

An Interview with  
**Vivian Eveloff**

at *The Historical Society of Missouri* St. Louis  
Research Center, St. Louis, Missouri

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**Oral History Program**

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## PREFACE

The interview was taped on a placed on a tripod. There are periodic background sounds but the recording is of generally high quality.

The following transcript represents a rendering of the oral history interview. Stylistic alterations have been made as part of a general transcription policy. The interviewee offered clarifications and suggestions, which the following transcript reflects. Any use of brackets [ ] indicates editorial insertions not found on the original audio recordings. Physical gestures, certain vocal inflections such as imitation, and/or pauses are designated by a combination of italics and brackets [ ]. Any use of parentheses ( ) indicates a spoken aside evident from the speaker's intonation, or laughter. Quotation marks ["" ] identify speech depicting dialogue, speech patterns, or the initial use of nicknames. Em dashes [—] are used as a stylistic method to show a meaningful pause or an attempt to capture nuances of dialogue or speech patterns. Words are *italicized* when emphasized in speech or when indicating a court case title. Particularly animated speech is identified with **bold** lettering. Underlining [   ] indicates a proper title of a publication. The use of underlining and double question marks in parentheses [   (??) ] denotes unintelligible phrases. Although substantial care has been taken to render this transcript as accurately as possible, any remaining errors are the responsibility of the editor, Josephine Sporleder.

Vivian Eveloff: Actually, I'm Vivian L. Eveloff because I had an aunt who was also Vivian Eveloff. I was born in St. Joseph, Missouri and grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, did a brief time in Topeka, Kansas during World War II.

William Fischetti: What was it like growing up at that time?

Vivian Eveloff: Well, I thought it was fun. I was the second child. My sister's five years older than I am so I was almost another first child and it was fun. My recollections of my childhood are very positive and warm.

William Fischetti: Did you have siblings?

Vivian Eveloff: That's it, one older sister and my parents were each part of large families so there were a number of cousins.

William Fischetti: So what did your parents do?

Vivian Eveloff: Well, that's a very good question. I'm a second generation feminist. My mother was born in Topeka, Kansas, the first child her parents had in this country. Her parents arrived with two children and she was the hope for the future so she grew up as a very optimistic child, talented as an artist and a really good student and my grandparents were among the small number of Jewish families in Topeka, Kansas. They all knew each other. My mother reported that when she got the lead in the senior play at Topeka High School, the Jewish ladies in Topeka held a tea for her. She was the only Jewish girl her age at that time and this was considered a great triumph, that she had been selected for that role. Then after she graduated from high school, her mother died in a flu epidemic and she was left with her widowed father and her five brothers who were still at home. She had an older sister who was married and living in Lawrence, Kansas and she decided she wanted to go to college, which was unusual then, she having been born in 1909, and Washburn College was in Topeka, a two-year school but it was also the Depression or the coming of the Depression and she knew she needed to work. She also knew that if she didn't do all of those things, she'd end up being the caretaker for her family and all of her younger brothers which she did not see as her future. So she went to Washburn. She applied for a job at the Ashers in Topeka on Santa Fe Railroad which was based there. She applied and she reapplied and the third time she came back to apply, she looked around at the room in which she would be working and realized they were all men and she said to the manager, who would be her boss, if he hired her,

“I’ve applied twice before and I haven’t heard back and I really would like to work here and I want you to know I live at home with my widowed father and my five brothers so that working here with these men doesn’t bother me.” And so they hired her and it turned out to be a job that changed her life and probably that of the rest of us. She, among other things, did transcription from teletype information for the railroad but her boss was also interested in the stock market and information about the stock market came across the same ticker as the railroad information so she became interested in the stock market and she began to invest in the stock market at a time that, despite the subsequent crash, she did well and she was making very good money. She had railroad passes. She traveled around the country. She did well in school. She graduated. She was offered a scholarship at the Chicago Art Institute, took a transfer with the railroad for the summer to go to Chicago and see what it was like and went to the Art Institute and asked to meet some of their graduates to see what they were doing and all of these talented art students that she met were pattern makers in what she called “sweat shops” and not making anywhere near the kind of money she was making at the railroad. So she bought herself a fancy designer hat, got back on the train and went back to Topeka to continue her work with the railroad there and subsequently met my father...and I will fast forward to the year after her...she took a leave of absence, she thought, in case the marriage didn’t work out, she wanted to maintain her seniority at the railroad and they moved to St. Joseph, Missouri where my father was from. But we were having the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary party for them. They were married over 70 years, in total, and my father who could recall every job he ever had and how much money he had made down to, “That job paid me \$11.43 an hour and then I got another job in Acheson, Kansas and I was making \$12.19...”...not an hour, a week and he was reflecting on all of that and said, “But I never knew how much money your mother was making at the railroad when we got married.” So we called Mother in and said, “Okay, 60 years, I think it’s going to last. Now you can tell him how much money you were making at the railroad.” So she said, “Well, in the summer when I worked overtime, I often made \$75 a week,” and my father pulled himself up and said, “Oh, my gosh, if I’d known that, I would have moved to Topeka” and she said, “That’s why I didn’t tell you. I wanted to get out of Topeka.” So she was kind of a woman. She was always very well informed, interested in the business world. She was one of the early

members of the Women's Business Group in Kansas City. When the Vietnam War was on and she was very much opposed to it, in part because my husband at that time was sent to Vietnam, she withheld her excise tax on her phone bill which was funding the war directly and when the IRS people showed up in her office a year or two after that was over, she gave them their money but she gave them an earful before she did it, to tell them what she thought of that war. So, I was raised in an environment that supported women being assertive and independent, self-reliant and I think it was a good way to grow up.

William Fischetti: So, tell me about your schooling.

Vivian Eveloff: I went to the public schools in Kansas City which at the time were considered very good. I learned later that one of the reasons that the high school that I went to, which was Southwest High School which has long since closed, was highly rated in the Ladies Home Journal, was that one of the graduates some years ahead of me was Calvin Trillon, an author who has written for the New Yorker and a variety of other things and who lived down the street from me when we were all growing up, and after he graduated from college, he went to work at Time Magazine, one of his friends went to work at the Ladies Home Journal and was charged with putting together a list of the 10 best public schools in America. He got a call...as he told the story...saying, "My editor says I need some other Midwestern schools. I have a lot of the East Coast schools and West Coast schools and I remembered you were from the Midwest. Where did you go to school?" So he said Southwest High School and she said, "Was it a really good school?" and he said, "Well, yeah, I got to Yale and..."...blah, blah, blah and so it became part of the list, a highly researched, repeatable process. But anyway, that's where I went to high school. I went to Boston University. I decided I wanted to be in a co-ed environment and at that time most of the schools, particularly along the East Coast, were still gender-specific and I wanted to be on the East but I didn't want to be at a one-gender campus. So that's where I went. I started off as a chemistry major because I liked chemistry, I was good at chemistry and I had gone through an era even in high school where I was often the only girl in the advanced math class or some of the science classes. I helped some of my less able male friends get through chemistry. We still joke about that. And then my sophomore year at BU, I had a class load that included organic chemistry, physics, advanced

calculus and I had one elective which I took a political science course and I was the only woman in the labs; I was the only woman around and most of the men wanted to be doctors and it was not of any interest to me. And so finally I sort of woke up and said, well, this is my only chance to be an undergraduate. I ought to take a lot of different classes. So I became an English major, like many women in my time and got a great, well-rounded education, learned a lot living in Boston. It, in itself, is an instructive place to live.

William Fischetti: You were from Kansas City. Why did you want to go East?

Vivian Eveloff: Well, it's a public school and there was not much recruitment going on. Most of the kids went to the University of Missouri or to KU. I had family in Lawrence; I had seen KU. That didn't appeal to me. I think part of it was that I thought of myself as an intellectual and the East Coast seemed to be an intellectual place to be. I had visited there several times. My parents were in business together for a number of years and would go to New York on buying trips and things like that and I would often go so I felt comfortable in the East and I had friends who were going to gender-specific schools in the Boston area and they seemed to like them just fine. I went to visit and didn't think it suited me, I didn't know anybody that had ever been to BU. It was a total shot in the dark and it was a great education and I really became part of the community, did a lot of the cultural things that were there so I enjoyed it.

