

Oral History Interview with Theodore H. (Ted) Zimmerman

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[Cover](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

*(the page numbers on the table of contents
may be different from those at the bottom of the screen)*

[Restrictions, Literary Rights, Quotations](#)

[Preface](#)

[Interview History](#)

[Interview](#)

[Index](#)

[Biographical Information](#)

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California Department of Education
Adult Education Oral History Project

Oral History Interview

with

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Riverside, 1988-89
Director, Employment Preparation Centers and Programs, Los Angeles USD,
Los Angeles, 1985-88
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Director, Career and Continuing Education, Garden Grove USD, 1970-74
Principal, Tri-Community Adult School, Covina Valley USD, 1968-70
Consultant, California Department of Education, 1967-68
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December 13, 1992

Bermuda Dunes, California

By Linda L. West

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RESTRICTIONS, LITERARY RIGHTS, QUOTATIONS.	v
PREFACE.	vi
INTERVIEW HISTORY.	vii
INTERVIEW December 13, 1992	
[Tape 1, Side A].	1
Characteristics of the "golden years" of adult education in the 1960's-- Shift in curricular priorities in adult education during the 1960's-- Regional Adult Vocational Education Councils (RAVEC's) Delineation of function between community colleges and school districts regarding adult education programs--Efforts of adult educators to gain respect-- Development of adult education from night school concept to round- the-clock comprehensive programs--Importance of administrator associations including Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Adult Education Committee and the preceding California Association of Adult Education Administrators--Establishment of Tri- Community Adult Education in Covina, West Covina, and Charter Oak--adult education finance--Development of Regional Occupation Centers and Programs (ROC/Ps)--start of Valley Vocational Center in La Puente.	
[Tape 1, Side B].	24
The ROP program in Garden Grove--Benefits of ROP's--Governance of ROP's--Effects of federal Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act (VEA) funding--Changes in VEA guidelines over the years--Adult education in the La Puente Union High School District in the 1960's--Adult education in the Simi Valley Unified School District in the 1960's--The carousel concept of vocational training courses--The California Bureau of Adult Education in the 1960's--The beginnings of the migrant student program--Tri-Community Adult Education in the 1960's-- Garden Grove Adult Education in the 1970's--The influx of Vietnamese refugees into Garden Grove--Changing demographics in Garden Grove.	

[Tape 2, Side A].....	49
-----------------------	----

Restructuring the Regional Occupational Centers at the Los Angeles Unified School District in the 1980's--Establishment of Alternative Education Work Centers at Los Angeles Unified School District--Concurrent enrollment programs--Establishment of the adult education Executive Development Program (EDP)--The outgrowth of EDP, the Professional Resources Outreach System.

INDEX.....	65
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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION.....	67
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RESTRICTIONS ON THIS INTERVIEW

None.

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PREFACE

Adult education in California has a proud history of helping its citizens to meet the challenges of life in a huge, complex, multicultural state. Through the years, California adult educators have provided leadership to the nation in the *development of innovative instructional practices and creative educational solutions.*

The California Adult Education Oral History Project began in 1992 as a companion to a print history of adult education commissioned by the California Department of Education. As the century draws to a close, the growth and energy of California adult education in the sixties, the institutionalization of competency based education in response to the influx of refugees and immigrants in the seventies and eighties, and the innovative uses of technology of the nineties will be recorded.

The oral history project started with a small group leaders whose careers began in the 1950's and 1960's and who witnessed and influenced important events in the development of the nation's largest adult education program.

Significant assistance to the new project was provided by the staffs of both the California State Archives and the Oral History Program, History Department, California State University, Fullerton. This project could not have begun without the vision of Raymond G. Eberhard, Administrator, Adult Education Unit, California Department of Education, and the support of Lynda T. Smith, Consultant, Adult Education Unit.

Linda L. West
June 1, 1993

INTERVIEW HISTORY

Interviewer

Linda L. West

Interview Time and Place

One interview was conducted in Theodore H. (Ted) Zimmerman's home in Bermuda Dunes, California, on December 13, 1993.

Editing

The interviewee reviewed and edited the transcript. No information was omitted. When the tape was inaudible or when necessary for clarification, some information was added and is indicated by brackets [].

Tapes

The original cassette tapes were transferred to reel to reel format at California State University, Fullerton and deposited with the California State Archives.

CALIFORNIA ADULT EDUCATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEWEE: TED H. ZIMMERMAN

INTERVIEWER: Linda L. West

[Session 1, December 13, 1992]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

WEST: This is Linda West interviewing Ted Zimmerman in Bermuda Dunes, California, on December 13, 1992. I'm interviewing Ted to record his recollections of significant events and trends in California adult education during his career.

Ted, your career in adult ed spans over three decades and includes administrative positions in five districts and work with the California Department of Ed[ucation]. What can you tell us about adult ed in those early "golden years" of the sixties? How was adult ed different then, and why?

ZIMMERMAN: Essentially adult education at that time was legislatively free, if you will, of the constraints that I believe we've witnessed today in relation to the fact that there was no mandated classes, there was no CAP, and of course there was always the need for more money. It seemed like we never really did see the end

of the tunnel where the light was supposed to be on that one. There was also at that time a 10-cent permissive tax that districts could assess on the community that they served--up to ten cents--for the operation of an adult education program. And that would be in addition to the state block grant or a.d.a. apportionment funds that we received.

But the interesting thing, and I guess the exciting thing, about that was that as an administrator you could work closely with your community or in the community, and you could almost with your hand on the pulse make a reading of what was going on in the community and what wasn't going on, and many times that told you what kinds of needs the people had. And so, if you had an idea or a notion or community input on a problem or a need, you could establish a class, a short-term class, you could establish a forum--the state supported those with apportionment funds--you could hold like town hall meetings around the forum theme and you could conduct lecture series, almost like historically in adult education the old

lyceum approach to meeting the public's needs. So, in many respects, it held its own challenge.

Some of the problems that were then, I guess, or issues that were then--some of them are still with us--and that's the fact that there's the concept that we're the stepchild to the K-12 program, we are the night school people who when the sun goes down come out from underneath the rocks and do all these things that nobody else does. But essentially the golden years, I think--and we refer to them as that, many of us, because at that time I guess we had the gold and so we could make the rules. (chuckling) And the rules were: You see a need in your community, offer a class, offer a program, a service, to support and meet that need.

WEST: Curricular priorities in adult education have shifted in the years since the sixties. What can you tell us about the curricular changes and your perspective on why they occurred?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, in a kind of a humorous tone, if I might add, that we used to kind of humorously refer to the fact that some adult schools' programs and courses were constituted along the lines of

hats, dresses, and lamp shades, and knitting classes, and a lot of it accused or were considered to be nothing more than just coffee klatches for the adult, primarily some of the women in the community to get together on a regular basis. And that was done with some trepidation by some folks and by others with some rather identifiable regularity. And we, I think, began to see that the impetus or the direction of adult education, many of us saw that that was going in a different direction and that there was far more and a far greater challenge that had to be met by the adult education program.

We began to see shifting of the populations. We began to see that that shift in populations, not only in age group as the baby boom moved on, but we also began to see a terrific influx of immigrants and a change in the economic structure because of the high pressure on the space age. Sputnik, I think, triggered a lot of things throughout the educational as well as the national scene, particularly in adult education, so that the priorities in a sense began to move and change.

