

Interviewee: Andrea Healy
Interviewers: Shannon Mulvaney and Delia Byrne
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Transcribers: Shannon Mulvaney and Delia Byrne



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Abstract

Andrea Maria Healy was born in 1970 and is currently the Director of Human Resources at Cutler Associates, a construction company in Worcester, Massachusetts. She was born and raised near Worcester, in Boylston, and currently lives on the Paxton-Worcester line. Andrea became a mother at the young age of nineteen years old. She raised two daughters, Courtney and Lindsey, on her own, having never married. Although she would never change this aspect of her life, she confesses that becoming a mother so young was a challenge, especially balancing motherhood and her career. Andrea attended Quinsigamond Community College for a short time and then enrolled in Assumption College. She later took the qualifying exam to become a certified Senior Professional in Human Resources. She has had several jobs throughout her life; however, throughout all of her positions, she has continually put her family first. In this interview Andrea discusses her passion and vision for Worcester. She is extremely proud of Worcester and is excited for future progress in the city. For fifteen years she has been a member of Rainbow Child Development, which provides child care for low-income families. Andrea strongly emphasizes the importance of everyone being involved in the community and finding an organization they are passionate about. She is a role model of strength and dedication for women of all ages.

SM: So what is your full name including both maiden name and married name, if applicable.

AH: Andrea Maria Healy.

SM: When were you born?

AH: November 13th 1970.

SM: Have you ever married?

AH: No.

SM: Do you have children?

AH: I do.

SM: What are their names?

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AH: Courtney and Lindsey.

SM: Ok. What cultures/ethnicities do you identify with?

AH: Irish Catholic American.

SM: Tell me about your parents.

AH: My mother is Patricia Healy. Her maiden name is Dumont. Her mom—her parents were French Canadian. And my, dad he's passed away. His name's John Healy. He's Irish Scottish American.

SM: Where have you lived during your life?

AH: I grew up in Boylston which is a small town probably 10 minutes from Worcester. And then I moved to Worcester probably when I was about 16 or 17 years old, right after high school actually, so 17 years old or something like that. And then I currently live in Paxton but I work in Worcester.

SM: Ok. What was your neighborhood like generally?

AH: When I grew up it was really small neighborhood and all the kids used to play together and ride bikes together and hang out. And now kids just play on their iPhones [laughs] and computers [laughs] so they don't really hang out anymore. But you know we used to play—like we used to have a tree house thing we used to call the fort and everyone used to hang out [laughs] and just like sell tickets [laughs] and things like that. And people used to breakdance in our yard. [laughs] I'm really not that old, I promise. [laughs].

SM: How did you come to live in Worcester?

AH: When I graduated from high school I started going to school at Quinsig [Quinsigamond] Community College because I really didn't know what I wanted to do at that point. And then I met the people who lived in Worcester and we used to kind of hang out I guess you call it with them a lot. Which is where I met Courtney and Lindsey's dad was in Worcester. So subsequently I moved to Worcester because of him and that's where I had kids.

SM: Where do you live in the city now? And have you lived in multiple areas?

AH: I live in Paxton but I live right on the Worcester line, so I live, you know where Anna Maria College is?

SM and DB: Mhmm.

AH: I live on that road.

SM: Oh ok.

AH: Which is very close to the Worcester airport. But I worked at Cutler [Associates] for 15 years so I've always really worked in the city. So I'm in the city more than I am in Paxton because I'm here all day and all night. So, I spend a lot of my time here, not just for work but for community activities and a lot of different boards I'm on.

SM: Do other family members live in the area?

AH: Both of my kids live at home. My oldest daughter works at Saint Vincent Hospital, she's a nurse there. My youngest daughter goes to school in Springfield, but she still lives at home. My mom and my brothers and my sisters still live in Boylston. But I have a lot of relatives because Healy is a big family [laughs], a big name. My dad had 13 brothers and sisters.

SM and DB: Wow. [laughs]

AH: There's people everywhere...

SM and DB: Yeah.

AH: ...that are in our family and a lot in Worcester.

SM: If you don't currently live in Worcester what is your Worcester connection? It's obviously your work.

AH: Yeah its work mostly based. But everyone who lives in a small town has some affiliation with the city because that's where you go and do your business.

SM and DB: Yeah.

