

Interview with Charlie White

Conducted by Danielle Kreh

October 22nd, 2021

Oral History of Clemson's Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management Department

Introduction: This is a recorded interview with Charlie White, retired parks, recreation and tourism management professor at Clemson University, conducted by Danielle Kreh on October 22nd, 2021 as part of a thematic research collection project for History 8500 digital history.

Interviewer: Do I have your consent to record this oral history?

Charlie White: You do.

Interviewer: Awesome, and then go ahead and state your name and your title for the recording.

Charlie White: Oh yes, my name is Charlie White. My position when I came to Clemson in '71 was associate professor of recreation and Park administration.

Interviewer: And when did you start working at Clemson?

Charlie White: Well, I was hired in December of '70 to come in mid-semester and arrived and started my teaching in January of '71.

Interviewer: Okay and at that point the PRTM program had been around since '66, correct? Ans so, based on your experiences, how did the PRTM program come to be?

Charlie White: Again, I'm not absolutely certain. My recollection is that Doctor Edwards, president of the university, had seen, or heard about, another program at another college or university that had... That was doing well. I'm not even sure, probably in another state. This is my recollection. And he became interested in the program and thought that being a land grant institution, it would, you know, apply to Clemson. Recognizing that this state is very diverse, from the mountains to the sea, and had potential for tourist destination and the State Park system was growing at that time and all of those things sort of combined to peak his interest and ultimately he was able to get the request through the proper channels in Columbia to establish the program. That's my recollection, and that's coming from other people.

Interviewer: Do you remember what concentration areas were offered?

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Charlie White: Far fewer than what we have now, those things have grown over the years. It was, you know, we certainly didn't have a camping interest area, although that was my

area, we had a class. More, as I recall, it was more of an emphasis on Community Parks and Recreation than anything. Programming was very big, recreation programming. Those are the things that I remember. I don't, you know, we had not gotten into the specific concentration areas of tourism and many of the things that we have now. I don't think.... recreation therapy was not an early part of the program. Those all came later. So it was mostly City/County/Municipal I would say orientation for graduates to seek experience, seek employment as well as the State Park system.

Interviewer: Do you remember when the master's degree and PhD degrees began to be offered?

Charlie White: I would not remember, I would not remember. It certainly was an undergraduate department for a long time, and then Doctor Brantley worked the system to go to Columbia for the Masters program. And then it was sometime after that, before the PhD program was established, but I couldn't give you the years for those. And the reason is by then, although I was a faculty member and had faculty rank, there was a time when it became appropriate for my presence to be full time at the outdoor laboratory and not full time in Lehotsky Hall. So while I had an office there for a few years as the laboratory grew, particularly as we moved into the shoulder seasons of serving people in April in May and September and October, in addition to our summer programs serving more people to extending our horizons to other groups and organizations then I needed to be physically present on a day to day basis. So, you know, I was not exposed to the inner workings of the program and faculty interaction on a day to day basis because I was remote. I would come in for faculty meetings and certainly would participate in, you know, department activities, department socials, those kinds of things. But you know my office was six miles away. So some of your questions may be, not because I didn't know, but because I was in a very specialized concentration. By that time, trying to build the outdoor laboratory.

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Interviewer: So by the time you arrived was PRTM or I guess they were called RPA at the beginning where they already in Lehotsky Hall or were they still in Godfrey?

Charlie White: When I came they were in Godfrey. They were in Godfrey before, you know Lehotsky had not been built, so I'm going to say three or four years maybe. Something like that, and then Dr. Edwards decided that a standalone facility was needed for two very different departments, Recreation and Park administration and the Department of Forestry and neither group of faculty were really excited about merging with the other.

Interviewer: Do you know why?

Charlie White: But Doctor Edwards said "If you want a new building, you're going to be together in Lehotsky Hall". Well, yes, I do know some of the issues why. First of all, they were somewhat counter to each other in that forestry professors were not in tune with the recreation profession. I can see that nicely. And probably the other way is that RPA faculty was not excited about being next door in the same halls with people who had

different viewpoints about each other's specialty. But we made it work, it's gotten way, way, way, way much better because part of the issue was you had a very... You had a large number of aging forestry faculty who were very set and rigid in their thinking. And this was somewhat forced

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upon them. And they didn't- from the get go, they were not welcoming, I should say, to our faculty. However, those people eventually retired. Younger faculty were hired in both departments who didn't know the past and the relationships got much better.