And I think the leadership in adult education that was visible then began to recognize that rather clearly in the kinds of programs and the approaches that they were taking in their programs to be more community directed, to be more directed at the needs of the community rather than the pastime or recreational needs of the community.

WEST: Maybe something specific about that would be the Regional Adult Vocational Education Council [RAVEC]. I know you were very involved in that in the seventies. Tell me something about that.

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I'm trying to remember the dates on that. I think that was a precursor to a couple of other legislated or enacted items, one of which was the CAP and the loss . . . the passage of Prop. 13, of course, which was the monumental historical event that I think affected all of education, but particularly adult education. But the RAVECs were actually a brainchild of a legislator at the time who was serving the La Puente/Hacienda area--who, by the way, as a point of reference, is a former student of mine--Senator Joe Montoya, and I know he had some real concerns about adult education.

We had the advantage, I guess--and I say we, at the time I was assistant director in La Puente--but we had the advantage at the times to. . . . In the early years, I should say, I was assistant there. But we had the opportunity and the advantage of sharing with him many of the problems that we faced in adult education, because there was a period of time when our offices were in the downtown business mall, and next door to us was Senator Montoya's office. So we began many times conversations with him in the sixties about the problems that adult education was experiencing. And maybe some of that, plus some of the influence that I believe the associations and other people had, instigated the law which actually inaugurated or established those RAVECs.

And the notion was that because of the golden years and the growth that adult education was undergoing, there needed to be some more clear thinking in many people's minds about what was being offered and why it was being offered, and whether it was. . . . Primarily, I think the interest was: Are you duplicating what another entity is also offering? And there were

funds set aside by the state to establish those councils. They were comprised of representatives, both of recreation departments, ROC/Ps [Regional Occupational Centers/Programs], at that time CETA funding programs, which are now JTPA kinds of programs, community college representatives, and the secondary, and the notion in the law was that those RAVECs would meet and discuss and agree upon, in a sense delineate, which entity would offer which programs, how those programs would be structured. And the primary purpose of that, too, was to assure the state that there was no duplication of effort going on. And I think the unique thing about that whole notion is that many of us quickly began to realize that if one entity like the community college offered a certain program and the high school or unified district adult program offered a similar program, and even a CETA program might have their own community-based funded organization offering a similar program, but if they were all filled in enrollment, how could that be duplication of effort? In other words, if there was that high a demand and that need, then

especially on a voluntary attendance basis why would the people go if it was being duplicated? I mean, why would they want to do that? Or where did the numbers come from that it was being duplicated? So, in a sense, there has always been apparently--and it was, I think, kind of memorialized by the RAVECs, a concern by legislators about the duplication of effort, and I think the RAVEC attempted to do that.

And quite interestingly enough, I feel that's a topic of which I have had some experience. Beyond just being a chair and starting one of them, was the fact that I wrote my dissertation for my doctorate at USC and the subject was the strengths and problems of the RAVEC. The basic findings of that study was that the RAVEC was attempting to solve a problem in a rather institutional way that didn't need that much institutionalization. And secondly, it was an institution that was really asked to do a job without the clout to really do it. Because if the colleges decided they were going to offer this class, and the high school and unified district decided they were going to offer a class, and an ROC/P was involved and it

was also going to offer the same class--let's say a secretarial training program--again, there was nothing in the law nor did the RAVECs themselves have any authority to govern or adjudicate in a sense which entity could do it and which ones couldn't.

WEST: Were they responsible then to report to the legislature, or . . . ?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, there was a responsibility to provide a summary report of what activities were conducted and what resolutions were reached. I guess the bottom line to the findings I found in my study was that one of the real benefits of the RAVEC was that it began a forum for people to sit down and actually kind of, if nothing else, confront each other, if not resolve things with some mutual interest. But it actually created a forum--I think a needed forum--for people to sit down and discuss things. From my experience, one of the benefits I found is gleaning from the other leadership in the RAVEC their perspective about the programs to better serve adults. So, in a sense, it served that purpose very well.
[Chuckling]

WEST: Is there anything happening today that you would say has a relationship to what went on with the RAVEC?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I think that there's been some stirrings. And by the way, the RAVEC was not the initial effort by the state to create these kinds of forums, these regional approaches. At one time, there was an attempt, and I think they had regional forums established in the area of vocational education they called the Area Vocational Education Councils that had a similar purpose to what the RAVEC did. What the RAVEC did was to pull those into the adult and vocational education and not just vocational education. Today, what I see a semblance in a sense of that effort to try to create that forum is presently being conducted through the Adult Ed Research Institute with the . . . I believe it was six consortia that they established in the prior year. And they use a kind of a catchy little term in there. They call their participants "the stakeholders," as opposed to the way we used to refer to each other.

[Laughter]

But one of the outcomes also of the RAVEC, that I think was a distinguishing factor of it, was that each RAVEC had to adopt and report to the state in written form sworn evidence to the fact that there was an agreed-upon by all these participants--that's the adult educators, the community college folks, the recreation departments, the CETA departments and the ROC/P representatives--that there was actually an agreement, if you will, on a delineation of functions, which was to prescribe in a sense: Here's how we're going to go about educating the adults in this regional location.

WEST: That leads us into another topic. Adult educators have often felt they are not given their due respect and trust by K-12 and other segments of California public adult ed. What have you observed about the efforts of adult educators to gain respect?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I think in retrospect of my thirty years in the business, I have seen, I believe, a recognizable--what do I say--gain by adult educators in terms of their place in the sun in the California educational scene. I think that a lot of that was the result of some significant

efforts in a number of locations throughout the state, and one that comes to mind is the fact that there was a noticeable decline in the K-12 a.d.a. in the seventies as the baby boom passed through the K-12 system. And so, in many communities such as the one that I was working in in the early seventies, in Garden Grove, where they were opening an elementary school almost on a monthly basis, though the number of children that it once served, and it once served nearly 70,000 students, was diminishing. And in one year, I recall, we lost nearly 4,000 K-12 students. Well, 4,000 K-12 students represents a lot of classrooms, and so the district had a lot of buildings standing around and wasn't certain what they were going to do with them. And so one of the major tasks that I was given at the time was to arrange for the closing and the reconversion and the operation of those once they were reconverted. So we reached out to those programs that we felt had the capacity to do this, both in terms of program structure design, as well as fiscal strength to do it, and that was adult education. And I had the good fortune also to have the opportunity to

supervise the federal projects for the district, so we tied the CETA and other programs into this as well as the ROC/P programs. And so what we did is we worked out plans for reconversion of schools, and I believe the district today is still operating four sites on a round-the-clock basis, morning, afternoon, and evening, as well as six or seven days a week with classes, for in and out of school youth and adults in many of these areas.

I think when it was proven that adult education and adult leadership could do that kind of thing--and I cite Garden Grove because that was a personal experience for me, but I know that was happening in a number of districts throughout the state and I think the capacity and the ability and the enthusiasm and the leadership of adult educators to make that happen, and I think the fact that the adult school was no longer then conceived to be "those guys in the evening or at night," and I think that we began to demonstrate that we are a segment of education that can be respected and has a place to make a significant contribution in the community. I think there were many

things that happened, but I have a personal perception that that probably was one of the biggest contributors.