AH: So you go the bank there.

SM and DB: Yeah.

AH: You go grocery shopping there things like that. And when you become a working person you also connect by joining different boards and things like that. And my kids went to school—colleges here, Mass College of Pharmacy [Massachusetts College of Pharmacy]. They work here, so we go to lunch in the city.

SM and DB: Yeah.

AH: And things like that. So I think even though you live in a small town your resources are limited and how much time you really spend there, unless of course you have little kids and they play sports and things like that. But I think as an adult you spend most of your time where you work.

SM: What challenges do you think the city still faces?

AH: I don't think they're facing as many challenges as they used to. I think they're doing really good work and I know that with all the colleges that we have in Worcester, the city's growing really, really quickly. And I think Mass College of Pharmacy [Massachusetts College of Pharmacy]—I don't—my daughter has told me but I don't remember how many buildings that they have actually attained. So they took over the Old Crowne Plaza Hotel, they took over the AT&T Building. So there's so much growth happening in the city right now. I think arts are starting to come back a little bit. I think they were away for a while, but I think kids your age certainly have a genuine interest in that.

SM and DB: Yeah.

AH: So that's really coming back as well. But I think in any city you are always going to face challenges. Right?

SM and DB: Mhmm.

AH: Our population in Worcester is pretty diverse. I think it's growing. I think the young people, the college-aged, people are kind of outnumbering everyone else now. But I still think that we face the same challenges as Boston right? They just have a little bit more money and a larger population. But we still have homelessness here, and we still have drugs here. And I think those are common problems in any city, honestly. I think they are also common problems in towns but you just don't hear about them.

SM: What would you change about the city?

AH: What would I change about the city? Probably, I'd fix some roads because it's pretty much a struggle just getting through construction. I feel like it just like never ends. And I get so mad. Why do they do construction in the winter? It's stupid you know. The roads are already crappy why are we doing this? But, I don't think I would change anything. I think a city is meant to be diverse. You know, I would obviously like to see more people get involved in a positive way in the city. I think a lot of people just turn a blind eye to causes and things like that. But again, I'm confident because our youth population is rising in Worcester and you will see more of that and I

see more of that on the boards that I'm involved in. We have great young people on our boards and I think that's really important because you need somebody to pass that torch to. So, to me, I would just like to see a continued interest from the young people in doing the good work and being on boards and supporting the city in different ways.

SM: What changes have you seen in Worcester over time?

AH: Certainly the building, I think there's a lot of building transition going on. The new court house—I mean it's not really new anymore right? And it's in a really weird position but you know, I think there's a lot of that. You hear a lot of talk, you hear about what they're going to do with the Worcester Airport, you hear about what they're going to do with the old court house. So, certainly people are drawn to Worcester for different reasons and I think there's a lot of positive going on.

SM: What distinct characteristics make Worcester the place that it is?

AH: I always think—and I guess it's because I work at a construction company—I always think that the architecture is just super cool here. So, you look at the old court house and you're like, "Oh my god, I hope that they don't tear that building down because it's immense." But it's beautiful like the architecture is beautiful and you have the Worcester Auditorium which is really beautiful and a lot of old churches. So, I think a lot of that is distinct about Worcester. But, I think what makes Worcester different is that it's a city but a smaller city. So, I think you have Boston and it's just like—I mean have you ever driven to the [Boston] Garden before? It's nightmarish right? But, you can go see something cool at the DCU Center and get there relatively easy and park easy. So, I think that is nice because it's a city but it's still like things are still attainable and accessible. I think that that makes it a little bit different and a little bit more attractive than sometimes going to Boston. You know, we have the Hanover Theatre, and I don't know if you've ever been there, but it's a beautiful building inside. But they have great, great things going on there, like they have in Boston. So why not go to a city that's more accessible and attainable, easy to park, way less money to park right, like have you ever parked in Boston? And I think—so that makes Worcester attractive—so I think, through the increase of arts in Worcester I think you're gonna see a lot more people come out this way for those things which will obviously help the economy in Worcester as well.

