Gonzales: This is Melissa Gonzales. Today is Friday, April 26, 2013. I am interviewing COL Joel Ward for the first time. This interview is taking place at the University of Texas at Arlington Central Library located in Arlington, Texas. This interview is sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and is part of the Maverick Veterans’ Voices Project.

So, COL Ward, why did you choose to attend Arlington State College?

Ward: Well, it’s a matter of luck. I actually was going to be a ditch digger and the stop in Arlington working for at that time the gas company, Lone Star Gas, and I was a lineman. A lineman there is a ditch digger, and I did that for a while and when I finally finished that job—it was in the summertime—it was the summertime after my senior year in high school, and I went to Arlington Heights High School in Fort Worth.

Well, anyway, I came home to my dad, and I said, “Dad, I think I’ll go to college.” And so he actually moved into Arlington from Grand Prairie because he worked for Chance Vought back in those days, so that we could live in an apartment, and I could live with him and go to college.

So then I came on to the campus one day, and I saw some people that were from my high school, which was—it was in west
Fort Worth. Any anyway, the bottom line is it was Arlington Heights—and I saw a bunch of my friends, so I just followed them. And sure enough, they went down to the basement of then the library, which is still the library, as a matter of fact. And sure enough, they were all signing up for ROTC. Well, I’d taken ROTC in high school. I said, “Well, okay, I’ll do that.”

Well, the next thing you know after—trying to bring this all down in a short period of time, I was very lucky. I fell into a lot of things. I had a lot of good friends. I ran into some people that were fantastic leaders for me. One of them was then CPT Willard Latham, who ended up becoming a two-star general. But at that time, he was one of my leaders, and we did a lot of things together including marched from coast to coast across the country, and we had some fantastic accomplishments.

We were the first group to ever go to summer camp—ROTC summer camp—between the third and fourth year. And because that was the first time this school had ever gone, then CPT Latham decided we would march there. That was one hundred forty to -fifty miles. And he led us. He didn’t just say you’re going to do it. He says, “I’m going to lead you.” And we did that. We went to Fort Hood, Texas, and that also was an unbelievable event and has
never been done that way again. It has been done—repeated as
a—recognized as an historical event.

But anyway, bottom line is I was here at a time when they
were setting new marks and new goals, and I just happened to be
part of it. And I ended up coming back from there and becoming the
cadet colonel of the corps commanding the corps. That was as a
cadet colonel, and I have today—even today I have so many
personal friends that are still around that we all are still together
and best friends.

Gonzales: So what was your major while you were here at Arlington State
College?

Ward: Well, that’s interesting because I started out in architecture. About
six months in, I realized that wasn’t my bag. I couldn’t handle it.

So I went over to some engineering and started engineering,
and I worked on that for a while. Well, to make a long story short, I
ended up getting enough hours that I could finally graduate, and I
got my degree in history. I needed that in order to get my
commission in the United States Army.

And so I did. I got my commission in the United States Army
and moved on into my military career.

Gonzales: And you participated in the Jodies as well, the Sam Houston Rifle
Team?
Yes, I was. I wasn’t really on the rifle team. I was in the Sam Houston Rifles, and we marched coast to coast. We actually were at the inauguration of Eisenhower. Think about that.

And we also went to the West Coast, and the West Coast was the Junior Rose Bowl. For two years in a row we went there. And we traveled all over, up and down, east-west, north-south. We went to the Mardi Gras, and we’ve spent more time on the road—and by the way, in those days, you usually did it by bus.

So anyway, the funny thing was we did do that, but we also had one of our cadets with us, named David Earl. And David’s dad was commander of the air force unit over in Grand Prairie—at the base at Grand Prairie. And every now and then, he’d get us an airplane to fly us somewhere, which made travel a lot better, and that’s how we actually went to the inauguration.

So when you were traveling with the Sam Houston Rifles, did y’all take time off from school or did it happen during the summer or during breaks? How did they manage—did you miss class for the travel?

I don’t know really how we did that. All I know is when we came back to the campus, we would be accepted back, and we did have to play some catch-up, but as far as anything special, I don’t remember any special efforts. We just did the best we could. By the
way, when we were on the bus or something, somebody there was usually smarter than the rest of us, and he would teach us what’s going to happen in that class while we were gone. Now, was that good? I don’t know. (laughs)

Gonzales: So were there any professors or instructors that influenced you or that you remember having a strong influence?

