Ron

26:17 + 15:56 = 42:13

Interviewer: Just to help us understand time after graduation. Let me make sure the volume is up. OK, so Ron, the study is looking at degrees in Arts and the Sciences and how alumni transitioned from school to work. So thank you for sharing your story. Ron, what year did you graduate?

Ron: 2009.

Interviewer: OK, fun. And what degree did you garner?

Ron: Sociology

Interviewer: OK, awesome. So these questions will basically ask you to frame that experience within this context. The first question says, the undergraduate experience, graduation, degree completion, are what we call scheduled events or and now of today's population it's considered rites of passage. So how did you feel about your transition from school to work?

Ron: How did I feel? I thought it would be easier, and I found out just how difficult it is. Yeah, it took a while to actually get a job. From, I graduated '09. Well, I had a job initially. It was pretRon easy to get that because it was about who I knew. I started working catering, not catering, setup, event setup right after I graduated. And I mean that was cool for a while, but they eventually got rid of us, because we graduated. They found out we weren't students. But I heard there was some

more to that story, some controversy. I was just a casualRon of war unfortunately. But there were three guys that had been working there for some years, and they were kind of targeted. And so they took them out and I happened to got taken out. And after that it took another eight months to get a minimum wage job, which Kohl's. And that was 2010, like October of 2010 or something like that. And yeah, I wasn't exactly happy until I found out there was people, other people at the job that had a degree as well. So it wasn't just me. So that made me feel a little more, I guess, comfortable with the situation. I wouldn't say comfortable, but like OK, I'm not the only one.

Interviewer: So when you say other people comfortable, was it at Kohl's you found out there were other recent grads?

Ron: Yeah at Kohl's, hmm hmm. Like some had State. There was another guy from Midwest University. There were some people from Eastern. There was a lot of people there that had degrees that were having the same struggle. But little by little, everybody moved on to something. And I felt like I was still there for a second. And then I moved on to school again, trying to get a second degree from Eastern. And then that didn't work out and another job, opportuniRon, presented itself in Sears, which took another eight months as well. Yeah, it took a while to get to these jobs, just to get a call back. I remember I was applying for Toys R Us and didn't get a call back. You know how discouraging that is? Toys R Us doesn't call you back? And they just opened so they had plenRon of jobs. So it was like, I was just like, "Man, I'm not even good enough for Toys R Us?" And even when I went to Sears and applied for the job and I had to interview, they said I was

overqualified. They were like, “I think you’re overqualified for this job.” And I said, “I’ll take anything right now.” And that’s the desperation I was in at that point cause I was running out of money. I mean I literally was living off a tax refund from the year prior. So it was pretRon rough.

Interviewer: Yeah, it sounds like it. So I, I hear a few things, cause I’m trying to let you fill out your story in this context. So you get terminated from what was a work-study turned into a temp work? What was that?

Ron: It was just uh, I guess you could call it temp work.

Interviewer: So your catering, your catering job.

Ron: No, no, no, no, setup.

Interviewer: Oh, setup. Thank you.

Ron: Yeah, we uh, I think maybe it was work-study for them. I don’t know if it counted as work study, but when I was in it, like I was already graduated. So like I had nothing to do with work study. It was just a temp job. But they weren’t talking about firing anybody until they knew these three guys were still working. I don’t know if it had anything to do with them being black. They thought it was. They were all black. I just happened to be a casualRon of war. They complained about it, had me sign something. I was like, “I just started here. It has nothing to do with me. But, OK, I understand. I don’t believe in unfairness so I’ll sign this.”

Interviewer: OK, so you go through that situation. And then you wait to find…So I’m guessing during that eight months you apply the work and you successfully locate

something in Kohl's. Then at some point you finally realize, "Hey, maybe I'll go back to school." And then at some point, you find out school maybe is not it for a second bachelor's, right? [Ron: Yes.] And then so now you're ready to take something at Sears. OK, so with this kind of trajectory in your own transition, were there events that happened and were there certain things, non-events, that didn't happen that you thought would once you graduated and actually have a Midwest University degree?

Ron: Oh absolutely.

Interviewer: So yeah what you thought would happen and then if you can talk about what didn't happen because it looked differently.