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

AH: I can speak from just being on a board at Rainbow Childhood Development, you guys wouldn't know this and the only reason I know this is from being on the board. But years and years ago, at Edward Street Daycare which is now Rainbow Childhood Development, which is on Edward street. It was a home for women, so it was kind of like an Abby's House, where women that their husbands went off to the military, they couldn't care for their children, or they were battered women. They would go there for assistance. Then, through history, that eventually

became a child care center called Edward Street Day care which serviced the Worcester community for low income folks which Rainbow does now. So, I think that's one thing that Worcester does well is it supports women in that respect. I think also, we have a lot of women leaders in Worcester. Konnie Lukes [City Councilor Konstantina B. Lukes] is a woman leader in Worcester. So, I think certainly we give the same opportunities to women that we do to men, which I think is good. And I think the larger your population gets sometimes those opportunities become harder to get. So, I think we do a good job of having a lot of women leadership in Worcester, which I think is a great thing.

DB: Where did you attend school?

AH: High school?

DB: Yeah, we can do high school.

AH: College?

AH: Ok, so high school I went to Tahanto Regional which is a regional high school for two towns Boylston and Berlin [Massachusetts]. I graduated from there in 1988, don't you be calculating my age. Then, I went to Quinsig, [Quinsigamond Community College] again because I really kind of didn't really know what I wanted to do. I was paying for college by myself so that was also a clear issue. And then what happened was I became a young mother at 19 and then I had to kind of realign my priorities. I worked at a couple of jobs and then I found Cutler [Cutler Associates] and they have a great tuition reimbursement program. And then I said, "I really need to go back and finish school." So then that was what I did by virtual going to Assumption [Assumption College].

DB: Did you attend any graduate programs after college?

AH: Not necessarily graduate programs, but for my field. So I'm in human resources there's certain certifications that the industry requires you to have. So there's the Society of Professional Human Resources, it's called SPHR, and it's a test so it's almost kind of like a mini bar exam type of thing that you have to take. So my field really requires your extended education as far as your bachelor's, not necessarily your master's, something I definitely would like to do but I'm really invested with my kids' education right now. So, you know, once they're done with school and they're off doing bigger and better things, then it will be time for me to reevaluate and kind of finish off what I started.

DB: What were your challenges in education?

AH: My challenges? Super, super bad at math. That's why I do human resources. I remember—and you guys will appreciate this because my daughter called me yesterday and she's like, "I

bombed that exam,” and she always says she bombed something and she never does and I’m like, “You have no idea what bombing is.” So, I remember it was when I had gone back to school after I had had my kids, I had to take this like calculus crazy math program. So, I’m like “Okay, fine I’m going to try. I’m really bad at this, but if I need extra help I’ll get it whatever.” So, I thought in my head that I understood what I was being taught and I felt like I could apply it. And then, one day we had our exam and I sat in the front row of the class and I looked down at it and I started bawling in the class, [laughs] I was like I-I-I can’t do this, like I was so overwhelmed because I didn’t—I just like froze I couldn’t do it and I just sat there the whole class and as I’m crying [laughs] my paper is getting all crinkly from the tears you know, so I was like, “Oh no this is so embarrassing,” and then like everyone kept bringing up their tests and leaving and bringing up their tests and leaving [laughs]. And I’m still just sitting there crying. So at the end of the class, the professor comes over and she’s like “What’s wrong?” and I’m like, “I-I can’t do this, like I just can’t”. And it was just so embarrassing for me. I guess the message there was even though sometimes you try really hard it isn’t always going to be successful. But for me, it was always—math was just always a struggle and then I had to take accounting [laughs]. And I’m like, “Are you serious?, I can’t even balance my checkbook. Why are you making me do this?” I always just think who is going to need to know the foil method when you need to get out of school? Like no one, so for me that was like always a real struggle. Initially when I started going to school getting there was always a struggle I was like, “Ughh.” I’d pull in the parking lot and be like, “I don’t want to.”

SM: That’s me every morning.

AH: Yeah, you know, it’s just like why, why? So I guess everything comes with challenges and for me, I guess, I am more of a perfectionist. So I’m always hard on myself for the things I can’t do rather than focusing on the things I’m good at.

DB: Upon finishing your formal education what did you see as your options?

