

ALBERT JULIO ALVAREZ, FAHP: a conversation with the editor

Al Alvarez (Figure 1) was born in Uruguay on September 8, 1946. At age 5, he and his family moved to Texas, and after brief stays in Harlingen and Laredo, they settled in El Paso. He began college at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos and after 2 years transferred to the University of Colorado, where he received a bachelor of arts degree in history in 1972. For the next 5 years he was an executive with the Boy Scouts and then in 1977 became the first executive director of the Poudre Hospital Foundation in Fort Collins, Colorado, a position he held until 1985 when he joined the Providence Health Care System as director of the foundation at their largest hospital in Anchorage, Alaska. After 3 years he became executive director of the foundation of Northridge Hospital and then 4 years later became the executive director of the Swedish Medical Center Foundations in Seattle. The fundraising of the 3 Swedish Foundations under his direction grew from <\$2 million in 1995 to >\$16 million in 2000. In August 2002 he became president of the Baylor Health Care System Foundation.

Al Alvarez has been active in many community activities and boards. He was president of the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra board of directors and served as vice chairman of the board of the Seattle Symphony. He has been a Rotarian for 30 years, served on the board of directors of the Rotary Club in both Fort Collins and in Anchorage, and served as president of the Rotary Club of Seattle. He is a fellow of the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy. Among its 2500 professionals, only 150 are fellows. He has served as chairman of that international association. After spending 3 hours with Al Alvarez, I came away incredibly impressed with this man. He is a great guy. I'm convinced that he is an absolute straight shooter and superb executive. He and his lovely wife, Sally, live in Plano, have 3 children, and are wonderful additions to the Baylor family.

William Clifford Roberts, MD (hereafter, WCR): Al, I appreciate your allowing me to talk to you so that the readers of



Figure 1. Al Alvarez during the interview.

BUMC Proceedings can know you better. We are in my home on November 12, 2002. To start, could you talk about your early upbringing?

Albert Julio Alvarez, FAHP (hereafter, AJA): I was born on September 8, 1946, in Montevideo (Portuguese for "I see a mountain"), the capital of Uruguay. My dad, a Baptist minister, started the first Evangelical church, the first non-Roman Catholic church, in Uruguay. He was its pastor for >20 years before we came to the USA. Uruguay used to be a province of Argentina. Argentina won its independence from Spain in the 1820s, and in 1833 its northernmost province, Uruguay, broke away.

WCR: How many people lived in Uruguay in 1946?

AJA: Less than 2 million.

WCR: Now what is its population?

AJA: It's <5 million.

WCR: What were some of your earliest memories there?

AJA: I was 4 years old when my dad and I went to Argentina in 1950. I remember flying in a Grumman Goose, an amphibious plane, across the wide mouth of the Rio de Plata, the River Plate, to Buenos Aires. In my grandparents' home in Buenos Aires, I played with all their stuff, including a harmonium, which they let me play to my delight. On that trip, my dad lost me at the subway. Evidently, I just stood there at the station until he was able to get off at the next stop and come back and get me. I walked down the street with him hand-to-hand singing a little ditty about Uruguay's having won their second World Cup championship in soccer by beating Brazil.

WCR: Did you have brothers and sisters?

AJA: Yes. There were 5 of us.

WCR: Where were you in the hierarchy?

AJA: Second to the last. My dad was twice married. His first wife died of breast cancer. I had a sister and brother from that union. My sister died in 1993 in Argentina, and my brother is still hale and hearty and lives in Detroit. He spent his entire career in Latin America building markets for Ford Motor Company.

WCR: This is your older half-brother?

AJA: Right. I have 2 sisters who are both married to ordained Baptist ministers, both of whom are named Larry! The oldest

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lives in Riverside, California, where he runs the business operation of a huge church. My younger sister lives in Kansas City with her husband, who is involved in religious education with their church.

WCR: *Is your father alive?*

AJA: No. He was born in 1900 and died in 1980.