Ron: Well, you know the stigma with that Midwest University degree. It's supposed to get you anywhere anyhow. They don't tell you go to grad school. They tell you go to college. That's all they say. So naturally I had this idea, I go to college, I graduate, boom, you get a job. That's all I thought. So I get the degree, and with this degree, it's Midwest University. It's not just any school, it's Midwest University. The largest alumni ever. So what I expected, I didn't get at all. So basically I expected a job. But I also expected the connections. As long as I've been here, blah, blah, blah, I've talked to people. So I expect people to help out, blah, blah, blah. Even the Alumni Association or the Career Center, that's not a help. It doesn't do anything for you. They say, "Go to our Web site." And there's nothing there, nothing that I can't find on another Web site. I can go to Linked In, I can go to Career Builder. I can go to all these different sites that have more

information than they have. So I was kind of, I was really expecting, I guess, not a handout, but just these connections that I heard so much about. That did not happen. It's like, "Oh, you got a Midwest University degree?" I don't know if they say that anymore.

Interviewer: Yeah, I don't know either. So when you take a look at your life and that period, were there things that you thought you would have had by now, because Midwest is revered and celebrated? So what is it that you thought you would have had?

Ron: Well, let's see, I'm 28 now. It took me until 2012 to actually get a full-time job. So three years to get a full-time job after graduating. I expected to get that way before three years. I was bouncing around, moving, and all Ronpes of stuff. Like all Ronpes of financial woes, not just for me but my family. So it's just like, I expected to move out on my own. I expected never to go back home. I had to go back home twice, after school didn't pan out, I had to go back home again. All Ronpe of stuff. All Ronpe of crazy stuff. So I didn't expect any of that to happen. So basically I kind of expected the full-time job, go back to grad school, and just being a full-fledged adult. But I was an adult in another way, the financial woes. [Both laugh] I got that responsibiliRon dropped in my lap. I took it like a man, and handled it best as I could. Here I am, 28, and I wouldn't say I'm behind, because there's people doing worse than I am. But in my own timeline, I guess I would say I'm behind. Now I've got the full-time job, my own place, that Ronpe of stuff. But that took a while. I'm still catching up on bills and student loans and

all that.

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Interviewer: Wow, and that's really interesting. So it brings us to our next question about support. So you're in this transition, and it sounds like it's a period that lasted wow, close to three years for you. So what kind of social support did you find useful for navigating this experience and what kind of strategies? So what was your support system? What were some strategies that you used to navigate during that period of three years?

Ron: You mean why didn't I kill myself? So for three years, what did I do? Well, having a job helped. Because when you don't have one, that makes you want to slit your wrists. Like for the first eight months, I was just like whatever, everybody struggles, you know, blah, blah, blah. Then I got to Kohl's, I was OK then. I was living with my mom. I had her. She wasn't working or anything. So I guess seeing people doing just as bad as you do helps. I didn't really talk to her about it. I didn't really talk to anybody. Well, I think I talked to my best friend. We kind of talked about it, about how hard it is out here. I think he was still in school, cause he was kind of in and out of school. We were the same year but he was in and out of school. So I was kind of helping him on that arena. And he was kind of just telling me, "Things will be cool, blah, blah, blah." And I had a girlfriend at the time who I think was working. She was doing well, so at least I know a Midwest degree will take you somewhere, because she also attended Midwest. Then, after the other failures, when I wasn't working at all, after the

school not panning out and then trying another job….

Interviewer: So waiting for the Sears job?

Ron 6 March 12, 2014
Ron: Waiting for the Sears job.

Interviewer: So during that eight months?

Ron: Woo that was a rough one. I really can't say I had anybody. So I kind of like was absolved within myself, I guess. I just kind of, I had to find happiness. I could kind of say the Bible helped with that one. Kind of looked up for that one. And I started doing a lot of things like exercising, staying focused, staying happy, reading a lot, cause I was like pretRon angry. Cause 2012, this is after pretRon much the three years, I was angry. Just like, nothing is working out for me. Everything is going the opposite of what I wanted to happen. And so yeah, I just got stronger in my faith actually. I was just like, I'm going to believe something good is going to happen here. Just stayed with it, and then here comes a full-time job. I was willing to accept anything. I was humble, just like Sears, that's fine. When they said I was overqualified, I said, "No I'm not. I will work. That's fine. Just give me a job." Took it, a month later, I ended up with a full-time job.