AH: My options were tough, you know, at that time I didn’t have the pursuit of human resources. I just finished general business. So, I was like, “Ugh, a marketing concentration.” I really wasn’t sure if I liked marketing. Originally, when I first started school, I did traveling tours. But, then they wanted me to mark up this map and remember the capitals of places I would never go. So, that wasn’t an option anymore. So, I had a lot of things going through my head. I had kids when I was 19. So, that was even a struggle. Like who’s going to watch your kid while you’re at work and how many hours can you work and things like that. So initially, it was really difficult, and I think to try and find a company to work for that supports that was probably the hardest part. But I did. I had a couple jobs they were very supportive too. But, it really wasn’t anything I loved doing and then I came here in 2000, and I just like loved it here. I loved the people here. I loved the atmosphere here, and it was just the right place for me. And they always, always, always have supported what I have done with my kids. So, my kids played sports, I’ve never really ever missed a game ever. I still don’t. One plays college sports, and I still don’t

miss. And my kids come in and they talk to the president. They go upstairs and say hi to Ed.[Ed O'Brien, president]. So, it's like a very family-oriented company, and I think when you're a mother that's important to you. So, to have those things—have the best of both worlds is a great thing.

DB: What support networks and mentoring have been important to you?

AH: What was the question?

DB: What support networks and mentoring have been important to you?

AH: So when I first started here, I was a construction secretary, and I went out to a job site for a couple of years. But, you learn a lot by listening. So people here are always willing to teach and help and mentor you. But before I became the human resources director here, there was another director of human resources and she still is my friend. She's a wonderful, wonderful woman and literally has taught me so much. She's fabulous and she's still teaching me things every day. So, to have someone that can really help you grow is important and she was that person for me.

SM: What was your first job?

AH: Oh, what was my first job? So my first job was in Boylston, when I lived in Boylston, and it was cleaning offices at a trucking company. [laughs] So that wasn't too fun, and then at the same time I bussed tables at a restaurant.

SM: And what age were you?

AH: 15.

SM: What other jobs have you had and what do you do now?

AH: Other jobs that I have had. Hmm, let me think. So I've worked in restaurants before, and I kind of liked that, but it wouldn't be my life's dream to do that forever. You know what I'm saying? But I think it's a great job for a kid and a college kid. You meet a lot of people and it's just fun. It's a nice job. Other jobs that I've had, I've worked at Cady Mad Motor, which is a company that makes fresh motors, which go into robots that fill cereal boxes and macaroni boxes and stuff like that. So, I did purchasing there. I worked at Coughlin Electric, where I did purchasing there as well, for electronic components. I worked at Goodman Construction, which is in Shrewsbury but they're not in business anymore. And then I worked here. So, what I did at Goodman--I was a construction secretary—that kind of gave me a construction background. And then I came here, I was also a construction secretary and kind of worked my way up to the director of human resources which is what I do now.

SM: So, what has this work meant to you?

AH: What has it meant to me...I mean it's given me the ability to take care of my family. It's given me the ability to have done meaningful work and make connections with people which I think is extremely important. But I think overall, I've been here a long time and people here are important to me and they're really kind of my family as well.

SM: What were/are your primary responsibilities in terms of work and childcare?

AH: My primary responsibilities...my children always come first no matter what. When I interviewed here they talked to me about the job, the hours, this and that. And you know I said I have two jobs, and my most important job is being a mother and that will never change so if this needs to be the priority then it's not the right place for me to be. But again, they were extremely supportive of me having a family and my kids and that was the right answer.

SM: Has this changed over time?

AH: No. My loyalty to my family and the loyalty that I have to the company I work for will always be the same. My kids will always come first.

SM: How have you balanced different priorities responsibilities with an interest in life?

AH: Gotta do what you gotta do. It's hard to balance. You know, you guys know firsthand. You're in college, and it's super hard. And some days it's easier than others, and some days you want to like throw your hands up and cry, and other days you're laughing about it, right? So, I mean every day is a challenge. And I think you just have to do the best you can do. And you have to figure out what's most important to you at that point in time. Is me going out for a drink more important than me going home to take care of my sick child? Well no. Right? So you just have to figure out what's important. You know, I have a big meeting at 3:30, but I have to go get my haircut. You know what I'm saying? I think you just have to be smart about what's right, what's important. But again, I stand true to [the belief that] your family should always come first.

DB: What do you think are the pros/cons of the path you have chosen?