WCR: *What was your father like?*

AJA: He was a fascinating man, eclectic, intellectual, but stubbornly dogmatic in his thinking. He was born into abject poverty in Spain. His father was an itinerant wheat worker who took the family to Argentina when my dad was 9 years old. My father was the oldest of 4 kids. My dad grew up in a rural agricultural environment and, beginning at age 12, worked every day at the gristmill. On his way home from work one day, he happened upon a religious tent revival and was converted. He then took his family to the revival. One by one, they converted and became Evangelical. That revival was led by my mother's dad, who was part of a Huguenot colony in Argentina who had escaped persecution in France a couple of generations earlier. My sister has a photo of the day of my dad's baptism by a river in Argentina. Included are my dad and my mom, who was 11 years younger. By meeting American missionaries, he ended up being educated in the USA. He went from being an ignorant peasant to getting a degree at Furman University and 2 graduate degrees at Yale. He also went to Southern Seminary in Louisville and then returned to Argentina.

WCR: *What 2 degrees did he get at Yale?*

AJA: He got a master's degree in divinity and a degree in religious education.

WCR: *How old was he when he finished all that training?*

AJA: When he returned to Argentina, he was in his early 30s. In 1930 he married a part-time student he had met at seminary. She was Brazilian and therefore spoke Portuguese. I met her family in Rio de Janeiro just before we came to the USA. My oldest sister was born in 1932 and my oldest brother in 1934.

WCR: *Your father was out of school entirely until he got involved with the missionaries? They must have identified his brightness.*

AJA: Right. He was exceptionally bright. At age 19 he enrolled in a seminary in Temuco, Chile. He took a train from Buenos Aires to Barriloche, now a famous ski resort but then an outpost in the middle of nowhere. The train trip took 4 or 5 days, whereupon he found a guide who took him over the Andes on a mule down to Chile. My mother's family, who had taken him in, spoke French. He planned to pay for his training at the seminary by teaching French. On the way over, he taught himself enough to teach first-year French at the seminary.

WCR: *He had missed school from age 10 to 19?*

AJA: It was age 10 to 24 actually because he came to the USA in 1924 to enroll in Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. At the time he didn't speak a word of English. He worked his way over. He embarked onboard a steamer from a port in Argentina. When the ship put in at Panama in 1924, he learned that Congress had just passed the Quota Act, the first of the very strong acts that curtailed immigration, and the doors shut tight. My dad was caught in Panama without anybody there to help him. He worked through the consulate to change his visa to allow him into the USA on the previously arranged visa. He was late getting to Furman because of that. I've found his name

on the Ellis Island Web site, among the very last of the people who went through Ellis Island because it closed down in either 1924 or 1925.

WCR: *He went back to Argentina after he finished in Louisville. What did he do back in Argentina?*

AJA: He hooked up with my grandfather again. He was married to his first wife then, Marietta. They arranged for him to have a little church in Uruguay. Soon, however, he was called to Montevideo to start the church there and stayed there from 1930 to 1953. In the meantime, with a Methodist missionary, he started the YMCA movement in Uruguay. He had been quite active in the "Y" in the States as a volunteer and liked the program.

WCR: *When did his first wife die?*

AJA: She died of breast cancer in 1936. He married my mom in 1939.

WCR: *You came along in 1946?*

AJA: Yes. My older sister was born in 1941 and my youngest sister in 1948.

WCR: *You were in Montevideo your first 7 years. What do you remember about that period?*

AJA: I remember a little about our home and how cold it was in the winter. Nobody could afford heat. We had little alcohol stoves. An alcohol burner heated the water. We had hot baths once a week. Most baths were with cold water.

WCR: *Were the toilets outside?*

AJA: No. All of our plumbing was inside. Montevideo is about as far south from the equator as San Francisco is north of it.

WCR: *Buenos Aires is on the same latitude as Sydney and Johannesburg.*

AJA: Yes.

WCR: *When you came to the States in 1953, you were 7 years of age. Where did you go?*

AJA: To Texas. My dad did not have a job when we arrived. He had sponsorship from missionary friends to let us in on a resident visa (the green card). We were in Laredo and Galveston for short periods before settling in El Paso, where my dad was a pastor of a Mexican Baptist church in the part of El Paso called the Chamizal.

WCR: *What does that mean?*

AJA: Chamizal is that part of El Paso that was ceded to Mexico in the early 1960s. It was a downtown area next to the river. I don't know why it was called that. It had been under some dispute because the river meandered. One time when it took a different twist, the Americans finished populating it, but the Mexicans always laid claim to it. In the 1960s, under the Johnson administration, it was given back to Mexico, including my dad's church on South Stanton Street.

WCR: *When you came to the USA, could you speak English?*

AJA: No, not a word.

WCR: *Did you speak Portuguese at all?*

AJA: No.

