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ABSTRACT – Ellen Brody

Interviewee: Ellen Brody

Interviewer: Taylor Shellman

Date: December 2, 2019

Location: Cortland, NY. Phone interview

Length: 49:45

Ellen Brody is a SUNY Cortland alum, and she studied Recreation Education from 1972-1976. During her time at Cortland, she found a passion working for the Concert Committee, helping put on shows and doing various jobs such as working in advertising and hospitality. She later became the first female Concert Coordinator to work on the committee, where she faced various obstacles and doubts due to her gender. In this interview, Brody shares how she overcame these prejudices and her advice to other females working in male-dominated industries, recalls her favorite memories of the Concert Committee, and explains how being involved in the campus helped her succeed in a professional career in the music industry. Brody has traveled the world with music far from the small central New York city of Cortland. Her professional career has brought her to Syracuse, Boston, New York City, a European tour, and even Saudi Arabia. Her desire to be part of a campus organization blossomed into a fulfilling and lifelong career, and she encourages students today to join at least one campus group or organization in hopes they can find their passion too.

FIELD NOTES – Ellen Brody

Interviewee: Ellen Brody

Interviewer: Taylor Shellman

Date: December 2, 2019

Location: Cortland, NY. Phone interview

Length: 49:45

The Interviewee: Ellen Brody attended SUNY Cortland from 1972-1976, where she graduated with a degree in Recreation Education and a minor in Art History. She later went on to receive her Master's Degree in Student Personnel Services in Higher Education in 1979 from the University of South Carolina at Columbia. She used her professional education as well as her experience from the Concert Committee to pursue a lifelong career in the music industry, working in such positions such as talent agent, program coordinator, tour manager, and the Director of Celebrity Entertainment for the USO.

The Interviewer: Taylor Shellman is an undergraduate student studying history at SUNY Cortland and a public history intern for the Cortland Musical Legacy Project. This interview was conducted as a part of the Project.

Description of the Interview: This interview was conducted on the phone and recorded in Cortland, New York. The phone was put on speaker setting and the interview was recorded as such.

Note On Recording: Recorded on a Edirol MP3 Recorder

TRANSCRIPT – Ellen Brody

Interviewee: Ellen Brody

Interviewer: Taylor Shellman

Date: December 2, 2019

Location: Cortland, NY. Phone interview

Length: 49:45

Taylor Shellman: My name is Taylor Shellman and I'm a history major at SUNY Cortland, I'm interning for the Musical Legacy Project which seeks to preserve the history of live musical performances held at the university. Most of this semester I have spent finding old photographs and newspaper clippings about artists that have played shows at Cortland, and my focus was mainly on the early 1980s, but I have examined a variety of years during my research here. Today I will be interviewing Ms. Ellen Brody on the 2nd of December, 2019. And you were a student at Cortland from 1972-1976, if I am correct?

Ellen: That is correct.

TS: And you helped advertise and worked hospitality for various shows during your time at Cortland. You continued to work in the music industry due to her experiences during her undergraduate years. How are you doing today, Ms. Brody?

EB: I'm doing just fine, thank you! And I will give a correction, I started out on the concert committee doing advertising and then moved to hospitality, but I also worked lights, I ran a follow spot for Earth Wind and Fire and I was our first female concert coordinator in 1975.

TS: Yes, we're definitely going to get to that, because that is one of the reasons when I heard your story that I really wanted to interview you. So, would you be able to tell me a little bit about yourself, being a student at Cortland. Like what attracted you there, what was your major, and what were some of the things you really liked about Cortland when you went there?

EB: I have to tell you- Cortland was my fallback school, and I'm so grateful that's what I fell back on because I really had an incredible time, I met a wonderful group of women. My freshman year I lived in Higgins Hall when it was all female, and after that it went coed. I'm still friendly with many of the women that were on my floor freshman year. We in fact moved off

campus together and stayed in touch. It was a great experience for me in terms of developing my view of the world, giving me a great job working on Concert Committee, and enhancing my self-esteem.