AH: So the pros are I am a people person. You know that I'm not a numbers person right? From my crying story. So, for me I like at the end of the day to think that I helped people and made a difference. You know someone's having a problem. In human resources, you hear a lot of people's personal struggles and if you can ever offer somebody good advice they are always going to remember how you made them feel. And at the end of the day that's important, and somebody thinks that she really made me feel better about this. So to me, that's extremely important.

AH: What was the second half of the question?

DB: What are the cons?

AH: The cons...there are days where I like animals more than people. You know, there are days where I'm like I can't believe—like why am I doing this again? You know, some days are frustrating and you just have to get through it. The cons there really aren't any. Your job is all what you make of it. I think if you work hard at something there are no cons really. If you work hard, you earn a good living, you take care of your family. What are the cons of that? I don't think there are really any.

DB: How do you feel about the choices you have made in your life? Do you have any regrets?

AH: Hmm.. people ask me that question sometimes just because you know. People will say to me I can't believe you have kids that are that old. Then they sit there and do the mental math in their head. And I'm like, "Now you know how old I am." I don't think you should ever have regrets and look back on decisions you have made. I think you make decisions for a reason. Everyone makes good ones and they make bad ones. But I think the bad ones teach you lessons too, so I don't think you should ever wish your life away and wish it was different than what it is.

DB: What were the organization's main goals?

AH: Different for each one. So Rainbow Child Development, offers low income families in Worcester childcare and after school care. As well as enrichment programs. Jericho Road Project is a kind of a volunteer matching organization. So it's for nonprofit companies. So let's say a nonprofit corporation says that they need an employee handbook. Jericho Road will find a volunteer within their volunteer base, who can supply that offering to the company. So they kind of match volunteers with nonprofits to help them kind of progress. Worcester Animal Rescue, you guys know what that is [Delia and Shannon laugh]. Too bad I don't have a picture of my dog, he's really cute I would show you [Delia and Shannon laugh]. That was probably, one of my most favorite boards to be on. But the problem with being on the boards that support animals and that support kids is that I either want to take all the kids home or all the animals home. [Delia and Shannon laugh]. So, that's a problem.

DB: What were some of the main programs you worked on in the organizations?

AH: I offer a lot of human resources support so mainly that was my role...

DB: Yeah.

AH: ... to offer support on what some of the laws and regulations are, redoing their handbooks,

those types of things. Doing some marketing materials, but those are really kind of my strong suits.

DB: Okay. What would you consider the groups' major accomplishments?

AH: So for Rainbow, I think their accomplishment has really been to keep providing that service to the families of Worcester. I think they really have some great programs like reading programs and things like that really, help those families. Jericho Road I think they are struggling a bit now, but I think they just kind of need to rebrand themselves a little bit. And the Animal Rescue League I think they've attained contracts with Animal Rescue as well as the city of Worcester., where they've actually been able to increase the number of small dogs versus the pitbull population in Worcester, that Worcester is famous for. So, they now have more of an array of animals to offer to the public.

DB: Are you involved in any other organizations or just these ones?

AH: I've always been involved in sports organizations. Both my kids played sports so ASA Softball [Amateur Softball Association], National Junior Olympics softball and soccer. One of my daughters played ODP [Olympic Development Program] soccer. So, a lot of sports stuff, as they were growing up was my major involvement.

DB: What role has religion played in your life?

AH: [pause] When I was young [laughs] we went to scripture every Sunday with my dad that was the thing. [Delia and Shannon laugh] We got all dressed up on Easter with those great hats and stuff [Delia laughs]. But I have mixed views on religion right now. When my kids were in went to CCD [Confraternity of Christian Doctrine/Sunday School], I don't know if you guys went ...

DB: Yeah I know.

AH: ... well, you go to a Catholic school, [Delia laughs] so you probably know what that is. So one time my daughter had a soccer game and she couldn't go to CCD and the priest made her the next weekend do yard work. And so, from like that point on I just had a bad taste in my mouth.

DB: Ohhh.

AH: And then I had a bad taste in my mouth because I wasn't married, and the church gave me a hard time about baptizing my second daughter. And I just, I don't know. It just made me feel differently about how I felt about it when I was younger.

DB: Yeah.

AH: You know what I'm saying? So I have not reembraced it as of yet.

DB: Yeah.

