

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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J. J. STUPP INTERVIEWED BY BLANCHE TOUHILL

JJ Stupp: I was born in St. Louis. I am currently 57 years old. I work here. I have two children that are both in California and I work for a company called Exegy. Exegy is a technology company founded out of Washington University, Engineering School Technology over 10 years ago. I co-founded the company with the university. We're about 100 people. We provide a managed service to financial firms and I'm the Chief Financial Officer and run the Finance and Administrative Department.

Blanche Touhill: Well, that's wonderful. I want to talk about that later in more detail but right now, talk to me about your family and going to school and your siblings and your parents and grandparents or your family structure is really what I'm interested in, and was there a teacher along the way that was particularly important to you or anything about your beginnings.

JJ Stupp: Okay. Well, as I said, I was born in St. Louis. I've spent most of my life here. My family on my father's side is from St. Louis and has been since the 1850s. I'm one of three children. I have an older sister that lives in California and a younger brother that lives here. My mother's side of the family is from California. She was born and raised in Los Angeles; hence, the draw to Southern California. My father's side of the family, as I said, has been here a long time. We are a family company that's been around since 1856. We're primarily steel fabricators and have divisions here in St. Louis, Baton Rouge, Bowling Green, those three places, a little bit in Houston. I grew up and went to a community school for elementary school so from nursery to 6th grade; a wonderful environment; terrific small school. Then I went to John Burroughs High School. After Burroughs, I went to San Diego State University and got a degree in Physics in 1978; spent a couple more years out in California and then came back, got my MBA at Washington University in 1983, emphasizing

in finance and have found Washington University has been...I got a fine education there but for me, being part of the university community has been a huge part of my life, from the people I've known, the relationships I have, the opportunities I've developed. On the teacher's side, I don't have one teacher that stood out. I had a number of really terrific teachers in elementary school. I remember feeling very comfortable and I liked my teachers a lot. I got a great secondary school education. As an undergraduate in San Diego, had a lot of interesting characters for teachers. Being a physics major, there were a lot of very scientifically oriented, technically oriented people. So that was always an interesting environment and then when I came back to school at Washington University, I had a number of terrific instructors there also.

Blanche Touhill: Since you were in physics and probably math, as the only girl...were you the only girl?

JJ Stupp: In many of the classes. I always liked math and I say, had I been five years younger than I am, I would have been a computer science major but at the time I went to school, if you were a computer science major, it was pretty boring for people that know computer science. It's a lot of assembly language and COBOL and Fortran and I didn't want to be a programmer, and on the math side, I didn't want to be a teacher. So I went next door to applied math and in most of my classes, it was predominantly male. As a young person, really, I was pretty oblivious to that. It just didn't seem to matter and it just seemed, that was just the way that it was.

Blanche Touhill: And you didn't feel that there was a glass ceiling as far as getting the degree in physics?

JJ Stupp: Oh, certainly not in getting the degree at all. It was all pretty much the same. I do have one story as a, I think it was second semester calculus and I had an instructor by the name of Arnie Balone and Arnie was this character of a guy and there were two girls out of maybe thirty in the class and when we had tests, Arnie would come along and give the girls M&Ms to keep their strength up and I believe I got, if not the highest grade in the class, close to the highest grade in the class, but I loved the class and I liked Dr. Balone but I'll never forget the M&Ms.

Blanche Touhill: That's a wonderful story. So when you came back to St. Louis, did you work in the family business at all?

JJ Stupp: I have never worked in the family business. I came back and went to business school full-time and learned a lot. I came back not knowing anything about business really. I'd say I didn't know a balance sheet from a bottom sheet but I was mathematically oriented which helped a lot. In Washington University, the MBA program at the time, it was a full-time generalist program, learned a tremendous amount there and, really, what was very important to me was I was fortunate to become involved at that point with a small group of people that were interested in making St. Louis into a technology community. So there was a person from the St. Louis RCGA at the time, a couple of attorneys, an accountant, a city planner and I and we'd meet, really a lot, on a regular basis and work on, how do we make St. Louis into a technology community. This was in the early '80s and we managed to get some legislation through the State of Missouri to fund the first innovation center which at that point was called the St. Louis Technology Center. It's now the Center for Emerging Technologies. So we got the funding from there. We got the universities, Washington University, University of Missouri-St. Louis, St. Louis University, SIUE and the Botanical Gardens to all put in a small amount of money to help get this program off the ground. Since then...of course, now there's a couple of buildings and lots of small companies that have been started through that and, as a student, I just raised my hand and said, "Gosh, I'd love to help do this," and so did that; wrote essentially a Master's thesis. The university gave me credit for writing a Master's thesis on university-based innovation centers. So it was just a terrific experience for me and I met a lot of people in the St. Louis community, especially those who were interested in the technology community were already there and it was a wonderful relationship-building time for me. I met a lot of people, made a lot of friends, a lot of people that I still know, had a lot of opportunities.