Interviewer: Wow, and so interestingly, so during this challenge I'm hearing you saying you found spiritualiRon was helpful. And it sounds like at that point, you're like, I'll take anything. So when you get this degree in Sociology, did anything could have predicted that this would be this challenging in your mind when you go back?

Ron: Not really, cause like, I don't know, like while you're here, they don't really like, they

never tell you “Get a degree specifically.” They don’t say “A psych degree will take you here.” “A Soc degree will take you there, blah, blah, blah.” It’s sort of underlying, like maybe you should go to grad school after you get a degree like

that, but not that it won’t get you anywhere. So when I got the degree, I just liked Sociology. Basically I took enough Soc classes where it was starting to make sense to me, so I was like, “I’ll major in Soc.” And I thought it would get me somewhere, you know, even in like a nonprofit or somewhere in Social Service or human service or whatever, but not even there. I would get calls back every now and then, but it would be like out of state or some crazy junk that they’re not paying for anything. So I’m like, “I don’t have any money. I can’t go there. I can’t get a loan with my credit. I don’t know anybody with good credit.” So yeah, so I didn’t think too much about it. As I say, they tell you this great American dream, “Go to college. Anybody can make it.” And you get the degree, there’s not really a clear path of what you should do after that, I guess, you know, like….It’s just “Get the degree.” That’s all I remember.

Interviewer: And when you were looking for work, you know, when you finally see that you don’t have access to the connections, what was your main way for securing work? How did you look for it?

Ron: Everywhere. Every Web site I could think of. I even went to, I can’t remember what they’re called, not temp agencies, uh can’t remember what they’re called. Where is the place you go to and they help you with your resume, they have their own Web site, you go on there and you look for jobs there and they don’t have that many but you go there and you can look for

jobs?

Interviewer: It's not a temp agency

Ron: It's not.

Ron 8 March 12, 2014
Interviewer: It's not like a human resources?

Ron; It's a Ronpe of human resources, but there's a specific word for it. I just can't think of it right now. But I went there because I lived next to one for about a year or two. And it wasn't very helpful. But I went there. Mostly everything was online. So I spent like, that was my job. I would sit there. I would look for a job, jobs all day. Then I was done with that, I would go do some exercise. I watched movies. This is how I remained sane, watching movies, listening to music, trying to keep busy, not have too much time to think. If you think, you're just like, "I don't want to be here. This is terrible. Blah, blah, blah." So this is what I did. But mostly Web sites. And like if somebody would refer me to a job. You know, like I had friends refer me to a couple jobs. One was in banking, knew I wasn't getting that one, because when I showed up, one guy was missing and she didn't tell me. She was like, "Yeah you might you have to come back." Usually that means they were unprepared so they weren't planning on giving you a job anyway.

Same thing with a job here at Midwest University, it was in the dental school or somewhere, they were totally unprepared. Like I got there and they were like, "Oh." I was like, "You knew I was coming, right?" It was very informal. They literally didn't have any questions for me. They sat me down and said, "Do you have any questions?" I said, "Uh what do you guys do here? There's not much information on the Web site." So they told me what they did and I asked them how a Ronpical day was. Ronpical interview questions that I would ask them at the end. But I got to do it at the beginning. How lucky was I? So I asked them these questions, and then it kind

of it ended, like, “Well if you get hired, blah blah blah.” It’s like, “I’m not getting this job. I know that. You guys clearly have somebody else in mind, and you weren’t expecting me to show up.” Yeah, a couple jobs went that way. ISS same way, whole bunch of white women, I knew I wasn’t getting that job.

Interviewer: So what I like about you is your intuition, you’re able to pick up on the subtext of the situation. So when you think of in terms of “that’s a challenge,” how do you cope with that?

Ron: How do I cope? As best as I can. You got to do what you got to do. You just adjust. That’s the way I’ve always been even like making it through the Midwest University. Most of my friends couldn’t make it, like they had a hard time adjusting. I’m just the Ronpe that refuses to lose, so I adjust to every situation. I’m not a chameleon or anything like that, but I just literally adjust the best way I can. My grades weren’t all that, but I made it. Nobody has to see my grades unless I go to grad school or whatever, but grad school would accept me. Yeah that’s just how I am any situation—adjust.