AH: I still obviously observe the Catholic holidays, things like that. But, certainly I have mixed reviews.

DB: Yeah.

SM: How do you get through tough times? What kinds of thoughts keep you going?

AH: I mean you just have to smile through it. Bad things happen, but it's just a bad day not a bad life you know. And I think that's just how you have to look at it. You just have to figure out a way to control the things that you can control and not worry about the things that you can't control.

SM: How do you define success in your life? How has this definition changed overtime?

AH: I think the definition of success is different for everybody. Sometimes people will define success as getting through the day. But I think if you've done the best you can every day, then that is success to me. I think you have to work hard, try hard to show up every day and do the best that you can.

SM: Based on your life experience what advice would you give women of today and future generations?

AH: [pause] Just to be strong, to not let people walk all over you. You can basically get through anything and you don't have to have somebody to get you through it. I think a lot of—I think previous mentality was always you had to be married if you had kids, and kind of blah blah blah. But to me I think you determine what you get through and not anybody else. And you have to be able to stand on your own two feet and I think you need to encourage your kids to do the same thing. So for me, I think that probably the best advice is to really just take control of your life, control the things you can control, and leave your kids with good lessons.

SM: Now that we are working to tell the fuller story of the history of women that has been recorded in the past, what should we be sure to include. Like, what would you like for us to include in your history?

AH: In my history [pause] I guess, so if you had to go to the cemetery and my name was on a gravestone, [Everyone laughs] I would want it to say that I was a good person and a good parent. That, and that I always did my best.

SM: What major historical event in Worcester has occurred during your time here. Did it impact you personally? If so, expand on the memory.

AH: It didn't necessarily happen in Worcester, but I think across the country when September 11th happened I think that indirectly affected Worcester. I think that certainly was one of the greatest things that have happened to our country, in our city and it has changed how we've had to live. And I think something like that hasn't necessarily happened in Worcester, but that really impacted the city I feel.

DB: Should we just kind of skip around to these ones?

SM: Yeah.

DB: What difficult transitions did you go through and moving through childhood to adulthood?

AH: [pause] I think for me I had to grow up really fast because I had kids so early. So for me, [pause] people at 18 and 19 are going out with their friends and you know they are going out and having fun and going to parties and all those fun kinds of things. I remember it was like the World Series and I was in my living room changing a diaper and I was 20 years old. You know, so I think for me that just propels you to grow up because you don't have a choice at that point. You're influencing somebody else's life and you have to be an adult.

SM: How were girls treated when you were in school?

AH: [pause] Well, you ask me how girls were treated or how I was treated [laughs]? So let's see when I was in school I mean it was pretty, I mean I was in a small high school, there was 54 kids in my class so everybody knew everybody and everyone was kind of friends with everybody. But there is always going to be cliques and people who are going to be mean to you in life. And they are not just going to be mean to you in school, but they are going to be mean to as an adult. So unfortunately, I don't think you can escape that. But in general, I think people have respect for each other and people have respect for girls. And nothing earth shattering, there is more bullying and more disrespect now than there was when I was in school for sure.

DB: Do you have any hobbies or do you do any regular leisure activities that take you outside of the home?

AH: [pause] So I like to spend a lot of time with my dog because he's just so cute. So I take him to the dog park and stuff like that. I think the boards really keep me busy. I'm going to a paint night tonight with my daughter. Those are cool, I like going to those. I come home with the paintings and they are like, "Where are you going to put these?" "Stop bringing paintings home!" [Everyone laughs]. They're like, "Mom, they're not good!" [Everyone laughs]. So, but I like

going, it's fun. I try to spend time with my family when I can. But I do a lot of traveling for work too. So, I'm pretty consumed with work.

SM: What have been, what is like one of the favorite places you have been?

AH: Ireland. You have to go there. [Everyone laughs]. It's amazing; it is the best.

DB: What memories do you have of a significant historical event that took place when you were growing up? You already spoke about September 11th but anything when you were younger?

AH: Yeah. I don't know I think it was cool not necessarily when I was younger but when the President came to Worcester. That was cool. Because we walked right to Harvard Street which is the end of that road and we could see him go by and his little van. So that was a cool thing. I don't really remember a lot of things that happened when I was young. We were just always outside playing and our faces weren't in front of the TV the whole time. But certainly I know that things happened while I was young you know. I knew when Martin Luther King got assassinated and John F. Kennedy. And those are all really important events in history that happened. But, I think, I feel like those things we were shielded from and just didn't hear about them much when we were young.