TS: That's awesome. Looking through the newspapers I saw how the dorms used to be separated by gender, it seems like there's different roles I guess that aren't here in Cortland today, although maybe not in the 70s maybe a bit earlier in the 50s, but they definitely were different. What was your major here exactly at Cortland?

EB: My major was recreation education. I was a very pragmatic person. I knew after I joined the concert committee that I wanted to be a part of the music industry professionally, and so I looked for a major that was going to help teach me the skills for the music industry and recreation was the closest I came to that.

TS: So did you come into Cortland with the Rec major or did you declare it when you got here?

EB: I declared it once I was at Cortland. I didn't know it existed as a major before I came to Cortland.

TS: I can definitely relate to that, I've switched my school and my major multiple times, so I definitely know what you mean by coming to college and realizing new things and things you didn't know existed in high school until you come to college. At what point did you decide to get involved with campus music? Were you involved in any other student organizations that kind of led you there or did you attend shows previously?

EB: No I got involved right away because a friend of mine in high school was a good friend of Concert Coordinator Stu Shaler, and he was coming up from his college for our homecoming concert, and he asked me if I would join him at the homecoming concert which I was delighted to do because I had a big crush on the guy [laughs], and then after the concert the Concert Committee had a big party at the Concert Coordinators house. So in 1972 Jack Samuels and Stu Shaler were the Concert Committee chairs- at that time it was called the Circulating Fund. And so I went to the party and met all these cool people and decided this was a pretty cool thing, I think I'm going to join. I went to the next meeting and got hooked!

TS: See this is why we do interviews of people who actually lived these things, because reading the newspapers you're not going to get stories like that, like what you just told me. We'd get advertisements of a show that was played or pictures from the show, but not stories of why people joined or things like that. So this is definitely very valuable information we're going to have archived here when this interview is all transcribed and stuff. So did you ever go get to see

these shows or were you always behind the scenes? Did you get to go see what you put on, like the final product?

EB: Well, we worked on the shows from about 8:00 in the morning until about 2:00 in the morning, because we had to make sure the stage was setup if we were working hospitality, we had to make sure the food was there at 8:00 in the morning when the bands' trucks arrived, so we were there pretty much throughout the day. We had to setup the chairs for the shows before we let the people in, and we had to take down the chairs and put them away after the concerts before we could have our big party after the show. So we were at the shows most of the day, and usually you got to see the shows if you were working security at one of the doors or working the aisles you got to see a lot of the concert. If you were doing hospitality you got to peak from backstage.

TS: Which I'm sure is pretty cool.

EB: Yeah.

TS: That's probably an angle of the show that not many people have gotten to see unless they're working for it, so it's a pretty cool privilege to have. You mentioned as a hospitality worker you had to get things for the riders for the bands. Now what was one of the craziest things you've seen on a rider? You don't have to say obviously who they were or what band or artist they were...

EB: They always ask for booze, they always ask for specific brands of soda, and what we did we crossed out the entire food rider, and just explained to the agents that Cortland was a small town and we didn't want to get sued or not have a concert because we had to provide Coke instead of Pepsi or we weren't able to get Mountain Dew. We always tried to get everything they asked for, but nobody asked for anything weird. We didn't have people that asked for all the green M&Ms to be taken out or anything.

TS: See I was picturing stuff like that!

EB: That didn't happen that I can remember.

TS: The brand thing is understandable, I've even heard stories of getting different brands of water, but like, it's water!

EB: Yeah, and the thing is if they complained about it, because they liked to complain, it was never the band that complained. It was always the tour manager that complained. And I would always say 'clearly you haven't seen the rider because we just crossed that page out so there's

really not something for us to argue about', and then I would show my copy of the contract and that basically put the argument to bed.

TS: So as far as skills go, you know with working with their management and working hospitality, did you learn a lot of that stuff through your major?