I think secondly, if I could add that one to what has changed or caused the formation and change of the stature of adult education is the fact that it has earned, and I think continues to earn, respect among its professional peers, particularly in the statewide organization that now operates in and through the Association of California School Administrators [ACSA]. While in many people's opinion, as well as I've had my own about the fact how much effectiveness it really has had and what kind of contributions or problems it's created for adult education, I think what it's done is I think the result of it is very similar to the RAVEC that I made comments about earlier that ACSA provided a forum for adult educators to in a sense be identified and stand up and be counted and present their case and participate in a process that affects all of the profession. And I think that's been a . . . probably those two factors that I believe have made probably the biggest contribution to watching the adult ed stature,

if you will, gain recognition. While it isn't in some cases or some places to the extent that some people maybe feel it ought to be, I think that it's measurable in many locations in great deal, like so many things we do, even in the classroom. A class is as effective as the teacher, and I think the program's stature, the respect it has is in direct relation or correlation to the leadership it has.

WEST: Following up with what you mentioned about ACSA, you're a thirty-year member of ACSA, the Association of California School Administrators. In the sixties there was a separate California Association of Adult Ed Administrators. What happened? Tell us a little bit about that organization.

ZIMMERMAN: That organization historically, and I kind of feel like maybe I was kind of a Johnny-come-lately, I went into adult education on a full-time basis--I think it was in 1961--and the Association, I think, merged into ACSA somewhere in '66 or '67, something like that, and I think there was a period of transition there. The old association, I think, while it was highly successful and a very powerful one in the sense

that it could generally manage things it needed for itself, particularly in legislation, I think was kind of a prototype of what was happening throughout the profession in California. The school business managers had CASBO, the California Association of Secondary Principals, CASA, the superintendents had an organization, so we had all of these various little segments all over the state.

There was a gentleman out of Los Angeles who was the assistant superintendent of the Division of Adult Education and Occupational Education, who was promoted from that position to the superintendent, who I think was the most influential person in moving the old association of the California Adult Administrators Association to merge with ACSA, and that's Dr. Bill [William J.] Johnston out of Los Angeles. And I think there was a lot of discussion, and in some cases some very heated arguments. There was even some professional and peer relations that were kind of injured or bruised over this thing.

In fact, I think one of the gentlemen that I recall from El Monte at the time--his name is

not important to your research here--during the discussion about the merger he said, "Hell, this is not what we need to do. What we ought to do is get legislation to establish adult education districts." And it wasn't too farfetched, in a sense, because at that time we did have the 10-cent operational tax and there were some areas in the state that were like in San Jose that were moving toward these Joint Powers Agreements [JPAs] where the districts would go together. And instead of assessing a 10-cent tax on each district, by going together, if there were five districts, in a sense, as an example, they could assess two cents to each district and still raise the ten cents assessed tax to operate the program. So a district or a conglomeration or a consortium wasn't too farfetched, and I'm not too sure that that notion still hasn't got a lot of merit.

WEST: Very interesting. Following up . . .

ZIMMERMAN: And I had the opportunity to establish one of those, and I don't know whether you want to talk about that now or later.

WEST: Sure, tell us about that.

ZIMMERMAN: Well, that was the Tri-Community Adult School that involved Covina, West Covina, and Charter Oak. And when I took over that program they had been operating under a Joint Powers arrangement, but it was very weakly structured and it needed some drastic organizational and administrative management changes. But essentially that was, I feel--and it's still in operation--one of the most successful adult school programs in the state. And they still to this day, while they don't have the 10-cent operational tax--none of the adult schools do--they still share their resources and their a.d.a. and they move that around to meet various needs as they arise in any district. And I think that makes a great deal of sense.

WEST: While you're talking about Tri-Community, what needed to happen to get those three districts to cooperate in that way?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, it was a fiscal consideration totally. Again, it boiled down to the consideration that, hey, you know, if we take three cents from each district and assess that three cents, three times three is nine. And so, if we stayed separate as districts, Covina, Charter Oak, West

Covina, to have that capacity we'd each have to assess nine cents.

WEST: And so each one of the school boards had to come to that same conclusion?

ZIMMERMAN: That's right, and they assessed based on their assessed value. Of course, you have to realize at that time all of the income for education was based on state funds and assessed value taxes, local property. And, of course, at that time, prior to Prop. 13 in '78, I believe it was--'77, something like that--the cost for public education was borne 65 percent--65 percent has generally been quoted--by local tax on the property. So the ten-cent operational tax for adult education, or maximum ten cents, was not something that wasn't already being assessed in the community. As a matter of fact, the ROC/P's when they were initiated, the law gave them also a ten-cent operational tax, plus another additional five cents for capital outlay because they were going to deal in vocational programs and building buildings.

WEST: Okay, talk a little bit more about the ROC and Ps. You've worked closely with them over the

years in a lot of different capacities. What about that movement? How did it get started?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, again the movement actually, I think, was initiated in the Los Angeles Unified School District, in the sense that [they had] the first school. . . . The law was actually drawn up, if you will, and pushed/promoted by the L.A. Unified School District with Bill Johnston, the gentleman I mentioned earlier, who had left the Division of Adult and Occupational Education and moved on into superintendency. But what that did is it actually enacted a law for that district to establish these Regional Occupational Centers. And these were buildings, if you will, that were to house vocational programs to serve high school age and out of school youth and adults in the Los Angeles Unified School District. And since Bill Johnston came out of the Division of Adult and Occupational Education, the ROCs and the administration then had assigned him that division. In fact, that notion and that idea for that legislation I believe he was promoting and probably conceived that when he was back and serving his superintendent position.

So I watched the ROC/Ps personally from that perspective, and of course I had a good number of associates and friends of mine who were in the Los Angeles district and so I had access to them. And I remember visiting the first one out near Pierce College in the north valley, and then one. . . . I believe now I think they have seven, and now I think they even since I was there and converted the skill centers in Los Angeles, they now have twelve operating centers.

Then shortly after the establishment of the center, it became I guess understood by many of the operators of the ROC/Ps that what they needed to do was to also be able to have the flexibility to put programs out in the community, the same way that the adult schools were doing it, only directed at vocational education. So they came up with the notion of programs. So the law was changed to allow an ROC to offer programs outside of the confines of the original center that was built. So those became known as Regional Occupational Programs.

And then, since other districts were highly motivated to do this, and Los Angeles actually

had authority as a single district, the county offices showed interested in doing this. They saw it as a similar delivery system to special education, so the county offices moved for legislation to establish a county superintendent to establish on a county-wide basis for those districts that wished to participate with the county in a Regional Occupational Program contract, and they could build a center or a program.

And then many of the districts however felt that rather than go with the county, since it's regional in nature, why can't two or more districts establish a program or a center? So you had what's known as the Joint Powers Agreements, JPA. So right now the form of governance for ROC/Ps is you have single districts, and that's prescribed in the code, but essentially it's based on the size of the county and the student population of that district--generally 100,000 or more. So you have very few of these operating unless they've got a waiver from the state board because of their size and they didn't meet the original legislation. But right now there are five

single-district ROC/Ps. I think there are thirty-four that are operated by county office of superintendents, and then remaining, I believe there's about twenty-six of them out of the seventy-one that are JPA.