Blanche Touhill: In your thesis that you wrote on the innovation centers in St. Louis, how many were there at that time?

JJ Stupp: I want to say there were probably...to my recollection...about 18 or so...12...18 in the country that...

Blanche Touhill: In the United States?

JJ Stupp: Exactly, in the United States at that time. RPI was one of the models that they had, innovation centers that were related to a university where a university was trying to spin out technology or a university was trying to help their community start small technology businesses and receive funding and receive other types of assistance.

Blanche Touhill: Did you go to any of the research parks?

JJ Stupp: I did not.

Blanche Touhill: But did you cover that in your book?

JJ Stupp: I covered them; I talked to all of them; I did all the research I could. This was, of course, pre-internet days but we had a lot of information on them and a lot of statistical information on them: number of businesses started; size of facility; what sort of resources that they had.

Blanche Touhill: It would be interesting to know how many survived.

JJ Stupp: It would be and, you know, I would suspect that the majority of them have because, if you look at St. Louis today and the technology community in St. Louis, for many years in the '80s and the '90s and, really, the early 2000s, we were saying...to my opinion...we were saying the same things that we'd said for a long time but if you look at St. Louis today, in 2013, really, the last several years, to my opinion, there's been tremendous growth. There's a strong feeling of entrepreneurship; there's a lot of support for that; there are many, many different programs; there is some more funding in place than there's ever been before. There's a feel to it, when you read the press on a daily basis, obviously everything that comes out over the internet. There's a lot going on.

Blanche Touhill: When you did that book and we both know about the CET, were there other innovation centers here attached to universities or related to universities or...

JJ Stupp: So, St. Louis County Economic Council had...and probably still does...had a handful of small incubators. This was...to my recollection...was the first incubator innovation center really aimed at technology and I know, of course, University of Missouri has a big facility now and there are a lot of other organizations now.

- Blanche Touhill: I know that both Washington U and St. Louis U and University of Missouri-St. Louis were involved in a business incubator before they moved to the idea of SET, which really was a technology incubator...
- JJ Stupp: Mm-hmm, right.
- Blanche Touhill: ...and I think that's a very fascinating story and talking about the history of technology, incubators throughout the United States attached to these universities.
- JJ Stupp: Mm-hmm.
- Blanche Touhill: Now, you eventually moved into CET, didn't you?
- JJ Stupp: Well, so when we started it, we were...originally, the first location was the old Falstaff Building off of 40 and Kings Highway, which has since been torn down. It's now where the St. Louis Science Center is, and so we had a couple of floors there and probably five or six businesses there and I worked for the then St. Louis Technology Center as the innovation center manager working with the companies, with the applicants and helping them get going. I spun off with one of the companies, a small company with a couple of people out of McDonnell-Douglas that had some laser technology after maybe a year-and-a-half or so and worked for them on the financial side really in a small company, you know, Jack of all trades, doing a number of different things and had worked for other small companies along the way since then.
- Blanche Touhill: In this innovation center that's focused on science and technology and now health, are there many women directors of those technology centers?
- JJ Stupp: You know, I am not involved at this point but certainly there are. There are...I can picture many more women in the hallways down there as part of those companies.
- Blanche Touhill: But as director?
- JJ Stupp: As the president, the CEO, the founder? No. I mean, it's still predominantly male, I think in technology and many other sectors.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you find any glass ceiling when you were the director or involved in this kind of...it really was a new idea.

JJ Stupp: You know, I always had the mindset and I wouldn't say that I set out consciously to have the mindset but I was pretty...just, I didn't think about it. It was not a factor for me. Working in small companies is very different than working in large corporations because nothing is set at that point and I just...it just never really crossed my mind very much.

Blanche Touhill: And you were always attracted to smaller endeavors?

JJ Stupp: I was, I was.

Blanche Touhill: I remember when you had a card business.

