

Interviewee: Caitlin Lubelczyk
Interviewers: Victoria Petrie and Julia Mazzeo
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Abstract: Caitlin Sargent Lubelczyk was born in Worcester in 1982, grew up on Chester Street in 1988, and attended Notre Dame Academy in 2000. Caitlin met her husband in 2008 and she has a daughter named Olivia who is almost eight. She and her husband moved to the Burncoat area and just recently she began working at Notre Dame Academy in 2016 as Director of Communications and Alumnae Relations. In 2016 she was awarded the 40 Under 40 Award from the *Worcester Business Journal*. Caitlin has made changes in her career that she is grateful for. In this interview, Caitlin discusses the struggles and joys of her experience in her working career. From going to college for psychology and changing her path to theater later on, to finding a job in health care, to now working at a high school. She discusses the challenges she faced in building up a successful career and working in the health industry while facing family illness. Caitlin elaborates upon the importance of time and to not stress about the little things, to just live. In this interview, Caitlin also touches on her experiences as a young working mother and the changes that she witnessed on Chester Street over the years. She is also currently President of the Emerald Club.

JM: We are completing a city wide oral history of the lives of Worcester women aiming to collect stories of a broad range of experiences based on the goals of the 1850 National Women's Rights Convention in Worcester. We are focusing on the areas of women's education, health, work, and politics/community involvement. We want to focus today on your experiences with work. Thank you for your help with this important project. Do we have your permission to record your oral history and using your name and date.

CL: Yes.

JM: Ok. What is your full name including both maiden name and married name if applicable?

CL: My name is Caitlin Lubelczyk, my maiden name was Sargent and Sargent is now my middle name—I took out Elizabeth so it's Caitlin Sargent Lubelczyk.

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JM: And, where were you born?

CL: I was born at Memorial Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts.

JM: Have you ever married?

CL: I am married—I'll be married ten years this October—in a few weeks, October 25th will be ten years.

VP: Nice, congrats.

CL: Thank you.

JM: And what's the name of your husband?

CL: His name is Thomas Lubelczyk.

JM: Do you have any children?

CL: I do, I have a daughter. Her name is Olivia Grace and she will be eight in November.

JM: And do you have any grandchildren?

CL: I do not [laughs]. She tells me everyday, "You are going to have grandchildren." Not for a very very very long time. [laughs].

All: [laughs]

JM: What cultures/ethnicities do you identify with?

CL: So, I probably most closely identify with the Irish ethnicity. I come from a big Irish family. My great grandfather was born in Ireland and emigrated to America and my father—because of that close relationship you were able to get your citizenship so my father is a citizen of Ireland, he has an Irish passport. And I've been—he goes pretty much every year—I have been three times and I love it. But I'm also French blood, and English, and probably some Dutch too. But I would say definitely my Irish heritage. Yeah. For sure.

JM: So tell us a little bit about your parents. You mentioned they were Irish.

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CL: So, my parents—my mother was raised in Shrewsbury. My dad was raised in Worcester, he was Grafton Hill, Irish, the Irish family. He has three brothers— I'm sorry he has two brothers. He's one of three boys. My grandfather, my dad's father, was a Worcester police officer. My grandmother worked for, I believe the phone company. And also raised the three boys. My mom grew up in Shrewsbury, she has an older sister and a younger brother. Her mother worked for a law office for many many years downtown and my grandfather worked in Westborough— Westborough court? He passed away when I was six and my dad's father passed away when I was four. So both my grandmothers have been alone for many—30 years. That's my family.

VP,CL, JM: [laughs]

CL: Those are my parents, my mother's a nurse. They met when my father was, he was a police officer at UMass [Medical], he worked in the emergency room at UMass. And my mother was an emergency room nurse, and they met one night working there.

VP, JM: Aw.

CL: And it was a love at first sight thing. They met, they moved in, were married by the next year. They got married on my mom's birthday in 1980.

VP: Wow.

JM: That's really cool.

CL: Yeah, that is, and now he's a lawyer in Worcester.

VP: That's awesome.

JM: Where have you lived during your life?