EB: I learned all this stuff from Concert Committee, just by doing it, which made every concert interesting because you learned a new thing. Like I learned that what all bands expect is for the stage to be setup by the time that the truck arrives and they also expect that the coffee will be ready and so will the breakfast food, and if you don't have that breakfast ready by the time the truck pulls in your will have a very unhappy room crew. And that sets the framework for how the day is going to go. Are you going to be working with a bunch of guys that are grumpy, or that have their stomachs full, the stage is set, they can go to work, and that's that. Those are lessons I've learned by times we didn't have the stuff ready. Although I've worked at so many atmospheres where there was hospitality, that I don't think it was at Cortland where we didn't have the stuff ready. It may have been one of my other jobs.

TS: So then how many students were typically part of a committee while you were there, it seems like there's so many moving parts there has to be quite a few different people.

EB: There was about 100 volunteers.

TS: Wow!

EB: We met at the Fireplace Lounge, it seat about one hundred people and that's where we had to have our meetings.

TS: Its' really difficult in 2019 to get that sort of involvement in any organization here. That's really impressive to hear the numbers you pulled I guess.

EB: That's pretty depressing to hear that it's so difficult to get people involved in student clubs and organizations because it was such a big part of my education.

TS: It's not even just music based organizations, you would just not see a club with one hundred people in Cortland.

EB: Wow.

TS: I don't really know what it is, limited resources or something. I think some of it has to do with social media and phones and stuff, it's a lot easier to self-entertain, [EB agreeing in

background] you would not have to go see shows or entertainment or throw a party or event on campus. But I don't know.

EB: See I know one of the reasons we had so many volunteers was that if you worked the concert you got to see it for nothing And even though tickets were only \$2.50 or \$3.50, students didn't have that much money, so seeing it for free was incentive to work. And from my recreation degree I know if you made all your volunteers feel important and gave everyone a specific job to do, that made them want to come back and work on more shows, or tell their friends this is a really cool thin, you should join. So we always had a lot of people and were able to put them to work, and in fact one of the lists in the archives that Kevin [Pristash] has is actually a ditto- I don't know if you even know what a ditto is- [both laughing] is a list of the names of everybody who was of the concert committee, a list of their jobs and like where they were stationed for security at which doors at which hours and stuff like that. So yeah there were a lot of moving parts and we broke down where the parts were supposed to be.

TS: That's really impressive, because like I said it's really hard to garnish that sort of student involvement nowadays. As far as the Committee goes, I know you faced a lot of firsts, or even challenges, as a female working on the Concert Committee, and I'm assuming after Cortland in the music industry. So I guess what were those challenges?

EB: I'd say the blowback of being a woman wasn't from the campus and it wasn't from my fellow Concert Committee workers, it was from the agents and the managers and the tour managers. They were always surprised about working with a woman.

TS: So it was the people you were bringing in and doing the work for essentially?

EB: Exactly. Exactly.

TS: I read some of your stories that were pretty shocking, from the document you sent me, like when you said they would try to see who would make you cry first.

EB: Yeah at the *America* concert they were having a contest to see who could make me cry first [laughs].

TS: And the fact that they admitted that to you is just insane you know?

EB: And they admitted it after the show because everything had gone so beautifully...

TS: They were impressed!

EB: ...it was a sellout and the audience could not have been more enthusiastic, so it was easy for them to admit it because everything went swimmingly well.

TS: Well because everything went well, it was their way of saying they were impressed I guess just not in the best way. Did you then face some of that stuff working outside of Cortland, in your professional career?

EB: Well you know, when I worked as a tour manager for the jazz band Steps Ahead, and we did the European tours, the promoters would always ask 'which one is your husband?' and I would say 'none of them' and they would ask 'which one is your boyfriend?' and I would say 'none of them'. I got this job because I'm good at what I do, not because of who I'm sleeping with. That was always a bit of a surprise, I always got asked those questions.

TS: And that's still something we see in male-dominated industries now, I'm sure way less than what you saw in the 70's.

EB: Yeah but that Me Too stuff is still going on.

TS: Exactly.