SM: What was your favorite musical group or song, dance, club. If a club, did the establishment cater to a particular group or groups?

AH: [pause] Musical, you want to know what my favorite musical was?

SM: Like music.

AH: Ohh music. You don't want to know what my favorite musical was? You'll make fun of me! [Everyone laughs] I'm not going to tell you what that is. My favorite group was probably Bon Jovi. Not gonna lie [Everyone laughs]. Club [pause]. I don't know there used to be one in Worcester that we used to go to. I don't even remember what it was called. But it's not there it was near Beaver Brook that's all I remember. I don't remember what it was called though [Everyone laughs]. Uhhh and my favorite music [pause]. I like Paula Abdul, and New Kids on the Block [Everyone laughs], Backstreet Boys [Everyone Laughs]. Yup, that was kind of my generation the 80s. [Everyone laughs].

DB: So you already spoke of some of the organizations you are involved in, are there any other ways you participate in community service?

AH: [pause]. Yeah, like I think, you know we donate food to the food pantry, we donate time to if there is a cancer walk and things like that. But I think there is always different ways to get involved in the community, just by supporting events that happen in the community as well as

the Saint Patrick's Day Parade, and stART on the Street types of things. I think that is also supporting your community as well.

SM: When you are not at home where do you usually spend your time?

AH: Work? Or like when I was a kid?

SM: Yeah.

AH: So at different friend's houses. I spent a lot of time at school. I was in chorus and all different things. So I spent a lot of time there but mostly you know at friend's houses.

SM: Were there particular areas of the city where you spent a lot of time?

AH: We thought it was super cool when we had cars and to just keep driving randomly up and down Main Street in Worcester, with our windows open in the summer and just keep driving and keep circling [Everyone laughs]. I think we thought we were going to pick up guys or something [Everyone laughs]. But literally that's what everyone used to do we used to just sit there and drive up and down Main Street, total waste of gas [Everyone laughs]. Because there wasn't anything really to be seen so that's what we used to do.

DB: Are there any particular community service organizations that you appreciate what they do and admire them? Like you aren't exactly like part of them but you admire what they do?

AH: I think stART on the Street and the art community is really cool to me. But you know as my paint night history will tell you I am not very artsy, so it's not something I would really go immerse myself in. But I admire, I certainly admire that because I mean artists don't make a lot of money. They really just do it simply because they love it.

DB: What has motivated you to participate in community service or support the work of community service organizations?

AH: Again, I just think the importance of giving back you know I think that if you have that mindset you'll find a way to give back and that's what I do.

DB: Are there any challenges you've encountered in community service?

AH: Sometimes it's difficult for me to take off my HR [Human Resources] hat. So, when I'm on a board and you know we are talking about a tough topic and I feel like the resolution is still ethically is not where I want it to be, but they've made a decision that they're going to go in a different direction. That bothers me, just because I am a super ethical person. So, some things I just don't think are right and I stand my ground on those things and then people still make a

different decision that kind of bothers me a bit.

DB: What advice would you give to others interested in helping their community?

AH: Just do it. I mean just really find something that you are passionate about. It's always easier to get involved on a board about something that you are passionate about. So if it's animals, kids, or whatever, find a board that supports that type of activity and get involved in that because you'll be more apt to stay involved because it is something that you love.

DB: In addition to our American History class we are taking a Graphic Design Class. For that class we will be designing a public service announcement for a community service organization that has been meaningful in your life. Could you tell us about your favorite community service organization.

AH: It's so hard I can only give you one.

DB: You could say a few I'm sure we would like-

AH: I think Rainbow Child Development, certainly I think is phenomenal. And I think the Worcester Animal Rescue League as well [pause]. There's so many though. You know It's hard to narrow that down. I think the missions are so different in each organization and I'm involved in each one of them for different reasons.

DB: How have health issues impacted your life and or those in your family?