And in a sense, the ROC/P was able to capture, I believe, the fiscal capacity and resources and focus on training and retraining of in and out of school use in adults in a way that I believe was similar to what a lot of the adult educators, and myself included, were attempting to achieve; but without the resource capacity that they had, it was difficult for us to, in a sense, duplicate or compete with them. And I believe also that they happened to be in the right place at the right time, like so many things that happen historically, in the fact that they came along with the offering of training and retraining and that kind of thing at the time when it was really necessary and there was a high need for it.

And I think the evidence to that, again in personal experience, was to watch the program in the years that I spent in the La Puente Valley Vocational Center. That started with what my

friend Tom [Thomas J.] Johnson and I refer to as "the modest proposal," which was a \$49,000 VEA [Vocational Education Act] grant to open a 10,000-square-foot building in the City of Industry. And I mean, Tom's got a conglomerate down there now that certainly is an edifice, I think, and evidence of really reaching out into a community and responding to what the needs are.

But I think the ROC/PS themselves have done really a good job. I became personally and more directly involved in it when I was working in the Garden Grove Unified School District. The district was participating with the county office, and I had the good fortune to be there at the time when we wrote the contract with the county.

WEST: Okay, I'm going to stop you right there.

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

ZIMMERMAN: Well, in the Garden Grove School District, as I mentioned earlier, when we were in the process of closing and reusing schools, ROP became a very necessary and essential and also a very effective mechanism, or vehicle if you will, for

that reuse. And it also, I think, very clearly met a need that was a strong need in the community for training and retraining of people.

I think what we did in a sense in that perspective is we were able to meld the strengths and capacity and resources of adult education and ROP together. The benefit of that, I think, is rather obvious, and I think there's two or three locations in the state where that's happening. I think you know we refer to it in the trade--call it trade if you will--that the synergetics of this thing was easy to recognize. And one thing led to another because it goes full circle almost in a family. You have a child attending school, for example, who doesn't speak English--this would be an example--and obviously the parents need help educationally as well as they need a job. And the day of the one-income family is over, so you've got both parents who are not only in need of services that a good adult program can provide, they also can provide them with the ROP and adult [education] can provide them with the kind of training and retraining needs that they have. So I think, you know, again you get the

client- or student- or client-oriented approach, and the synergetics of that is rather significant. And then further innovations of that took place when they added independent study and some other things to it, to the mix, so to speak.

But ROC/Ps themselves, I think, are a very effective organization. I think their programs are very cost-effective. I think their success is evidenced by the same kind of evidence that adult education has in a single area--that's vocational or occupational education. They enroll nearly 500,000 to 600,000 in-school and out-of-school youths and adults statewide. The state budget for the program is \$232 million, and I think that kind of growth and progress has taken place in a twenty-five-year period of time, and I think that speaks for itself.

WEST: I'm a little confused about the governance of ROC/Ps. They're not governed through the [California Department of Education] Adult Ed Unit, for instance?

ZIMMERMAN: No.

WEST: Are they then under the K-12 vocational . . .

ZIMMERMAN: Yes. As I mentioned earlier, you could have a single district like Los Angeles or San Francisco and a few other places that are not as large as that, but let's look at Los Angeles because I'm more familiar with that, having served in that district for four and a half years as director of their ROP, and that's the fact that the board of education in a single-district ROC/P is the governing board for that organization, for that ROC/P. Now, if you're not in a single district, then the next kind of governance is county operated, and the law is clear there: the county board is the governing board of that ROC/P. And the county superintendent's office, and with the county board as the governing board, can operate an ROC/P for one or more districts throughout the county. I served in Riverside County where I finished my career there as director of the ROC/P program, and it was a countywide program. And of the twenty-nine districts--some of them were elementary districts--twenty-two of them were unified or high school districts and all of them . . . We served all of the districts with that ROC/P program, with the county board acting

as the governing board, and I reported to the superintendent and he and I jointly on many occasions made presentations to that governing board.

The other form is what's called a JPA, a Joint Powers Agreement, which is very similar to the adult education structure of joint powers like Tri-Community and the one at San Jose and Central County Regional Programs there. That's a Joint Powers Agreement where the law states that two or more districts, unified or high school districts, can apply through the county office and get approval from the state to operate a Regional Occupational Program or Center. And when they form a JPA, then they have to form a governing board of at least three people, with appointees from each district off of the governing boards of those districts. So you have what's called a joint powers or a joint management board. So those are the three governances for an ROC/P.

WEST: I see. And then they all are responsible to the State Department of Education. Is that correct?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, the State Department of Education provides the same kind of support and leadership and

assistance that is provided to the adult education people, but those people that provide that service come out of the Division of Vocational Education.

WEST: Vocational Education. That clarifies it, thanks. You mentioned Carl Perkins VEA Funding a couple of times. The Carl Perkins VEA legislation started in '63 and continues in various forms through today. Reminisce a little bit about what Carl Perkins has done. . . .

ZIMMERMAN: Yes, that's a good question. The Carl Perkins Fund, as I say, in the beginning when there was no light. . . . [Laughter] The Carl Perkins money originally was written to emulate the original Smith-Hughes Act that was written back in the end of World War I, and the intent of that was to put money out in the communities into the school systems to train Johnny when he came marching home. And so the Carl Perkins Act was really written to allow for R&D, improvement of programs, but primarily expansion. So you could start a new program with VEA money, but if you wanted to continue it beyond the first two years or three years of funding or whatever that you were authorized for, you had to be in a

position to take it over with local funds and continue it. And in a sense, that really augmented and kind of complemented that golden years concept we talked about, because if I got an idea that the community needed this Vocational Education Program, as Tom Johnson and I mentioned in our modest proposal, we wrote a proposal to address what we thought was a need in the community for that kind of a center for the adults and the out of school youths, and we got the money, and within a short . . . you know, the thing expanded and blossomed and bloomed and mushroomed, and most of it was assimilated with local funds or other efforts to make it happen.

But the VEA or Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act money started off with that intent, and then it began to move and change directions as the politics in Washington changed. There was a period of time when the vocational money was kind of dwarfed by funds that were put out under the Career Education Act and Plan that the U.S. Office of Education was promoting, and we all kind of humorously referred to that as the "Conestoga wagon out of

Washington full of money." That also came and passed. That was part of Johnson's [U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson], I believe, New Society [Great Society] or whatever he referred to it as.

I think then from there the VEA funds shifted into more of a categorical sense and began to look at disadvantaged students and underprivileged people and non-English speakers, the NES [Non-English Speaking], that later became LEP, limited English proficient. And now what you have. . . . And then you got into the other kinds of special group interests, such as the women's movement and the . . . what they refer to that now, and the name escapes me, but a number of other areas of special interests and funds where the money can be spent.

The most recent, I guess, version of VEA, or Carl Perkins money, that interests the adult educator and then the ROC/P folks is referred to as the Section 232 funds, which are based on actual counts of certified disadvantaged people in classes by which monies and grants are received, and then a plan is written to demonstrate how over a three-year period of time

you intent to spend, expend, and use those funds to reduce the barriers and to improve the lot of people who are disadvantaged or handicapped and those kind of. . . .

WEST: So the Carl Perkins funds have really given the boost to the local programs and is ongoing?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I think that's measurable again in a great respect to the individual administrator's ability and initiative to go get them, to go get those funds and to write projects or to seek those funds, or to be willing to go into meetings in his own district and actually argue for them or to reach compromises for them. But I think that the Carl Perkins money in many cases has made a significant contribution to a lot of the voc ed classes that are serving adults both in the adult school as well as our ROC/P.

