talk a little bit about that experience because it's always interesting to me to hear from other people. They often described it as life-changing to have gone over to the Senegal campus and meet those students and how serious they were about education. What was—

[00:38:09]

**EONAS:** Oh, they were serious, but I never thought they were any different than any other students. They just had a different language. And I really think they pretty much fit the mold of student. And they looked forward and appreciated any help you gave them and everything. Now where else—oh, Morocco. I had a student who was a big deal in Morocco who said, "Gee, can

you maybe put a trip together? I'll put a trip together." So, we took a trip to Morocco. And let's see, where else did I—

**PERRY:** That's a lot.

[00:38:48]

**EONAS:** So, my international travel—my wife has COPD, so she can't do a lot of flight time. She has a breathing problem. But we got it out from under our skin, too, quite substantially.

**PERRY:** You did a lot. Was that the first international traveling you had done? Have you done any—you must've gone home to Greece.

**EONAS:** No, I never made it to Greece. No. And then one thing is— which was a little consternation for someone—is the students did evaluations on the trips, and there were quite a few trips going and everything else. And one of them, perhaps, opened their mouth, or someone opened their mouth, and said I had the highest student rated trip of all the trips. There was an administrator who didn't particularly care for that. Later on, recognized me for it. But that would be rare that administrators would not give me the credit for it. But I kind of liked that idea, that it was excellently rated.

**PERRY:** So, before we wrap things up, I am kind of curious. I certainly haven't been at Suffolk as long as you were. I'm like a forty-six-year employee, and, you've got a couple of years on me. I remember you being here when I arrived. And from my perspective, it seems like in that time, there were an awful lot of changes that were taking place here at the university, most of them very, very good. Some of them, people had trouble with. Can you talk a little bit about changes that maybe you saw over the years? Earlier when we first started talking, you mentioned space, which, we're in downtown Boston, and there's always going to be skirmishing within each of the schools for sufficient space. But other things that went on here that were changes and how you dealt with them, how you reacted to them, some of the ones you thought that were really great. Do you have anything in terms of thoughts on that?

[00:41:07]

**EONAS:** Well, I thought it was tremendous doing the accreditation and making the business school well-recognized in the Boston area. Any time you'd tell someone that you taught at Suffolk, "Oh, the law school?" No, the business school. "What? They have a business school?" No one ever recognized—nowadays, it's an entity on its own. People have—that's the major thing. And actually, now when Northeastern is a preeminent institution, I hear that they tell people that get accepted to Suffolk, and not to Northeastern, they send them over to Suffolk for a year or two and tell them to succeed here, and then they reapply to Northeastern. Or BU [Boston University], some of them, the same thing. So, many of those students, international students, would stay here. They enjoyed it. I always liked giving my advice to—people worked under me. I didn't mention this.

[00:42:24]

My advice was different to the people I hired and to people who asked me. All the department new-hires were told if they wanted a straight answer, on Suffolk, to see me. Go ask Tony. No bull, here it is, here's what you do. And my advice was different and recognized after the fact of tenure that my advice was different to teachers who were going for tenure. My advice was don't listen to all the other faculty members. Try this. And they came back to me and said, "What you said worked." I'm not telling you my secret. That's it. But it worked.

**PERRY:** That's fascinating.

[00:43:30]

**EONAS:** Oh, of course the computer applications, which I'm still struggling with. And textbooks—the textbooks, again, have changed, and they always change. But the strange part is I had the first computer experiences in my engineering programs. I didn't like it then, and I still—and I ended up—I've always had an assistant or a secretary to do the stuff. At Northeastern, I had my part-time job, one class job, was entering the card file where you had a batch process, and for all the industrial engineers, it was my job to put their programs on the cards and batch-process them. And when I got over here, where they required a computer class, I'd have students ask me about one of their programs or something.

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And I had a knack of being able to look at a program—and these were program projects. You had to write the whole programs out. I was able to pick out things, what was wrong with their particular programs, to help them. I wasn't their advisor for it, but they would come to me, and I'd be able to tell them, "This is your problem here and right there." But that was because I disliked so much sitting at a keyboard that I never made a mistake. Just make sure it's right the first time. So, you know, it's the computer applications that have been totally, totally changed. And I'm trying to think of it. There must be so many other things that have happened. But I was proud, mostly, of Suffolk's gaining recognition in the world of business schools.