JJ Stupp: I did. So when I had two children, after my first child, a daughter, was born, I'd never been around children and I had this baby and I was immediately going to go back to work and then all of a sudden someone put this baby in my arms and I was, well, this is my baby. I want this baby to have my bad habits, you know, whether that worked out correctly or not and so I did not want to go back to work full-time and I was looking around for ideas of what I was going to do because I didn't want to also stay home full-time and had several and came up with the idea of decks of cards that I called "conversation cards." Each card had a fun, interesting fact, an open-ended question designed to get people talking and designed them and wrote them and built a small company around it. We had about...oh, gosh, I want to say 18 different types of cards from, we called it "Table Talk" to "Science Talk" to "Art Talk" to "Sports Talk." We also did some of the big publishers at the time, the Franklin-Covey, Seven Habits, Chicken Soup for the Soul. We did a product for Ralston-Purina and then had five other product lines that I built a small business around. We had about 5,000 retail stores at the time. The way things were sold back in the '90s was very different. It was pre-internet; it was when there were thousands of independent bookstores and educational stores and toy stores of which there are very, very few left, and sold directly to the stores and was able to then...I had a second child and stay at home and run a small business out of my house.

Blanche Touhill: And did that last? I mean, does it exist today?

JJ Stupp: You know, I sold the business in 2000 to a book publisher and once in a while I'll hear about it. There are many different knock-offs now which I guess is a compliment or something but it was a wonderful business. I enjoyed it a lot. I learned a lot and we provided a really good product. I

think we probably sold about three million units, total. So it was a good experience for me. After that, I started this company, Exegy, in 2003, with Washington University and I've been doing the financial job since then.

Blanche Touhill: And you're tied to their Engineering School?

JJ Stupp: The technology was developed by four professors at the Engineering School and, in a nutshell, what the technology does is process massive amounts of data very fast using parallel processing and we've got, I think, 26 patents to date and probably an equal amount pending at this point. So I got involved with it. The then dean of the Engineering School, Chris Burns, he and I served on the board of the CET together and we were talking and he said, "JJ, you should go and talk to one of our professors, Ron Indeck. He's got some pretty terrific technology and we ought to look at starting a business around it." So I'd known Ron and spent some time with him and said, "Yeah, let's figure out how we start a business." It took a couple of years to get the license done and to get the business started but we started the company in 2003 and currently are 100 people and have several dozen customers and are continuing on, started the second company a year-and-a-half ago based on the same technology.

Blanche Touhill: Do you use your physics?

JJ Stupp: No. I can still do differential equations at cocktail parties which makes me very popular but I think a lot of undergraduate training is not so much to teach a skill but to teach a process of thinking and so that process, I think, was a good experience for me, good education.

Blanche Touhill: And your mathematics fit into your finance.

JJ Stupp: Right, so now I spend a lot of time with spreadsheets and working with a team, making sure that we're 100% accurate in everything we do.

Blanche Touhill: How do you keep current and look to the future?

JJ Stupp: Look to the future with regards to...

Blanche Touhill: To the computers?

JJ Stupp: So, being on the business side of it...I'm not on the technology side of it so I really rely on the technologists in the company to do that. I, of course...every day there's e-mails from all sorts of sources to say, "This is

happening; this is happening; this is happening.” I do work with the patents from an administration standpoint so I know at all times where we are in the patents but it’s pretty sophisticated stuff that we do so I don’t pretend to have a deep and thorough technological understanding.

Blanche Touhill: Are your children interested in technology?

JJ Stupp: I have a daughter that just graduated from film school at USC and a son that’s a senior in college.

Blanche Touhill: What is he majoring in?

JJ Stupp: He’s majoring in psychology and he’s probably going to end up in sales, I would think.

Blanche Touhill: What’s your relationship with the International Women’s Forum? How did you get in that?

JJ Stupp: So, I’ve been a member...gosh, I don’t know how long. I was previously a member of the St. Louis Forum so met a lot of people through that and then the IWF, I found to be a really terrific group. It’s probably split halfway between people from the business side and people from the non-profit side, or I guess for-profit/non-profit. Every event I go to, I’m always having an interesting conversation with someone. There are events that take place and I really...I participate as a member and talk with people and I’m thrilled to be included with the group.

Blanche Touhill: How did you get in? Do you remember that?

JJ Stupp: Maybe it was Joanne Griffin who suggested me for membership. I don’t recall.

Blanche Touhill: And did you know about the organization?

JJ Stupp: I knew a little bit about the organization but I knew a number of people in the organization and now know more, which has been terrific.