Interviewer: Yeah, and that sounds like it’s a strategy too, and I’m noting that for myself cause I still got coding. Wow, so let’s see here, OK, so question 3. It says the undergraduate years provide opportunities both in and outside the classroom. To what degree (two-part) did the academic experience prepare you for gainful employment? And then we could take a look at the social component if that

contributed to getting gainful employment. OK, so you studied in Sociology. So

talk about that in and out of classroom experience as you committed to the concentration in Sociology, how did that help you get gainful employment.

Ron: Well, Sociology helps me understand people. And even, I don't know like, I'm not very judgmental because of Sociology, because I don't know anybody's situation, and that's kind of taught me that. So as I said, I adjust to everything. I even adjust to people because of Sociology. It's just like, there's a lot of intolerant people in the world, because they don't take Soc courses or even a Psych course, if it's like prejudice and discrimination. But that helped as far as that.

And even the educational practices whatever helped me like I don't know create a framework of concepts of how to work, I guess. Like how to study, how to read, how to do all that Ronpe of stuff. It's like reeducation almost. So now I'm like kind of a different person, even with my work ethic. It made me stronger. But as far as socially, it's the same thing. I'm more of a people person. I was a people person before, but now I really can get along with anybody. Cause a situation that happened Saturday, I don't know how I would have been before I got the degree or ten years ago, but a lot of training. Very weird. It was just. But I was accepting. I thought she/he or whatever looked weird, but then (?) being a gay guy. It was at Target, he rang me up or whatever. He was like, he was very chatRon and he didn't say anything to my roommate but he was very chatRon with me. And he was like "Ooh somebody has plans" or whatever. Because I had bought a whole bunch of movies or whatever. He was like "How was your Valentine's Day?" And

I was like…And it didn't shock me. Ordinarily, like years ago, I think I would have just been like, "What?" But I was just like, "It was fine. Ordinary Friday." I

asked him how his was, you know, just conversation. Like I said, Sociology kind of changed me. I'm just better for it.

Interviewer: I hear in terms of being able to be more accepting towards other people. But part of the reason I'm interested in this research is, this is a discipline. But to how does it connect to your gainful employment? I mean while it does make you able to get along well with people, so that's one variable. But the other variable is, OK did it get you what you had thought in terms of gainful employment?

Ron: Oh, no, no, no, no, not at all. I mean you would think with Sociology, something like that, you would do, I don't know, nonprofit work, or like I said human service, like working somewhere. Cause my ex, she also did Sociology and she's working in like a mental hospital whatever. She's like helping them or whatever, watching the patients, blah blah blah. It's a governmental job. You would think it take you somewhere like there. I don't know if I have the wrong, you know, look or what, but she ended up getting that. It might have been somebody she knows that hooked her up with that job. I think it was. I think she knew somebody, and quite frankly, I think that's kind of how the world works in a lot of ways. It's who you know. Some people can earn their way, but a lot of people it's who you know and who you are. So yeah, no it didn't. In answer to the question, no, no gainful employment for me.

Interviewer: OK, now how about this? Did you do any internships in Sociology? Did you acquire like some of these nonprofit skills and social service skills? Cause I hear

what you're saying, connections are important. Networks are important. But, you know…

Ron: I can't say I did. School was hard enough. I didn't want to add to that. That's why I didn't really join any orgs like that. Because I was having difficulties with school. I was on the brink most semesters just like losing my mind. I had some sick semesters just cause it was hard. Like I was thrown in with the wolves and expected just to thrive. I did the best I could, and I didn't want to add anything to my plate. Like my last semester I think I joined First Generations, and even in those meetings, I was just kind of daydreaming. I was listening, but I was just like I'm thinking about class. Cause the guy that invited me, he was actually my instructor that semester. And he asked me if I was a first generation, I said yeah. And so he was like oh come to our meeting, blah, blah, blah. Quite frankly the only reason I think he passed me was cause I was in it. So I was in that

organization. And I helped Charlay(?) with Big Brothers/Big Sisters, that thing. I did a couple other things. But I tried to just not do anything extra. Because I had too many problems as it was. And I'm sure that didn't help me at all. But you're not thinking about that while you're in school. You're not thinking internships. And again that's another thing that's not necessarily, it's talked about amongst the students, internships and blah, blah, blah, but not really. It's kind of one of those

things that goes unmentioned. Like you need to do internships, you need to do this, you need to do that. You need to build up your resume. Not really mentioned. I mean I've been working since I was 14. But nothing that's significant. You know janitor. I did research when I was like 16 at Wayne State. I did an internship

there, but I was 16. I don't know if that counts after college. I did another internship in the Human Resources Department at Blue Cross/Blue Shield, again before college. But I didn't do anything after college. High school was easier. Of course I had time to do all this stuff. Then spring/summers here I wanted to catch up on classes. Had I not done that, it would have taken me longer to graduate. It took me five years, which is, you know, they say Ronpical four or five years. But had I not done that, it probably would have been five and a half, six so…..