Remember, we have all those institutions within the [Route] 128 area of Boston. And I know a couple—several students who ended up getting into medical school from Suffolk because they'd apply here, they'd be taking their biology or whatever the courses were required for premed. And they'd say—I'd say they'd be stars, "You're a star at Suffolk." And the faculty would be all behind you in your major, and all had some connections with medical schools. And you'd go to a place like BC, and you have pre-med—three hundred and something students. Where were you going to stand out? You could be a wonderful person and never stand out in that atmosphere. So, that was kind of the success I saw. Pre-med-type situation, you can be a star at Suffolk, where you might be just lost in the crowd. You deserve to be a star, but you just don't get overlooked. That's it.

**PERRY:** Well, Tony, certainly I think over the years when I think Suffolk that always made you a star faculty member, and one that stood out was the fact that you drive a motorcycle.

[00:47:12]

**EONAS:** Oh, that's been fun. With the heart situation, I sold it a month ago. Not only that, I can't risk the people on cell phones and texting. I only got wiped out once on a motorcycle. This old guy -- he had to be at least ten years older than I—knocked me down. But no, I loved riding the motorcycle [simultaneous conversation]

**PERRY:** —when you would ride that motorcycle up to the—yeah, Sawyer School.

[00:47:50]

**EONAS:** I remember one of the students—one of the Middle Eastern students drove up to the side during one in front of Sawyer. And it was the fastest motorcycle that year, the Honda something or another. And I said, “Can I have a ride?” And he looked at me like I was an idiot. “Yeah, go ahead.” Jumped on it and I took off, and everyone's looking at me like—this was with a suit and tie and everything else going on, zooming. I had a Harley. Not always, but most of the years, I had a nice Harley. And the gentleman who saw my ad in my constable’s office on the bulletin board—was starting to ride again. They called me, came over to the house. Didn’t argue the money, didn’t argue one thing, didn’t start the bike. Took one look at it and said, “I want it.” But I don’t take care of my cars, but my motorcycle was immaculate. I took good care of that. My cars—when I was a sales engineer, the first year with the Chicago Rawhide Company, I put sixty thousands miles on travel. At that time, you traveled all New England. So, I put that much on a new car they gave me every fourteen months or something like that. So, what? I’ll have a car toy, maybe. But any other car, I just drive till they're a bucket of rust and take the plates off and kick them to the side of the road and that’s it. I have no—I did have a Corvette, too, for a while. And that was fun.

**PERRY:** Not as much fun as the motorcycle.

[00:49:53]

**EONAS:** No, no it wasn’t. But the motorcycle—I’d been to Laconia regularly every year. And there was only one year that the schedule for spring break worked out that I was able to hop down to Florida, to Daytona. And then I’ve been up to Sturgis about three, four times. And I don’t drink, didn’t drink prior to—I did have Black Russians. But at that time, I would drink a little bit. Not that I had a problem, but I just decided then, that I didn’t want to do any more drinking. And I’d still have a Black Russian with you. So, I’d been, as I said, to Daytona that one year because it worked with the spring schedule. And so, I’ve been there, and then Sturgis, I think I’ve been there three times. And as I was saying, a lot of people just hang around and drink all the time. My other associate attorney and myself, and some of the other people that would go with us sometimes, would just say hello to Sturgis, look at the bikes, the hundreds and thousands

of bikes, just walk them, and then hop on the bike every day and head out to Mexico, Colorado, Arizona.

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And, then, that was west and south, and then west and north, you know, Montana, Glacier National Park up at Alberta, Canada. We rode, in a period of two weeks or ten days or everything, we put between two and three thousand miles on a— that's without driving the bike out there; the bikes, we'd have them towed out there in a trailer that they'd supply. We would ride, ride, and ride. And that was the fun part of it. What do you got?