Blanche Touhill: Do you think, if you were born 50 years earlier, you would be doing what you’re doing today?

JJ Stupp: No. If I were born on the turn of the last century and I can go back to my grandparents that were born in the late 1890s or the early 1900s and the paths that they took, it was very different. I don’t have any conception of

what kind of person I'd be or where I would have ended up if I were born 50 years earlier. If I were a young person today looking at a job, I think I'd probably still be on the technology side of things. I think I'd be a computer scientist.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, indeed. Do you volunteer for anything around town?

JJ Stupp: I have been involved in many different volunteer activities over the years. I've spent a lot of time at Washington University. As I said, that's been a very big part of my life, the Business School and the University as a whole. I'm also on the board of the Academy of Science, which is a wonderful organization that promotes science education in the St. Louis area. It's part of nationwide and it's an organization that's very lean and does a lot and reaches out to a lot of people. I'm currently on the board of Junior Achievement. I've been involved with the zoo a little bit. I've been involved in a number of different organizations along the way.

Blanche Touhill: Why don't you talk about Junior Achievement and their move to the County and...

JJ Stupp: Right. So Junior Achievement, for a long time, was out in Florissant and had a small facility out there and Junior Achievement's mission, I think, has...it's always been to teach kids about business and continues to be that way. They now encourage a lot broader things in business than when I first...it was really the first organization that I was involved in as a younger person. I was probably in my mid to late 20s at the time and my father had been on the board for a long time and put me up for board membership. I was one of maybe a couple other women. I can't remember who even was on the board at the time. So it was a lot of gentlemen who were primarily large company executives: McDonnell-Douglas at the time; Southwestern Bell, companies like that, and so we'd have, I think, quarterly board meetings and they would do outreach into schools where a business person would go into a school and teach a class or they had the kids come in to the facility and learn how to build a business where they'd have different roles and it was just...and it continues to be a terrific organization. The person that runs it now, Laurie Jacob, has been involved. This has been her entire career and so I bet she's been there...I want to say 25...30 years or so and just has built a tremendous organization. I know it's the 6th largest in the country, where we're certainly not the 6th largest in the Metropolitan Area in the country

but we do outreach to a lot of students and they now have a big facility...several years ago, they received the funding from, I believe it was Dennis and Judy Jones primarily to build a large facility out in Chesterfield Valley and have a facility out there that has two different rooms where there...many cities where they've got the grocery store and the post office and a number of different companies and students come in and do what's called "JA for a Day" and they have different roles. You could be the banker or you could be the salesperson for a company or a lot of different things and the kids really get a lot of out of it because it teaches them what business is all about and what money is all about.

Blanche Touhill: Did you belong to Junior Achievement?

JJ Stupp: I did not as a kid.

Blanche Touhill: How did you get...I mean, it's obvious to me that you were interested in technology and science but you had an entrepreneurial streak to you?

JJ Stupp: Yeah. You know, I've never...as I said, I've never worked for a large corporation besides one summer as an intern and I like to do a lot of different things.

Blanche Touhill: But you must have had that as a child?

JJ Stupp: Yeah, a little bit but I didn't start any businesses; I didn't know anything about business as a child but I like people that are interested in doing things. I like to be around people that are thinking out of the box. There are great ideas. I always tell people the beginnings are the best part, the beginnings, really, of anything because then you've got all the possibilities and fewer of the restrictions than when you're a 100 person or a 10,000 person organization where you have a lot of rules and procedures and processes that you need to follow. At the beginning, you get to set all those and you get to be [inaudible 24:55] with it.

Blanche Touhill: Will your company grow?

JJ Stupp: So Exegy is about 100 people right now and will continue to grow, people-wise a little bit. We started a second company called VelociData a year-and-a-half ago using the same technology but its customers are large healthcare providers, credit card processors, big companies that have massive amounts of data they need to get through and that's a

company of about 12 people right now but it's on a pretty steep trajectory. So that will continue to grow significantly and I manage the financial position for both companies.

Blanche Touhill: Are they in the same building?

JJ Stupp: We are in the same building as of today. VelociData was next door but it's moving today. So we're one, two, three floors.

Blanche Touhill: When you talk about the data, what do you do with the data?