CL: So I'm born and raised in Worcester. I grew up here. I guess more specifically, when I was born my parents lived on Uncatina [Avenue] which is in the Burncoat area. And then we moved to Honeywell Road, which is kind of right off [Rt.] 190 in the Greendale area, and then we moved to [laughs] Chester Street, which is up near Saint Peter Marian [School]—it's right behind here actually, it's behind Assumption [College]. And so I've kind of stayed in the same zip code my whole life. But for college I went up to New Hampshire. So I lived there for four years. And now I live off of Burncoat Street. Yeah, the same area [laughs].

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JM: I know you said you lived in a lot of different places, but what were the neighborhoods like, generally?

CL: So Uncatena, I was a little too young, but, Honeywell was a lovely little neighborhood, and we probably still would have stayed there it was in a great location and the neighbors were wonderful. A great little school system, but we found out that my mom was having my brother and the house only had like one bedroom. So we had to move, but Chester Street the same, it was a really nice neighborhood with great neighbors, they were older, kind of as the years went on they all passed away. My next door neighbor Mrs. George would babysit my brother, my mom would come home, and Mrs. George would be asleep [laughs] and my brother would be reading to her. It was a really nice neighborhood. And then it really built up and it's a cut threw now to get to Holden and Salisbury street and tons and tons of construction, it's really unrecognizable now. But we were right across from the water tower that says Worcester, you know the water tower? So my parents lived right across the street from that. But, I mean we used to play street hockey in the road and it could go for like an hour before a car would come by, and now there's no way. You can't even play in your driveway because the road is just so busy.

JM: Do your other family members live in the same area?

CL: So my grandmother, my mom's mom, probably lives the closest, she lives off of Ararat Street. My younger brother, hasn't been home since college, he moved to California so it's me and my parents, and their brothers and sisters live like in the area.

JM: What challenges do you think this city still faces and what would you change about the city?

CL: I think that for a long time Worcester has gotten, kind of a bad reputation from people who aren't from here. People who are from here, know what a great city it is, they know that it is a safe city. I feel so safe in this city. And I think people see it as just a dirty city and dirty Worcester. But so I think you know, reputation wise we kind of still have that as a challenge to get the word out there, but I think just even these past few months it's just the press that the city has gotten, there's kind of, the cameras are facing towards Worcester now, and seeing just how it has been built up. And the food scene, and the music scene, and you know the WooSox coming it's just, these huge things happening for the city, and I think people are starting to say, "Oh maybe it's not so bad." People can come from out of town, even people who come from Boston, just seeing what a clean city it is, and how it's a really friendly city. So I mean the challenges

right now are kind of [sighs] making sure that it all works and that it still stays the city that everyone loves and doesn't become something that it's not.

JM: Now, what are the changes you have seen in Worcester over time?

CL: Oh my god.

CL,VP, JM: [laughs].

CL: So much, I mean for one, downtown I mean, I feel like I don't drive down there as often as I used to, I used to work at Saint Vincent [Hospital] downtown so I'd see changes daily. But now when I drive down there, especially at night, I feel like I'm in, you know, like a real city. Just going into the different restaurants, and the different bars, and there wasn't like that before. So, I've always been proud to say I'm from Worcester, but now I'm really like, yeah, of course I am look at how beautiful it is.

VP: [laughs]

CL: I mean I guess now as an adult I can see the changes that are made, but to me like looking in it's just how it always has been, but it really has-- I mean it really has grown as a city, so yeah. I'd say that.

JM: And then, so, what were distinct characteristics that make Worcester the place that it is, I know you had mentioned a couple?

CL: So I would say, I mean, I worked in marketing for the hospital. I work in marketing now and what I'd say over and over again is that Worcester is a different animal. Like we are—our citizens are—just everything about it. You can't compare us to Boston, you can't compare us to any other city, we're our own animal, and we have our own personalities. We don't—we're not cookie cutter, so I think that sets us apart. You know those family members, you can't say bad things about them, like we can but you can't, so did I answer the question? I mean we're a friendly city, but we're also pretty tough. We're just Worcester.

VP, CL, JM: [laughs]

JM: What do you think women's experiences in Worcester have been, generally?

CL: [sighs] That's a really good question because as a woman I—looking back, I see so many leaders of Worcester being men, the business leaders, the community leaders, but then we have slowly but surely, we see these women coming into these real positions of power in Worcester. I mean you have the, off the top of my head, you have the president of WPI, and we're kind of seeing a lot of women's firsts in Worcester, and I think throughout history we have as well. Like Tuckerman Hall was designed by one of the first female architects, which back in the 1900s was kind of unheard of. But today, I think now we're starting to see more female leaders and more female politicians and I think that women have a real place here in Worcester. Fortunately, you know [laughs].