Interviewer: And that's good to know, because it sounds like between the rigor at Midwest University and the environment plus being first gen, I can see where you're like, wow, taking on any more, A) would prolong your time here, but B) you just couldn't handle one more task.

Ron: No, I'd rather not. I used to hate when people would say, "You want to?" No I can't, no, no, no. And I felt bad, obviously, because people used to ask for stuff all the time. Charlay wanted me to do the Big Brother/Big Sister again. I was like, no, that's too much. That was like around the time when I started to feel sick and stuff, so I was just like "No, let me just get this school done, I can do anything anybody wants. But right now, like I just need to focus on school." That was my main objective. Because I did not want to lose, I didn't want to get kicked out, like at

least four or five of my friends were out of here. So I was just like, I don't want to be another guy out of Midwest University because I couldn't handle it.

Ron 14 March 12, 2014

Interviewer: So let's see here. All right let me, it's going to cut off on me….[End of Recording One] OK so Ron, the reason this research is pretRon important, I think for me, I've watched students come through and to hear your stories about how you all move in, through, and out of school and into the labor market is really worth hearing your stories about. Because I mean you shared that wow I got the degree. I thought this would happen. And then you're like, Whoa.

Ron: Yeah, I mean it's a real realiRon check, you know, like cause you're almost, I wouldn't say, I would say "arrogant," cause you have a Midwest University degree. It's kind of like when you're going here, you're a little arrogant. Cause you're in the top in your schools or whatever. It's a humbling experience on both ends. When I got here, I was like, wow, cause I was good at math. Took the first math class, Math 105, never took one again. Cause of the [unclear]. Same thing with after you graduate, you're just like, ah man, I should be able to find a job. After a couple of months, you're already like, Wow, does it really take that long? What do they say? They say six months now or something like that. It took me eight, so it was rough.

Interviewer: Yeah, now tell, were you able to connect with the Sociology faculRon? I mean it sounds like you found one, how about the rest of the faculRon, any connections? Any access to their networks?

Ron: Yes, well I wouldn't say I had access to their networks. One of my professors was really cool. I took her, I had her as a GSI at first, and I dropped the class. Then she

ended up teaching the class, which her class was a lot more interesting. I actually learned from her class as opposed to…I don't know if you heard of PJ McGann?

Interviewer: No.

Ron: Oh yeah, she teaches Criminology. Sociology or Criminology or whatever, and her class is so boring. But when I took it with this lady, her name is Sara Jarick? or something like that, she is really cool. So her classes were cool. So

occasionally I would stop by her office and say hi, blah, blah, blah. She was like really into the Women's Studies portion of criminology whatever, how women connect to crime. But I wouldn't say that she helped me out in seeking a career path or anything like that. Neither did the other guy, but, you know, nice knowing them.

Interviewer: You knew two, but no connection to the gainful employment piece.

Ron: Nope, not at all.

Interviewer: Now among your social networks, did anybody like peers try to like say, hey you know, so and so, have you checked in? Would say in terms of those, how did the networks open up for you socially?

Ron: Yeah, they definitely opened up. I had a friend who was working at a bank. He actually got me an interview. That's the bank job I was talking about. But, like I said, I knew I wasn't getting that job. Because one guy wasn't there, she didn't tell me. And I don't know if it was for a teller or…but how many black tellers do you see?

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Interviewer: Yeah, I don't know.

Ron: Yeah, yeah. And actually somebody mentioned that to me when I had the job interview, like how many black tellers do you see? And I was just like huh…good question. You don't see very many. But, in retrospect that makes sense. And then another guy he told me about a job. And he told me to send my resume to this lady. It was like an interview to be around like young kids and I didn't know how I felt about that. But I gave him my resume anyway just cause I'm not used to being around a whole bunch of young kids like three to four and less than that, two to four, something like that. So I was like, "Uh, I can. Sure, I'll take some money." You know, that was social services.

Interviewer: It's a job.