WCR: *Why was your father so anxious to come to the States?*

AJA: He grew to love the States during his long period of training here. He was coxswain on the crew at Yale. He ran cross-country at Furman. He was in the glee club at both Yale and Furman. We have a photo of the Yale Glee Club singing for Calvin Coolidge at the White House and a picture of my dad

shaking hands with the president. We packed everything we owned into a couple of steamer trunks. We never saw our South American family again.

WCR: *Your dad's first wife was Brazilian. Your mother was Argentine. What was your mother's name?*

AJA: Lidia Ostermann. She was born in rural Santa Fe, Argentina. She was part of a Huguenot colony, nondenominational, kind of Calvinist in their thinking. She would have been the second generation born in Argentina. She was born in 1911 and died in 1994.

WCR: *Was your mother anxious to come to the States also?*

AJA: My mother was as quiet and reserved as my father was loud, boisterous, and expressive. She never talked about herself, certainly never talked about how she felt about things other than to express great support for my father and his work. She was the most loving, saintly person I've ever known. To know her was to love her instantly. She was surrounded by friends. Everybody was her friend. I'm sure I could still go back to Harlingen and find people who would speak fondly of both my parents, particularly my mother.

WCR: *What was your father like on a day-to-day basis? It sounds like he was the dominant individual in your family.*

AJA: He was. He knew his own mind and what he wanted. He was rather stern, serious, and bald. He knew how to "let his hair down" every once in a while. He was tough to be around, particularly when I was going through my teen years. I was trying to figure out who I was as a person. We had to really toe the mark with my dad. He was not a strong disciplinarian. He had a sense about him that you just knew you didn't want to cross that line.

WCR: *Was he a good preacher?*

AJA: No. I don't remember spellbinding sermons. What I remember was being enraptured, along with every other kid, by his teaching abilities. He was a very talented teacher.

WCR: *Teaching what?*

AJA: The Bible and, really, lots of other topics. He was an incredibly knowledgeable person. He was a walking encyclopedia. He was a sponge who absorbed knowledge from everywhere. He read voraciously and was as curious as could be about everything. We went to Rio in 1953. On that trip we stopped at a famous reptile place where scientists studied the toxicology of various venoms. We spent hours there. I was bored to tears, but my dad was like a kid, absorbing everything. He also retained what he learned, and he talked about it and taught it in a very compelling way. My dad was a very gifted musicologist as well. The basis of my appreciation for classical music comes from him.

WCR: *Did he play an instrument?*

AJA: No. He sang—a lovely tenor voice.

WCR: *And he was an athlete too?*

AJA: Yes.

WCR: *Did he ever sleep?*

AJA: That's a good question. I don't know. He did everything full speed. He had a lot of energy.

WCR: *Were there a lot of books around the house?*

AJA: Yes. I still have a lot of his books.

WCR: *What was dinner like at home at night when you were growing up in El Paso?*

AJA: It was very pleasant and animated with lots of discussions. We talked about what was happening in the news or what was happening at school.

WCR: *Dinner at night was a big deal?*

AJA: Dinner at night was a huge thing. We tried to eat all 3 meals together. In El Paso, my younger sister and I were in grade school, and we walked the couple of blocks to school. We came home for lunch. We had a little devotional time at breakfast. That was neat. Even as a kid I appreciated that time. It was very seldom that we were not able to eat together as a family even though my dad was involved with the church most evenings. There was no television during dinner. Nothing interrupted that time.

WCR: *Was there any alcohol in the home?*

AJA: No. My parents were teetotalers. My dad was part of the Baptist tradition that remained true to its Calvinist roots. When I was a kid, it took a lot of persuasion on my part to be able to watch a football game on a Sunday. We didn't patronize stores for the longest time on Sundays.

WCR: *Did your father smoke?*

AJA: No.

WCR: *Nobody smoked in your house?*

AJA: Correct. There were no vices. We couldn't dance. In my senior year I was elected to the royalty of "Mardi Gras," our big spring party. As part of that I was supposed to pick my escort and dance around the dance floor. I had to get "papal dispensation" to do that. We couldn't dance. It was a very strict Calvinist/Baptist upbringing.

WCR: *Did you speak Spanish or English at home?*

AJA: We spoke Spanish at home until the day my dad made the pronouncement that we would speak English. Nobody spoke English around the table except for him, but he made that pronouncement anyway. The commitment was to get fully immersed in English as quickly as possible.

WCR: *What year was that?*

AJA: That was 1954.