EB: Sad but true.

TS: No exactly, and I know that I'll probably be surrounded by males a lot in my job. First of all, as a history major, most of the people in my classes are boys. Sometimes there will be one or two other girls in my class. So is there any advice you would have to females that are going to be working in a male-dominated industry, that I guess you realized while working?

EB: The whole thing is you have to work harder and you can't be afraid to speak out and point to what your accomplishments are. Even in the Trump impeachment trial it came out with Dr. Hill, the Irish state department person, she said sometimes men look at women as being overemotional when we say 'why are you doing this this way?', and she described her situation as she couldn't understand why ambassador Sondland was working with Rudy Giuliani, in fact he should have been working with the State Department Personnel on specific matters She said it wasn't until she saw a copy of the email at the impeachment trial that she realized he was working with all the people he was supposed to, and she never understood that until the impeachment trial itself. When she brought it up to him, rather than explain it to her he took it as she was overly emotional about because he wasn't including her. The advice is, you really need to stand up for yourself, but you need to do it in a way that's not emotional so people will listen to you. If you get all hot and bothered and start yelling, nobody is going to listen to what you have to say, no matter how important or how accurate it is.

TS: That's definitely I'm sure such a hard balance to find. Because there's such a 'women act on their emotions' and all those kinds of things. This past summer I went to the Marine Corps Officer Candidate School, and towards the end they start getting a little nicer to you, and our head Drill Instructor said, 'look at the boys over there, you'll always have to work harder than them. To be respected, to be acknowledged'. [EB agreeing] And that's the sad reality. We trained every day the exact same way, and we all graduate the same, but you don't have that authority, unfortunately, the same way a man in that job would have walking into the room. And that's the sad part is you really have to be careful how you speak up for yourself, otherwise you'll just get passed as 'oh the woman who's crying for not getting heard', so I definitely see where your advice is coming from, and that was a really good example too. But yeah, it's definitely something you still see, in 2019. That's something I was looking forward to talking with you about, and it's unfortunate that it was brought upon you by the people you were sort of catering to and working for as far as hospitality was concerned, but it's also encouraging to see it wasn't brought on via SUNY Cortland.

EB: That's the name of the game. If you do a great job, everybody knows you did a great job. And I was in a place on the concert committee where there wasn't any doubt in anybody's mind that I would do a good job, so there wasn't any resistance. It was a little angst between the college newspaper and the concert radio station because I was giving more tickets to the radio station than I was giving to the newspaper. And the guys at the newspaper wanted to have a big meeting about it- it was the guys of the newspaper.

TS: And I know from looking through those newspapers there was a pretty equal balance of females to males working on there on the paper every week, so the fact that they were having a males meeting [laughs]...

EB: And during the meeting the guys said 'you give the radio station and you only give us two, that's not fair'. And I was like 'well the guys at the radio station play the music, talk up the concert, and you don't. You don't give us any advanced press, you don't tell people to run out and get this record, you don't review the records and tell us what your favorite songs were. And once the concert happens, if something went wrong you seem to only focus on what went wrong, rather than the fact that everyone had a good time. So why would I want to give you more tickets?'

TS: I've definitely noticed that.

EB: And they were like well we have the same two writers all the time and if you don't want the same two writers all the time, give us more tickets. So I was like 'I can't believe this was the

purpose of this meeting, that you didn't get enough tickets.' I explained to them what I wanted from them, and they were like 'okay, I can do that for you', and they did. So everything was fine.

TS: And that was awesome how you could go in there and say what you wanted and not just give in to what they were hoping you would do. You didn't just go in and say 'sure, you get the tickets', and like you said before in your example, you gave them a reason and why you were standing behind that reasoning. It all makes sense. As far as, I guess, shows, what is the proudest moment you had putting on a show here at Cortland. Tying into your work as hospitality and advertising.

EB: When they sold out, that was the pat on the back for a job well done.

TS: Did it happen frequently?

EB: Yeah, it happened frequently, with all of my shows.