WEST: Let's talk a little bit about each of the districts that you worked in. You've alluded, I think, to almost all of them in one way or another, but just the characteristics, the special things you remember, in chronological order.

ZIMMERMAN: Well, let's see . . . [Laughter]

WEST: Now, you started out in Hacienda-La Puente? It wasn't Hacienda-La Puente then?

ZIMMERMAN: No, it was the La Puente Union High School District, and I got involved in the adult school. I taught the first aid class for the bus drivers and I got to know Tom. I remember one evening he came in and he said, "Hey, I've got authorization for a half-time person next year." He said, "I'd like you to think about coming on board with me." He said, "The program is growing fast and I need a good pair of hands, and I'd be happy to nominate you and get you to the board for employment if you want to consider that." And at the time I was coaching the high school football team and thought I was the second coming of Knute Rockne when I first started in that. And I began to analyze what was going on in my life and where it might be going and where it might go, so it seemed like kind of an interesting challenge. So I took it on. I spent . . . let me think, '62 to '67, and five years as assistant principal, assistant director in La Puente, and as I say, we had the fun and the experience of starting the Valley Vocational Center. Then an opportunity arose

and I took advantage of it and I moved to Simi Unified School District as director of adult education, vocational education, and summer school, so I had a few hats to wear.

WEST: That was quite a small program, was it not? It was a small community.

ZIMMERMAN: When I went there the adult education program was 242 units of a.d.a., and we were still in that time span I mentioned, the golden years, where if you had an idea you could offer the program. In fact, the superintendent that hired me was aware of some of the things going on in the state in the way of the growth and serving of adults and so on, also in vocational education, so he was very supportive to anything that I was trying to do.

Of course, one of the things we did immediately was to find a location to hold classes. There was a condemned junior high school that the district didn't know what to do with, and, of course, as an adult educator I think you learn this one quick, and that's that the law exempts adults from those same requirements that are placed on K-12 schools for meeting earthquake requirements, as long as you

post a sign warning them that the building does not meet those standards. And so we took over that junior high on a temporary basis, but at least it gave us a place to hold classes, and within one year we went from 240 units to . . . I think over 560 or something. We more than doubled.

WEST: What were the kinds of classes that you were offering that were so successful?

ZIMMERMAN: English as a Second Language [ESL], medical office preparation, secretarial training. We organized them on a merry-go-round or carousel concept. In one room one teacher could have with an aide probably forty or fifty students, one of them working on filing, a group working on filing, another one working on typing skills, another one working on adding machines. In those days we didn't have computers, but we had various stations, and the notion was that a person could kind of get on and off of those like horses on a carousel, depending on how much need they had or whether they had any need at all. But they could get on the carousel, ride as many horses as they wanted to for as long as they wanted to, and get off anytime they wanted

to, to go out and go to work or go back to a job or go to a better job.

And other kinds of programs that we offered had to do . . . We did a lot of forums and lecture series on pertinent issues at the time, local kinds of political issues. Gosh, we took the homemaking department and turned it into a real service to the homemaker, in terms . . . not just knitting, but we did a great many things in clothing making, clothing construction, clothing construction for teenagers, clothing construction for the elementary age students. And these were young, newlywed, striving American families in that community that needed those kinds of opportunities to improve their lot. If mother could make the clothes for kids and go to school, that's a savings to them. It's like mother going to work. Often many of the women came in and learned how to do that and did it for other people and made money while they were in their home.

It took on another direction, in the sense it was more product-ended and directed in terms of the kinds of courses, rather than just what.

. . . The statistics years ago used to show as the reason why people took adult education classes was the social environment and opportunity it provided for them. That may to some extent still exist, but it's also interesting to note that the enrollments in adult education classes go up significantly when times are tough. Americans believe in the notion that education is the bridge to getting "my piece of the pie."

But the courses when I got there were more of a recreational type, they were directed at a different population. The gentleman that was running the program had other things on his agenda and wasn't, I don't think, as interested in seeing the program maybe as I was and willing to spend the time that it took. Because when you get involved in that kind of a program and that kind of a . . . in a sense, a work environment, you're on a twelve-, fourteen-hour day many times. You know, that's a grind in a sense, but it's very rewarding.

WEST: Just finding the places, finding the teachers, and getting the courses approved and all those things?

ZIMMERMAN: And it's interesting how you can run in . . . Once you got the word out in the community and got. . . . And one of the things, the first things I did was establish a community advisory committee, and I handpicked them. I didn't want them [to be] the typical kind of a PTA group or anything else. I wanted people that were going to tell me like it is. And that was a great help, just great inspiration, great help, to start a lot of the classes. When I left the district in Simi, I left in . . . what was it, '67. . . . No, '68, I left in '68, I believe it was, somewhere in that time frame. I got a call--'67, it was late '67--I was just not quite two years in the district. But when I left Simi the second year, we were doing over 700 units of a.d.a., so it was moving along just fine. In fact, I was right proud of the fact that I had been able to convince the superintendent and the board to approve a full-time assistant principal for me. [Laughter]

But I left the district at that time based on a phone call I got from the then Chief of the Bureau of Adult Education in Sacramento, and he says, "We've got a project up here that's going

to really be interesting, and we need somebody we think can take this thing and give it some good direction and some good results. We'd like to talk to you about it. Can you come on up? We'll pay your airplane fare up here." So I went up there and met with Stan [Stanley E.] Sworder, who was then the bureau chief, and Stan convinced me that this was something I needed to do.

WEST: What was that?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I ended up as the project director for a joint federally funded project amongst five western states, Oregon, Washington, California, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico. This was to study and make recommendations regarding the relative educational needs of the migrant population. And many of the recommendations that came out of that group and the work that they did were the basis and formation of what we now see as the Migrant Student Program.

We were talking then about doing distance learning, but through like cable television. There was teaching ESL through tapes and distance learning, cable TV if you will. The notion was we could go in like telephone lines

into these camps, hook them up, and people could go to classes in two days and learn English, and they'd watch these tapes and then there would be somebody there to help them. These tapes were being produced at the University of Arizona in Nogales.

I stayed, I guess, and my offices were then also in Los Angeles, which I was quite happy about in a sense, because while I was in Simi I was a weekend warrior. I'd drive up on Monday morning and come back Friday nights, and sometimes didn't come back at all on the weekend. My family at that time was living in Diamond Bar, California, so that was a long couple of years. And I don't know why, I guess it's my wife's insistence on "Let's wait till you're there for two and a half years before we make a move," and fortunately it worked out good for us. I was with the department I think for that year with that project. My offices were in Los Angeles and I felt we were very successful and accomplished many things.

Then, at that time, the directorship opened up in Covina, Charter Oak, and West Covina, in Tri-Community, and I applied for the job and was

fortunate enough to be appointed. I guess I was then. . . . I went into Tri-Community and we were doing like 600 units of a.d.a., and of course what we needed was again a facility. So they had an old barn that they were trying to use for classes, and I was able to convince the superintendent and the board to spend \$80,000 that I promised to earn back for them to refurbish and remodel those buildings. And they're still using them, by the way, up there.

WEST: I know where they are.