Ward: Well, some of the professors that influenced me: one of them was one of the military professors besides Willard Latham, who was a captain at that time. There was also a major here named Oliver A. Hoard, and he kind of became my second father. And he would even have me out to his house every now and then to sit down with his wife and have dinner and stuff like that. He just kind of became a second dad, and, yeah, he was actually drop dead great, and if it hadn’t been for him—I think he motivated me a lot too. He lived in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and he’s passed on, of course, by now. But I miss him a lot and I think about him a lot.

Gonzales: Did you go to school full- or part-time while you were here?

Ward: Did I work?

Gonzales: Did you work while you were going to school—

Ward: Oh, yes, I did. I started out here—actually, what I was doing, I was actually working for Bell Helicopter before I came here, and I had a job at the main Bell Helicopter plant and then moved up to the north
and west to a facility there where we actually blew a helicopter bolts. That was back in the days when you could do that. And I worked for them while I also went to college.

But then finally, I got to the point I also went to work for American Airlines. I was a ticket agent, and I worked for them for a while, and that was out of Love Field because then DFW did not exist. But anyway, so I worked there for that. I did all those kind of things, and I can think of other jobs I might’ve had but those were the biggies.

And, yes, I worked my way through college.

Gonzales: You said you’d lived with your father in an apartment, and I know that most of the cadets lived in the dorm in Davis Hall, I believe. Did they ever require you to live in Davis Hall or ask that you stay on campus?

Ward: No, they did not, and because my dad was here, it was really a great opportunity because he could afford me being with him more than he could having to pay for a dorm as well even though back in those days, dorms were cheap. They’re not now.

But anyway, I lived at 804 ½ W. Abrams, and it’s still there, but now it’s a beauty parlor.

Gonzales: I think I know the building you’re talking about. I may have gone in there once. (Both laugh)
So in addition to the ROTC, did you participate in other campus activities?

Ward: Maybe I did, but I can't think of many. You know, we did a lot of things, but I was basically ROTC focused, and, yes, I got into some other things but not a lot elsewhere.

Gonzales: Was there a strong social scene on campus while you were here?

Ward: There was some, but, no, I would say it wasn't strong. We didn't have the chapters and things and all of the other activities here. In fact, the Sam Houston Rifles was one of the strongest organizations on the campus.

Gonzales: Did y'all host anything for the students on campus, any events or anything like that for other students?

Ward: No, we didn't. I don't remember that anyway. If we did, I don't remember it. We didn't do that kind of stuff. The campus was a lot smaller then, and I think we had—I'm guessing now—but about nine- to ten thousand people on campus on a good day.

Gonzales: So you mentioned that in 1960 you participated in the march to Fort Hood.

Ward: Yes.

Gonzales: What was that march like? Like, when did it get started? When did you start in the day? Where did y'all sleep? I mean, did you take breaks?
Ward: I'm having a hard time remembering exactly the way that happened, but we did kick off and we marched—I've written that to you—but basically, it was a five-day event, and we did start off and we marched so many days and spent the nights on the road and had a bunch of us guys—and I still have photos of that. And they are, by the way, over in the military science department as well of that march. And of course, then CPT Latham led the march, and we all did the march, and so we did about thirty miles a day, and we had a support team that came along behind us in a bus or something to bring food. And if somebody had a physical problem, they had something—if they needed to haul somebody off because he couldn’t walk anymore. We didn't have many people quit. That was amazing. But anyway, you got to realize that in order to pull that off, we had to practice on that for months before. So we were in pretty darned good shape.

Gonzales: What kind of training did y'all participate in to get ready for it?

Ward: Well, I’d say over the previous three months we would actually go out north of Arlington usually and march for a certain length of time and then come back and just kind of get in—knowing how to conduct yourself so that you could endure.

We were all in pretty good shape. I mean, we were young and we were in fantastic shape. And of course, then the CPT
Latham, he was the mark of physical fitness and he still is today, by the way.

Gonzales: So when did you graduate, what year?
Ward: Nineteen sixty.
Gonzales: Okay. And did you go anywhere else for additional military training?
Ward: Well, after I finished there, I graduated and I went on to become commissioned in air defense artillery, and I went to Fort Bliss, Texas. And I got my officers basic training there, and from there I actually was reassigned back to the Dallas-Fort Worth area as part of the Nike Hercules Air Defense Artillery right here. And I was actually assigned out to Mineral Wells at Fort Wolters at what they called Battery D. There were four batteries, and D was—A, B, C, D—was the fourth battery, and we surrounded the Dallas-Fort Worth area and provided air defense artillery protection against the possible enemy.