Interviewer: So I know we talked a little bit about some of this before the recording got started, but who were some of the key people involved in the start of the PRTM program or in the early years of PRTM or RPA?

Charlie White: Yeah you know, Doctor Brantley will probably be able to tell you the order of hires, but there was a professor by the name of Revis Frye. Has anyone mentioned him? Revis came from a little school up near Asheville, Marcel, I believe, and did not have his doctorate. Larry Gahan came from Illinois, he had his doctorate. Gordon Howard came from UNC, he had his doctorate. Jim Sellers I believe, had been at NC State and was working on his doctorate, I think he ended up commuting to Georgia to finish his degree. Marvin Keith, I don't know that I ever met Marvin, but he was one of the early hires and I think I took his faculty position. I can't think of anyone else there. There may have been another one or two who were gone when I came. You know they were here for a year or two, I never met them and they were, and they were no longer here. It was a growing department so you know, not long after I came, I would say not in this

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particular order, but Sarah Fletcher was hired, Mabel Wynn was hired, Jess Grove was hired, there were several others who didn't stay very long.

Interviewer: Do you know what role the state may have played in the formation of an RPA program at a public university like Clemson?

Charlie White: The most supportive group was probably the South Carolina Recreation and Park Association, I think they had been formed by then, and that was, you know, a conglomerate of people out across the state who were in the field and would meet as a professional organization on an annual basis at least and then disseminate information, you know, via newsletter and so forth long before social media. So I think that was, if it had not been formed, it formed early after our department because Dr. Brantley worked very well with the State Association, the professionals out in the field. In terms of politically, to create department, to establish a Masters program to establish a PhD, it takes behind the scenes political savvy. First, you've got to get it through their proper channels at Clemson, and with the President, and perhaps the board of Trustees endorsement, they just got to go to Colombia and go through the various offices of higher education and committees to get approval. And it's embarrassing to go down there and not get it approved. So it takes a lot of effort behind the scenes before you put your cards

on the table and say. "This is what we want. This is why we want it. This is what it will do. This is how we'll do it."

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Interviewer: So we've talked a little bit about when it came time to move into Lehotsky and forestry and RPA didn't necessarily want to move in together, were there any other problems or little bumps in the road that may have been faced in the beginning of the program?

Charlie White: Yes, I could come up with a few. First of all, getting back to forestry and RPA. Give you an example, the Clemson Forest has 17,000 acres. It still has 17,000 acres. It has 109 miles of shoreline on Lake Hartwell. It's managed by- the managing department at Clemson is the forestry department. They manage the forest, they have the employees in that department who are not faculty, but are staff who managed the forest. That was true then, it's true today. The Clemson Forest sustains itself its budget by cutting timber. On the other side, that's why you sleep clearcuts. You did your undergraduate work here, so you've probably driven around and seen clear cuts on the Clemson forest, ugly scars, ugly scars. Well, you know, eventually they grow back. But on the other hand, our department was interested in recreation anywhere or anytime, and that includes the Clemson Forest. So we are supporters of hiking and biking and horseback riding and nature activities and research that benefits our department in the Clemson Forest. Forestry folks were not excited about people walking and riding the trails and getting in the way and using their space, so that was a little bit of rub between the two departments.

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In general terms, I would say what I remember about our department early on was that it, and you will need to paraphrase me on this because I'll use the wrong words, but our department was looked down on by a lot of Clemson students and faculty in other departments. You know, here we are a recreation and park administration major at a school that has engineering and architecture and on down the road. It was a new department. It was seen as a, you know, I would have to say that probably was it seen as a weak department. A weak academic department. An easy academic department for students. A place where students who failed in other departments were transferred to our department. A place where athletes would go to make sure they got passed through and kept their status academically to perform. And that took a long time to overcome. I think I'll give an example with the athletic Department. It soon became apparent to the athletic department that our department was not a pass through, that the rigors of our department our courses, our classes, our faculty, our grading system, was just as rigorous as any other department. And an athlete could fail in our department just as quickly as in another department. So that early stigma eventually went away and you probably don't... you know, back in the day when you go to graduation,

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May, August and December, lots of athletes walked across that stage with their degree in recreation and park administration. Now you go to graduation and, percentage wise, far fewer athletes... In fact, I'm just taking a stab at this, but it seems like to me a lot of athletes are now in sociology. But you know, that's just my take, but I think they found we're not the basket to drop in to keep your eligibility for playing the sport. Oh sure, we

had a lot of people to transfer into our department. We had a lot of great students who went on to become tremendous professionals in our department who did not start out in our department. They moved over from education, from some other, from a science, whatever. And found their home in our department, fell in love with our department and went on to be extremely successful in their careers. We also had a lot of people to graduate in our department, probably even more so than engineering or architecture- I'll use those because you are either engineer and architect when you graduate- but in our department, a lot of our graduates went on to non-Recreation and Park administration fields. I remember students going into banking programs, training to be in banking and other business endeavors. They had the degree. They had the degree in a field that was, that required human interaction. And businesses and organizations were willing to take our students and train our students and make them professionals in their respective places. So the old, I mean, have you ever

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heard this slogan from, about RPA? Party Right Through May?