VP: So, now it's my turn, we're gonna talk a little bit about education. I know you said you went to UNH, but which high school did you actually attend when you were here in Worcester. I know you mentioned the Burncoat area, Saint Peter Marian. I know Worcester has a lot of high schools to offer.

CL: I went to Notre Dame Academy. Which is right up the street on Salisbury Street. It's an all-girls high school. Now it's grades seven and eight as well. So it's grades seven through twelve. And I went there for all four years and I absolutely loved it and that's where I work now so I guess I loved it a lot.

JM: Nice.

VP: What were some of your challenges in education?

CL: For myself?

VP: Yeah.

CL: [laughs] I probably the typical kid. I didn't like taking tests, I was more artsy, I loved the theater, I loved singing, I loved music, I loved history too, and I really loved psychology. But I couldn't sit down and read a book—although I loved reading—I couldn't but I'd always just wait until the last minute and read the Cliff Notes. It was terrible and looking back now, as someone who's busy, I'm a mom, I'm busy, and I'm think, “You had all the time in the world to read a book, why didn't you read? Why did you get Cliff Notes?” [laughs] So I try to tell the students now, “Just read the book, read.” I just feel like I wasted that time [laughs]. It's a terrible thing to say.

VP: That's good advice though for us too when we're still in school.

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CL: Oh god, a few years out and you're not gonna have time to do it. You're gonna get home and you're just gonna wanna veg. But now like take the time to read and like really, yeah. That's what I would say. Read the texts. Study.

VP: So upon finishing your formal education, what did you see as your options?

CL: From college? So it's funny, I went into college as a psychology major and because I did theater in high school I thought this might be a fun thing to do at school. So I auditioned and I loved the community, I loved the theater community, I loved my professors and I decided to change my major to theater. So leaving college, I thought that I would pursue theater and move to New York. I had a bunch of friends—classmates, roommates move to New York, and a few hung back because they had an extra year to go. So, I said you know what, I'm gonna move back to Worcester, I'll get a job, start paying off my school loans [laughs]. And I did that and I got a job at the hospital which was in the admissions department—admitting, registration, and it wasn't anything that I would have ever saw myself doing or going into healthcare or anything, I didn't really have that get out of school and find a communications job, or get out of school and need to find a business job, I kind of went this other route and ended up doing marketing and public relations and I really loved it. I think that sometimes, especially in high school and college and I'm seeing that even more so now working at a high school, is that girls think, "Ok, this is my plan and I need to have my plan." Seventeen year old girls are worried about what am I going to major in? But really you have forever to make the decision. I mean there are 40 or 50 years old who go back and say, "This is what I wanna do," so I would say try everything, you know, like I'm glad that I took the gen-ed classes in college because I really found out that I love psychology and sociology and all—not statistics [laughs] all of those classes, and so working hard at those things helped me with everything else going forward.

VP: In what year did you actually graduate from college?

CL: 2004.

VP: Ok, thank you. And the last education question that we have for you is, what support networks and mentoring have been important to you? So throughout you education time.

CL: So I [laughs] remember specific teachers through my elementary and high school and college career. In high school, I remember the teachers that stand out to me aren't the ones who were taskmasters, "You need to do this." Even if they were good teachers, they don't stand out to me as much as the ones who spoke to you like you were an adult. I always appreciated that and I

find myself doing that today. People who don't talk down to you or treat you like you're the student, I'm the teacher. So I think those were the men and the women that kind of affected me the most in my adult years. And even as a mother because I've always had that, ok we're talking like this and we're not gonna, you know...

VP: Right.

CL: ...kind of that equality. My health teacher when I went to interview for my job, I said to her, "What you taught me in health class has got me through college safely and has helped me as an adult women too." I didn't say it just like that, but I said, "What advice you are giving to young girls and teaching them about health and wellness and staying safe, this school is so lucky to have you, because you really do make a difference." I've heard it from, I'd say a handful that still stick with me in my adult years.

JM: Moving on to the work. What was your first job ever?

CL: My first job was, I worked at Austin Liquors.

All: [Laug])

CL: On Park Ave, Goldstar Boulevard [Worcester, MA]. I was—what's the legal working age, 15? 16?

VP: 15, 16.