**PERRY:** Is there anything that I haven't asked or anything you would like to address?

**EONAS:** I got the most fantastic wife in the world. She raised three kids when I was in night school all those years and working on the road.

**PERRY:** And didn't a couple of your children eventually graduate from Suffolk?

**EONAS:** Oh, yes. I can't forget the kids. George, number one, is a lieutenant in the Brockton Fire Department, okay. And he's done pretty well. He's given me three grandchildren, too. And then, Russell is number two. He's an assistant district attorney in Plymouth County, but he also has had the title of chief of the district courts in Plymouth County. In other words, that meant he did all the extra work. But he's a career district attorney. And then my daughter was in business and marketing working for Macy's chain or whatever and everything else.

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And she kind of looked around and said, "Jeez, that's seven days a week, any time during the week." And her girlfriends—we had suggested she do it, but her girlfriends, a couple of them were schoolteachers, and they had the summer off with their kids and stuff. She had—Russell, the second, provided me with two more grandkids, a girl and a boy. And then Nicole, who is the youngest, had three, two girls and a boy, and they're fantastic kids. Anna, the oldest, just got her license last month. Takes the load off of chasing her around. She can drive herself now.

**PERRY:** You got quite a brood, there.

[00:53:54]

**EONAS:** Oh yeah. And they're fantastic kids. We haven't had any real problems with any of the kids. I think I was more problematic for my mother than my kids have been to me. Russell stayed on and got his law degree, besides his undergrad. And my whole philosophy, and even talking to other professors who have kids, you make them get their bachelor's degree at Suffolk. It's not going to be any different than anywhere else. And then if they want something afterwards, then you choose the graduate school more carefully. And I felt proud enough of Suffolk that I felt my kids could do as well there. And the Georgie, a firefighter, but had to get a master's degree to get the Quinn Bill or whatever, get the money and stuff. Then Russell got his law degree here.

He didn't know what he was doing. He was into the school here before all of the sudden, he decided he might want to be a lawyer. And then Nicole getting into the education routines. Anna got a couple of master's now and stuff. Not at Suffolk. We're right next to Bridgewater State, so she's convenient, and cheaper. Oh, you want my philosophy on tuition and moneys and all? It's been the demand of the students' parents and students that all this extraneous stuff be supplied to the students. Like, BU has a cruise ship layout, two Olympic swimming pools, rock climbing walls. When I went to Northeastern, we could pay our own way with a co-op job and a part-time job, and pay everything.

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I was able to see Suffolk's tuition climb, climb, climb. And then when my freshman year at Northeastern cost me six hundred dollars, it is now seventy thousand, I believe, tuition. It's ridiculous. I think you're not paying for education. You're paying for entertainment of the kids, and I think that's foolish. There's no need to have so much debt if they concentrate on education. And Suffolk's a little better at concentrating on education than some of the other schools. But that's strange I didn't say something like that before because it's always in the back of my head. You should have the idea that what the purpose of a university or a college is. I don't know, I guess that finishes off what I should say, probably.

**PERRY:** Nothing else you can think of you want to share with us?

[00:56:59]

**EONAS:** Off the top of my head, no. What else, tell me what else I might think of?

**PERRY:** No, this is your time.

**EONAS:** No, question-wise.

**PERRY:** Oh, okay. I think actually we pretty much covered most of them. What do you think for you, at this point, the future holds in terms of—

**EONAS:** Dialysis, doctors.

**PERRY:** You're not unusual. And good memories, I hope.

**EONAS:** Well, I hope I keep a good memory.

**PERRY:** Well, good memories of Suffolk.

[00:57:32]

**EONAS:** Oh, yeah. Nothing negative about the schools that I've been at—Northeastern, Bentley, Suffolk. Each one had strengths and weaknesses.

**PERRY:** You seem to have clearly enjoyed your time here. And I think that that's wonderful, for somebody to be able to feel as though they had a long career and enjoyed [simultaneous conversation]

[00:58:03]

**EONAS:** I had the philosophy, if you love your job, it's not work. That's it, yeah. And actually, when I was here, the people that we—our colleagues were wonderful. They established a very, very nice relationship when I first got here. I don't know if it remained that close. I think maybe the mistake was breaking into departments, separate, because then all of a sudden people became insular in their thinking, and it was because of the size of the faculty expanding so rapidly.