William Fischetti: So, what came after BU?

Vivian Eveloff: So I was at BU and my mother said, "An English degree? What are you going to do with an English degree?" She was fairly critical and so I said, "Well, I don't know. Maybe I'll hang around and take whatever classes I have to take, I'll get a teaching certificate," and so I did. In the process I did student teaching at Newton High School, one of the suburbs of Boston, sort of comparable to Clayton or Ladue, very good students, very competitive parents. It was an interesting experience in a number of ways and they had just gotten a Ford grant to kind of re-examine how education could be improved, whether the "Sit there. I teach; you listen" process could evolve to something that was more conversational and have the student play a more active role, which I thought was an interesting concept. And while I was doing that, my parents, who were, at that point, still working but took a vacation every year to Mexico where

the weather was reliable and when they came home, my mother was dancing around to some of the Mariachi music that she had brought home with them and she slipped and she fell and she hurt her back and was flat on her back for over a month. So I had in my mind, my parents were getting older and that perhaps the responsible thing would be, instead of taking the job that I had with the World Affairs Council after I graduated from Boston University, that I should do something to get back to the Midwest, be closer. While I was student teaching, there was a delegation from University City High School who came because they had just gotten a Ford grant to try and do some more revolutionary things. So I thought that was interesting. I thought the idea of getting in on the ground floor would be very interesting but my first choice was really to be a journalist. I had been a writer after I became an English major and the editor of the literary magazine and I really aspired to be a journalist and I knew people at both the Post-Dispatch and the, may it rest in peace, Globe Democrat, people I'd known from Kansas City and so I arranged to have interviews at both of the newspapers. No one told me at the time that the Post-Dispatch had a particular problem with hiring women writers. So I thought it was a legitimate interview and that I had a legitimate chance of being hired. I was offered a job at the Globe in the Society section which was standard for women in that era. It was not something that I was particularly interested in so there was an opportunity to become a journalism and English teacher at University City High School. So I decided I would do that. I moved back here. I knew a few people and went to work at the high school and I guess the best revenge for my hidden journalist part was that many of my students went on to work at the Post-Dispatch. Some of them are still there. So I felt like I had an impact although not directly. Shall we go on from that point now? Where do we go?

William Fischetti: You go where you want to go. If you're at a loss, I'll ask a question.

Vivian Eveloff: No, I'm just going to do this continuum and if you have a question...

William Fischetti: That's fine.

Vivian Eveloff: So, toward the end of my first year as a teacher here, I had decided that St. Louis and I were really not well suited for one another, that it was a very traditional environment. I generally say that St. Louis is the last eastern city and Kansas City the first western city. And being an outsider

was very difficult, the, where did you go to high school question was as prevalent then as it, I think, probably still is now and the fact that I was not from here and therefore was not living at home where other nice girls of my generation were living until they got married, seemed very problematic to a lot of people and I thought, man, I am ready to go back to Boston. This is it. And I had applied for jobs back in Boston and someone fixed me up with a guy who seemed nice and who seemed smart. He'd been educated in Boston and I don't know, I think we went out maybe the end of April, the first part of May. We got engaged in June and married in August because I needed to get back to teaching and I had signed my contract again to go back to U City and all of that happened in very fast order. And he was a physician and he had not participated in any of the military alternatives at the time, the draft was still around and he had just sort of managed to get to be 31 or 32 and never had served his military commitment. Well, as the Vietnam war buildup occurred, there was a desperate need for doctors and for the first time in a long time, they specifically drafted doctors and he felt certain that at his advanced age he would not be called but, in fact, he was so he was reclassified in November and drafted in February. So, it was a whole turn I had not expected. I left my teaching job and those very traditional days hadn't occurred to me to finish off my semester which I think currently would have made a lot of sense. There was nothing about basic training that really required my presence but who knew and we were newlyweds. So off we went to Fort San in Houston and after he finished his training, he was assigned to a fort outside of Washington, D.C. So we moved to Washington and I liked Washington a lot. I had never been there, I don't think, before and looked for a job at the Smithsonian. I thought it would be fun to do research there and write there and by the...so we got there in May, I think, or June and by the following winter, I was pregnant. There wasn't much else to do. I hadn't been able to get a job so it seemed like a good time to start a family and then he got orders to go to Vietnam and it was this moment, one of these great questions: well, we have two messages to deliver to our families, one, that we're having a child; two, that he's going to Vietnam and what is the appropriate sequence in which you do that? Do you give them the good news and then the bad news or the bad news and then the good news? And I can't quite tell you which way we decided to do it but it was a package. I wanted to stay in Washington because I liked it and we had friends there and I had friends

there but that was not acceptable to the parents and so I ended up moving back to Kansas City and living with my parents while he went to Vietnam and having my first child there, in Kansas City, a son who was born that September, met his father the following January. They had an R&R process for people who were in Vietnam where you got a week to get out of the fight and so that was January. So he met his first born when he was four or five months old.

William Fischetti: He could come back to the United States?

Vivian Eveloff: No, we met in Hawaii. They could not come back to the United States. They could go to Thailand; they could go to Hawaii...

William Fischetti: I went to Thailand.

Vivian Eveloff: Okay, all right, so you know the deal. So we met in Hawaii and then he went back just in time for the Tet offensive which it turned out that his barber at the base was the leader of and I think that whole experience had an impact on him and what I was doing back here had an impact on me, that would take its toll in the not too distant future. So my responsibility was to find us a place to live in St. Louis and I think, had he not been sent to Vietnam, we probably wouldn't have come back to St. Louis and the story might have a whole different tale, but it didn't. So I was living in Kansas City, commuting back and forth, finding a house, re-doing the house that I bought from its original owner who had it for 60 years and it needed a lot of updating and I had never done that before and he had always lived in an apartment so it was a new experience for both of us and I would say it was one of the many ways in which we were different people by the time he came home. So we sort of settled down into a regular life here and then a couple years later I had a second child but by then it was clear this was not the same person...neither of us, I would say, were the same people we were before he went to Vietnam and, no matter exactly what we tried to do, it was not possible to find those people again and to put that relationship back together. So we separated in 1973. So there I was, mother of two young kids and trying to figure out what to do now. I didn't think going back to teaching school seemed like the best idea. So I did a variety of things which, again, we probably don't need to spend a lot of time on because the thing that I did that was most impactful to the future was going...in 1971, my parents were in visiting for Halloween and so my daughter was just a year old and

her brother was four, so we did a little trick-or-treating, brought the kids home and she and I went to hear Bella Abzug speak at the Jewish Community Center. They had a series of lectures they called the Liberal Forum and she was the Halloween day speaker and of course it brought lots of guffaws from the critics of the fledging women's movement, that she was the perfect witch for Halloween and such things but it was jammed full of women of all ages and at the end of her talk, Bella Abzug picked up a yellow pad and said, "I'm putting this down here on the stage. One of you women come up here and take charge of it and everybody who wants to join and help start the Women's Political Caucus, sign up and then you carry on the organization." So that's exactly what happened, including my mother. We all lined up, we all signed up. She got stuff from the St. Louis Women's Political Caucus probably until the time she passed away, that she was always active in it and it was, again, consistent with her kind of feminism and activism and certainly had an impact on my life. I met a lot of new women I didn't know. We got organized. We found candidates. We recruited Sue Shearer to run in 1972, despite her resistance, that she thought we should find someone younger but most of us were too young to run and had young kids. So people like Betty Van Uum and Marcia Mellitz, a large group of us who are still friends to this day and still activists to this day, joined up and we learned what we knew about campaigning by working on Sue Shearer's campaign and the history of that and its impact on me, I could not have predicted at that moment but it impacted my entire family. I taught my children to go door-to-door with me. They may not want to open the door for an adult woman, but a cute little girl or a cute little boy at the door, oh, yes, and they learned to hand them the campaign literature.

William Fischetti: And sell some cookies at the same time.

Vivian Eveloff: Right. So that's sort of...my life changed in the '70s for all kinds of reasons, one, that I was a single mother, the other, I became a political activist and I also got into organic gardening, something that I'm still into and the end product of that was and my job hunting, that one of my friends who was a big environmentalist was a friend of Barry Commoner's who worked at Washington University in the fledging environmental movement and he was sort of the voice of it, his picture on the front of Time Magazine, sort of announcing the fight against industrial pollution and...