CL: 16.

JM: Yeah.

CL: And I worked in the bottle redemption center. Back before they had the machines and people would come in with their disgusting cans and bottles and put them in the flats. And we'd have to sort them. It was actually [laughs]—it was a gross job, but it was one of the best jobs I've ever had, it was so fun. It was all high school kids working in this backroom [laughs] sorting cans. So I did that for, well, through high school and then when I'd come back from college. It was a good time. [laughs] And then the machines took over.

JM: So how long were you doing that for, do you think?

CL: I was doing that for maybe three years until I was old enough to work the register and then I was a cashier at the liquor store. It was a lot cleaner for sure.

JM: [laughs] Yeah I bet. So did you have any other jobs after that? Before you went to college, or?

CL: In college I worked for key services so when people would lock themselves out and they'd call key services and we'd drive over and let them in. That was--that was fun. But when you're in college you don't want to work. You know what I mean [laughs].

JM: Yeah

CL: But that was a good job too. But that was it.

JM: So they were the only two jobs.

CL: Yeah I think so.

JM: And then, I know you mentioned you worked over at the school and you worked at the hospital...

CL: Yeah.

JM: But did you have any other jobs after college?

CL: No I went right to Saint V's.

JM: So just those two.

CL: Yeah, and then I did on the side, after college I did the after school drama program at Saint Mary's in Shrewsbury. So it was just after school I think for grades four through eight or something. So I directed and choreographed their show and then they'd put on a performance. So they didn't have a drama teacher. I kind of just did the after school program. So I think I did that three years. Yeah. It was fun. [laughs].

JM: And then, can you explain what you do now over at the school?

CL: Sure. So I'm the alumni director and communications director [Notre Dame Academy] and I've been there for about a year. So I'm a communications guide, I run their social media pages. We just upgraded their website to make it look nicer. I do like all the e-newsletters and all that stuff. And then for the alumni side, I hold all the alumni events for the school and keep in touch with the alumni and update our database, and stuff like that. And then I also took on this year the dance position in the arts department. So that's for eighth grade, ninth grade, and then I mentor the seniors for their senior projects. And I'm also the yearbook editor—I'm sorry yearbook advisor.

VP, JM: [laughs]

CL: And last year was my first year doing that, and I really loved that. And we just this year started the multimedia club. Which is photography, social media, we're going to start a high school TV show and do TV. So that's going to start this year.

VP: That's gonna be fun!

CL: Yeah, the girls are already having a good time with it. Any time I can work directly with the girls is really awesome because we have a lot of fun.

JM: How did you come to find this job? Your current job?

CL: It's actually a really funny story I think because I was at a point where—I mean I went to the school so I knew the school, I knew the principal at the time. I hadn't really been back, I hadn't been to any of my reunions. I hadn't kept in touch the way I should have, but I'd been at the hospital for 13 years and I said you know what I need—my daughter was young. I had a five or six year old at the time and I said, "You know what? I need a change. I need to get out for a little bit. And I emailed the principal at the time, Sister Anne and I said, "I'm looking for a change, if you know any alums who are looking for someone that's just marketing or public relations could you let me know?" And she emailed right back and said, "Our public relations director is retiring." And so I went in [laughs] and she said, "How did you--how did you know we were looking? We were just talking about it?" And I said, "I didn't know. It just kind of--I just thought to reach out to you. I don't know why." And I got hired. Then became the alumni director and it kind of just went from there. It was one of those weird, I don't want to say fate things, but it felt like there was a higher power at work there because something—something made me do that.

JM: Yeah.

CL: You can't really explain why you do something and—and it worked out. And it's worked out so far. [laughs]

VP: That's awesome.

JM: And what has this current work meant to you so far?

CL: Oh my god, so much. It's an all girls school. I've been able to see us start a seventh and eighth grade and just see it—going from healthcare to education is such a change because you go from one situation to this—everyday is just this—you're upbeat, you're smiling, there's youth. I can't explain it because, I don't know, but it's a different. I leave work and I feel good and I can't wait to go into work the next day. And I love being able to be a part of growing the school, and telling other people about the school, and telling people that they should send their daughters to this school because they'll get a phenomenal education and they're going to become strong, independent women. And really it's a phenomenal place and I'm really happy to be back.

VP, CL, JM: [laughs].

JM: Kinda switching gears a little bit what are your primary responsibilities in terms of house work and child care?