**PERRY:** Is there anything you want to leave us with? Are you feeling okay about this? Check your notes and everything?

**EONAS:** I think we covered—of course—wait a minute. With the accreditation and all, it became a publish-or-perish place. And a big surprise to everyone at the business school, who had thought of it, was the first one to be academically qualified when they started recognizing and classifying people—the first one that all of a sudden said, “Gee, I'm academically qualified.” “You, Eonas, have some publications?” “Yeah.” And I would send them in the mail, and just did them. And I had that whole period of time—I don't remember exactly when they started giving that designation—the academic qual—for publications. But I was, from day one, academically qualified, until last year when I left. I still had enough publications to be—and gee, I was one of the few that also hit all the credentials for professionally qualified. So, I was both, but people were surprised when Eonas had publications—actually, one of my publications I did with my grad assistant a few years ago was in the—University of Oregon ranked number sixteen law review in the country [Oregon Law Review]. That wasn't bad.

**PERRY:** No, that was very good.

[01:00:31]

**EONAS:** It really surprised a lot of people when I snuck in a publication or two, enough to be academically qualified. But I really didn't like the pressure of having to do something. My first publications were professional associations that I had with certain clients a little bit, beaten down Shell Oil Company and other stuff like that. And I would then be interested in it and I would write it, environmental issues. So, I'd get interested, and then I'd start reading and put together, and then I'd all of a sudden write a little something.

**PERRY:** Excellent, excellent.

[01:01:21]

**EONAS:** I'd better quit while I'm ahead.

**PERRY:** You don't have to if you don't want to. If you're comfortable in terms everything you wanted to say.

**EONAS:** I think so.

**PERRY:** Okay. Well, we'll let the gentlemen in the booth know that—what did you say, “We're all set?”

**EONAS:** Wonderful thing, building the organization of retired individuals here at Suffolk. And I think it gives me—one of the things we want to do is I volunteered to work with undergraduate admissions. Well, the other advice I have is we would be better listening and researching what students want on the graduate level. Enrollments can be down or up and everything else. You better ask the people what they want. The faculty are writing what they think they should want. Now, they're the experts, yeah. But making the commitment so difficult to get it that they're going to—and I've seen it over the years. They will take in mind, how many credits do I need, period?

[01:02:39]

You're looking to get the credit for work, for doing what you're doing, and not necessarily be research-oriented as many faculty members are. So that's something I was going to mention.

**PERRY:** That's okay. And I appreciate the mentioning the retiree group.

[01:03:02]

**EONAS:** I was excited when it opened up.

**PERRY:** So many of us have been hearing that people left the institution through retirement, and then you were here one day, and you were a vibrant part of the community, and then it was just like you faded into the sunset. So, this is wonderful that there's—God love Nancy Stoll, that she pushed this initiative, and has gotten all of us off the mark who are on the committee in terms of trying to bring back retirees and make them a part of the community that many of us miss. So, it's nice.

**EONAS:** And it doesn't bother me that many of the students I've had, the thousands that I've had, don't remember me. They remember me, but not to me, about me. They've had other—that doesn't bother me because I also discovered that once you're gone out of this area, you're forgotten.

**PERRY:** Well, you may be forgotten by some of the students, but I think that you're well-remembered by your colleagues and coworkers that you had. And so, for me, that has been a lot of the joy of doing this work with setting up a retiree program that Nancy Stoll has been just brilliant with.

**EONAS:** And I jumped right in, yup. I said, "I think that's a wonderful idea."

**PERRY:** Yeah, we were so happy to see you at the luncheon. That was the hit of the day for many of us to see you looking so well. Well, I know that it was a long trek and you're not on your motorcycle anymore, but thank you for coming in. And thank you, Deedee, for coming with Tony. We really do appreciate the fact that you both came and did this. You're busy, we know it, so we're grateful.

END OF INTERVIEW