William Fischetti: ...and the Baby Tooth Survey.

Vivian Eveloff: ...and the Baby Tooth Survey before that, exactly. So he hired me and I was responsible for most of his external communications, which always had a certain political element to them, much to the dismay of the leadership at Washington University and worked on the research on the comparative economic costs, environmental costs of organic versus conventional farming, was the first really controlled research project on that topic. It was fascinating to me as a practitioner and I learned a lot and we came out with a book called *The Poverty of Power* which talked about energy consumption in a variety of different ways, everything from solar energy to environmental considerations because of the high economic and energy burden of producing conventional crops and the fertilizer they needed and so forth. So that was the beginning of the next chapter of my life but at no time did I cease from being civically engaged and continued on with all of those efforts at the same time and, as those of us who have been associated with the universities, know, public as well as private universities are, in themselves, very political. So, having those political skills in a variety of applications has always been very helpful.

William Fischetti: So, when did you come to UMSL?

Vivian Eveloff: Well, after I was at Wash U for two years, I began to realize that the fact that we were living mostly on grant money because the university was not supportive intellectually or financially of the kind of research that Barry Commoner was doing that, as a parent of two kids who was their prime support, I needed a better job at a more consistent, reliable source of income. So I was recruited to come to Monsanto where they were trying to improve their public image and to have a greater awareness of issues because they didn't think they were important, assumed that everybody thought they were not important and they had just come from a very expensive experience in which they tried and did invent a new kind of container that had a lot of merit to it in terms of really environmental responsibility. They had invented a polymer returnable, refillable soda bottle so you got to reduce the loss and the weight involved in recycling glass containers. There were all kinds of issues. This was a lighter container. It would take less energy to travel, blah, blah, blah, blah. I'm not going to give you the commercial for it. So they started

manufacturing it in Baltimore, a facility they had bought in Baltimore, just right on the outskirts of Washington, D.C. where people raised questions about whether it was safe, whether that Coca Cola would react with the bottle and there were all of these other health implications for which Monsanto had done no research and no testing because they were certain that it was safe, that it couldn't possibly react and they didn't have the answers and, in the absence of the answers, the only thing to do was shut down the plant and that was the end of that product. It's never reappeared. So, the CEO at the time was somebody who had been at Proctor and Gamble before and so he had a sense of the end user and the importance of having better relationships with your customer and understanding what your customer's concerns might be, which was something that Monsanto, because it was then a company that was often described as a goes into company, it made the chemicals that goes into the carpet. It didn't make the carpet; it made the chemicals that went into aspirin. It didn't make aspirin, on and on. So because they had no relationship with the end user, they had thought of themselves as a science company and not as a company concerned about public relations or customer relations. So, the CEO who I respected, he was wise, he was socially responsible, he had a different view of things that had been the traditional, when it had been mostly a family run company until that time, decided they were going to launch a communications program and try and make people not think that because something was a chemical, it was inherently bad, that there were beneficial chemicals and teach, particularly the people within the company, how to reach out and share that information. So we created...he hired me, we created something called "The Chemical Facts of Life Program" and part of my responsibility was to teach leaders in the company and, in some cases, rank and file factory workers, how to be spokespeople in their community. So that was my primary challenge. On the side I was also working with the executives, trying to get them to be more effective communicators and it was a very interesting job. It sort of got me back to my interesting chemistry from the dawn of time and I don't want to say that I was the conscience of the company but I was one of several people who asked hard questions and if we didn't have good answers, we didn't move forward until we had better answers. So, I felt good about what I was doing. I got that program up and running. The National Association of Agricultural Chemical Manufacturers thought it was an interesting program and I helped them

develop it for all of the manufacturers within this country. So that was fun. I got to go to Washington a lot, got to know a lot of the players in Washington and, of course, I knew most of the players back in St. Louis and the company decided they were going to do more with state government relations and they needed somebody to lead that charge. And so, because I had been active as a citizen in political efforts, it put me on a whole different plain from almost everybody else who worked at the company. It used to be a joke that if a governor from one of the states where Monsanto had a manufacturing facility or significant employees wanted to come to call, I had to be there as though they spoke a different language from everybody else and I would be the translator back and forth. So I ended up meeting a lot of governors and as some of the leadership said, "They don't seem to have to be real bright to be elected governor." I think that was an eye-opening moment for them but it wasn't such a surprise for me, having been around for a while. So I was there for a decade and became their director of state government relations and traveled around the country. I have seen a lot of state capitols and met a lot of legislators. I could be a huge spender in Montana and take all of the relevant people out to lunch and not have to break a \$20 bill. In some places it was much easier but it was great. I loved the travel, spent a lot of time in Sacramento where agriculture is the number one economic engine, not the entertainment industry and it was fascinating. It was really interesting work and I helped recruit a few more women to the company where there were hardly any. At one point I was the senior woman there before it seemed like a good idea that maybe they should hire women. We started a women's support network there and one of the questions was, would hourly workers, which is what most of the women were, be allowed to participate and I said, "Well, if we don't let them participate, we won't have enough women to do this." There were a couple of women engineers and some women researchers but all in all, the number of professional women was fairly small. There was support for doing something. It was still a good ol' boys network. A lot of the people there were Southerners for whom seeing women as peers was a particular challenge but there were wonderful things that came out of it. For instance, at one point Will Carpenter was my boss who is now the person who has this lecture series on our campus and it's such a pleasure to continue to see him and his wife, Helen, who were wonderful then and are still wonderful people now, I think doing things

they wouldn't have imagined they would be doing, 30 years ago or whenever it was that we worked together.

William Fischetti: I'd like you to talk a little bit about joining Monsanto as not only a woman but an environmentalist and the kind of reaction that happened with the mostly male executives.

Vivian Eveloff: And a Democrat, we have to say that. I was sometimes the house Democrat when they needed me. One of my funniest moments was when Gary...I just went blank on his last name...Gary, who was running for president.

William Fischetti: Hart?

Vivian Eveloff: Yes, when Gary Hart was running for president, the word came that he was going to run as an environmentalist and that Monsanto had a plant that was then in Boston Harbor, so on the bay and that there was a lot of pollution in Boston Harbor and he was going to announce his candidacy from a boat in front of the plant and that it would be on the national news and everybody was all upset about it. So I got a call from the president of the company saying, "Could you call him and tell him not to do that." I'd never met Gary Hart. I did not have that kind of standing on a national scale, in the Democratic party, it was elite and his part, a reflection of not uncommon innocence: How does this work? Who really do make the decisions and don't and so forth. So I said, "Well, I'll see what I can do" and I made one phone call that I'm sure was of no avail just to try and get in touch with the Hart people from this area and he moved his campaign announcement and they always thought I did it. You know, perceived power is just as good as real power sometimes. So there were those kinds of moments. But it was a very male...and as I said, largely Southern environment. I also learned something that I wouldn't have known if somebody hadn't filled me in: there were a lot of very tall men who seemed to have very obscure jobs. These were men older than I was, maybe in their 40's or 50's, whatever. I was in my 30's when I went to work there. And I found them puzzling because they didn't seem to ever really be working very much and if I had questions that I would think would have answers, they never seemed to have the answers and so I asked somebody at one point, "I don't understand what so-and-so and so-and-so do. They seem to just sit around with their feet on the desk and I don't know what that job is but could I do that too?" and the