ZIMMERMAN: It's on Puente and whatever that street is. I forget now but I can find it. [Laughter] But a program then went and grew rather rapidly. In fact, when I was my last six months in the district, their enrollment began to drop and we converted three campuses. Plans were drawn for three of them. I put those plans together and was able to see one of them close and begin classes.

WEST: Pioneer?

ZIMMERMAN: That was Pioneer. I was replaced by a fellow out of the high school who later left . . . was there very shortly, in fact only a year. I forget his name. He went on to Mount Sac and he

was succeeded there by Vince VanDetta, who is still there.

WEST: He's still there, yes.

ZIMMERMAN: And the fellow who was my assistant while I was there remained on as assistant director and ended up as chair of the ACSA [Adult] committee and that was Jean Estes. Jean, as you know, has passed on.

WEST: Yes.

ZIMMERMAN: But Jean was quite a guy and a great guy to work with and a real right hand. I remember I was sitting in my office in Tri-Community and I was happy as a frog in a mud puddle. The superintendent that I worked for in Simi had left Simi and gone to Garden Grove as the superintendent, and he walked into my office and he said, "I've been trying to find you for three months." And I looked up at him and I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "I'll tell you what," he said, "you know I'm down in Garden Grove now. We've got a big district down there, we've got a lot of needs, we've got a A lot of the things you were doing for us and doing up there in Simi, and I know you're doing them here now, I've talked to the

superintendent. . . ." He said, "I'd like to talk to you about a job down there." So I said, "Well, let's talk." So he talked and I left.
[Laughter]

WEST: You were there a long time, almost ten years, or about ten years?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I went to Garden Grove in 1970, and I was there--'69, actually, then I left in '79. I was there ten years.

WEST: That's a long time.

ZIMMERMAN: Yes. Well, when I went to Garden Grove, their adult school was. . . . Well, when I left Tri-Community we were just under 3,000 a.d.a. So in two years it went from about 800 to 3,000. And again those were the times when we could . . . the money was there and the state was willing to support those kinds of services. Then, when I went to Garden Grove, I remember there was a . . . as director of what they called extended services. It included all the programming and areas of responsibility that nobody else in the district wanted. [Laughter] But the basic bulk of it was adult education and vocational education, especially in federally funded projects. And then later it included the

continuation school and the teen mothers program and child care and that kind of thing.

WEST: Talk about the ethnic mix in Garden Grove. It's an interesting area.

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I wore that hat, too, that you're pointing to. When I went to the district there was a perception amongst a lot of the people that it was predominately Orange County white Anglo-Saxon Protestants. I said, "I think that has changed or it's changing, if not changed, and I think there are other kinds of forces affecting this community that will affect it more." So evidence took place to that fact, and when I went to the district head of programs, about 305 a.d.a., pretty much the traditional stuff, what we used to kind of, the old guys and the old guard used to refer to as "creamin' 'em." That means you're doing the easy ones, we thought, you know, hats, dresses, and lamp shade stuff.
[Chuckling]

So we moved in another direction. I got an ABE project, I got some VEA money, and we started the ball rolling, and in a very short period of time the program tripled. And quite interestingly enough, they began to realize that

the population that was in need in that community was something they were not looking at. Santa Ana, for example, right now is 98 percent Hispanic, I believe, or 96 percent, and at that time they were like 40 percent. And the south end of the district, which is abutted against Santa Ana, was taking on the same composition.

I remember in Garden Grove one of the things that really changed is when the Vietnamese War ended, the Vietnamese thing ended in '69, I think it was. Is that right, '69? When was that year?

WEST: It was in the middle seventies [1973].

ZIMMERMAN: Okay, then we're talking later then.

WEST: In '75 or '76.

ZIMMERMAN: Okay, '74 or '75, somewhere along in there. I had just been promoted to assistant superintendent of instruction, and I still supervised adult ed and all the rest of that, and I mean one of my responsibilities was to act as the board's representative for a multicultural committee.

I remember a fellow named Father Abibe coming to me and he said, "Ted, you know, I've

been in touch with the federal officials and there's going to be a large influx of Vietnamese people into this area. And," he said, "this is an ideal location in terms of climate and opportunity and everything, and we've got to gear up for these folks and be prepared to help them. They're going to need language assistance, they're going to need job training, they're going to need this, they're going to need housing." So he put together a coalition if you will. His name was Father Abibe of the. . . . And don't ask me how to spell it, I don't remember, but Father Abibe was quite a mover and shaker. But he put together this coalition of school districts, city people, public services, and it really was kind of a blue-ribbon committee in the community of Garden Grove to deal with the influx of the Vietnamese into that community.

The first influence of it was recognized in the fall--I believe it was '75--at Cook School--I remember that distinctly. And here was a district, as I mentioned earlier, with declining enrollment, and all of a sudden the principal calls in on the first day that class is open and

says, "Somebody has got to get down here and help me. I've got 400 children standing out here waiting to get in." Or 200, I guess it was, but ultimately ended up at 400. Anyway, it was quite a number of them. And she said, "And nobody and none of them speak English, and I don't know what I'm going to do."

Then the next thing was that they brought them in, as you know, by the boat load and were having them down at Camp Pendleton in tent camps and were distributing to different places throughout the United States. And quite frankly they were allowing them to make a choice, and many of them made the choice on the basis of what their relatives already were [doing] and where they were, and this thing snowballed like you just can't believe. And in addition to that, the immigration from Mexico--you know, the Hispanic and Mexican immigration was also compounding itself. So now that community, which at one time considered itself white Anglo-Saxon Protestant, is standing on an ethnic count of over . . . like most of the state, over a majority of them are minority students and families living in the district we're serving.

And the schools that we closed in that community, particularly the Lincoln Educational Training Center--it's called Lincoln--on Garden Grove Boulevard, I was by there last week. I happened to go by there. They've remodeled it and done some things to it, and I tried to find a place to park and you aren't going to do that.

And so it's obvious that here again the influx if you will, hasn't changed, but I think the needs have compounded themselves. Because the people that came in originally that got the basic skills they needed to get out and be self-sufficient are now coming back to improve themselves even more in many cases, or also bringing their friends and relatives over and sponsoring them and just continuing that flow and mix that's taking place. So it's been kind of a It really was ten years of transition to watch take place in Garden Grove. That was a kind of interesting question there.

WEST: And then you went to L.A. Unified.

ZIMMERMAN: Well, no, I had one little stint here in the desert and that's how I got here. I was, as I mentioned to you, the assistant superintendent in Garden Grove, and I got a call from a fellow

who was superintendent here and he said, "The board has authorized me to hire a deputy. And," he said, "you've been recommended to me by a number of people that I have confidence in." And he said, "I think you can give us the kind of leadership we need. We've got a tremendous need down here for people who understand the ethnic problems and the people that need special help and assistance not only in the school but in the home and the rest of it." And he said, "I'd like to talk to you immediately." So, long story short, I hired and I came down here as a . . .

[End Tape 1, Side B]

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I was in the district, Desert Sands here in the desert, served a little over four years, and then I left the job. I was a little frustrated and wondering what I should do and where I was going next, and I knew I didn't want to be a superintendent and I didn't know whether I wanted to seek a job in adult education again even though I enjoyed it so much, so I thought, well, how about if I went into business. So I went into the insurance business with the then

president of the board here, and we did quite well for a couple of years. [Chuckling] And then things went awry, as sometimes they can, primarily because insurance companies were having deep-pocket losses and were taking it out on the small agents, which is what we were. So I sold my end of the business to the board president and I went back into education.