JJ Stupp: So, we ingest the data into servers and into basically technology that we have and when you think of all the massive amounts of data out there, think of what a credit card processor, the amount of data that they get in every microsecond, every nanosecond and that data all comes in different formats. It needs to be processed very, very quickly so that it can be handed off and into whatever sort of systems that a company has or that a large bank has and we can do that very quickly. There's a number of different functions that the technology can perform to get that data so it's in a format that companies can use faster and better and we're all drowning in data, as we all know.

Blanche Touhill: Is it still connected to the Engineering School or the...

JJ Stupp: It's not. Washington University still owns a small part of the company. We like to hire students but we're not...

Blanche Touhill: Have the faculty left the university?

JJ Stupp: So, one professor did. One professor left the university and was with Exegy and now is the President of VelociData.

Blanche Touhill: And you're the financial officer of both?

JJ Stupp: I'm the Chief Financial Officer, yes.

Blanche Touhill: Of both?

JJ Stupp: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Are you going to have a third one?

JJ Stupp: I don't think so but I don't know. We'll see, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Why didn't you go to California?

JJ Stupp: That's an excellent question and I ask myself that on a regular basis. So I moved out there at 18 and stayed out there until I was 25 and came back to school and I love Southern California and I ask myself that question pretty much on a daily basis. When I decided to come back to St. Louis and to go to Washington University, my family was here; my parents were here. I subsequently lost my mother a couple years later so I'm really glad that I did come back and spend the time here. When I was in California, I wasn't quite sure what I was going to do and I had the brilliant idea of, well, I'll go back to school and, well, I'll get an MBA and really found St. Louis and to come back here to be very comfortable and it was easy to navigate. In St. Louis, you can get in to see anybody. It's very easy to connect along. In bigger cities and San Francisco or Los Angeles, it's much harder but here, as a young person...anybody can get to meet anybody and I found that to be really stimulating and a nice place to be.

Blanche Touhill: What do you do in St. Louis in your off times?

JJ Stupp: Well, I work a lot. You know, people ask me: "What do you like to do?" and I go, "Well, I work a lot." My kids, as I said, are both gone. My father is here and I spend a fair amount of time with him and friends and I like to travel and I love to read and I'm going to the Cardinals game on Saturday night so that will be fun and I just see a lot of people and go to different events.

Blanche Touhill: I find that St. Louis does have so many wonderful cultural institutions.

JJ Stupp: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: And I'm getting interested in the farmers' markets. Are you interested in any of the farmers' markets these days?

JJ Stupp: You know, I've been to a couple of them, yeah. Yeah, they're always fun to walk through.

Blanche Touhill: And do you go to the Gardens?

JJ Stupp: I go to the Botanical Gardens; I go to the Art Museum; I go to the zoo; I go downtown; have now been to the Mercantile Library. You know, I really have gotten to the stage of where I enjoy every day and I don't

project a lot into the future and say, my goal in 10 years is to do this, or when I buy the boat and move to the farm and that sort of thing. I'm going to continue doing what I'm doing right now. I'm busy every day and I like that a lot. I work with...I've got a tremendous team and I work with great people and I enjoy that a lot and I enjoy growing businesses and having the opportunity to grow this second business, VelociData now, is really exciting and fun and I enjoy doing that. So, I see myself continuing doing what I'm doing now for a while.

Blanche Touhill: Will you be involved in the federal healthcare as it changes?

JJ Stupp: Well, you know, I think we will just as a business of how's that going to affect us as an operating business? What does that mean? What do the healthcare regulations mean? I think that that will have to...no one knows at this point because healthcare is an extremely important thing for everyone and it's very important for a company to provide that properly for its employees and it's a wonderful benefit that we have for our employees.

Blanche Touhill: Well, it would seem to me, with all the giving the doctors computers and hospitals computers and that the paper seems to be disappearing...

JJ Stupp: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: ...although, I would think that your business is right on target.

JJ Stupp: You know, there's a lot of...one of the customers of VelociData is a large healthcare provider and there's just tremendous amounts of information they have to get through and it's just growing and growing and growing.

Blanche Touhill: And I'm sure the federal government will require reporting in certain ways?

JJ Stupp: Yeah, yeah. I mean, it's very complex.

Blanche Touhill: Did you teach your children the computer when they were young?

JJ Stupp: Oh, yes. We always had...every kid had a computer or two, yeah. So, they are certainly very computer-savvy.

Blanche Touhill: Where do you live in St. Louis?

JJ Stupp: I live in Ladue.

Blanche Touhill: And you've always lived in that area?