CL: Oh... [repeats softly "house work and child care"]

JM: [laughs]

CL: So, [laughs] so my husband is self employed. He is a musician so he teaches music lessons in the afternoon. So when my daughter was born we were fortunate enough to not have to put her in day care; he was the stay at home dad. So he stayed home with her. I get out of work at three and would have her in the evening. So we were pretty much on opposite shifts and he would have gigs at night. So in terms of child care we had this special balance where it was almost like shift changes. I would come in and he would explain, "Okay she had this this and this and she pooped twice and blah blah." We would give a report and then go on our separate ways, but we always were able to maintain that parental, "Okay well she did this and I just wanted you to know and this is what I told her," for years. And so housework wise, I get home from work, I empty the dishwasher and do the laundry its a working mom thing.

JM: Awesome. So how have you balanced the different priorities or responsibilities, roles or interests in your life?

CL: With everything? I mean first and foremost and I know this sounds cliché but my family comes first and my daughter comes first. And it was like that when I was working for the big corporation and it was that when I worked at the school. I think that is really important. Now working at the high school it is a lot easier to say like, “Liv, do you want to come to work with me?” Because it is a much better environment rather than being in a hospital. But I mean it’s hard. I try to make it so that when I get home it’s just us time, you know? So from four to five it’s time to just hangout, like did you do your homework? And then at five I make her dinner, at six we kind of hangout. At seven, seven-thirty shower, bedtime, and then I’ll break out the laptop and do work for another three or four hours to kind of stay caught up. But I try to set those boundaries with both places that I work. Between four and seven you’re not going to hear from me because it is only three hours and I get that time and same with the weekends. I really try to—I don’t like to load things on so that we’re not never seeing each other.

JM: Yeah. What do you think are the pros and cons of the paths you have chosen?

CL: So I would say the pros are—I’ll start with the pros, because there really aren’t that many cons. Well, so for pros I would say I never had to—I see these people who set themselves up for a specific thing and that’s what they do and that’s what they always do and just what they have to do because they can’t do anything else. But for me, I find that if you learn a whole bunch of things and you become good at a few of them or most of them then you really can do anything. And I went from having a bachelor's degree to working an admissions job and then working up to the marketing manager. Then working my way up to director of communications. If you work hard enough and you learn enough and you keep trying to learn things, then you set yourself up to be able to do anything you want. What was the other question?

VP: [laughs]

JM: The cons.

CL: Oh the cons, [sighs] I mean the cons are that I’m not making millions of dollars I guess.

All: [laughs]

JM: That’s fair.

CL: I mean I work for a non profit. And I probably could've stayed at a job where I would've kept making money money, but I wasn't happy, and if you're not happy then what's the point?

VP: [whispers] That's true.

CL: [laughs]

JM: So how do you feel about the choices you have made in your life and do you have any regrets about any?

CL: No! Right at this point no. I feel happy with the decisions I've made.

JM: That's good.

CL: No, I do not have any regrets.

VP: Okay so another shifting gears, politics and community involvement. Do you consider yourself active politically?

CL: [pause] I mean.....

VP: Voting?

CL: Oh yeah, I vote. And I support our local Democratic politicians. I don't go to rallies and stuff, but my husband does. But I definitely support our local politicians.

VP: Okay.

CL: I'm friendly with many of them.

VP: So have you been involved in volunteer or community work?

CL: Yes.

VP: If so what groups did you work with or for?

CL: So for a couple of years I was on the board of directors for the Boys and Girls Club which is a wonderful organization, I was a corporator for the YMCA for Central Mass for a few years.

Another great organization. There are so many wonderful organizations in Worcester that you can be a part of or be a board member or volunteer for. But the organization that is nearest and dearest to my heart is the Emerald Club of Worcester. I've been on the board of directors for that for four or five years and last year I was elected as President.

VP: Oh wow.

CL: So I'm serving a two-year term as President.

VP: Congrats.

CL: Thank you, thanks.

VP: So I guess we'll stick with the Emerald Club then if I know you are involved in a lot of them. So what led you to join this organization?