explanation was that there had been an industrial basketball league on the East Coast and Monsanto had had some facilities in Springfield, Massachusetts and some other places and it was important to have a good team. So most of these tall men had been recruited for the basketball team and never really expected to do much else and I guess they hadn't anticipated that they would become life-long employees which they did. It was still of the era where you went to work at big companies out of college and you retired from them 40 years later. That was the ethic. But, of course, for women that wasn't true other than the secretaries who had been there for a long time. So there were issues. There were meetings where I was the only woman. One of my favorite runs...and this is a Will Carpenter story and a more current kind of one...we had staff meetings and the problem with having staff meetings generally was that the boss was too busy to come so the staff would sit around and tell each other what we were doing and then we would leave after 45 minutes or so. So, when Will was the boss, he recognized the problem and said, "Well, we'll have them in the evening." Again, for the men, that was always a plus: "Oh, a free meal, an open bar, whatever." For me, I had children at home and, although I had somebody there helping look after them, it wasn't that I didn't like home cooking or my own cooking or that I was trying to avoid my children, which in some cases the men thought was the real upside of evening meetings. And this meeting was going to be at the St. Louis Club in downtown Clayton, a private club, and we all got the notice. It was the such-and-such room on the such-and-such floor and I get off the elevator at that floor and there's a man there by the elevators to greet the members and he pales at seeing me and he said, "Ma'am, you must be mistaken. I'm sure wherever you're going it's not on this floor" and I said, "Is the Pine Tree Room..."...or whatever it was "...on this floor?" and he said, "Yes, but you can't go there," and I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "This is a floor that's men only," and I said, "Well, I have a business meeting in the Pine Tree Room," and by now there are three or four people and one of them picks up a tablecloth, does not put it over my head but puts it as the screen and says, "You just walk behind that tablecloth and we'll get you down this hall and around the corner" and he knocks on the door and Will opens the door and in I go. But that was the only time we ever met in that space. But, when I look at women today and the whole issue of being covered and all of that, I think, you know, we're not that far away

from when we were not to be seen in places in this community, in professional circumstances. So, it was an opportunity for both of us to learn and I think it gave some of the men, at least, an appreciation, that, in fact, in some environments, we had evolved very little.

William Fischetti: When you went to work with Monsanto, were there any other women executives?

Vivian Eveloff: No, there was another woman...and you have to understand, it was a somewhat awkward situation where, although I had been interviewed and hired by the people I was working with, the word was that I was to be hired, that I was seen as somebody who had a background that was going to be very helpful for them because I understood the environmental movement and environmental issues which everybody else there was pretty much was with the team and lined up (in March?). Of course, there were some people who thought I couldn't be trusted because I was really from the enemy camp and I think there were people at Monsanto who thought the environmental group...and there were a number of environmental organizations...we were really the only one that was university-based but Sierra Club and some other groups...picked the polluter of the week and that we would all send out press releases criticizing one chemical manufacturer or the other, that it was that kind of a conspiracy, to go after them and then the environmental groups had a very different perspective about why I was going there, that maybe I was going there because I'd been a plant initially and now I was being sort of brought home, as it were, to the mother ship. So establishing credibility after I made that transition, was somewhat challenging but I think that was the beginning but in some cases I became the canary and they understood that I had a life-saving value for the rest of them because I could see where there were pitfalls that they were entirely oblivious to and help them...I always felt good about what I was doing because I got them to do a little more research perhaps, a little more testing on some of these things. We had a wonderful project that I was really excited about. They were then in the early stages of looking at ways of minimizing the impact of pesticides in agriculture and one of the questions was, could you treat seed, which we now know they can, in a way that it would be immune from their greatest pest enemies without having to treat the land. You don't really want to treat the land; what you really want to do is treat the plant and leave the land alone essentially,

somehow make the plant so that it is not susceptible to the disease for which you had been pouring on gallons of chemicals. So the initial research was taking place at the St. Charles County Research Farm that Monsanto had owned for years and tested their products on for years and the research was being done with tomato plants. So the tomato seed was being treated with an organic material that is known to be pest-resistant and it was going to be dusted on the seeds. Well, dust and seeds do not have a natural affinity for one another and the question was, how to get the pesticide dust, which was organic, to stay with the seed. You don't want to end up with the seeds over here and the treatment product over there, can't do it. So it was some high tech research and the end result...and I think this is not patented so we can talk about it... [47:44 1<sup>st</sup> tape ran out of time. Switched to 2<sup>nd</sup> tape here...] labor union brotherhood lived not far from the farm and I know him because of my external activities and he calls. He said, "Vivian, I need to talk to somebody." I said, "What's the problem?" He said, "Well, they're testing this new kind of stuff over at the farm and my dog runs around and he sometimes runs through the farm and I want to know, is it going to hurt him? Is it going to kill him?" I said, "We'll have a meeting," and I brought together some of the management leadership and some researchers who could speak English and I don't mean that they had another foreign language basis but could communicate in a way that this man could understand. So we sat down and we talked about it and they explained, the tomato seed, yes, and the pesticide and the Elmer's Glue and he was pretty good about all of that and when the plant comes up, the seed and the pesticide are all down here and his conclusion was great relief and he said, "I was afraid I would have to shoot the dog the next time he ran through there so he wouldn't have a terrible death," and it was just astonishing to the scientists to think that somebody who in many ways was very savvy and smart could have come to that conclusion all on his own, that this must be terrible, and again, it fed into the need for that kind of higher degree of chemical education for the general public.

William Fischetti: In your success at Monsanto, do you think, did they start hiring more women?

Vivian Eveloff: They hired more women, we did coaching. There was a lot of professional development programs that they had begun and historically they had not had women participants and so I was often the first and the only woman

and then when they began to reach out sometimes to the engineers...because many of the men who rose to the top had an engineering background and I had encouraged them to go out and recruit more engineers. At that time there were still not a lot of women engineers but they would do that and to have them in the plant which required that they allow women to wear trousers at the plant, along with their steel-toed shoes which were hard to find in women's sizes in those days. They were mostly concerned that they were going to trip and fall because the shoes really didn't fit them very well. Anyway, so there was a particular woman they wanted to have go through a residential program that was held at a retreat area out west of St. Louis and they called me and they said, "We're doing a leadership from your side..." or whatever the program was "...program," and I said, "Oh, yes, I did that a couple of years ago. It was a good program and I'm glad to know that you are doing it and you're including this woman" and they said, "Yes, but we can't send her by herself and there really isn't another woman who is at the point in her career where she would be eligible. Would you mind doing it again?" and I said, "Is it like nuns, where we have to have two of us together? You can't let her go out there by herself?" and they said, "Well, we think she'd be more comfortable." I said, "Have you asked her?" "Well, no, but we really want you to do this" and it became clear that it was take one for the team so we went out and I think there were maybe 12 men and the two of us and the accommodations were in group homes, essentially, on the property and there were four bedrooms, several bathrooms, whatever. So there were initially three groups of four men and she and I were staying in a place where there was just the two of us and I said, "There's no point in her coming out here and doing this if you think we have to live in a segregated way. If we were in a hotel, the guy would be here, the woman would be in the next room. Nobody would say 'You can't be that close together.'" I said, "There are private bathrooms, there are private bedrooms. We have homework to do at night as a group. You want her to learn to work well with men. You want men to learn to work well with women. I won't do it if we don't have mixed housing." You could just hear all the stuff in human resources, r-r-r-r-r-r, and a couple more phone calls and that was the way it was. We integrated the housing so that we learned to work together as a team. They weren't resistant. It just wasn't their first idea about how things ought to be done. So whether those changes are still even thought about,

I don't know. I presume by now that they're all employees and everybody's treated to the same opportunities as they were then but it was historically a very male environment, not that they were unkind to women but they didn't see women as their peers.

William Fischetti: When you went through the program, did they give you a separate house?

Vivian Eveloff: I don't think so. I think I was there and I can't remember whether there was another woman there or not but it wasn't anything I'd given that much thought to and then when they tried to closet us both, I spoke up.

William Fischetti: What happens after Monsanto?