WCR: *You were about 8 years of age?*

AJA: Right.

WCR: *How did you enjoy growing up in El Paso?*

AJA: I have fond memories of it.

WCR: *The school was English?*

AJA: Yes. It was a public school called Houston Elementary. I felt the sting of some prejudice because I was different. By the time we got there I was in second grade, but I was still wearing short pants in the South American tradition. Nobody wore short pants in El Paso. It was cowboy country. The kids teased me pretty hard. The sting I remember was from some teachers—being ignored, set aside, not really welcomed. That hurt. It made me work much harder to succeed.

We moved to Harlingen in 1960. I have pleasant memories of that time too. I had a lot of friends. I was involved in a lot of activities. Those were good years. I worked hard; I "over-Americanized."

WCR: *What does that mean?*

AJA: I really wanted to belong during my teen years. I'm sure that I spoke with an accent. (My brother and older sister speak English with a faint accent.) I worked hard at not being different. I tried to lose touch with my ethnicity at that time because

I just wanted to belong so badly. That was a period of 3 or 4 years while in high school.

WCR: *When you were in El Paso and Harlingen, was there enough money to do what you wanted to do? How did you make it?*

AJA: No. We were as poor as church mice. My dad was the pastor of a small church. We just barely made it. We had 1 car. We bought a television at Foley's in 1955, and that television was there when I returned from college in 1968. We lived in what the academics call "genteel poverty." There was always a commitment to education, music, and those kinds of things. My parents scrimped and saved so that we could have a hi-fi for music. We never went out to eat. A restaurant meal was something that was absolutely foreign to me until I went to college. We always had plenty of books around. We took car vacations to national parks and stayed in the park facilities, those little "cabanas." I don't look back on those years as being years of deprivation because we never felt deprived of the things that were important to us as a family.

WCR: *Both your mother and father pushed education on all 5 of you?*

AJA: Yes.

WCR: *You were just expected to do well in school?*

AJA: It was the expectation. It wasn't that they pushed us. I did not feel a lot of pressure. We were made to feel as though we were born into positions of educational privilege.

WCR: *When you were in high school, what activities did you participate in? Were you an athlete?*

AJA: I played basketball until I discovered I could never overcome my natural clumsiness. I got involved in student government. I played in the band.

WCR: *What did you play?*

AJA: The trombone. We had a great marching band, a concert band, and a symphony in Harlingen. We had a very talented director. I played some real nice music in high school. And I sang. I sang in the El Paso Boys' Choir, starting at age 10, and I've been singing formally ever since. Music, particularly vocal, is an overriding passion in my life.

WCR: *Did your mother work outside the home?*

AJA: My mother was a substitute teacher wherever she went. It appeared as though she had a regular job because she substituted so much. She arrived home not long after we kids did.

WCR: *Were there any teachers in junior high or high school who had a particular impact on you?*

AJA: Yes. There were a couple in high school. Ms. Hastings in high school was a fabulous history teacher who made history come alive for me. It was what woke me up to the fact that history was something I really wanted to pursue. An English teacher, Ms. Adams, taught me to write, to appreciate the beauty of the English language, and to appreciate the art of communication. I still think of Ms. Adams when I see poor writing. Mr. Seale was my band teacher in high school, and he taught me a lot. Mr. Bob Irby was our talented choir director. He recognized my love of music and encouraged it. He was able to get a lot of boys to sing in the choir, and he made it cool as well.

WCR: *You were the fourth of 5 siblings. Did the older ones go to college?*

AJA: Yes. The oldest did. My brother never did go to college even though he had a very successful career with Ford Mo-

tor Company. All 3 sisters went to college. Both my older and younger sisters graduated from Hardin-Simmons.

WCR: *Were there scholarships for college?*

AJA: Yes. Both of my sisters had scholarship help. My younger sister had so much scholarship help that she made money going to college. I graduated well in the top 5% of my class in high school.

WCR: *How many were in your class?*

AJA: About 410.

WCR: *You were among the top 20 students.*

AJA: Right.

WCR: *Where did you go to college?*

AJA: I started at Southwest Texas State in San Marcos.

WCR: *You had a scholarship there?*

AJA: Partial. I had a scholarship offer in music at North Texas State (now the University of North Texas in Denton), but I didn't want to pursue music as a career. I did have some Baptist scholarship money that was available to missionary kids. Our dad was involved with the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The threshold was a B+ average. One had to maintain a 3.2 grade point to hold onto that money. At that time, tuition at Southwest Texas was \$50 a semester, and my room and board was <\$300 a semester.