CL: So the Emerald Club, it's an Irish American organization. My father was a member and my Uncle Dan Foley who was a former State Senator was a member and my dad one day just said, Do you want to be on the board of the Emerald Club? And I said sure. I was kind of looking for new things to do and the organization itself does wonderful things. They raise money for the Mercy Center in Worcester and the Mercy Center used to be a school run by Catholic Charities for children with disabilities and many had Down Syndrome. But as public schools and other schools started to incorporate classes for those with disabilities and became more inclusive, the enrollment for Mercy Center went down, so the school closed down a few years ago, but the adult program still lives on. We have over 100 adults in the program. And so what the Emerald Club does is, all of our fundraising events, all of our money goes towards the Mercy Center. So what we do right now is we fund their music and arts therapy program. We'll hopefully someday soon afford to renovate their gym—their gym is falling apart. So we want to do things like that. They do phenomenal work. We just did a picnic up there [laughs]—I told you I don't ramble. We hosted a picnic up there a couple weeks ago and just seeing the faces of these adults. We had the Worcester mounted police there and just seeing their faces light up, it's just this simple thing—and the Bravehearts mascot.

VP: That is really nice.

CL: Things like that really hit home as to why we do the things that we do and why we are doing it. Because with all these bigger—I mean many people haven't heard of the Emerald Club. So, you have all of these organizations that people donate to and they are all phenomenal

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organizations and this little gem of an organization, we do what we can, we don't have millions of dollars. It is for such an important cause and these people need advocates for them and they need people to know that they're there and know that they need the funding.

VP: Right. Besides what you just mentioned, were there any other programs or initiatives that you specifically worked on yourself while being a member and being on the Board of the Emerald Club?

CL: Well, I mean we have our yearly events. We do a fundraising gala, we do a ladies holiday, it was called the Holiday Tea. We just changed it to Holiday Market Place coming up in November, but we haven't really had any initiatives I would say. I mean bringing back the picnic was something that I guess that I did as President. They used to do it for years and years when it was a school and then it kind of went away and last year I said like let's bring it back. I wanted to do a prom thing, but they're not there at night, but I said let's bring it back and that was kind of was a big deal to them. You know it was nothing for us, we just made some phone calls, and have a fun time but for the program members it was a big deal. So I would say if anything it would probably be that.

VP: And so taking another spin, what role has religion played in your life?

CL: Oh that's a very interesting question. So I was raised Catholic I went to Catholic school grades three through eight. I went to St. Stephen's school up on Grafton Street. I went to a Catholic School, Catholic High School. I wasn't a Sunday church goer for sure.

All: [Laugh]

CL: I made my confirmation and then when it came time to get married my husband and I didn't get married in a Catholic church we got married by my father's best friend who was a judge in New Hampshire, justice of the peace and that was just the decision we made. He was raised Roman Catholic and his parents went to church every Sunday. [quietly laughs] But something that me and my husband discussed is that we were both raised Catholic and this was funny—this was one of the first conversations we had before we were even dating, which is such an absurd conversation to have—is that if we had children we felt that it was very important to raise them with some form of religion some form of faith. And because the Catholic faith was what we were both raised in we signed my daughter up for CCD and she's making her first communion this year and she was baptized Catholic so I guess that is the role religion has played in my life. At least the Catholic religion, for me kindness is just so important. I say that to my daughter all the time, kindness and being kind to others and kind of the golden rule is really the

religion everyone should have. So yeah, I'll leave it at that. [laughs] Instead of getting into more. I could probably go on.

VP: So in regards to health have you, how have health issues impacted your life or those within your family?

CL: So, when my when my daughter was 6 months old, my father was diagnosed with colon cancer, it was stage four and two months later my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

JM & VP: [gasps] Oh my god.

CL: It was a terrible year, but they're both fine, [whispers knock on wood] and this was seven years ago but they both had to have the surgeries and that kind of stirred things up for a while. So, that was a big thing, but if anything it made our family stronger and it made me realize that you know at that time I had worked in the healthcare industry. It made me realize how difficult it must be to navigate the healthcare industry as someone who doesn't know any better. I was there at my parents' doctor's appointments, my mother's appointments. My mother's a nurse, and my dad had no idea, you know, had never been to a doctor in his life. So, I went to one of the chief medical officers at the time and said, "You know we need something, something needs to be done. We need patient navigators if we're going to help people through this system." I remember being in the room and, you know, you have cancer and I think both of my parents, they were just shut down. I think people need to think about that and health care executives need to think about that. Just to think about the patient in those situations and so that was hell for a little while, but we're all good now.

VP: Good.