Vivian Eveloff: So I'd been at Monsanto for a decade, during which time I also became the first woman to have a male subordinate...and this was somebody who...it was an engineer who had been at a plant but had interest in government relations and nice young guy with a young family and I interviewed a lot of people and he seemed to me to be best suited for the position. He had some technical skills that I didn't have and he was interested in government relations and politics and all of that so that seemed good and I hired him and we had a serious heart-to-heart talk and I said, "You know, every guy in the company who meets you is going to probably say, 'Oh, you're the poor sucker working for some dame,'" and I said, "I hope you will always say that 'she's as good a boss as I've ever had or maybe the best boss I've ever had' and if you have problems or concerns or questions, bring them to me. I don't want you grouching with the guys when everybody sits around complaining about their bosses for reasons that would have any implications for gender. We're just not going to do that." So we worked together for, I don't know, three, four years maybe and there was an opportunity for him to get promoted so I worked very hard for him to get promoted because I thought that was important. We don't want this to look like a dead end career path. And so I got him promoted and then there was a hiring freeze so I was never allowed to hire anybody again and ended up doing the work of two people, which is not an uncommon story, I think, for women in most professional environments. And when I finally left Monsanto, they hired three people to do my job. And it's interesting, I was contacted by three or four other professional women, several of them engineers who had left and were trying to put together a class

action suit about discrimination at Monsanto and I was not interested in being a part. I thought they probably had a pretty good case in their field. I felt in my field, I was treated reasonably fair but I did a lot of self-advocacy early on. I had a title and job grade. Most of the major corporations at that time, and I think to some degree still, are modeled on the military and so things had grades and very close to ranks and you were entitled to this at that rank and something else at the next rank. So I had a rank that entitled me to a private office but I was in a cubical and one of my women friends in the same area put together a poster board door with my name on it, "Miss Eveloff" and a thing that simulated a handle and I could kind of slide it in front of my opening to my cubical and then I went to a guy in HR and said to him, "You know, I know that my job is more important than those two guys who spend their entire days with their feet on the desk reading the newspapers and they could close the door and they don't even bother and I don't have a door; I have conversations that need to be private. I need a door and I'm not saying I'm going to sue but I'm saying it makes you vulnerable to suit if you let the company do those things," and I pretty soon had an office with a door. If I had waited, who knows? And I just wasn't inclined. I wasn't raised to wait for somebody else to solve the problem that I thought I had a solution to. So, when I left, I was at the point where I either had to move to Washington or I had to go someplace else. I'd been doing what I'd been doing for a long time. It was running well. I have to say, I made a significant difference in the environmental policy for this country reaching an agreement with a woman who is a senior staffer too, a very powerful senator in the California legislature where all the agriculture policy in the country really comes from California and then becomes national if possible. And so being able to take care of a challenge in California was enormously helpful for the entire industry and the industry's view always was, "We'll see you in court" or "We'll kill it in the senate." There were two tools available for the industry to stop requirements that they felt would restrict their success, their research, their new products, whatever it was. So I usually was required to take an attorney with me when I went to California, when there was legislation to consider because there was always a possibility of a lawsuit just hanging out there. And the senator, a man, was a pretty inflexible, determined fire brand kind of guy who, in my heart, of course, I really liked and he had a terrific woman chief of staff and she and I communicated. We hit it

off and she understood that it wasn't in their best interest to end up with doing something terrific that would be tied up in court forever and might be turned down and I understood that it wasn't good for the company to be in that role, that there were things that were doable and that we worked out some environmental responsibility middle-ground language that they adopted in California ultimately. One day I get a call from the head of the division that I'm now part of which is now what Monsanto is, the ag company, and he said, "Well, Vivian, I'm afraid the chickens have come home to roost," an agricultural simile in the business, and I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well, you know, our biggest customer in California..."...who I did know and who was a real tough and tumble sort of guy, he says, "He is beyond mad about the new law and he's chewed me out but I told him you make the policy decisions in that area so he's going to be calling you and just know I stand behind you but you're going to have to listen to him." Well, it was sort of a...if you get the phone any closer than this, your face will melt, kind of conversation in which he cussed me out which in some ways made me feel like I had really arrived, that they were no longer being deferential to the little lady. If I was the policy maker, I was taking the push-back for making the policy and that they would never buy another Monsanto product, ever again, yada yada yada and I said, "Well, you have to do what you have to do but I hope you understand that we don't want the pollution that those practices can create and it's bad for our name to be associated with that and if you don't want to go the small step to be more responsible, I can't help that and if you decide not to buy our products, that's your choice." He was back in the fold because our products suited his need and it wasn't so burdensome to do it. So while I'm running around the country fighting the ag wars, I was also active back here. Now, it did include Governor Bond putting me on the State Agricultural Marketing Commission where I was the first and only woman, which I discovered entailed going to meetings and being given cases of fruit and vegetables which was sort of the best perk I'd gotten at any job I'd been in. I come home with a case of oranges where weren't grown in Missouri but nonetheless...the Ag Marketing Committee had oversight over all produce and meats. I was not so much into getting meats. Anyway, so I was continuing to be active in the community. I worked on lots of campaigns. At the time I was active in the caucus. We brought in the first women lieutenant governor from anywhere in the country, from New

York State, to be a speaker for a women's caucus event and the reception after the event was at my home and must have been 1975...'6 maybe, around that time, Kit Bond's first term and Kit Bond was in support of the Equal Rights Amendment and the Democrat he ran against in the '72 election was a very conservative Democrat so he had the support of a lot of women. Anyway, I opened the door, guests were coming in and who is it but Kit Bond and several aides, meeting his supporters prior to the next election and he comes in and he couldn't have been lovelier, just lovely and my children were around and at the time my daughter must have been three or four. So I say to her, "Go get a piece of paper and a pen and you can get the governor's autograph and you can take it for show-and-tell to school on Monday." And she said, "What's an autograph?" and I said, "Well, that's a famous person's signature and you keep it and you treasure it and it's a nice thing to have to remember that you met that famous person." So she disappears into the kitchen and he and I are continuing to talk and she comes back and she...cute curls, the whole deal and she pulls on his camel's hair jacket and he scoops her up like any good politician and she says, "Here," and she holds out the paper and the pencil and he said, "Well, what do you have here?" and she says, "My autograph" which he found amusing. I don't know that he kept it forever and treasured it but she now is a famous person and he might want to reconsider. But she wrote about that story when she applied to get into a private high school and it seemed to have worked. It stood her in good stead for a long time, since she was accepted. But anyway, so my family's house, my dining room table, like many of the other women of that era, was always full of some kind of campaign efforts. My kids learned to shake hands and meet people growing up, doing that, having worked on Sue Shearer's successful campaign in '72, we moved on in '74 when Betty Van Uum ran to be the first woman on the county council which most men thought was a crazy notion but she nonetheless won, crazy notion or not and made a difference in that job. Then Harriet Woods decided she would run for the state senate and we all got involved in that campaign which then led to her running into the U.S. Senate so we began to learn about campaigns on a larger scope and I became a Democratic committee woman sort of by default in my community. The committee woman left, moved away, I can't remember what it was. I was appointed but it subsequently was an elected office, way down at the bottom of the ballot in August of presidential elections. There were the party

committee people and I served in that role for about 10 years which put me at Democratic national conventions. My favorite one was 1972 when the Vietnam War was still at issue and George McGovern was everybody's favorite candidate and the Women's Political Caucus was getting started on a national basis and we would have caucuses late at night and there were women from around the country and the press was all over it. One of the reasons we would meet at 11:00 o'clock at night was the idea that the press would be doing other things and they wouldn't bother us. There were women who put on hats and covered their faces and crawled in underneath the camera's range to come to the meetings because if the people back home knew that they were part of such a movement, they would lose whatever office they had. One of them I remember was the school principal. She was afraid she would lose her job if they knew she was for the Equal Rights Amendment which was the issue then, as it's been an ongoing thing. So it was fascinating, meeting people nationally. It's the first time to meet Gloria Steinem and some of the other national women leaders get all fired up and continued to do those kinds of things until finally, in 1994, I was recruited to run for the open state senate seat and actually it was open originally in 1992 when the office holder, a man, Ed Dirk, was given an appointment by Governor Ashcroft to be on a labor council that was a full-time, well compensated job and one of the classic political strategies where it was a seat that the Republican governor thought he could probably pick up if he could have a special election, probably not possible in a general election but then if you win it, you have the incumbent. It was a hodge-podge of elections whether re-districting having occurred, the election should take place with the new lines which would be in effect in '94 or the old lines which was still in effect because the seat was a 1990 election and this was.... So first they had picked candidates with one geography and then they picked them with the other geography and in the end, in fact, the Republican candidate won and then when it came time for 1994, he wasn't in the district so it was once again an open seat. I faced a three-way primary and the two men who ran against me seemed, fortunately for me, to believe the other man was the real opponent so it was a nasty, personal kind of election between the two of them, kind of campaign literature that would go down in the annals of classic negative campaigning but they didn't pay that much attention to me and the Republicans in the meanwhile had a male candidate who had been in the