JJ Stupp: I grew up right next to where St. Luke's Hospital is now. When I was a kid, we lived out there on 10 acres and had horses in the back yard and backed up to property a woods of 500 acres and Maryville College was across the street and there were all sorts of wonderful trails through there and St. Luke's, as I said, was a corn field at the time and so it was like living in the country, yet you were 10 minutes away from anywhere. We had horses in the back yard and dogs and cats and...

Blanche Touhill: Do you still have horses?

JJ Stupp: You know, I had a horse up until probably about seven or eight years ago and it was a terrific way to grow up as a kid: tremendous independence because you just get on the horse and be gone for the day and no one knew where you were and no one worried about you.

Blanche Touhill: And you had to take care of the horses?

JJ Stupp: And you had to take care of the horses, so I can shovel with the best of them. I was very fortunate because we were outside a lot and doing a lot of things: fixing the fence and cutting 10 acres of grass on a tractor and it was...I was very fortunate.

Blanche Touhill: What do you think about this news...Mr. Snowden and all this, the gentleman from the service who...

JJ Stupp: I think that it's very difficult to keep any sort of data secret. I think that one should not...one of the best things my father ever taught me as a child was to not put anything in writing I wouldn't want printed on the front page of the newspaper, and that, I think, these days, applies obviously for electronic correspondence, for voicemail correspondence, that there really are no secrets out there, that all data is out there permanently, whether it's your health records or an e-mail or a Facebook page posting. There's simply no way, to my way of thinking, it's very difficult to keep it secure and to keep it private. From a societal standpoint, I take a somewhat unusual view of it in that in some ways, I think it makes us more thoughtful people. I no longer sneak through yellow lights because I got the \$100 ticket where the camera takes a picture of me and I don't want to get any more of those. So it makes me a better person in that I stop at yellow lights now because I know

somebody's watching. It makes me, when I think of every e-mail that I wrote, every voicemail that I leave, my father's recommendation to me is in my head of, be thoughtful with your words; think of how you say things and don't say anything that you wouldn't want repeated. From a healthcare standpoint, I think it's unfortunate, there is no privacy out there but I think that's just the way the world is now.

Blanche Touhill: How do you think we'll figure that out? How do you think we'll...I agree with you and yet, I think the government has to put in some restraints or some...

JJ Stupp: I think they should continue to try very hard and continue to try to stay ahead of people that are able to break that or leak that but anything that's out there, I just think it's impossible to keep completely private.

Blanche Touhill: Talk to me about tweeting and social media.

JJ Stupp: I don't participate very much so I don't know a whole lot about social media. I think that it really has made the world so much smaller and people so connected that people that are really involved with it, they know everything about everybody and in some ways, I think it's a really good thing. I think it makes us all not feel isolated. I think that you can take it too far, of that's your only life and that's your only connection and I think people expose a little bit too much of, "Gee, I'm sitting down to have lunch and I'm eating this and that" and it's okay, and that's not so interesting, but I think, for the most part, it's a really good thing.

Blanche Touhill: Did you warn your children when they were growing up to be careful?

JJ Stupp: Well, the same thing my father told me, of, don't put anything in writing on a Facebook page or anyplace else that you wouldn't want everyone to see.

Blanche Touhill: And did they take heed to that?

JJ Stupp: One can only hope, yeah. I'm sure they did. They're smart kids and they're technically savvy young people and certainly are quite aware.

Blanche Touhill: From where you stand, will the old way of communicating on telephone or in letters, will that exist in the future?

JJ Stupp: I think that we will always telephone call, video chat, face-to-face, I think we'll always have that and certainly through my lifetime and probably through my children's lifetime. I think that communicating in written form, in many ways, it brings more clarity and that you can compose when you're asking someone for something, you can be more specific rather than a conversation where you go, well, and you can't take it back, where when you're writing an e-mail or you're sending a chat or you're communicating, you can be more precise and reflective of what you're going to say. So I think that that's good.

Blanche Touhill: Let me talk about a historian's problems. We used to have records and now those records will be on the e-mail. So how does somebody get those back?

JJ Stupp: How do you parse through all that information? Yeah, it's...that's back to the big data question, the big data problem. There's...think of how many e-mails you've sent in the last year or the last 10 years, how can you go all the way through that? How could one person possibly read all that? It's going to be different but it's going to be somewhat more accurate but also, it's easy to take things out of context where before, if you just had phone conversations or a handful of written documents, there's a lot more information now. So it's going to become...it's a much bigger job.

Blanche Touhill: Do you read science fiction?