I took a job, as an interim for six months, as the interim assistant superintendent of the Santa Barbara County Schools. And while I was working there I got a telephone call from Xavier Del Buono, and he said, "Hey, I hear you're back in the business, and L.A. has a new assistant superintendent of adult and occupational ed," and that was following [Robert] Bob Rupert's unfortunate passing. And he said, "I'd like you to meet with him and me and we can talk about something." So essentially what we did is we made an arrangement where I went to work for the district in the Los Angeles Unified School District with [Gabriel] Gabe Cortina, and I was actually hired by the district and paid for by the state. That was kind of an interesting arrangement.

WEST: And what kind of work did you do for them?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, I wore a lot of hats and I was really his chief advisor and assistant, etcetera, etcetera. And primarily what I did and was able to accomplish--and I'm quite pleased with that time in Los Angeles Unified--I restructured their Regional Occupational Centers and converted their skill centers to Regional Occupational Centers. I was able to establish a unit called Program Planning, Development, and Evaluation, which really took responsibility for needs assessment, new programs, project writing, resource development.

And then one of the other things that we established under the SB 65 law was what's called the Alternative Education Work Centers, which really became intake return points for out-of-school youth, primarily coming out of juvenile halls. It was really an eye-opener to me to find out that Los Angeles Unified Schools has nearly 5,000 to 6,000 youngsters a year come out of the L.A. County Juvenile Hall School. And obviously there was no place for them to be accommodated in the high schools because of the youngsters' background--unfortunately we're not

too willing to take them. So, under SB 65, which was designed to recapture and to avoid dropouts, I was able to get the state to recognize this and we wrote a proposal, and there's a manual in the department yet that they use for establishing those that I worked on and put together. But the Alternative Ed Work Center right now serves over 6,000 youngsters a year. And what it is actually is it's an intake place where they do assessment, personal assessment and counseling, and then transition them into either a Regional Occupational Center or the adult school. And it allows . . . in a way it's the second chance for those youngsters they would never have without that. And when I was in Los Angeles for four years and worked with Gabe and we, I thought. . . .

Oh, and one other thing I helped him with was establishing their concurrent enrollment program, which I think is one of the finest in the state, and I think it was also recognized . . . the fact that it was providing a real service and not just done for other reasons.

WEST: Say a little bit about the concurrent. I know it's a big topic, but say just a little bit about it.

ZIMMERMAN: Well, adult education, in my experience and background with it and the years I've been involved with it, has always had legal authority or legislative authority to serve minors. In fact, I think the code still states that any minor may attend who in the judgment of the board can benefit from it or benefit from the instruction. And I think internally we've always kind of felt that that meant that at least the youngster should be at least sixteen years of age, and there should be various kinds of reasons or criteria for them wanting to go to the adult school, makeup of credits, a language difficulty, get some basic math assistance that maybe the school can't provide them, maybe take an occupational training course that's not available in the high school, and in any other where they would augment or supplement the youngster's program. And I think that stands within the intent of the law which says any minor may attend who in the judgment of the board will benefit from it, and not just let's

see how many we can get enrolled and how many dollars we can make off of it.

And I think you've hit some of that going on, I'm not sure to what extent. You know, I'm not pointing the finger at anybody, but I think that when you see some cases where. . . . In fact, it got to the point where the state had to put into effect controls on that, meaning that, you know, any program couldn't be. . . . the number of minors could exceed 49 percent of the total enrollment of that program.

So, you know, the concurrent thing, I think, is. . . . I think what it does is it exemplifies the flexibility of adult education to be able to serve people who are motivated to learn on their own. And I think in Los Angeles one of the things that really astounded me as a factor as we tracked this over the years that I was there with the concurrent enrollment was that we found that 80 to 85 percent is about the average throughout each school of high school kids who were enrolled to attend adult classes on a voluntary basis, either, in many cases, a lot of the kids that had a resentment for the bell structure in the schools and the over-

structure and discipline and the rest of it, and you think they would never function or be successful in a voluntary environment, but 80 to 85 percent of them completed classes. So somebody was doing something right or was meeting some need there.

And I think that this recent move where they have taken the financial initiative out of it and said to adult educators, "Hey, okay, we agree with you that you've got something you can do for these kids that maybe no other system in the education structure can, so, okay, go ahead and continue it, but the financial incentive is out of it." And I think that gets it in the correct perspective, I think, and I laud the department and other people who forged forward on the passage of that law.

WEST: Let's end up with the things you've been doing most recently, the Executive Development Program [EDP] and the PROS [Professional Resources Outreach System]. How did that happen and what's going on?

ZIMMERMAN: Well, those things just kind of are fun to do and keep me out of trouble. I retired from Riverside County as Director of Vocational Ed,

Adult Ed, Regional Occupational Programs and Alternative Ed. I was there for, I guess, three years.

Shortly after I retired, I got a call from Paul Belomy and he invited me to attend and participate in a meeting of a group called the Oversight Committee. This is a group representing CCAE and ACSA and the State Department [of Education], who were kind of the steering committee, or as the title said, oversight committee for a program that was started some years previously for adult educators called the Adult Ed Institute. And they said, "Well, what we're interested in, Ted, is maybe your perspective on what can we do, or should we be doing, and what's best to be done for the experienced adult educator." And I said, "You know, that's really a good idea and I'm not ready to give you specifics now, but I would like to start with this, the fact that I think this should be a program or an opportunity where the chief administrator who has had experience can get away from the everyday rigmarole. Put them in an environment where they're not going to discuss current issues--we

do plenty of that in little region meetings and ACSA meetings and state conferences and all of that, that kind of networking--but get them away, give them a chance to treat them well, treat them like . . . you know, like executives," I said. "In fact," I said, "I think we ought to call it the Executive Development Program." And everybody kind of liked that idea and they said, "Well, why don't you put your ideas down in terms of content and let's go from there."

So I came back to the house and thought about it for awhile and I sat down and I just started putting down my thoughts. And basically the program revolves around that concept of getting them away, getting them to create a new perspective about leadership, a new leadership style. How do you take advantage of what's around you to make that style effective?

So we looked at futuring. And futuring, as I recall, I remember one of the things I learned about it is nothing more than looking at the past and the present and coagulating, in a sense, what your perception would be of what the future may be. And the past tells us a lot as

well to what it did to the present, to kind of be able to project the future.

And data also tells us. For example, we know you can look historically. . . . I mentioned this thing about the immigration factor. When I was in Los Angeles, it became very clear to me that this is the Ellis Island of the West. You could just go down near Belmont School or go downtown to the big adult school down there at the freeway exchange [Evans Adult School]. Here's a place that enrolls 50,000 people a year. Well, demographics will help you understand that and project that if you know how to use them and how to gather them. So we used demographics and I got some top-notch people in that respect to present that out of the RAND Corporation.

Then the second area that I felt we ought to try to give them some exposure on was I believe an essential knowledge and some tools to do some strategic planning. So I used an expert out of La Verne University to do that.