House at an earlier period and a woman who had a very similar profile to my own, a community leader, active in Republican politics but also active in lots of other areas. So she won her primary and I won my primary and then we get toward the 1994 general election and it was a district that historically had been Democratic, from the prior Democrat who represented the Northern part of the district and then the middle part of the district had also belonged to a Democratic senator in the past. But 1994 was a watershed election for the Republicans in which they took over the House. That was when Newt Gingrich became the Speaker of the House and the only other state-wide candidate at the time was the auditor's office and we had an open senate seat with John Ashcroft, I think, facing a former congressman from Kansas City who was running, who had won the nomination and was running for the general election who was not well known and not widely supported here. So there were all these signs that it was going to be a Republican sweep but we had a terrific operation and we knew how many votes it took to win, something I'd been doing the math for for a long time and we got more than the number of votes it would have in a normal election taken to win but not enough to win. So Betty Simms became the state senator and the first woman to represent...since Harry Woods whose district was part of this district but also a large part of it not in the district. So we started a tradition of having women senators from the mid-county: Maria Chappelle, no doubt, carries on that tradition and Jill Shupe who's running for the open seat this year that's sort of that central corridor, and a little west, Joan Bray. So part of what I wanted to accomplish got accomplished anyway and it was a fascinating experience, to say the things I say to people now when I try to encourage them to run for office is that people you don't know will be so wonderful to you you can't imagine. I remember a retired school teacher who I knew was living entirely on her pension but who cared and who I'd known through the Women's Political Caucus, gave me a contribution that was inordinately generous. I knew what a significant amount it was considering her resources and people with an enormous amount of money who could have done 10 times what this woman had done without anywhere near the same impact, were much less generous. People worked hard and cared. One of my favorite moments was a woman who lived in North County and was a friend of...volunteer, somebody I hadn't known before the campaign who had called her and said, "You know, you live on a great

corner and there's a lot of traffic on your corner and I wonder if I could put up a yard sign for this woman I'm working for" ...this was in the primary ...and she said, "Oh, no, I couldn't possibly take that kind of a yard sign. I'm sorry, my husband wouldn't hear of it," and after the primary, the woman called the campaign and spoke to her friend and she said, "Did that woman win the primary?" and she said, "Yes, she won, Vivian won the primary election." She said, "Are you interested in a yard sign?" and she said, "Yes, I just put my husband in a nursing home. Bring me a yard sign," and there was, at that point, still a lot of women voting the way...or saying, at least, they voted the way their husbands told them. That's the good thing about a secret ballot.

William Fischetti: The fact that two women had won the primary is definitely progress.

Vivian Eveloff: It was, it was indeed. So now I have been at the university since...almost 18 years now. It will be 18 years in September and encouraging other women to do it. Part of what Blanche's vision was when she and I originally talked about creating an entity like the Institute for Women in Public Life was that this was a campus with a predominantly female population and that they continued to mostly favor majors and career paths that were very traditional so the question was, how can we encourage them to take risks, to do something new? Nursing and teaching and some of the traditional occupations are great but these women are also perfectly capable of business leadership, scientific leadership, all of this, and if you want to be a nurse or you want to be a teacher, terrific, but maybe you'd like to be the head of the nursing program or be the nurse that sits on the conflict resolution panel at the hospital or something else beyond being a bedside nurse. So we decided that what was lacking really is the opportunity to be encouraged to do some of these things, to see beyond the traditional opportunities and to do a program in which the participants learn to be leaders and take chances perhaps and one in which they met women who were doing other things, who might be mentors or role models for them. So that was the original model for the Leadership Academy which, when it was begun in 1996, was the Leadership Academy for Women in Public Life. It was not Sue Shearer and then two years later, when Sue Shearer was ready to retire after serving 26 years, a record for a woman, in the Missouri legislature, the curators and then the legislature as well, voted to add her name to ours and now we are most commonly known as the Sue Shearer

Institute and we've lost our own last name but I like to remind people that it's about leadership for women and, in addition to doing a week-long residential program the week before Memorial Day every year, and a scheme that I designed because it made the most sense to me in terms of having a broad and lasting impact, there are nine public universities who are partners in the program, the University of Missouri-St. Louis being one of them, three other (system?) campuses, what used to be the "compass" campuses, Southeast, Southwest, which is now Missouri State, Warrensburg and Lincoln and Truman, they each send four students. They help underwrite the cost. The students arrive on Sunday and leave new people, by and large, on Friday afternoon. We all live in the dorms together, the staff, we have a couple of students who serve as interns, we have a faculty in residence slot; sometimes we have two, and they don't have a moment to breathe or doze or anything, nor do any of the rest of us for the entire week which includes public policy and career decision-making, how does it all work, how do these people who do things in the public sector balance their life and their other commitments because most of them also have families and sometimes they have regular jobs. So we have a panel that has women of various ages and stages of life doing various things: lawyers, judges, community leaders, teachers, they may be any of those, and that occurs right before graduation Friday morning and their families and sometimes their significant others are there for that conversation which has had a fabulous impact because, particularly the significant others hear these women say, "Well, I need my partner to help do this. We're both parents of these children so we both share the responsibility," and it has, I think probably improved a lot of relationships and perhaps saved a few marriages, to have everybody in the room doing that. On Wednesday we go to Jefferson City, having picked a bill for the students to debate in the chambers in the capitol and that they have formed teams and done research, spoken with advocates for both sides and we get some lobbyists, women lobbyists from Jeff City to come join the debate on the floor and coach somewhat. We get a member of the legislature to serve as the speaker and from there we go to the governor's mansion where we have a lunch that includes members of the governor's cabinet who are women or other senior women in Jefferson City and then we go to the Supreme Court where I have to say we are very pleased to be met by the three women of the seven-member court, all of whom I've been

advocate for. One of my particular personal interests is the judiciary and diversity in the judiciary and leadership among women in the judiciary and we do a program on how to become a judge in the non-partisan court system because I've realized that the men all coach each other: "Here's who you need to call or here's what you need to do; here's who you..." ...and nobody tells the women and the women don't ask. So we created that program, I guess, 15 years ago and the number of women on the courts has increased significantly. I wouldn't say that we or the institute gets credit for all of that but we are given credit by a lot of the women judges, of encouraging them to do it. Now that the interviews are open to the public, I have attended the interviews for judicial applicants for the Supreme Court, for the Court of Appeals in St. Louis City and County as well as in Jackson County and Kansas City and in Green County in Springfield where they have the non-partisan court plan. I think that I will write a paper of some sort because there is not any consistency between the regions, among the regions or from the presiding judges of the next higher court or the executives in this process and there is no rule book and they change every year or every two years, depending on the circuit and sometimes they only get to be involved in the selection of one judge for one vacancy. Sometimes they never get to do it and they don't school each other on how they've done it. So I am sort of the resource, I hear, from...we talk to the presiding judge in the Eastern district about the process and his experiences one time doing it and shared with him some of the things I knew and he said...he had no idea because they just don't share it with each other. So it's an important job and there's not much preparation for doing it and sometimes the assumption is the governor has a particular agenda and the commission may or may not be in sync with that agenda and so he may get people...I remember when Governor Carnahan was doing this, he and I would talk a lot about who made the panel and we came up with the analogy, it's sort of like the boarding school of meat and two veg but the panel of three people sometimes was meat and two veg and if the governor picks the meat and they send him back the veggies over again and maybe something that looks less desirable than the last one he picked, does that make sense? And he said, no, he thought that you could start with a whole fresh panel but often historically that didn't happen. It's happening a little more these days. But anyway, that's a particular public service interest of mine because it makes a huge difference, not only encouraging women to

become attorneys, but the idea that they can become judges and I would say...now, this is a terrible biased statement...my experience is that often the caliber of attorney who applies to be a judge, among the women, is a little higher than it is often among the men. For women, particularly, if they're reasonably young and have a family at home still, it's a perfect job. It has regular hours; they don't have to go out and generate work; they don't have a lot of other things that they have to do. It's a good job. It's interesting. They're smart; they can figure it out so they do a really good job. They may not be as palsy as the guys are with one another but so be it whereas I've seen many men who have applied who either aren't successful in private practice or don't want to work that hard or whatever it is. Sometimes they're very good people and they really care about the law and they care about fairness and they're going to be great judges without regard to gender and sometimes I think to myself, particularly when they've applied for the fifth, sixth or tenth time, "You know, really, you ought to just give it a rest maybe or hang it up. It doesn't seem to be going your way no matter who the commissioner is or who the governor is." So it's a very interesting process, particularly when there are no women on the commission. I sat through two days' worth of hearings some years back in St. Louis County where it happened that everybody on the commission, save one, was not only male but Catholic and it was the springtime and the interviews focused mostly on fish fries. I, not knowing much about fish fries, learned a lot about fish fries because that was all they really wanted to talk about. I think the commissioners were not particularly interested. They picked three of these people they had fish fry conversations with to be on the panel and one of them is on the court now but it was astonishing to me that it could go so far afield. They had, in that case, almost all male applicants that they were interviewing that particular day and it was just a bonding moment for the guys but it didn't seem to me to help much in the selection of an effective judge.