Interviewer: Oh, I sure have.

Charlie Whie: Okay, well, that's been around for 50 plus years, and that's not that's not a compliment, that's from other students that's put down. That's like, Debo getting so mad with the thing about clemsoning for so long. When we would lose the unexpected game, "Well Clemson is clemsoning." That word was coined and he got extremely angry about that. Well, there's nothing you can do about Party Right through May, but you know we heard that a whole lot more back in the day than we do now. Then you'd see students out, classes out on Bowman Field or outside somewhere, playing games or trying to develop some Recreation leadership skills. They were out there for the right reasons, but observers saw all those students, RPA students, just having a good time. So I am so happy that recreation and park administration now no longer takes a backseat to anybody. That, by and large, every president since Dr. Edwards have been supportive and appreciative of our department. They have come to our events when invited, they have spoken highly about us, when they didn't have to. Generally across campus, in other departments, faculty members level of support for our department has really, really grown. And I think our department holds its own. I think it's a respected department. I'm extremely proud to be a

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part of it, or having been a part of it and still volunteer some. It's come a long way because in the early days it was a fledgling department that had a reputation that we didn't deserve. We had to grow out of it. We had to prove that we were worthy of being created. How's that? You don't need to put this in there, but an aside, I was in Lehotsky one day teaching a class and the doors had a little, small little window that you could look in from the hallway. And I looked back at the window and Danny Ford was looking- the coach, the head coach!- was looking through the glass and Lehotsky and counting to see that his football players were in that class.

Interviewer: If you had to estimate how many students were enrolled in the RPA department, maybe in the year that you joined, or what do you think was the highest number or the lowest number that it got to while you were there?

Charlie White: My guess is guess is by the time I came we had a couple hundred, maybe 225 something like that, all undergraduates. I think by the time I retired, we probably had close to 500 undergraduates. Certainly 500 undergraduates, Masters and PhD candidates that that's my, that's my guess. That's another reason why presidents have supported us because we had the numbers to generate a tremendous amount of money through tuition. When you take 500 or 600 students and multiply the tuition costs, that generates, you know, several million dollars more, annually, for the university because of the existence of our department. And I'm sure that's not why

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the administration supported us, I think they supported us for the right reasons, but it certainly didn't hurt to have large number of students that were generating large number of credit hours and large number of dollars for the general budget.

Interviewer: I would love for you to talk a little bit about your work with the outdoor lab since that was your specialty. Were you a part of actually starting the outdoor lab or was it already established by the time you arrived?

Charlie White: No, I was definitely a part of that establishment, not a single tree had been cut at the outdoor lab. The site had not even been selected, so my being brought here... Well, there were a couple reasons. One, Dr. Bradley knew me as a student at NC State where he taught there as an instructor in the department, while at the same time finishing his PhD at UNC just 20 miles away. So I was in his class and then I was encouraged as an undergraduate to go to Graduate School, and I did at Indiana University and got my masters there and then I accepted a job in Ohio in generally the camping field. But it was a year round facility that served inner city kids in the summertime from Cleveland. We were about 20 miles east of Cleveland, our facility, and then during the year it served several schools and environmental education programs, two and three day environmental education programs, and then weekend groups, retreats, conferences, and so forth. So I did that for, four, four and a half years, and I got a call from Dr. Brantley one night saying