WCR: *This was the first time you'd been away from home. San Marcos was how far from home?*

AJA: It's about 300 miles.

WCR: *How did you get there?*

AJA: My father drove me to college. My dad, who never slept, would drive me to school and back. They never thought about spending a night and making it easy on themselves. They did that to Abilene also. They'd leave Harlingen to take my sister to Abilene, which is another 200 miles farther than San Marcos, and then drive back the same day. Those were some brutal 20-hour days.

WCR: *How did it work out in college? How did you enjoy being there?*

AJA: I enjoyed it, and that was part of my problem. I had a real good time. This was my first time out in the real world without the very strong dominating influence of my father. I had to find my life in such a prescribed way through high school. I broke out of that and pledged a fraternity in college. School had always come easy for me, but I got lazy academically and consequently I got into grade trouble at Southwest Texas. At the same time, I was trying to figure out, "Who am I? What is it that I want? What am I doing in school?" I recognized that I was really in school just to stay out of the army.

WCR: *You entered college in what year?*

AJA: 1965.

WCR: *What fraternity did you pledge?*

AJA: Sigma Nu.

WCR: *What happened to you there?*

AJA: I got involved in fraternity life. I was interested in being a big man on campus. I set aside academic pursuits. I had no idea whatsoever what I wanted to do for a career. I was floundering. My parents didn't really work with us in terms of career planning. My student friends also were kind of lost and aimless at the time. We were interested in getting from one party to the next. We had a pretty fatalist view of the world.



Figure 2. At an annual trip to Collegiate Peaks, Colorado.

WCR: *That was in the midst of the Vietnam War?*

AJA: Yes. I lost all interest in the formal academics. Nevertheless, I read voraciously. I discovered Proust, Hemingway, and Faulkner. Then, I loved the history courses. Often I wouldn't read what was assigned because that just wasn't what I was interested in at the time. I would read history just from the standpoint of my natural interest in it.

WCR: *It's not that you weren't pursuing knowledge or information, you were sort of rebelling against having to do this or that assignment at that time in your life?*

AJA: That's very accurate except for the "sort of." I just rebelled.

WCR: *You really let go for the first time in your life?*

AJA: I really let go. I started to smoke and drink, and I partied all the time. I thought that was what so-called normal kids did because I'd never had a normal upbringing. What hit me between the eyes was being on scholastic probation, which made me eligible for the draft. I got my draft notice right away. In the meantime, I had spent a summer in Estes Park in Colorado and had just absolutely fallen in love with Colorado (Figure 2). I had read a lot of the romantic poets. I really like that literature. It speaks to me even today. I saw Colorado in the same way that Keats and Wordsworth saw the Lake District in England. Since I was drafted, I asked for permission to change my draft board to Boulder and, sure enough, they postponed my draft date from February to May. I had those extra 3 months and I went to Boulder and got a job and was able to establish myself in Boulder and do a little thinking before going off to Vietnam.

WCR: *You didn't finish your junior year?*

AJA: Correct. I had finished my sophomore year and at the beginning of my junior year I got in grade trouble. I went down on May 14 to Denver for my draft physical. My buddies in Boulder had had a little party for me to say good-bye. But, I flunked the draft physical. I discovered that my basketball clumsiness wasn't due to 100% awkwardness on my part but was the result of a bad knee, which I didn't know about. I had one of those moments in life that can only be described as "a new lease on life." It was like my life started all over again. I could do what I wanted to do without having to fear the consequences of going off to fight. Then I said, "I've got to get hold of myself." I worked at establishing residency in Colorado, became a student at the



University of Colorado, and rediscovered what I had had in high school, i.e., a real interest in academics and educational pursuits. I had some great teachers who encouraged my writing.

WCR: *All of a sudden you became a good student at the University of Colorado in 1968?*

AJA: I had to establish residency because I wasn't transferring exactly great grades from Southwest Texas. They allowed me in for the first year as a "special student." They only allowed me 6 hours a semester for the first 2 semesters. It wasn't until 1971 that I was able to get in and really knock them dead. After those first 2 semesters, I took 18 hours each semester thereafter plus I worked. I became a student again. It was great! I married, and our oldest son was born.