William Fischetti: We've interviewed two of the Supreme Court justices, Mary Russell and...I can't think of the...

Vivian Eveloff: Laura Stive or Patty Breckenridge or Ann Covington who was the first.

William Fischetti: Ann Covington. Yeah, we've done both of them and the courts are very interesting interviews. So the Sue Shearer Institute, besides doing this annual thing that you're about to do next Sunday, I guess...

Vivian Eveloff: This coming Sunday, yes.

William Fischetti: Okay, besides that, what else is going on with that?

Vivian Eveloff: That's an annual program, this is our 18<sup>th</sup> year doing that and we have lots of graduates and the most wonderful part is hearing from them about how their experience changed their lives. My favorite short case study is a woman from Missouri's Science and Technology who was a nuclear engineering student. We've had several nuclear engineering students participate in our program, each of whom has said that it changed their lives and this particular woman is living outside of Washington working for an engineering company whose responsibility it is to do failsafe engineering for nuclear rockets but she's also on her local election board and she said it would never have occurred to her that it was important to do something for the government that makes the kind of work she does possible, to be involved in the government, that she couldn't just be a free-loader. And so when it's election time, she's out working the polls and going around and making sure the elections are going as smoothly as the rocket launches do. That, I believe, in a big civic way, is about the best thing anybody can do, to help people who are good in all kinds of ways also appreciate the importance of being a participant in a democracy.

William Fischetti: Is there more than in Missouri right now?

Vivian Eveloff: We can and we have a few of our graduates in the legislature and some of them working in administrative positions. The woman who is being singled out for the Amethyst Award honor at the dinner we have, our culminating dinner Thursday night, is a surprisingly junior person who has had a big impact on health policy in this state, both as a lobbyist for the Health and Social Services Department in the state and having worked also for some legislators who helped craft some of the policies. So, that's good stuff. Anyway, in addition to that program, we have managed now...I think we are about to be in our 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> year to do a program that focuses just on UMSL students. My feeling from the beginning was that, for the honor of being part of this campus, it would be important to do something specifically for the students on this campus so this is called UMSL Lead and it's a semester-long program. It begins in the fall and the leaders of the program are prior graduates of the program which began the first year we started doing it, two of the applicants were so advanced

in terms of their leadership experience that they seemed overqualified. So we decided they could lead the Lead Program and we would be the coaches, kind of behind the scenes. And that model has continued. So, it's open to everybody. We send information out to faculty, to department heads. Everywhere we put banners in the MSC and we usually end up with about 20 students and much of the program...it's done usually Fridays when we don't have classes to speak of on campus and we can get together...and it used to be one Friday a month with a speaker or some kind of external content and another Friday a month as a small group discussing what they learned and what's coming up. And last year the group decided that they should meet every Friday. So it's been interesting to see how it's evolved but they learn how to negotiate; we do a strength-based assessment with a professional assessor talking about it so that they learn what they're good at and where that might take them and those kinds of programs and we also do a community service project as part of it and we have adopted agencies and done volunteer work and a couple of years ago, we went to an agency to do volunteer work and the students were just so taken by the mission and the people who were there that they wanted to do more. It was a shelter for women who are pregnant who have young children and are homeless and provides them with childcare so that the young women can, in many cases, finish their high school education, find a job, essentially get themselves on their feet, learn good parenting skills and they can stay there, I think, until their baby is a year old and then they have a kind of halfway transition home across the street which is an apartment that you have to pay rent for. So the young woman parent who spoke to us when we went to visit to do our volunteer work was so impressive. Here she is living off of Jefferson, just south of the highway and she is working at McDonald's in Chesterfield and she's taking public transportation and spends most of her day back and forth doing the transportation and also going to night school to work on a college degree...very bright, very personable, of course an adorable little baby and the students, the Lead students decided they wanted to adopt the family and do a fundraiser for them to help with this transition, to get her fixed in her apartment and all of that. Whatever age your children are, when they're doing a fundraiser, I think all of your life's experience passes before you. So they talked, of course, at first, about having a bake sale and we said, "No, no, you cannot raise real money at a bake sale. It's going to cost you about what you're

going to net if you're lucky. So you can't do a bake sale. You have to do something that's going to be at a different level if you're going to really talk about raising money." So somebody knew about selling frozen pizzas. They had done it at their church and they decide that they're going to become frozen pizza salespeople. My eyes crossed. I thought, this is one step above the bake sale but I'm not sure that it can be successful. We were dubious but we discovered there was a place on campus where we could have the pizzas delivered and then dispensed, some freezer that was available for that moment. So these women did a sales job, the likes of which I couldn't have imagined. They raised almost \$800 toward outfitting this woman who also had no transportation so they had to take her shopping and arrange for her to get the furniture she needed. Anyway, they had sort of a moving shower for her. The Women and Gender Study group co-sponsored with us. There were all kinds of great gifts. Everybody cried. The young mother cried; the students cried; the adults cried. We were all in tears because it was a wonderful, moving moment. So last year, we have friend who were involved with the National Association of Women Judges and one of the women here was the president of it, somebody, again, we'd worked with over the years in our involvement with the judiciary and she said, "I'd like to try something new. The National Association is looking for ways of making a difference in the community, of having a service program of some kind and we think what we'd like to do is do a one-day long program for middle school girls who are so vulnerable and sometimes if you can get them on the right road, then it sets them on the right path for life. And so we think we could afford to have 50 middle school girls and we'd like to do it at your campus and we'd like the institute to be the co-sponsor of it. We don't have it in our budget, of course, and bring in a number of adult women who will be speakers and will talk about how they've taken control of their lives and they've managed to accomplish what they have and some of these women were in their 20's and some of them were older than that. So we put together a day-long program. A number of schools were invited to participate and it looks like we're going to be 50 and the schools will pay for the transportation. They will bring advisors. We will provide lunch" and so now we have a new fundraising effort which becomes our part of the match for what the National Association of Women Judges. Well, the next thing we know...and we're doing this in January...is we have 89 students and their advisors who had signed up

from public and private schools in St. Louis City and St. Louis County, some parochial schools. The judges are all in charge of designing the program. We're getting the Lead people to understand what their roles were going to be. The day of the event arrives and there are people calling saying, "I didn't RSVP but I'm coming with 20 students" and one of the judges, Judge Lofton, said, "No," in a perfect judge voice. "You had time to respond. You didn't respond. We have no room for anybody to come. Get off the bus. Go back to your classroom. You cannot come. No, you cannot come with a few students. Did you not hear what I said?" I mean, she really...the woman on the other end of the phone learned a lot in that process. So here we are, 89 students, a dozen or so Lead students who were able to participate who are running the program, the advisors, the judges. It was a fabulous program. We all learned a lot. The advisors were busy signing up to come back again next year. We're not sure about the funding for it next year but it's not the first time where people have wanted us to do things and there isn't any funding to do it and sometimes we can work it out and sometimes we cut it back. Our funding is no better today than it was when we started 18 years ago. It's about the same \$250,000 from the Missouri budget and then however much money we can raise. We charge the schools for the students they send for the Leadership Academy but we don't charge them enough to cover it so we're forever fundraising on the side. So we do that program. We do the How to Become a Judge school where we partner with the Association of Women Lawyers and men come to that program as well as women who are interested in the judiciary because the bar association doesn't run a similar program. We get a lot of judges and applicants and people on the commissions to talk about things that nobody was saying in public 10 years ago. It was really a back room kind of network of mostly men and now, it's out there and I meet one-on-one sometimes with applicants, sometimes before they apply, when I always encourage them to go sit through a round of interviews so that they can understand what it's about. That's what having them open to the public is supposed to be about, not just me. More often than not it is just me listening. So we do all of that. We used to do a program on appointments, how to be appointed with somebody from St. Louis City and somebody from St. Louis County as well as people from the governor's office and we haven't done that program in some time, partly because I think all of those entities are now more in tune with appointing women. We used to hear,