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that there was going to be a position open at Clemson, was I interested. We had sort of kept up with each other over the years, I knew that he had come here, he knew that I was working in the camping field and by that time he had been approached by an organization in South Carolina that was operating a summer camp for special needs citizens and they just felt like Clemson needs to be running this program, not our little organization running it. We'll support it, we'll try to help fund it, let's see if we can get Clemson involved. And so that approach somewhere before I came was made to Dr. Brantley. A facility was already available that Clemson owned in a Aiken County called Camp Long. It was an old WPA built 4H camp, well worn down and closed because of the lingering effects of integration in South Carolina. And that means that a Clemson facility, and there were more than one 4H camps in state, there was two or three, were closed because of integration. White parents

who are not quite ready to send their children to a summer integrated camp. That's sad to say. However, I say this without any malice, but it was a blessing for us because had a Clemson University facility not been available to us. The question would be, would Dr. Brantley even consider running programs when he had no site, no facility? It just kind of dropped in his lap. It was two hours away, it's in Aiken and we're in Clemson, so how best

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to do that? So Dr. Brantley and the head of this organization, and if you can believe it in today's times, the organization was called "The South Carolina Association for retarded Children". A term you would not use anymore. The State Department, the governing department in South Carolina was called the South Carolina Department of Mental Retardation. Can you believe? That you would use those terms in today's society you would get, oh, just drop that one of those words in your in in deep trouble quickly. But Dr. Brantley decided to give it a shot at Camp Long, to hire a person to lead the program to move down there, to stay there during the brief amount of time that it operated. It was, it only started out about three weeks during the summer, it was not all summer. I mean, it's probably three weeks, and he hired an English professor, a friend of his to go down and direct the camps, and, Marvin Keith was involved, faculty member. I think, sort of supervising the operation of the camp not living on site but, you know, just administrative responsibilities. He was the go between for Dr. Brantley and the English professor. And so it operated in 1970 for three weeks maybe. And then that Fall when things returned to normal in Clemson, Dr Brantley approached the English professor about doing it again in '71. And his response was "I will never, ever again in my life go and direct to summer camp." So, now this is a story

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from Dr. Brantley, so now you've had one sort of experience. You've got a relationship going with the South Carolina Association for retarded Citizens who could provide the children, and could provide resources, funding, some funding. With the help of the South Carolina Jaycees, they had gotten on board, a civic organization like Lions, Rotary, and... But no director. So he called me in November of '70 to say, "would you like to come to Clemson, I've got a factory position open, but you won't be nine months you'll be twelve months and you will have summer responsibilities for directing to camp", which meant you spent all spring, finding the staff, getting ready, getting the programs organized, getting materials, ordered or on hand. Basically moving the entire operation to Camp Long come June and your staff shows up and you do staff training and you run the program. So we did that in '71, '72, '73, and

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by '72, with two years of success and growing now from probably three weeks to four weeks, getting some recognition for our students because many of our students were employees at the camp. We're doing internships at the camp and not all of the staff 'cause we had staff coming from all over, but getting good practical experience. Something that would look good on a resume in addition to a degree. Oh, you know, Dr. Brantley saw that as an opportunity that could be greatly expanded if we had our own facility, plus parents were getting over the effects of integration. The 4H camp started coming back. They were taking the dates that they wanted and we were getting pushed further and further into the summer. With a clear picture that we're going to be pushed out the back door. 4H is going

to come back, take all the dates. Now what are we going to do? So that prompted the possibility of building our own facility at Clemson. Why at Clemson? One, you've got the Clemson Forest. Two, we wanted it close enough to the university that it could be an easy commute so students from our department and any other departments on campus, faculty in our department or any other faculty on campus, could use this facility, make it accessible, easily accessible simply because of the proximity.

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And so, now I'm really involved with Dr. Brantley in beginning to nurture this idea of building our own facility. We had gotten support by this time from, more support from the Jaycees, Sertoma, another civic organization of South Carolina, that stands for service to mankind. There's a Clemson Sertoma Club that exists here and now, I'm a member of it. It had gotten on board and was willing to participate financially. The Association for retarded Citizens was interested in participating. The South Carolina department of mental retardation was interested in participating. We've got some political clout and we've got some revenue streams being developed. So an event occurred that is essentially has occurred one time in the history of Clemson University, has not been repeated, uh, see I could be wrong with one area, but the idea of a of a permanent home was taken to Dr. Edwards. He listened, he gave Dr. Brantley and myself direction. He said "I'm hearing what you say, basically you go and find a piece of property that meets your needs and you report back to me, and we'll go from there." And can you believe? That Dr. Brantley and I were given the authority to go anywhere in the 17,000 acres of Clemson forest with 109 miles of shoreline and pick out the perfect piece of property. You know, the perfect piece of property, I'll just give you one example, had to be

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the perfect piece that would be handicapped accessible. There are a lot of beautiful pieces of property that Clemson owns on the lake, but extremely hilly. You know, downhill to the lake would be impossible for wheelchair use and so forth. So we went to several sites. Did a lot of tramping in the woods, walking down logging paths until one day we went to, down the logging path to the outdoor lab. Not the current road. Not where the road is now, but a logging path that went down to Twin Lakes. There were- it was called Twin Lakes because there were two lakes back there before Hartwell was flooded, but anyway.