There were commands like that all over the country under the headquarters of the U.S. Army Air Defense Command, or AADCOM.

Gonzales: How long did that go for, like, did they continue that presence, do you know?
Ward: AADCOM?
Gonzales: Or the presence around D-FW?
Ward: It was there for at least twenty years more.

Gonzales: Okay.

Ward: Yeah.

Gonzales: What were your job assignments as part of this? What were your duties as part of the—your duties here in D-FW when you said you were part of military—

Ward: Well, I—oh, that’s an interesting thing and that’s an interesting story.

I was a platoon leader of what they call a fire control. In other words, the greater battery was set up, we had one platoon that was all radars. And another platoon that was all missiles. And so the radars controlled the missiles, but the missiles had to take special—we had one platoon leader for one of the ones for another, and we had another platoon that was there to support everybody and had a battery commander.

And the interesting story was that one day because all the batteries had hot status, and they would rotate the hot status between A, B, C, and D batteries.

And sure enough, as a second lieutenant, I became the fire control officer for one day, and my battery commander had to go to Duncanville, which is where the battalion headquarters was, and so
he said, “Okay, you just take over and don’t worry about it.” He said, “The battalion’s in charge.” And I said, “Yes, sir.”

And he took off, and he wasn’t gone but very shortly, and I get the word that we’ve got an incoming unknown aircraft. Now, our job on incoming unknown aircraft is if you have something unknown, you prepared to shoot at it if you have to. I mean, you really wait. You don’t want to do that if you don’t have to. But it was coming from the south from down what looked like from Austin. We didn’t know where it really came from. But the bottom line was, it was coming in, and all of a sudden, the battalion headquarters electronically went out.

Here I am the commander of the hot unit, I am now the acting battery commander, and the battalion is out. So now I am the acting battalion commander as a second lieutenant, and that’s usually commanded by a lieutenant colonel.

And so I’m sitting there watching this aircraft come in and I’m counting down because we were getting to the point where I was going to have to fire that missile and take that unknown aircraft out. So I was getting down to where I was doing a five, four, three, two, ready to hit the switch, and all of a sudden, the battalion command came back in there. We’re on line, don’t worry about it.
And the next thing I knew, I found out they did identify. It was
an air force friendly aircraft that just had not been identified, and
had it been two seconds more, it would've been shot down, and I
would've been the guy that did it.

So, yes, a deep breath. (laughs)

Gonzales: Goodness.

So once you graduated in 1960, how long were you in
training and involved with the artillery training for the air command?
I guess, when were you deployed to Vietnam?

Ward: Okay.

Gonzales: So how long were you in training before you were deployed?

Ward: Well, first thing, I've been in air defense artillery my entire career.
Now, what happens is sometimes you go places where they don't
need you as an air defense officer. They need you for something
else.

And so when I went to Vietnam, I went there in the role of
infantry. So having said that, my first tour, I went to Vietnam—I
guess I have to remember this now. I'm trying to remember the
year I went—I'm having difficulty. But I went to Vietnam, had to
leave my wife behind, and I moved to the southern tip of Vietnam to
what they called the Mekong Delta, and I was the assistant advisor
to an advisory team and to a Vietnamese force in that southern tip for a year.

And then I got my Combat Infantryman Badge there for that, and then I came back and while I was there, I had a whole bunch of other events like you would if you were in combat, and then I came back.

Gonzales: So did you meet your wife when you were still—you said you’d met your wife while you were still in Texas before being deployed?

Ward: Well, my wife actually went to Arlington State College at the same time I did. But she never graduated here but she went here. She was actually majoring in art, and she is a children’s book illustrator.

Gonzales: Oh.

So when you went to Vietnam, did they send to you any—was that your first time overseas?

Ward: At that time, yes.

Gonzales: Okay. And did they send you to any kind of cultural training or give you any kind of training to kind of be familiar with the area and with the people in the area?

Ward: They sent me to a place on the East Coast and learned Vietnamese. And I learned Vietnamese at a school, and that did help a lot because when I got there because I was dealing directly
with the Vietnamese, I could speak a little Vietnamese. I wasn’t bad. I wasn’t great, but you know, I could get by.

Gonzales: So how long did that take, that training?

Ward: Well, that training took about I’d say six weeks.