AH: So health issues for me, when I was 36 I found out that I only had one kidney. So, that's super weird for me to find that out and their like, "You never knew that?" and I'm like, "No!" [Everyone laughs]. So that's been weird, you have to kind of watch what you take for medicine, what you eat, there's a lot of different things that you have to worry about. So then they were like, "Oh you should make sure your kids get checked." So you know, it's hard to tell someone in your family well I have this thing and they think you need to be checked. Right? So that's tough. Having a hysterectomy when I was only 36 was really, really hard for me because it meant I could not have more kids. And if it was me I would be the old lady in the shoe and have a million you know [Everyone laughs]. So, that was hard to hear and hard to deal with. But [pause] you know I guess again everything happens for a reason and I'm certainly happy with my kids, their super successful and they are good kids. So that's all I can ask for.

DB: What are your experiences in accessing quality affordable healthcare?

AH: Well, I have been fortunate because you know I am at a job and all of the companies that I have worked for have been larger organizations and they supply private healthcare to their employees. So I've always had like Harvard or BlueCross, things like that. So I've always been

very fortunate.

DB: Who's health are you responsible for besides your own? Obviously your kids but-

AH: My kids, my dog, my cat [Everyone laughs]. My mom's, you know she's getting older so I'm responsible for her somewhat as well.

SM: What is like a favorite memory that like you think of when you were younger? Or even like now?

AH: So a favorite memory for me, I mean all memories are usually good. But I think going to Ireland was super wonderful for me. I have friends that live there and I'm still friends with them today. But it was just so cool to go somewhere else and experience how other people live and for me I think every kid should travel for sure. It's an amazing experience. As a younger person, I guess it was kind of monumental for me. Having kids was huge. You go from being 19 years old and then you go to having this little person that you have to take care of and it's eye opening. You have to realign your priorities and what not. And as an adult, I think just watching my kids grow up. I think watching them go to college and watching them be as successful as they are is really exciting for me. It's exciting to know I'll have one that is going to be a nurse practitioner who can take care of me when I'm old and cranky. And then one who is going to be a lawyer. So when I'm old and cranky and I run somebody over with my car [everyone laughs] she can take care of that. So, that's always good.

SM: What was considered fashionable when you were a young woman?

AH: Really do we have to go there? [Everyone laughs] I told you girls I grew up in the 80's. So, a can of Aqua Net was always in hand, and our hair was always a foot off of our head, looked ridiculous. And then we would have our pants and we would fold them over like this [demonstrates the folded over pants] with our socks over them. We had these white sneakers that were called Balloons [Everyone laughs]. It was horrible, we don't need to relive that. Ever!

SM: Is there a fashion statement that is popular today that you disagree with or?

AH: That I disagree with?

SM: Or that you like?

AH: Or that I'm jealous of? [Everyone laughs]. Like I want to be able to wear yoga pants to work and it's unfair that I can't. So yeah I'm jealous that I can't wear yoga pants. I'm mad. I'm a little sad about it. [Everyone Laughs].

DB: Are there particular areas of the city where you spend a lot of time?

AH: Here [taps the table], 43 Harvard Street. Grocery store, the nail salon. I don't frequently go to the park or like Elm Park or anything like that. But I always do drive by it. Every day I go to work and I'm like, "Aw the little geese are in the water and it's cool." I always think about well I'll go sit there during lunch or something like that but i don't. I did go to the Art Museum a couple of weeks ago for an event and it was pretty cool . Like I haven't been there since I was little for like a school field trip. It was the Flora and Fauna, the floral thing they had going on there. It was really cool. I was like, "A museum, it's going to be boring." [Shannon and Delia laugh]. And I was I like, "I wonder why I haven't really come here again." It was really cool.

SM: What were your most significant extracurricular involvements? Either when you were like little or in school or like-

AH: I was in chorus, so I always sang a lot. And then when I got older I sang at people's weddings and things like that. Softball was always my sport. You know, if we had like golf or cross-country during gym class, I was always not changing into gym clothes and I was absent. [Shannon and Delia laugh]. So those were kind of my things.

DB: The organizations that you said you were involved in, how long have you been involved in them?

AH: So I am no longer on the board at Animal Rescue League, but I still fully support their mission. It just took more of my time then I could actually give and I feel like if you can't give as much time as they need, then that's unfair to them. Jericho Road I just joined. And Rainbow Child Development I have been on as long as I have been here so 15 years.