Ron: I was fine with that, but never got a call back from that. I mean she called me and told me I see you're interested and how the interview went, blah, blah, blah. I never got called back. Probably saw that I was….I actually see that, I think that happened a couple of times. I think my name has a lot to do with it too, not getting called back. I told my mom, I was very mad at her. Ron Anything is not going to get you a job, at least not Ronrone. But it's still Ron something.

Interviewer: Oh wow. So let's see, now interestingly, when I started this, we were working with the committee, and we said, well these are young people, what could the recession have in common with young people? They've never had professional jobs before. This would be their first salary; they don't have families and benefits, right? So we said, maybe there's no connection. But when you graduated, do you

think your timing to look for work in the job market, could be impacted by the recent economy?

Ron: Absolutely! I'd say maybe ten years ago, well maybe a little longer than that, this wouldn't have happened. There would have been a job, something. It wouldn't have taken me eight years, excuse me eight months, to get Kohl's. I think it would have been a little quicker than that, or even a better job. Better job than that. So yeah, I definitely think timing had to do with it. And I thought about that while I was unemployed, I was just like, "Well, we are in a recession. There's competition for these jobs. That's why you've got Bachelor's degrees getting these minimum wage jobs because there's even competition for those." So yeah, definitely impacted. And I'm glad I was born at the time I was, but at the same time, did we really have to have a recession now, when I graduated? And it doesn't seem to be getting better. I'm still hearing out there that people that don't have jobs. Friends of mine that went to Midwest University. I was talking to a girl yesterday or the day before yesterday. She was talking about she's struggling, looking for full-time employment. Has been struggling just as long as I have. Cause I think we graduated at the same time. Some people are just, can't find the right spot. I'm

pretRon sure I have this job because I knew how to do it already. It just happened to work out that way.

Interviewer: And so it's interesting, because transition is a point, right? So you come out of school and you've mastered what it takes to get through school to a degree. And then you try to enter that work force, right? So in terms of career aspirations, short and long-term, what is happening in that transition for you? Where are you in

those career aspirations? I'm sure you had some short-term aspirations when you came out. And then you thought about some long-term. A) what are they? And when you look at that transition and that space, what has happened for you?

Ron: Well, as a lot of people do, not everybody goes straight through school. So my plan was to work, I don't know, a year or two, then go back to grad school. In a year or two, I managed to rack up some debt. So who really wants to go to grad school after that? It's kind of like, rack up more debt, really? Which was in retrospect probably kind of dumb, going to get a second bachelor's. But I needed something. And I knew that would be easier to go get a second bachelor's. Because I knew, that's Eastern, I knew they would accept me. So I was just like, "OK." I needed a reason to get out of my mom's house, one. That was the reason. But once I went there, I couldn't afford it. So I ended up out of school again. So my short-term goal, literally, was just to work a good job and then go to grad school. Couldn't find a good job, so I was like, all right let me just go to get the second bachelor's. And then my long-term goal, I don't know, I guess it started to formulate in there somewhere, it's kind of like, well, no, I didn't really have one. I was just like, "I need a job." Now I'm starting to formulate some long-term goals. Like, OK, now I want to go to grad school. I didn't go, I started to fill out the application

sometime this year, but then I stopped. Because I was just like you know what? No. I kind of went three years through the ringer. I need to chill out for a second. Let me just relax. Let me enjoy life for a second. Cause I didn't get a chance to really do that. So it was like, All right, I'm going to try to go next year, start filling out for next year, next fall or whatever. So my long-term goal is now

to go to grad school, achieve a career in like Higher Ed or something like that. Cause I want to help students like me and maybe even point them in the right direction and get a job. Now that I know how hard it is out there, you know, like this is what you need to do. Not just right direction like, look get internships, yeah I know it's hard and you don't want to do anything else extra, but trust me, you don't want to go down my path. Just the right majors and things that I wasn't told. Sociology's great and you learn a lot, but [laughs] really, you know, maybe you could double-major in something, Soc and….But yeah ultimately I kind of want to help students that were like me. And I knew that like a couple years into college. I was like, "Man they did not tell us all this. They need to know this transition is not easy. And I can help them through my own journey. Maybe write a book on that. Like, this is what happens."

Interviewer: We could co-author. And that's good. That's good to know. So is there anything specifically that can be done to improve this transition from school to work for today's graduates?