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And we walked around on that peninsula and the grade of the land down to the water looked appropriate and we came back to Dr. Edwards and said, "We think we've found our place." And word got out and all hell broke loose.

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Particularly from forestry faculty. "You're not gonna carve a piece of land out of the Clemson forest. You are not. This is unheard of. It's sacrilegious. You can't do this." And so, there was a tremendous kickback toward Dr. Edwards about even the remote possibility of building a recreation facility. Not an engineering facility, but a recreation facility on sacred Clemson waterfront property. So anyway, Dr. Edwards approved that piece of property for development. You know he, of course, he had to get approval by the board of trustees and those kinds of things. By then, you know, Dr. Edwards said, I think,

was certain that he had made a correct decision to establish this program at Clemson in '66, so much so that he was willing to stick his neck out in '73 and allow this to move forward. So that was how that piece of property came about. Then from '73 when construction started until today it has been built out one piece at a time. One piece at a time, so when I tell people they say "how long, how long have you been involved with the outdoor lab?" I said "I was there the day the first tree was cut down."

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And we still use it. And it's, you know, basically now, pre COVID, 800 kids a summer, 75 or 80 summer staff from all over the country, including our own department, 15,000 users from one summer to the next. Conferences, workshops, retreats, reunions, weddings, wedding receptions, whatever need there is to generate income because it has to be self-sustaining. It has to be financially self-sustaining. The current director Leslie Conrad has to generate 100% of her funds so it cannot sit idle. Therefore, what started out as a summer camp, and of course I was a part of this and they built out, and much, most of it had been built out by the time I retired. What has happened since I retired is pretty much a maintenance improvement, remodeling, rebuilding because facilities get old and roofs need to be replaced and bathrooms need to be upgraded. And so lots of effort now go into maintaining what we have and improving what we have but by the time I left most of it had been built out already. And when we were able to convert all of the cabins to year round use by adding heating systems, that extended our shoulder seasons, that enabled us to really develop out the entire year. It really is. It really is now... has many the same services and responsibilities as the Madren center. But we're not a Mandarin center, but we are a Conference

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Center. That we can accommodate groups and organizations and we can provide meeting space and audiovisuals and, you know, equipment, now Wi-Fi and all the social media stuff and feed them and house them if need be for a fee, and do that throughout the year.

Interviewer: So RPA students, PRTM students, were a part of running these summer camps. Do you know to what extent students were also involved in, I mean were there classes conducted out there, trainings for the students, things like that?

Charlie White: At the outdoor lab? Many faculty in PRTM utilized the outdoor lab facilities for classroom opportunities or, uh, yeah, classroom opportunities. Not having a class there on site for the entire semester, but using it as an outpost for various activities. I'll give you one example: Team building. You know we have a team building course. We have a high ropes course. We have a zip line. Many of our faculty have used that component of the outdoor laboratory on a given day during the semester for team building exercises. Well that's good not only in our department but in any Department across campus. Once we built the team building area faculty from other departments heard about it and started using it. ROTC started using it. So it has attracted, you know beyond the walls of Lehotsky Hall again because the reputation of our department has been expanded. And other

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faculty see opportunities to give their students unique experiences. So that's one example. I would say that we have had faculty members who, despite the class that they were teaching just did not use the outdoor laboratory. I could not convince them to use the outdoor laboratory. It was almost like an inconvenience, like 6 miles was too far away. We've had others who jumped at the chance to use our facilities, so it was a mixed bag. Now it's much more inclusive that all these new, young, excited, exuberant faculty members that we have, now, you know, are certainly open to whatever opportunities will enhance their student education and practical experience and of course, you know I Norman McGee, followed me, Leslie Conrad out there now, we are always included in faculty meetings, so when the department head calls the faculty meeting in Lehotsky or at the outdoor laboratory, you know, the director is included. So there's always that- we usually have a faculty meeting every couple or three weeks, so there's always that opportunity to come in and let, to give an update on what's happening at the outdoor laboratory, what facilities had just been completed, you know, what you might be interested in, that kind of thing you know so. And of course you know, being there four years, of the department now uses the outdoor laboratory a lot for department socials or faculty meetings. Presidents of the university, the Provost, use a particular cabin called Bowfin