TS: Oh wow!

EB: It seemed that I had developed the formula for success, and that it applied to all those shows. It was great.

TS: I can imagine. What was a memorable show, or a show that sold out that you didn't anticipate?

EB: Well the shows that I did were *John Bastion* and *Livingston Taylor*, and that was the homecoming show and that sold out. And after that, *America*, and that sold out. I think those were my only two shows, I was only Chairman for one semester because I went overseas to London on a recreation program, which was great.

TS: Oh wow, could you tell a bit more about that and if it had an impact on what you did at Cortland?

EB: Well, it couldn't give me music experience. But I remember when I was getting off the plane and I was talking to the customs guy and he said 'what are you doing here?' and I said 'oh, going to school,' and he said 'what are you studying?' and I said 'Recreation Education' and he started laughing and he said 'good joke- what are you *really* studying?'

TS: You see, I have friends in the recreation department, my aunt is actually a professor here in the recreation department, and even now that's a reaction to the recreation major. I don't know

how many subcategories there were in the 70's but it's a pretty expansive program now over in Professional Studies.

EB: Yeah, it was a pretty popular program when I went to school there as well. There were two programs that Cortland was known for when I went to school there were Phys Ed and Recreation. In addition to just general education.

TS: [laughs] That sounds, like, very similar to Cortland today. Those are the three things people will assume when I tell them I go to Cortland, you know. Usually it's education. So, back to London. What experiences from there were you able to take back to Cortland? Whether it was music or not, I guess.

EB: I guess what I learned there was that when you go overseas, you're an ambassador for your country. And people will think all Americans are like you. So you had to be very careful not to be the "ugly American" and, you know, later when I was in the music industry we made a joke about it, because if somebody was giving me a hard time, one of the guys in the band was like 'oh Ellen, you want me to "Ugg Out?"' and I was like 'what is "ugging out?"'. And they said 'oh being an ugly American, going to tell at this guy, you know tell him I want this I want that so that you don't have to'. So I sort of liked when that happened [laughs].

TS: So then what semester were you there for, what year was it?

EB: It was 1975, the program was January to May but I was able to stay until June. So I got 26 credit hours in that one semester of school, it was incredible.

TS: What classes did you study there? Was it regular gen ed classes?

EB: There were a few health classes, there was recreation, parks and playground management. Going to centers for disadvantaged kids, stuff like that.

TS: I guess that's cool because you can take classes like that here, but living in and experiencing a culturally different environment you notice some differences.

EB: And we were really put off by the accents. You hear the accents and you'd automatically think they were smarter than us because they spoke so eloquently, but that was not the case.

TS: Were you going to school with people that were native to London, or was it like an American class?

EB: Yes, we went to school with London students, all day Monday and Tuesdays, and half day Wednesdays. Wednesday afternoons, Thursdays, and Fridays were field work.

TS: So then after that you came back for another year to finish up your senior year?

EB: Correct, I came back for a year. I think I worked hospitality.

TS: So you worked hospitality and you worked advertising, right? And you said you also worked lights?

EB: My first job was advertising, and after I was the coordinator. I worked hospitality.

TS: And then you said you worked lights in a show?

EB: Yes, Earth Wind and Fire I worked a follow spot in Corey Union in the function room.

TS: Which of those lines of work did you prefer, or set you up for your career after Cortland?

EB: Well it was the advertising that set me up for a career in the music business. It was being the Coordinator you really got to learn the wide overview of what it took to make a concert successful that prepared me for the industry. And then working hospitality backstage you got to hang out with the musicians, so you learned what the pluses were for them. What I learned when I went on as an agent was that music was the musician's drug. Getting up on stage and performing was their drug and I was the person who made it possible for that by calling and getting them all their gigs. And then there were requirements that were necessary to make their shows successful, so they counted on you to provide everything they'd required so that they could go out and do a successful show. An agent always wants an artist to give successful shows because of word of mouth. And just as bands talked about what a pleasure it was to come to Cortland, artists talked about what a pleasure it was working with Ellen Brody as their talent agent. So I got a series of jobs in the music business. First I advised students who did entertainment programs at Syracuse University, and they really got to work with a lot of bands there- Syracuse had a lot of money.