WCR: *When did you get married?*

AJA: I got married in 1970 to Ann, my ex-wife, whom I had met at Southwest Texas. She had come up to Estes Park and gotten a job. We hooked up.

WCR: *What did you do at Estes Park? You had a job that summer.*

AJA: I worked at the go-cart track. Summer employment is fairly easy to get there. It's like Cape Cod. "The underground" says that's the place that you want to work.

WCR: *What was it about Colorado that appealed to you so much when you went to work at Estes Park? It sounds like you didn't want to go back to Texas after you got there.*

AJA: That's true. The serenity, the majesty of the mountains, the clean crisp mountain air, and the opportunity to hike and see the country appealed to me. The feeling of being part of nature's majesty inspired me and still does. I've climbed Long's Peak, 14,000', outside of Estes a dozen times (Figure 3). Since my religious reawakening, this whole sense of being able to be close to God—"close to nature's God," as Jefferson described it—is what I felt. It was not so much a rejection of Texas but a feeling that this environment was new and exciting for me.

WCR: *When you were a kid, did your family go on some automobile vacations to Colorado?*

AJA: We sure did.

WCR: *You knew about Colorado. Where else did you go on those family vacations?*

AJA: We took 3 long car trips. One was to the Grand Canyon National Park, and we stayed for about 10 days. Another was



Figure 3. Climbing Long's Peak with children Andrew and Sarah.

to California, ending up at Sequoia and King's Canyon National Park. The third was to Colorado and Yellowstone, where we spent 2 great weeks. My parents loved it, too; my mother especially loved the mountains and the wonderful crisp air. She got her soul as well as her lungs refilled.

WCR: *Where did you work when attending college at Boulder?*

AJA: I was a teacher's aide in a junior high school in Sheridan, Colorado, a poor suburb of Denver. I was the "warden" during study hall.

WCR: *Were there teachers at the University of Colorado who had a major impact on you?*

AJA: Yes. The dean of the department of history was really good. An English teacher, Professor Salzman, encouraged and challenged my writing. My most intellectual period was that time at the University of Colorado. For example, in a term paper I explored the relationship between the character of Bartleby (the Scrivener from the Melville novella [50 or 60 pages] written during his short-story period) and the character of the raven (in Poe's poem), as they had very similar characteristics and similar effects on the protagonist in both stories. There was a religious philosophy teacher too. The course was about philosophers who helped frame theology. We studied Anselm, Aquinas, and Augustine. I read those people and subsequently have continued that reading because of an interest in theology. It is helpful to know how others came to their concepts.

WCR: *You graduated in 1971, were married, and had a child. What happened after that? What were you going to do with your history major?*

AJA: I wanted to go to law school. I had a family to support, so I knew that was going to be difficult. I needed a job to earn enough to save. My wife taught in the school district about 9 miles from Boulder.

WCR: *How far is Boulder from Denver?*

AJA: Thirty miles. I got a job with the Boy Scouts and loved it. I had been an Eagle Scout in Harlingen. The placement office at the university helped me get that job.

WCR: *What did you do?*

AJA: I did everything. I was responsible for all scouting activities, including the recruitment of volunteers, the raising of money, and the building of programs in Larimer County. The seat of Larimer County is Fort Collins, where we lived, and Estes Park is a part of that county. I was in a part of the world I loved intensely and worked at a program that I admired a great deal, even though it was really under fire in the early 1970s. The social pressures were starting to mount against scouting. I got the equivalent of an MBA in how to do community development work by working with the Boy Scouts. I found that I was good at it.

WCR: *You got your "MBA" with on-the-job training?*

AJA: Yes. I did have some formal course work, and they exposed me to the educational programs of some industry

groups. For instance, I spent a week with educators from the 3M Company on their management techniques. I spent 5 years working with a program that was patterned after IBM's management program. It was great on-the-job training taught by seasoned pros, and it has served me well to this day. I got so involved in my work and community that I set aside thoughts of going to law school. When I discovered that I couldn't really make a living in scouting, I knew that I could do this work for hospitals or colleges and be remunerated better. After 5 years, a group of my volunteers from the Boy Scouts was asked to start a foundation at Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins. They asked me if I would be their staff person to help put the foundation together. That was 1977.

WCR: *How big was that hospital?*

AJA: At the time, 210 beds. It is now close to 400 beds.

WCR: *What happened?*

AJA: I decided to do it, and for the next 8 years I did. I was in Fort Collins and built the program there. That foundation is going strong to this day, I'm proud to say. I started from absolute scratch. Now, they have a big, successful operation.