Gonzales: Do you recall your first days in the service? Is there anything that was—I imagine it was overwhelming at first.

Ward: As a matter of fact, it was not. And I have to say that is because of the quality of the program I came out of here. Because of GEN Latham, then CPT eventually MAJ Latham, we had been so well prepared that what other guys in the same role that I was in there were having difficulties, this was a slam dunk, easy can-do. And I talked to my fellow cadets that came out of this program, and they said they had the same experience. So that says something about the quality of the program that was here.

Gonzales: So you said you were an advisor. What did that entail? What assignments did you have?

Ward: Well, basically, I was on a very small installation, very, very, very small, and we would go out and be with Vietnamese troops and I would be there with my counterpart, who was the same rank as me. In this case though, in my case, I was the deputy when I first got there, and I finally became the senior advisor, but I was the deputy,
and so I was kind of there to support my boss, support his counterpart.

But anyway, we didn’t really learn a lot of Vietnamese at that time, but we had enough to get by with. And so we would advise them and go with them. When they went into combat, we would go with them and advise them on how to lead their troops and we would provide additional things, like, if they needed American field artillery to fire some cannons for them, we could help them with that too.

Gonzales: So you did see combat while you were over there?
Ward: Oh, absolutely. Yes.

Gonzales: Were there many casualties in your unit while you were there?
Ward: Well, not in my advisory unit. There were many casualties in the Vietnamese unit absolutely, and I was there. In fact, one of the things—what I did have though, after I had left that, I went to a second job in Vietnam, at a higher headquarters, and at the time I was leaving, the sergeant that was with me in that particular unit was out of the combat. He was in the same area with me and I had been in combat many times, but we had a—he had a new boss, a new senior advisor, and not faulting him at all, but it was new to him. And needless to say, something went wrong, and this sergeant got killed. And it really broke my heart. And he was a fantastic guy.
His name was Clyde Hall, and so I was there and I wanted to do more. In fact, I really wanted to take him home, and I couldn’t find time to do that.

Gonzales: Were there any memorable experiences that you had, that you took away from being overseas?

Ward: Well, it depends on which overseas you’re talking about. I had a second tour in Vietnam. And the second tour I was there, I was a major, and I had another team—this time this was only my team, and it was up in another province but it was also in the Mekong Delta. I had some fantastic experiences there, where I actually started—they now have what they call the standard briefing and you have to give everybody a briefing when they come to visit you. And I’d been doing that, but I was actually looking at that briefing and thought it was kind of stupid, so I rebuilt it and I had some people coming.

There was a guy named John Paul Vann. If you looked in a history book, you’d see that he was a big deal that was an important guy, and he came by one day. He sat down with me and said, “Okay, give me the briefing,” and I said, “I’m going to give you my briefing.” He said, “What?” I said, “Just watch.” And I gave him the review, and we got through and he looked at me and he says, “Why didn’t you tell me?” I said, “Because what you all tell
everybody is good, but this tells you exactly what’s going on.” I said, “As you walk out of here, you know what’s going on and it also shows you that we’re moving in the right direction.”

He calls me back about two hours later, and he said, “I’m sending a helicopter to you. You’re going to be—I want you to take it and teach that briefing to everybody else in the southern tip of Vietnam,” and so he did. And I was in my last few weeks of Vietnam, so I took half of my time while I was there to finish up my old job but also to travel around in the Mekong Delta and teach other people that briefing.

As I did that, halfway through that—the helicopter pilot had been teaching me how to fly the helicopter—so halfway through that process, one day he lifts his hands off the control and said, “The controls are yours.” I knew how to fly then dangerously, but could fly. And so sure enough, I took the control and he said, “Now, you fly me back to Canto and you drop me off and this helicopter is yours until you leave country.” I wasn’t licensed or anything.

Needless to say, I did that. I could barely fly but I could do it. And sure enough, at the end of my tour, I flew back there and I walked into his office and I handed him my key and it had really wanted the key, but I handed it. “Okay, here’re the keys. It’s yours.” He said, “Thank you very, very much.” I walked out and they flew
me out of there to get on an aircraft back to the United States. I started thinking, That was the dumbest thing I have ever done in my life. I could’ve been killed so easily and yet, you know, in those days your attitude was so, oh, man, I’m good. I can do all this stuff. But, yeah, it was a real experience.

Gonzales: How did you stay in touch with your family while you were in Vietnam?