“I wanted to appoint a woman but I didn’t know any,” and I haven’t heard that in a while. So we tell people what the process entails but we have not hosted that particular program in a time. We do a lot of public speaking, from going to the League of Women Voters and other kinds of service organizations, to talking to college students. I gave a talk at RALA this past fall with, I don’t know, 100 and some people in the room, men as well as women. A little bit has to do with how to connect and how to network and networking is now the hot word and because being involved in public life is a lot about networking. We have been teaching it for a long time and put it sort of ahead of the curve on that subject and we still do that. We had been approached by law students at the two law schools in town at one point to do some kind of program for them but the student from one law school didn’t want to go to the other school’s campus to do it. So we decided, if they couldn’t work it out, we had our hands full and we did not do it. But there’s a lot of needs and we try to meet the ones we can. We’re still a small staff. We began as two people. Now we’re three people but it’s a lot of work and a lot of nights and weekends and we hardly ever say no because it seems to be a real need and we feel a calling to meet it.

William Fischetti: And there’s a lot of gratification in what you’ve accomplished.

Vivian Eveloff: There is. It’s hard to say, there are a lot of people whose lives we’ve touched. We have over 600 graduates of the Leadership Academy now. Some of them are very successful and generous in repaying what they see as their gift from the institute, what they learned and who they’ve become as a result.

William Fischetti: If you were a young woman who, say, wanted to get involved in politics, what would be your suggestion?

Vivian Eveloff: Don’t wait to be asked.

William Fischetti: Well, run for city council or...

Vivian Eveloff: Well, I think the best way to learn and connect...and this is different for women than for men...I generally say, I’ve met the men who are just turning 25 and have four ties and maybe a suit and a blazer and they’re ready to run. That’s all it takes in their mind. They have the costume to wear and maybe they worked as a college student at the state capitol or in city hall or wherever else so they think they have the right connections

and in some cases they do but they're ready to run but women always want to be better prepared. So they want to have taken classes in political science. I had a woman call me and say, "Do I need to go to law school if I want to run for office?" I don't think a man would ever think that that was a barrier and that in order to be a law maker, you needed to know a lot about the law because we have very few lawyers in the Missouri legislature and that's true in general. Very few legislatures are composed primarily of lawyers. It generally doesn't pay well enough to get them to do that versus practicing law. So I would say working campaigns, read the newspaper, for heaven's sakes. Be informed, whether it's newspapers, old school and you're going to read a lot online. If you have the wherewithal to do that, fine, but you need to be well informed. You need to have good communication skills. If you want to go to Toast Masters or someplace like that where you can learn to talk, that helps. You need to know how to raise money and not be afraid to ask for it. It's one of the great barriers for women.

William Fischetti: Me, too.

Vivian Eveloff: They feel like they're asking for something for themselves. It's as though I'm asking you to help me buy my new purse or my new coat as opposed to men saying, "I'm going to make this a better government and you need to help support me because you're going to benefit from it." They just have a hard time getting into that mindset so we teach...two campaign schools, one of them annually in January aimed at people running for local office. Its two evenings. It's pretty darned effective, if I look at the results because often people run for local office without giving it much thought so the fact that they've come and they've prepared gives them a leg up. Then every other year, in odd numbered years, when we don't generally have big elections, we do a two-day program that's a more intense program and talks about how to find people who vote for people like you, which has partisan implications, although all of our programs are non-partisan and non-ideological. We really teach them as though it's starting a business: How do you find your customers basically and how do you raise the money to launch the business and what are the best ways to reach them for what you're doing and how do you deal with the competition. So it's a lot of those basic skills that if you're going to work in a campaign or be a candidate are extremely useful and if you're going to start a business, come in handy as well. So we've done that, kind

of a network of women around the state. It's always surprising to me who shows up. Men sometimes show up for these programs. It used to be that they would show up because their wife, their daughter or their sister was running and they were going to help in the campaign and so they wanted to know what was going on. Now sometimes they come as candidates. The last program we had in January had not quite as many men as women but its sort of Campaigns 101 and for a lot of people on the outside, it all seems to them to be a mystery. They can't quite figure out how you decide to run: "How did you get my address? How did you know this about me?" a lot of information that's available publicly and helps target your message when you reach out to those people. It's a science. It has to do with math so of course things I love but I think it's important. I think if it's only information that's passed from father to son, we don't get a representative government and the laws suffer as a result and the public suffers as a result. Why women want to do it is a question they ask themselves a lot. It doesn't seem, at this point, possible to make a big difference and I think women, when they give that kind of time and energy, want to make a difference and it's not so much about their egos which, in many cases it is for me, nor is it so much about being a stepping stone. I think particularly in Missouri now with term limits that as soon as...and we've had people on this campus as speakers who have talked about it...as soon as you get elected, you try to figure out how you can be elected the president of your class and as soon as you've done that, you try to figure out which are the most powerful committees you can be on which will give you the most opportunities to make connections with people who might hire you and that's why we have people leaving in the middle of their term, to go become lobbyists or to take a lucrative job where their experience in Jefferson City is valued. But it doesn't serve, I think, the community, the citizenry, the state to not have people who think that that's the job they want and willing to stay with it for the greater good.

William Fischetti: I think sometimes women run because they get mad about something the current organization is doing and that's a great motivation.

Vivian Eveloff: Well, you know the Harriet Woods story?

William Fischetti: Yeah.

Vivian Eveloff: That's kind of a classic one with the manhole covers that she couldn't get fixed and that's how she ended up thinking she could fix it herself and there she went. But I think in the beginning there are a lot of women of that generation who had personal issues that the government could do something about and chose not to that motivated them to go out and change government so that they were more responsive to the citizens' needs. Today I think women who are running are less likely to be from that model, more likely to see this as a way of making an impact or change in a big way and want to run, not just for the state legislature, but for state-wide office, be in a leadership role. Missouri has done moderately well in terms of electing some state-wide women. We, at this point, have regressed though. We have no women in state-wide office other than Claire McCaskill but in terms of our constitutional offices, as a state we've gone from having 50% to having none, not the kind of growth that I had hoped for.

William Fischetti: I'm not going to discuss Missouri politics because I've actually thought about moving.

Vivian Eveloff: Yes, well...

William Fischetti: Take that off the tape, will you?

Vivian Eveloff: Well, I can understand that.

William Fischetti: I have to ask you one more thing.

Vivian Eveloff: Okay.

William Fischetti: If you had been born 50 years before you were born, what do you think your opportunities would have been?

Vivian Eveloff: Oh, well, the suffrage movement existed then and there were women who were brazen enough to run for Congress in the '20s so those would have been opportunities. I don't think, as a shy little girl hating to go out selling Girl Scout cookies, that I could have imagined myself knocking on strangers' doors trying to sell them a human being, an elected official. I remember when I first did that for Sue Shearer, I thought, I cannot imagine that I am doing this but somehow that motivation was within me and prompted me to overcome my shyness and when I say I'm shy, people today would find that probably hard to believe. But somewhere

inside there is that little girl. But I've also been curious, willing to work hard, a lot of other things that, although raising a family and caring about my grandchildren and all of that is important to me and I don't find anything inconsistent doing that and telling women they should go out and run for governor or president or whatever else. I think that women as well as men can be well rounded people. Can we have it all? I think we can, like men, but not all at the same time and I don't think most men manage to have it all at the same time either unless with the help of a woman.

William Fischetti: Well, thank you, Vivian.

Vivian Eveloff: You're welcome. It's been a pleasure.