WCR: *How did you learn how to do it? You were on your own.*

AJA: I read and talked to people and made use of every bit of training I possibly could. There was little formal training at the time. (There are now opportunities for people to get a master's degree in community development work. One couldn't do it back then.) I'd go to Denver and meet with colleagues there.

WCR: *How far is Fort Collins from Denver?*

AJA: Seventy miles. I met with people in Denver who had been doing this type of work and learned from their experiences. They were generous with their time. I was most appreciative.

WCR: *How did you go about carrying out your charge at the hospital's foundation?*

AJA: Somewhat methodically. I joined the right kinds of organizations, developed the right kind of network, and that led to meeting the right kind of people. I joined the Rotary Club and have been a Rotarian since 1972. I have been involved in various chambers of commerce and a lot of United Way-type activities. They all provided service to the community, and I met

important people through those activities. I've been able to show that I am willing to give back to the community as well as take from it. That's what is known as "paying your dues." As you start to get accepted, then you start to get introduced. As you get introduced, then your network broadens. A great way to meet folks is through the people on your board of directors who have influence and affluence, and they attract their peers in the community toward whatever your cause happens to be. Building and working with an effective board is the hallmark of how I like to work in the community.

WCR: *You found something that you loved. You are an extrovert; you enjoy meeting and knowing other people. They accepted you and liked you. You are obviously very successful.*

AJA: You have described what could be normally described as a sales personality. I love my work because it's beyond sales. What I do is have good people do very noble things—give of themselves to a cause that needs their support. I help people help others. That is what drives me. I like to be around people and can naturally be attracted to sales, but my product is the best.

WCR: *Everybody is trying to sell something. Was the Poudre Valley Hospital connected to any religious organization?*

AJA: No. It was a district hospital, meaning that it was like a school district. It had taxing powers. The taxing district allowed the hospital to tax or apply a levy.

WCR: *What were the accomplishments you were most proud of during that period?*

AJA: The building. We built a very good organization there. We got the community behind it in a very substantial way so that even today, folks think of it as being, if not the leading, a leading charity in the city of Fort Collins.

WCR: *How big is Fort Collins?*

AJA: Fort Collins had about 85,000 people when I was there.

WCR: *After 8 years you left the Poudre Valley Hospital?*

AJA: I was recruited in 1985 to go to the Sisters of Providence, who operated hospitals up and down the West Coast from Burbank to Anchorage, Alaska. They have a Providence Hospital in Anchorage, the population, commercial, and political center of Alaska.

WCR: *How many people live there?*

AJA: A quarter million. Half the population of the state lives in Anchorage.

WCR: *When did your first marriage break up?*

AJA: In 1979, after 10 years. Sally and I married in 1981. I'm sure that some day we'll probably go back to Colorado because that's our emotional home. Our children were born there. We have very close friends still there. But Fort Collins was limited, and the hospital was limited. When the recruiters would call, I'd say, "Nope. I'm not interested." Finally, I thought I'd better see what was out there. Anchorage does sound like a remote place to go until you see and experience it. It's a wonderfully vibrant and youthful community.

WCR: *The Sisters of Providence is a big deal?*



Figure 4. Andrew (left) and Geoffrey (right) Alvarez climbing Mount McKinley (20,320') at a temperature of -20°F . The picture was taken at the 17,000' level.

AJA: Yes. It's a big system, and the facility in Anchorage was one of its anchor points. I was able instantly to be with the top leaders in the state. I traveled often to Seattle and to other places up and down the coast. It broadened my life. The hospital system expanded tremendously as a regional referral center during my time there. For the first time, I had access to the likes of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, for example. Anchorage opened a lot of doors for me.

WCR: *How big was the hospital there?*

AJA: About 400 beds. It is the biggest 400-bed hospital you'd ever want to see. How many 400-bed hospitals have a burn unit? It has a 35-bed level 3 neonatal intensive care unit. It's the regional trauma center. It's got everything because of the nature of the geography.

WCR: *It was the biggest hospital in Anchorage?*

AJA: By far, and it still is.