JJ Stupp: I do. I've read a lot of science fiction in the past, yeah. I'm sort of on a murder mystery jag these days but...

Blanche Touhill: Is there science fiction murder mysteries?

JJ Stupp: I'm sure there are. There's some of everything out there, yeah, but I do like to read novels.

Blanche Touhill: Well, I do think that the area that you're in, you're really a pioneer.

JJ Stupp: Well, there are a lot of young people like me now. When I was...in the early '80s, there were not a lot of people in St. Louis talking about entrepreneurship and especially talking about technology entrepreneurship but now I think there's a lot going on now. I think there's a big community. They're getting a lot of support and they're getting a lot of traction.

Blanche Touhill: How do they get together?

JJ Stupp: You know, I'm really busy at work so I don't participate but I know that there's a lot of events. I know there's a lot going on downtown. I know there's a number of groups. There are a handful of capital groups that do that. I know that Washington University has the Skandalaris Center and I'm a little bit involved in there.

Blanche Touhill: What is that center?

JJ Stupp: So, the Skandalaris Center for Entrepreneurship. Bob Skandalaris started it...oh, gosh, 10 plus years ago. Ken Harrington's been running it for that time and they promote just a ton of events; they have classes; there's a lot of...there's an entrepreneurship track at the university and they've encouraged a lot of things to happen in the community.

Blanche Touhill: Who was the donor?

JJ Stupp: Bob Skandalaris. So Bob and his wife, whose first name I'm slipping on right now...they had a child that went to Washington University, I want to say, 10...15 years ago, along those lines, and Bob is the head of a company, I believe, called Noble Enterprises in Detroit so he's not a St. Louisan but had a really good relationship with Washington University and I believe went to Mark Wright and said, "We should start an entrepreneurial center here. I'm very interested in this," and donated the first funding for that and has really been instrumental in making that center happen and funding that center ongoing and to help driving the direction of it.

Blanche Touhill: And it's really to encourage young people to become entrepreneurs?

JJ Stupp: Well, so, this is going to get a little bit garbled so we'll want to cut part of this out because I can't quote it exactly, what it is at this point, but it's within the University. It's not part of the Business School; it's part of the University as a whole and they have entrepreneurship classes; they have events all week long; they do an idea bounce every week where they bring in people to bounce their ideas off, every month they bounce their ideas off people; they do a summer program, summer internship program; they've got a lot of different things going on and I just...I don't spend enough time and have it at the forefront of my mind to...

Blanche Touhill: Well, I heard the name of the center and I knew it was entrepreneurial but I wasn't...can you go back there and get new ideas?

JJ Stupp: Oh, absolutely. I mean, they have a lot of events open to the public. You can go in there and pitch your idea. You can get some help. There's a lot of things going on.

Blanche Touhill: Are there other places in St. Louis you can go for that?

JJ Stupp: Well, I think University of Missouri has a big center for that. I think St. Louis University does. I think there's a lot of different places and I'm sure that there's listings of all that and people can direct you along.

Blanche Touhill: Are you involved in (CORTEX?) and CET at all anymore?

JJ Stupp: I am not.

Blanche Touhill: Because I think that is...well, you know, everybody must need data organized.

JJ Stupp: Exactly.

Blanche Touhill: When I think about it, I mean...

JJ Stupp: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: You could have 15 companies.

JJ Stupp: Well, right, but, you know, for example, Exegy's customers are all big banks, big trading institutions that take market data in, need to get it in a format that they can run it through their algorithms to make decisions on how they trade.

Blanche Touhill: But now you're in health?

JJ Stupp: Right, and so now we're in healthcare and credit card processing and large data in general, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: So, your father is still alive and well?

JJ Stupp: My father is 83 years old and still a little bit involved in the company and, as I said, we're an old company, started in 1856. We're steel fabricators. We fabricate steel for bridges...was the original business down in Baton Rouge; buildings here in St. Louis, steel pipes for the oil and gas industry.

Blanche Touhill: Now, he was into helping Tower Grove Park, wasn't he?

JJ Stupp: He's been very involved in Tower Grove Park, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Can you talk about that?

JJ Stupp: You know, he's just been interested in Tower Grove Park. It's a beautiful park. The gentleman that runs that, I believe, is John Carroll and my father just thought that that was a good thing to help bring back a little bit and if you've been there lately, it's a beautiful place and it's a wonderful place for the community to be able to go and see just a beautiful old park.