TS: Oh yeah. I've seen that too looking through the papers. A lot of stuff I'll think is a show here and I'll find out later is at Syracuse. It seemed like they always had the flashier, bigger names, you know, as far as musicians went. I'm sure their budgets a lot higher for those kinds of things.

EB: Yeah, I'm sure they are too. And the advantage that Syracuse and Cortland have is that you're on the way to everywhere. If a band is going from Boston to Canada- Cortland's on the way. If you're going from Boston to the Midwest- Cortland's on the way. If you're going to

upstate New York- Cortland's on the way. So we always wanted to get Concerts on a Friday or Saturday night, but at Syracuse they were willing to take Concerts on Tuesday or Wednesday nights. So we had quite a huge portfolio of entertainers.

TS: Because it would just be while they were traveling, right?

EB: Exactly. And the students did a great job.

TS: So when you were working at Syracuse you were kind of working with students who were doing the same job you did in Cortland as a student?

EB: Right, but, for many different committees- for speakers, for video, for television. They had a seven day a week film program. They had performing arts program. So there was always something going on and I advised the students who were the Concert Coordinators or Performing Arts Coordinators or the Film Coordinators of all the programs. The guy I worked with was a Film Coordinator, he just knew so much about film, I just didn't have anything to offer him except getting him into different facilities to show the films.

TS: So what it neat or interesting to see where you were a few years before and almost similar shoes, and get to help them or guide them to where you were then? As far as being a student and working on a music committee, and then being a graduate, an adult with a degree, and working with that same demographic, I guess, of students?

EB: Yeah, and the thing is, after I worked at Syracuse University, I worked in Boston as a talent agent. And then I worked in New York, and that's where I learned how important it is to make sure artists had everything they needed to give a successful show. Then, when I was a manager and tour manager of a band, I had to ask for all those things that made for a successful show. And as somebody who traveled on the road with the musicians you most certainly wanted to be sure that everything you asked for was at the concert site, because it was your fault if it didn't get there, and you didn't want to be working with an unhappy band.

TS: So then when you were working as an agent, you were creating the riders? Were you working like that, with hospitality of other industries?

EB: Yeah actually, for example Andreas Vollenweider, he was a harpist who was extremely successful, and we stole his contract rider.

TS: You said you stole it?

EB: Yeah- it became a big joke amongst the various European promoters because our band didn't really need all that stuff, but we asked for it so that even if we were to get the minimum it would be a great minimum.

TS: So you had access to things that you didn't really need, but got it anyway?

EB: We asked for the world and most people couldn't provide it, but they could give us the sun and the moon. And the stars.

TS: And you said you were touring Europe then at that point?

EB: Yeah, we were touring Europe then. And then I worked for a record company and my job was to book tours for all the jazz artists on the label. And then I worked for the USO and ran the entertainment department and went with the bands to go overseas to perform for our troops. And that was an incredible job.

TS: So music and the music industry has really taken you all over the world, when you just started out at Cortland.

EB: Exactly. From Cortland to Saudi Arabia.

TS: Wow. That is honestly so impressive. From Cortland- where you would go outside New York State and say 'Cortland' and people would have no clue what you are talking about- and then you'd say Syracuse and they'd maybe have an idea. And then years later you're traveling the world in the same industry you started working in as a student.

EB: Exactly true, exactly true. And when I was working at the USO, because we didn't pay the artists, I was able to take everything I learned from all of my jobs to learn what it was going to take for me to get a band to give me two weeks of their life for nothing. And that meant providing all their requirements and having them be confident that everything they needed was going to be there when they did a USO show.

TS: Yeah being at home and then being overseas, creating that environment for them is probably a challenge I guess.