And the last thing we deal with is the technology and the paradigm shift. Of course, John Fleischman out of OTAN [Outreach and

Technical Assistance Network] has been very helpful and supportive in providing that assistance to us, and we put on a program that . . . well, a whole day we take the participants of EDP over to the Apple Computer offices training station over in Century City and they do some visual, some informative, and some hands-on things. And when we go over there, we make the assumption that nobody knows a thing, even though they might be quite talented or skilled about it. But when they come out of there, everybody has a pretty good exposure on it and it's gotten well received.

In fact, our program was recognized as being so successful we. . . . I'm in the process now of completing a similar training program that I wrote and developed for the National Directors of Adult Education. We have twenty-three state directors that are participating in a similar program. We did our first training program in Bethesda, Maryland, last July. We did the second session in Anaheim recently in conjunction with AAACE, and we're going to do the final one down at the Infomat in Dallas, Texas, in May, in which we will also use

Apple and maybe IBM facilities, too, for the national directors to go through the program. And then I bring a gentleman in from the Texas school boards who is in charge of planning for them, a fellow named Jim Brady, who does an excellent job on paradigm shift and systems analysis. How do I work with what I've got and how do I get people to change their thinking, their mind set about things to move into new ways of doing and thinking about this. So that's EDP.

WEST: And now PROS?

ZIMMERMAN: Oh, well, PROS is an outcome. . . . The Professional Resources Outreach System is an idea that I just folded into the EDP. Because I began to recognize at the state level, and I think it's true even in all the program areas, money drives programs and services, okay? And there's a lot of specialization in the state now. Years ago we used to have consultants, they were all experienced administrators. Now that's not very likely. You have specialists: ESL, you have GED, you have languages. You know, you've got specialists that do things and you don't have. . . . I don't think there's

more than one person in the department right now that's had his own . . . was the director of a program. And it used to be you could call them and you could get all kinds of help and assistance in terms of organization, operation, administration, curriculum--all of that. So, while I'm not knocking the department now, I think the people do a fine job, but I think they are in most cases specialists.

So I made the proposal that what maybe ought to come out of this EDP, Executive Development Program, is a peer group assistance system, a systematic way by which we can tap all of the talent and resources we've got out there in the field. So let's get the pro adult educator helping the new director, or the pro helping his colleagues, because he knows. He knows more about GAIN or JTPA or of some VEA or something else than I do. And so what we essentially have is a mentor program, a peer assistance program or a mentor program of adult educators helping adult educators. Or a district, for example, and that's where this is going now with passages of new law allowing start-up of new programs. It was a natural to

say, "Hey, why don't we organize the pros and use them as individuals or send them out as teams to help these new districts start their programs?" As a matter of fact, come this Wednesday we're going to have our first training session with them in Ontario. So I think it takes advantage of a lot of resources that are there.

The continuing aspect of PROS, besides this special training to start the new classes, the underlying continuing intent of it is that if you're an administrator of an adult school and you want some help, you can get on OTAN, call that up, choose the person you want, contact me directly either by phone or through OTAN, and I make contact with the person and assign them to you.

Now, to participate, all of these people have district approval for three days of released time, a minimum, and they do this. . . . There are no consultant payments. They're doing this to help their brother and sister, so to speak, in adult ed. And what the department has committed to do is to use me as the facilitator and coordinator of that and to

pay the travel expenses for these people for going out and helping each other.

WEST: That makes sense. There's no out-of-pocket expense for the . . .

ZIMMERMAN: Right, and what this group will be doing Wednesday essentially, and quite interestingly enough, the EDP completers who are pros does not include the state staff because they're already on deck there. They can also use a pro to help a school district or an adult program if they see that need; just contact me and I send a person out there. But what we're going to come out of that training session hopefully Wednesday with--and we may have to meet a second time if we don't--is a manual, in a sense, or a how-to kit or a guide that all of them will use, so that we're all saying the same thing out there when people ask questions about this or that or the other thing in this complicated world of adult education. [Laughter] That's it, but it's a fun thing. It's exciting.

WEST: Yes, it is. This concludes the questions I have. Is there anything you would like to add?

ZIMMERMAN: Gosh, I appreciate this opportunity. I'm very privileged to have the opportunity, too, to be

included in the annals of adult education. You know, when I was out of education for that period of time, I said to myself when I got ready to come back in, I said, "Where was it, and what was I doing that I found the most gratification for what I was doing?" And there wasn't any question in my mind what it was and where it was and what I was doing, and that's why I went back into adult education, and that's why I'm still there. Because it's that one segment of education that I think still carries that very positive onus, if you will, of putting out that hand to help your neighbor. And I hope it continues, and I'm going to try to help it as much as I can.

WEST: Thank you, Ted.

ZIMMERMAN: My pleasure.

WEST: This interview was done as a part of the California Adult Education Oral History Project.

INDEX

Adult Basic Education (ABE) Act, 44
 Adult Education Institute, 10, 56
 Adult Education Unit, California Department of Education, 26
 Alternative Education Work Centers, 51-52
 American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE), 59
 Apple Computer, 59
 Area Vocational Councils, 10
 Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), Adult Education Committee, 14, 42, 56
 Belmont Adult School, LAUSD, 58
 Belomy, Paul, 56
 Brady, Jim, 60
 Bureau of Adult Education, California State Department of Education, 38-40
 California Association of Adult Education Administrators (CAAEEA), 15-16
 California Association of School Business Officers (CASBO), 16
 California Association of Secondary Principals (CASA), 16
 California Council for Adult Education (CCAE), 56
 Career Education Act, 30
 Carl Perkins, see Vocational Education Act (VEA)
 Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA), 7, 11, 13
 Concurrent education, 52-55
 Cortina, Gabriel, 50, 52
 Desert Sands Unified School District, 48-49
 Distance learning, 39-40
 Division of Vocational Education, California Department of Education, 29
 Estes, Jean, 42
 Executive Development Program, 55-61, 63
 Fleischman, John, 58
 Garden Grove U.S.D., 12, 24, 42-48
 Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), 7
 Johnson, Lyndon Baines (U.S. President), 31
 Johnson, Thomas J. (Tom), 24, 30
 Johnston, William J. (Bill), 16, 20,
 Joint Powers Agreements, 17, 22-23, 28
 La Puente Valley Adult School, 6, 33
 Lincoln Educational Training Center, 48
 Los Angeles Unified School District, Division of Adult and Occupational Education, 16, 20-22, 27, 50-52
 Mexican immigrants, 47
 Migrant student program, 39
 Montoya, Joseph (California State Senator), 5-6
 Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN), 58-59, 62
 Perkins, Carl see Vocational Education Act (VEA)

Pierce College, 21
Professional Resources Outreach System, 55, 60-63
Proposition 13 (1978), 19
Regional Adult Vocational Education Councils (RAVECs), 5-11, 14
Regional Occupation Centers/Programs (ROP/Cs), 13, 19-21, 24-29, 31-32, 51
Santa Barbara County Schools, 50
Simi Valley Unified School District, 34-38, 42
Smith-Hughes Act, 29
Sworder, Stanley E., 38-39
Ten cent tax, 17-19
Tri-Community Adult School, 18-19, 40-43
Valley Vocational Center (La Puente), 23-24, 33
VanDetta, Vince, 42
Vietnamese refugees, 45-47
Vocational Education Act (VEA), 24, 29-32, 44

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- "A Plan is Needed," California Schools Boards Journal, Vol. 38,
No. 4, June, 1979
- "Strengths and Problems of California Regional Adult/Vocational
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University of Southern California Dissertation, August 1978
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