Blanche Touhill: Isn't something in the park named for your family?

JJ Stupp: So, I had a great Aunt Louise that donated some money for a senior citizen center down there.

Blanche Touhill: That's a wonderful center.

JJ Stupp: It is a wonderful center, yeah, but just long ago and far away.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have brothers and sisters?

JJ Stupp: I have an older sister, who's a PhD psychologist, lives in San Diego and I have a younger brother who works for the family company here in St. Louis.

Blanche Touhill: Is he going to take it over some day?

JJ Stupp: So, we have another side of the family, my cousin, John and my brother run the company. So there are two sides of the family.

Blanche Touhill: So it's still family.

JJ Stupp: It's still family-owned and operated at this point.

Blanche Touhill: Were you of a German extraction?

JJ Stupp: On my father's side, primarily, yeah, and on my mo...

Blanche Touhill: I always associated the name with South St. Louis.

JJ Stupp: Exactly. Well, my dad's family was all from South St. Louis. When his family came over in the 1850s, they primarily landed in South St. Louis.

The original plant was down in South St. Louis, just on the border of the city/county off of Lemay Ferry.

Blanche Touhill: Were they part of the group that came out of the Revolution of 1848 with Segal and...

JJ Stupp: I think a little bit...

Blanche Touhill: ...Hecker and...

JJ Stupp: ...past that. I'm not really sure. My father, he's been interested in that and they've had somebody write a bunch of information. I don't think the grand finale has been...I don't think they've come up with the final copy on that.

Blanche Touhill: Does he talk about his life in the Turn (Turnverien) halls or going to the beer gardens or anything like that?

JJ Stupp: No, he doesn't, no. He was born in 1930 and grew up here in St. Louis and went to University of Colorado-Boulder and then came back here and had met my mother who was from Los Angeles who also went to Boulder and...you know, blonde hair, blue-eyed, Southern California mother spent her adulthood here in St. Louis which was very different than Los Angeles of the '30s and the '40s.

Blanche Touhill: That's right. Los Angeles was expanding and St. Louis was the old traditional [inaudible 47:10] of the East.

JJ Stupp: Exactly, it was very different, yeah. As a kid, we'd go out every year, a couple times a year...my mother's parents remained in Los Angeles and you'd go out there and it was just...the whole place was like Disneyland. She used to tell wonderful stories of growing up there in the '30s and the '40s, where LA was much smaller than it is right now and there were dairy farms and orange groves and they used to take the four-hour drive down to San Diego to see her grandparents. She had a pony in her back yard and used to ride it over to Santa Monica pier and went to see all the openings down in Westwood Village. Her one brush with a celebrity, when she was, oh, about 12 or 13, her mother had a friend who had a niece who needed a summer job and so my grandmother hired her as a mother's helper for three summers or so and this young girl took care of my mom and her two younger sisters and she's on our home videos.

Then this young girl decided to get married at the age of 16 and had needed a house to get married in so my grandmother said, "Sure, you can get married in our house" and this was Norma Jean Baker who then grew up to be Marilyn Monroe. So Marilyn Monroe is on our home movies and about once every 10 years, I'll get a \$400 check from a Japanese company that wants to use the old footage. So that's our brush with a celebrity.

Blanche Touhill: That is a wonderful story.

JJ Stupp: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: But your mother was not interested in the movies?

JJ Stupp: No, no, my mother wasn't interested in movies and she was of a time where you got married right out of college at 22 and moved back to St. Louis. Yeah, so...

Blanche Touhill: Well, is there anything else that you want to talk about? I love the story about Marilyn Monroe.

JJ Stupp: Yeah, that's a fun one.

Blanche Touhill: Did you consciously choose your path in life? Did you plan it?

JJ Stupp: I did not. I went to college because you go to college; I chose a major sort of by default: I liked math but I didn't want to be a math major, so I went to applied math. Then I spent some time in California doing a number of different jobs and decided that I'm not really going anywhere. I'll go back to school and I'll get an MBA and then I found a way to combine the science and the business by being in the technology community and just was opportunistic or by default.

Blanche Touhill: Then, the entrepreneurship was unusual too.

JJ Stupp: Yeah. It was just...I really didn't do a conscious decision. It just seemed to fit.

Blanche Touhill: It worked.

JJ Stupp: It did, indeed.

Blanche Touhill: Well, thank you very much. It was a lovely story and I appreciate getting to know you much better.

JJ Stupp: Thank you for your time.