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for get away meetings. The university administration has used that many, many times because we can bring all the coffee and breakfast type foods up there and we can provide lunch there and they are away from campus, they're away from distractions, they can get a lot of work done. I've heard numerous presidents and Provosts talk about the value of being able to come to the outdoor laboratory for a meeting and then our department heads have consistently over the years had faculty meetings there like at the beginning of each semester. Or at the end of each semester, during the semester is difficult because so much is going on. You just meet there in the in Lehotsky. But beginning and end the department has there, usually as their Christmas social out there they bring graduate students out at the beginning of each semester for retreat and other departments too. We have numerous departments that use Kresge Hall for their Christmas banquet.

Interviewer: So that's all the questions that I have. Is there anything else that you would want to add before we wrap things up?

Charlie White: No, I think. Hopefully I answered many of the questions then they can be collaborated with Gahan or any other faculty member for right or wrong. I think, you know, where I sit, as director of the Outdoor Laboratory for 36 years, is that we have served thousands and thousands and thousands of special needs citizens. You know, we went from what you would now probably call intellectually challenged, the mental retardation children in the early days, children, teenagers and adults to Camp Sertoma, which serves two groups, underprivileged children and children with speech and hearing deficiencies, including deaf children, to camp lion's den, which

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still operates at the outdoor laboratory for the blind and visually impaired. Jaycee Camp Hope at the outdoor laboratory, which has been, Jaycees were involved in 1970 with a

couple of \$3000. It is long been, going back into the early 70s, their number one state project is Jaycee Camp Hope at the outdoor lab. Since 1975 Camp Sertoma at the outdoor lab has been the number one state project of all of Sertoma of South Carolina. We have served many, many years the Greenville Children's Hospital with kids with cancer, leukemia, hemophilia, sickle cell anemia. We served adjudicated youth through the Department of Juvenile... Whatever it's called. We have served emotionally disturbed children through Department of Mental Health. We have served... we had a camp, two or three years, for the South Carolina Diabetes Association for diabetic children. We have served Western North Carolina's muscular dystrophy camp and I say all of that because here's where we sit in 2021. There are hundreds of Sertomas and Jaycees in this state who see Clemson as their place for their number one state project and it doesn't make any difference whether their USC graduates, Furman graduates, College of Charleston, if they're in a civic organization of Sertoma and Jaycees, they know that Clemson is the place where their resources go to support the children that they support. Parents across the state and now surrounding states, Georgia, North Carolina, sometimes beyond and their grandparents, and their uncles, and their aunts of a special needs child, teenager or adult. But also child. Know that

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their special child comes to Clemson University to go to camp every summer. They may never even think about the two words "outdoor laboratory". But they do know that their camp, their child, their special child goes to Clemson University. Not South Carolina. Not Furman and not the College of Charleston, they go to Clemson regardless of their athletic allegiance or where they got their degree, or if they got a degree. It's Clemson and I'm saying that because that outdoor laboratory serving 800 or 900 children a year and 15,000 people throughout the rest of the year now has touched hundreds of thousands of people who know that there is a place at Clemson that provides professional, accredited camping opportunities for their child. That's pretty goodwill. That's pretty good goodwill for Clemson. That's pretty good, I could, I can sell a president on that because there are lots of people across this state who know and love Clemson because of the outdoor laboratory, and I'm not seeing that with my ego involved, I know that to be true and one other thing I'll say, and then I'll quit. And this is where it really becomes special to have been involved with this, you take roughly 75 college students or something, we recruit the best qualified staff we can find from anywhere. It is not a Clemson University staff. In fact, many Clemson University students who want to work in the camp will go somewhere else and work because they've been in Clemson for nine months and they'd like to like get out of town. So we try to recruit the best that we can from Clemson in

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whatever disciplines they're in, and we've had engineering students and education students and special Ed students and sociology. Multiply that times 75 and you multiply that times 50 years, and you know one of the proud points for me is that there are names and faces across the world now who worked at the outdoor laboratory and have gone on to do amazing things in related fields. So many summer staff will come to the outdoor laboratory and fall in love with our kids and will go back and change their majors at Clemson or some other school, will go back and change their majors, will go into PRTM when we they came as an education student or a you know something else and then go on in careers. You're going to be blown away by the credentials they already have.

They're not intimidated by working with special needs, because they cut their teeth at the outdoor laboratory. I could tell hundreds of stories about people. So anyway, let me get off.