Ward: Basically letters. We weren’t allowed to travel home during that tour. Now, they did let us go on R and R, and I went to Hong Kong one time just for a week, but you know, they wanted to give you a little bit of a break.

Gonzales: I’ve heard from others that that was the place to go for suits. So did you have suits have made in Hong Kong as well?

Ward: I think I did. Yeah. I did that, and I also got my wife some stuff too. Yeah.

Gonzales: Were you able to meet with your wife while you were overseas? I know some people said they were able to go to Hawaii while they were overseas.

Ward: Some of them did. I was not able to do that.

Gonzales: Okay.

Were you awarded any medals or citations?
Ward: I was awarded three Bronze Stars. Yeah. And the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Gonzales: So while you were over there, you said, you know, that you were flying this helicopter around. I imagine that—did you have a lucky charm? Did you do anything for good luck? I know some people had little rituals sometimes that they did.

Ward: I don’t remember anything. No, I was too busy trying to stay alive. (laughs)

Gonzales: Well, being a stressful situation, did you do anything to relieve stress or is there anything y’all could do for entertainment?

Ward: I didn’t realize it. I didn’t do that kind of thing.

Now, I did have a good experience though. You may have heard about the singing actress, Martha Raye, and she came in one time and they had—USO brought a lot of these people by, and she came by and visited me and my team. And she put on her little act and so sure enough, at that time we came under fire. And so we had some people—some Vietnamese—in our compound that had been injured and killed and we were dragging them all to get them sorted out and to get the injured and try to get them—and she took off her wardrobe and she was a—I didn’t know at the time—I think she was a lieutenant colonel nurse also. And so she said, “I’m a nurse. I’m going to stay here,” and she’d come in in a helicopter.
And so we used her helicopter to evacuate as many of them as we could that were still alive. And that became a real story. People couldn’t believe what she was doing.

And so sure enough, one day I came back to the States and I ran into her again. And it was wonderful. I mean, she said, “I can’t believe I’m looking at you.” (laughs) Anyway, and of course, she’s passed on now, but Martha Raye was a fantastic human being.

Gonzales: Did you form any close friendships while you were in the military? And do you still stay in touch?

Ward: As a matter of fact, I do. In fact, I still do today. Of course, back in those days, a lot of times we didn’t have anything they called email. And for example, I was fortunate enough to be selected to command a battalion in Germany. And by the way, I commanded a Nike Hercules Battalion in Germany many, many, many, many, many years later like the one I had before.

Well, my battalion executive officer—his name was Wes Kornet, and he didn’t come to this college or anything like that, but he and I still are emailing each other today. And I’ve got several other great people that were in that battalion that we still are in touch.

Gonzales: So you mentioned you served in Germany. Where else have you served and in what capacity did you serve there?
Ward: Well, my first tour there was as a battalion commander, and I was actually at a place called Raunheim, and then I moved forward and when I finished with that job, I did a successful job in that battalion. It was one of four battalions in a great big brigade and so I moved up to headquarters of the American Army headquarters in Heidelberg. And I was working for a three-star general. I was on his staff at headquarters as one of his advisors. And so we traveled all over and that was a real big job keeping him advised and doing all that kind of stuff, and that was in the final year while I was there.

Gonzales: And so when did your service end? Do you remember the year?

Ward: Nineteen eighty-seven.

Gonzales: I take it you returned back to the D-FW area.

Ward: Well, of course. I came back and eventually was over the process. What I did is I came back and eventually I went to the U.S. Army War College up in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. That is kind of like the senior, senior college in the military, and at that point I was on my way up to become full colonel. And so I went to the school there and I was about ready to graduate, and I was on the list to make full colonel, and sure enough—and this is interesting. (laughs) They offered me a job in the Pentagon. Now, I had already served in the Pentagon once. I really wasn't all turned on by that at that point.
And so I picked up the phone and I called Dr. Wendell Nedderman, and I said, “Sir, I want to come back to your campus and do your professional military science.” He said, “I’ve got fifteen people here on my list to become that professor’s job.” And he said, “Joel, you’ve got it.” And that was it. And Wendell and I have been friends ever since.

Gonzales: So you said you weren’t turned on by working for the Pentagon, and you said you had worked for them before. What were the reasons why?

Ward: Oh, it was just that it wasn’t something I wanted to do again. Before I actually was in the office of the inspector general, and from there I moved out of that to a secondary assignment at the same place where I was actually in the department of personnel, deputy chief of staff personnel. It’s okay to do that, but I was ready to move on to something more exciting.