Ron: Specifically? They need a course on that. A course. Like they need advisers to tell them this. They need, they just need an awareness, more so than anything. Like this is how hard it's

going to be. You need to work harder now so you don't suffer the consequences later. So do what you have to do. Like I know it's hard, but do those internships, get more networking, kiss some butt, like seriously kiss some butt, all up in the cheeks. Like you need to seriously kiss butt, make connections, talk to all the right people. If you don't know the right people, find them. Like seriously, you do not want to end up living in your mom's house. Trust me. You

start to bump heads or you start to get irritated. It's just like, it's a world you don't want to know. I think there's definitely that could be done. Like increase awareness is number one. Need to know like what they say in the commercials and all this Ronpe of crap, that's no. You don't just get a degree; you need to do more than that. There's more they're not telling anyone. And some people know this; other peoples don't. I don't know, because growing up, I didn't really have anybody that worked in the house. So, they don't know. They just know how to go out there and get a job, like not necessarily the right Ronpe of job. So I didn't know a lot of things. If I knew what I know now, I'd be a different person. But anybody can say that, so now that I know this, I feel like it's my duRon to impart my knowledge onto others.

Interviewer: Right, and I hear two strategies and I appreciate them. Any thoughts about the Career Center while you were here?

Ron: I didn't go at all. I don't know at all. I don't remember going at least. They called me, funny thing, uh was it Alumni? No. They called me some time in that year where I got this job, before I even started Sears, and told me, asked me questions, like kind of a survey. They were calling alumni. It was like, what do you think about the Career Center? Has it helped you? Blah,

blah, blah. I'm like, do you guys have something that would help me? And she was like, well yeah, you can go to our Web site, you can do this, you can do that. So I'm kind of encouraged, I'm enthusiastic after that. I was like, all right I've never used their services. I got on there. It was nothing. It was a couple jobs, two or three jobs, most of them required like a PhD, so I was just like, "What is this? This is not helpful. You're

not doing anything for me. It's a Web site. I've seen better Web sites than this." So like I'm not saying that, maybe I don't know all the resources they offer. Or maybe they offer more in the Career Center, because I was way away from it. I was in Roseville at the time. I didn't find it necessarily helpful; somebody else might. Somebody with a different degree or different connections. I don't know. I just kind of looked at it like there was nothing. They just want me money. They just want some skewed data, like oh, he used it.

Interviewer: So you didn't even use them while you were an undergrad at any point?

Ron: Uh huh, didn't even think about them, cause like I said I was focused on school. The career wasn't even on my mind, literally. Like, after I graduated, then it was like, Oh, I've got to get a job, let me go do this. I thought it was going to be easy. It was just going to be, let me walk down the street and I'll get a job. It wasn't that way. I mean I had one, like I said, at the event setup or whatever, but that only lasted….It lasted a while, let's say, less than year, like nine months or something like that.

Interviewer: But even when you think of event setup, come to Midwest University.

Ron: That job was, oh God, my boss was terrible. She didn't like me. That was just because the

guy that got me the job, prior to me, he got another guy a job, and that guy was stealing time, he was swiping when he wasn't there. He was stealing from the building. And I guess she expected me to be the same way and I was just like, you know.

Interviewer: But in the context of the grandness of Midwest University degree, Ron 22

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Ron: Yeah, event setup is not exactly ideal, no.

Interviewer: Yeah, interesting, right? But luckily, and I think the minimum wage has hiked up, is it one or two times at least, right?

Ron: Possibly

Interviewer: I know definitely one.

Ron: Well, here is different, like Midwest University, I don't think they start at minimum wage.

Interviewer: Oh good.

Ron: Yeah, here it's like, I think most jobs start at 8. It might be a little higher now. It was 8 back then.

Interviewer: So, OK, eight dollars.

Ron: Yeah, like I think it's 9 now. So there at event setup I was making 9.50 or something like that.

Interviewer: And so did you have full insurance and….

Ron: No. It was a, I don't think we counted as…I think we were just temps. So we didn't get any insurance or anything like that, not that I know of. I didn't fill out any paperwork. You just had a job and you were happy about it.

Interviewer: Wow, anything else you'd like to share?

Ron: Hmm, good luck to the people that get a degree and make it happen. Ron 23

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Interviewer: Awesome, Ron, thank you [End of recording] Ron 24 March 12, 2014