[knock noise on the table]

CL: [laughs]

VP: So what are your experiences in accessing quality affordable healthcare?

CL: I've been fortunate enough to have a job that provides healthcare so I haven't had any trouble with it, but my heart breaks for people who do because I see people who can't make doctor's appointments or pay. Before I met my husband he was paying a ton of money out of pocket just to have normal health insurance. So luckily I haven't had any trouble, but I mean anything could happen in a day right?

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JM: Yeah.

VP: Who's health are you responsible for besides your own?

CL: My daughter's. And probably my husband's because I carry the health insurance.

VP: Yeah.

CL: [whispers] It's the three of us, and my dogs. [laughs]

JM: And then, the last couple of questions to conclude this interview, how do you get through tough times, or what kinds of thoughts keep you going I guess?

CL: Oh that's a good question, I try to find the positive in things, and you know a lot of the times you say to people, you just have to think it could—it could be worse it could be worse it could be worse. I try to kind of put things in perspective if there's ever something really difficult. And you think like okay are you safe? Is your daughter safe? Is your husband safe? Okay, then it's not that bad and you can work through it. I'm talking normal difficult times.

VP: Right.

JM: Yeah.

CL: Like everyday difficulties. I'm not one of those people who is like blah when something goes wrong I try to—you know, if friends are in a bad place, just say, "Hey you're fine we can get through it." Usually, a lot of the times I use my sense of humor, terrible dark sense of humor, black Irish humor. So I think that has gotten us through a lot too.

JM: So how do you define success in your life and how has it ever changed over the course of your life?

CL: Hmm...gosh How do I define success? [long pause] I mean, right off the bat, I think my daughter because she's the greatest thing I've ever done. I mean, I don't know I don't know why this is such a difficult question.

VP: It is not usually one we think about a lot.

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CL: Yeah, like how I define success. I guess just you know [laughs] getting through the day. I don't know, gosh why can't I answer the questions. I love my job, I have a great daughter, we have a house, we put food on the table. I guess that success [laughs] I was never one to like, I sing and I act, but that never really defined who I was so I guess I would say, I have a great family and that would be my success.

VP: That's still a good answer though.

CL: [laughs] Yeah okay.

JM: Okay so final question, based on your life experience what advice would you give women today and of future generations?

CL: Based on life experiences what advice would I give? [pause] They really came up with difficult questions. [laughs]

JM: [laughs] Yeah.

CL: I mean the advice that I give, to the girls now, let's just say to the high schoolers and the girls who are going out in the real world is you don't have to take everything so seriously. You need to live your life, be honest, be kind, and not sweat the small stuff. Because really in the end, as long as you are happy and you're healthy and you're doing what you love nothing else matters. I hate to see when girls are stressing out about the littlest thing and I wanna say, "Who cares?" [laughs].

JM.VP: (laugh)

CL: No but seriously, in the grand scheme of things this is a little blip and like if you told me to name [laughs]—this is terrible, but if you told me to name five of my college professors, my gen-ed professors and this is like 15 years ago, I wouldn't be able to do it. Your life is what you make of it and who you surround yourself with, and the people who affect you. Right? So yeah, in the grand scheme of things don't put so much stock into the little things or the things that make you sad, or make you angry, or make you anxious. Just live. [laughs]

JM: Sorry there is just a couple more. So, now that we are working to tell a fuller story of the history of women...than have been recorded in the past what should we be sure to include like when asking women questions?

CL: Any women?

JM: Yeah, just in general I think.

VP: Do you feel that there was any question that we didn't ask you that you were kinda surprised we didn't ask or, I don't know if that helps!

CL: Oh! No, I think for what you are doing it was pretty thorough. Maybe going forward asking women where do you see yourself in the future, where do you see yourself in five years? I know that's a really cliché question to ask, do you see yourself ever going into politics? Or do you ever see yourself changing positions.

JM, VP: Yeah.

CL: Or something like that maybe.

JM: Okay yeah.

CL: [laughs]

JM: Is there anyone else that you suggest we talk to?

CL: Oh gosh I could probably send a list. I'll look at the list that you have, but a lot of the people on the list that you have are pretty top notch. Yeah, I could definitely send you a few.

VP: Awesome!

CL: That are way more interesting than me! [laughs]

JM, VP: No.

VP: Well thank you for your time.

JM: Yes thank you.

CL: Thank you.