Gonzales: So how many years were you here at UTA as a professor?

Ward: I want to say two years. Two years, and I moved from there back to Fort Bliss. At that time I was really—it was really interesting because at that time I lived—I was the professor of military science, and I also was privileged to have my—one of my sons happened to be a cadet. Now, I had to be very careful because Steve was my son and I—obviously if you’re the professor, you think he’s going to
get all the privileges. So I had to back off from him and let somebody else take care of him, and I left him totally alone, so that nobody would think he was getting privileged treatment. And needless to say, that worked out pretty good. And so, it was okay.

Gonzales: I imagine the campus has changed a lot since you had been here when it was Arlington State College.

Ward: Oh, it has. It has, and guess what. It has again.

Gonzales: Yes. (laughs)

Did you join any veterans’ organizations after your service had ended?

Ward: I'm trying to remember, trying to think of any. I can't remember any unless you can think of any.

Gonzales: I didn’t see any. I did see your bio and I didn't know if it just didn’t make its way in, so I thought I would ask just in case.

So how do you feel the service affected your life?

Ward: Totally. Without that and without GEN Latham, without my fellow cadets, whom I ran into throughout my military career, without the people that I met in the military that have come back into my life, all these times and all the re-enforcement that we’ve had for each other, it’s been drop dead unbelievably like a continuing re-contribution of us to each other. I really consider myself extremely lucky to have (1) come out of the workforce and into the military
side, to have seen it in my military career, and have had so many
rewards, and I feel like sometimes that I didn't really earn them all,
but with all my friends good things happened.

Gonzales: So in 1995, you became the first president of the Cadet Corps
Alumni Chapter.

Ward: Yes.

Gonzales: Was the organization dealing with your involvement? Are you still
involved?

Ward: Oh, very much. Thank you for asking. I’m still on the senior advisor
board of the Cadet Corps Alumni Council. And it is a very strong
organization. We have some fantastic people there now that are
leading it. And I’m in a role now of backing off trying to get younger
leadership to step up and take over for the future. And we have
some fantastic young guys coming out of cadet corps today that will
go out in military careers and come back here someday, and I’m
looking for those guys to come back and also take over. That’s
generation three. I’m looking trying to get generation two to take
take over right now.

Gonzales: So in 1995, you were part of the founding process for the chapter?

Ward: Yes.

Gonzales: Okay. And how did that get started? How did y’all decide this would
be something for UTA?
Ward: I think we’ve always been there. I’m trying to remember why we did that, but again, I was working with Dr. Wendell Nedderman, and we just had the people coming back to campus. At that time the Jodies were still a very, very strong drill team even though they weren’t the drill team of my generation, and we had a lot of good things going on, and we wanted the campus to realize the presence of the thing. So the Cadet Corps Alumni Council was set up to help promote the image of ROTC.

And some of those times—as you reflected earlier—those were not popular times for the military. But I think our role maybe contributed more positively than it would have otherwise.

Gonzales: So you were inducted as a Distinguished Alumnus in 2006. Can you elaborate on that and how you spent that day?

Ward: Not really. All I can say is I can boil it up in one word: lucky. In my whole life because I came to this campus and things happened on this campus, I’ve been extremely lucky.

But I’ve also talked to my fellow cadets, that we all were here together, and they all feel exactly the same way.

Gonzales: So if there was any advice or suggestions you would give to current cadets, what would it be?
Ward: Listen to your instructors, follow the rules, do your very, very best and then a little better. Stay in touch with your friends for the rest of your life. And take care of our soldiers. They deserve it.

Gonzales: Is there anything you would like to contribute to the interview that I didn’t ask you?

Ward: No. I think basically—I look back and I personally feel I was very lucky, but then I realize my luck was getting all the good help from wonderful people. And I really wasn’t lucky. I was taught and pushed to get the skills to do the right things, and without all those friends and buddies pushing and promoting me in the right direction and stuff like that, it wouldn’t have happened. I am so lucky to have come to this campus at the time I did and have all the opportunities that I had. I love this campus and there is nothing I wouldn’t do to help it.

Gonzales: Well, this concludes our interview. And I want to thank you, Mr. Ward, for participating. You’ve been very informative and very helpful. It was a pleasure talking with you today. And I just want to thank you for your service and your contribution to the Maverick Veterans’ Voices Project.

So thank you.

Ward: Thank you. The pleasure is all mine. Thank you. (end of interview)
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