EB: Yeah it was a challenge! Your stage crew is a bunch of guys who were, like, tank drivers by day. And they're your stage crew.

TS: Yeah like 'oh I think I can set up a stage, read the directions once..yeah maybe!' That's funny. So then I guess, going back to Cortland, thinking all the way back to bring it full circle-

just for archive purposes, and oral interview purposes- what are some of your favorite memories, or just something that you want preserved forever about the Cortland music industry and your time there. Any little anecdotes you have?

EB: It was great fun. It was a lot of work. I met a lot of people. I learned how important it was to keep the administration happy. And to keep the campus police happy [laughs]. And to keep the fire marshals happy. In addition to keeping the bands and their stage crew happy. But it was a lot of fun in the process, and there were always friendly faces on the concert committee to talk to if somebody was giving you a hard time. It was just great fun. When I worked at USO one of my staff people was just really having a bad day, and I said to her 'look, I don't know if anyone has told you this before, but this is supposed to be fun!...'

TS: Yeah! The entertainment industry!

EB: '...Nobody gets to do the things we do. You need to be having a good time while you're doing it. What is going wrong?' You learn a lot of times that throwing money at something isn't going to make it better, and so you have to really analyze what the real problem is before you just say 'oh if I pay more money this will work itself out'. And that is never the case.

TS: We need to broadcast the last part of this interview to every student that doesn't want to be involved in student organizations and campus life here. Maybe they'd find some motivation.

EB: Yeah I'm the person that would encourage everybody to join at least one club or organization. I mean, my nephew joined an improv club- and I never thought he was a funny or entertaining person. But he had this inner 'I want to do this'. And I just got in touch with this friend from high school, we used to be in the acting club together, and he is doing off Broadway shows, and still acting. He got the bug and it was fun and it was something he continued to do. Even when he was working professionally, he always tried to find a theatre gig. So it's just a matter of if you do something you like, you'll want to do it for your lifetime.

TS: Oh for sure. That's the reason we have organizations like this on campus. Because no matter how much you like your major, you don't just want to sit around and go to class all day and that's it. You know, find something else to do, something else to love. And look at you- you made a career out of it.

EB: And I worked on the orientation committee. Do they still do that? Have students lead orientation?

TS: Yup, yup! We have orientation leaders and tour guides. We have orientation leaders in the summer, is that what you're talking about?

EB: Yup! Exactly. And because I was in theatre in high school, I did check out the theatre group in Cortland, but I found that the students were too cliquey and that I wasn't going to fit in. Doing Concert Committee was the perfect substitute of giving me an activity that I could really throw myself into. And ended up to love to do everything.

TS: For sure. I definitely know what you mean, I think it happens more in smaller clubs maybe, even if you like what the club is focused on and oriented to. I feel that way, I was a transfer student so everyone already knows each other, now you join a club and everyone already knows each other. So it's awesome that you found a larger family in the music committee that you could share experiences with. I'm sure you had long evenings and long concerts and long days...

EB: It was like my family away from home! Exactly right, you nailed it on the head!

TS: Is there anything else that you, I guess, want to share or end with before we close up this interview today?

EB: When I went to Cortland, the motto was 'Let each be capable of all they're being'. And if you take advantage of all the opportunities that Cortland offers, then you will become a bigger and better person...and that doesn't include the Freshman Fifteen! It's great that you have a place to go to school and that you're getting an education, but you need to get yourself out of the classroom to find out what real life has to offer. I was blessed that there were all these programs and all these groups, that I got to go see as a spectator and to be a student leader and create programs for spectators.

TS: Well thank you so much for today, for everything.

EB: You're welcome!

TS: For that closing statement, for all your answers. Thank you for being part of this and helping us gather everyone's original stories. Because, you know, like I said before in the beginning of the interview, you can look at a newspaper advertisement or a photo in the yearbook, and sure that's record proof these things happened. But hearing someone's voice and someone recall personal experiences are completely unique, and we can't get them from sources like that. So thank you so much for everything today.

EB: Oh you're more than welcome!