WCR: *What did you do at that hospital to expand it? How did you fit in there?*

AJA: I fit in beautifully. I still have many friends there. Our 2 sons graduated from high school in Anchorage, and they are both still there. Both love Alaska (Figure 4). Alaska requires loving the outdoors, despite the cold, and the summers, despite the mosquitoes. If you can figure out how to tolerate those 2 things, you'll love Alaska. It is incomparably beautiful. Parts of it absolutely take your breath away. I'm a bit of a nature fanatic. There were times when I was completely by myself in the car driving from the hospital to our home (in suburban Anchorage, about 9 miles from the hospital), and I had to pull off the road to look at the big mountains and the salmon-pink light that exists only at those latitudes. We love to ski. It was like going to heaven (Figure 5).

WCR: *How cold would it get in the wintertime?*

AJA: Anchorage is protected from the most severe winter weather by the mountains to the north. The coldest temperature that I experienced there was -20°F . The coldest I ever experienced in Colorado was -25°F . In Colorado it's -25°F one day and then close to 40° the next. In Anchorage the temperature gradient doesn't vary 5° , from 5°F to 10°F or from 10°F to 15°F .



Figure 5. Catching silver salmon in Alaska.

for long spells. It isn't like Seattle, which is constantly gray. The sun shines a lot in Anchorage. It's gorgeous. We loved it.

WCR: *How did you like the people in Alaska? They are survivors in a way. It must remind you a bit of South Texas folk.*

AJA: Yes. There is a frontier mentality there. Most adults there are professionals. You don't go up there on a whim. You don't show up in Anchorage and hope that you can make a go of it as I did in Colorado. Everything is too severe. The economy is too thin. There's a very strong middle class. Most people have largely chosen to live there. For lawyers who don't want the rat race of, say, Philadelphia but still want to make a good living and have a decent place to raise a family, Anchorage is ideal. It's very family oriented and very youthful. Everybody participates in school, church, and community activities. Everybody is involved. It has its social problems. There's a growing drug problem, unfortunately, among the young people. A lot of that has to do with the accessibility of fishing boats. Alaska's native population feels very isolated. It doesn't feel as though it's part of the community at all. There are some social problems from that standpoint.

WCR: *Did Sally enjoy Alaska?*

AJA: She loved it.

WCR: *What did you accomplish there at that hospital?*

AJA: Quite a bit. I was able to grow the program and sustain it. They had had a development program before I arrived. They created the foundation and I was its first president.

WCR: *In 1985 you were how old?*

AJA: I was almost 40. In 1986 I turned 40. In fact, on my 40th birthday my staff filled my office with black balloons. I was able to recruit a board, and the chairman of the board was Wally Hickel, the former governor of the state and the former secretary

of the interior. (He resigned from the Nixon cabinet because of his opposition to the war in Vietnam.) He was a colorful and interesting man. He was the man most responsible for building up the North Slope as an environmentally sound oil development area. I say that as a pretty strong environmentalist. I love the outdoors and I love the pristine quality of being in the outdoors. I've been on the North Slope many times, and they are doing it right. I have no reservations whatsoever about development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. They know how to do it. When people think of West Texas, they think of acres and acres of oil derricks. The highest profile you see from any oil well on the North Slope is about 2' high. The technology is just stupendous. Wally probably was the person most responsible for that. That is what really put Alaska on the map. We built a great board, raised quite a bit of money, and developed some great programs.

Some money that I was able to raise did some serious outreach. We had a program that, through a grant from Robert Wood Johnson, reached out to the native communities out in the bush to train the health workers in crisis management. Alcohol problems are rampant in Alaska. In some villages, 100% of the adult population is alcoholic. This program trained and supported these health workers in crisis management. And it worked! In some cases these people became pillars of the community and worked with folks as they began to sober up and to try to clean up their lives. They became the anchor point for sobriety and for a healthier mental state.

WCR: *When you first started in a hospital in Fort Collins, how did you handle the prima donna physicians?*

AJA: I discovered that beyond the prima donna characteristics (and they are there, of course, with many physicians), the magic of health care happens because of the physicians. There is a point where healing takes place, either through surgery or through some therapeutic intervention. The patient's confidence in the physician is part of a process that is nothing short of miraculous. I'm a religious person, so I tend to see miracles in places where others don't. I see healing as miraculous. There is a real magic in that interaction between the patient and the physician. I saw that right away. It's been the hallmark of my career to zero in on that magic point and to leave the politics, the personality issues, and all of that aside as much as possible. Physicians are dedicated people doing incredibly hard work. I also believe that all physicians aren't as highly paid as they once were and that they earn every bit of money they charge. They work hard under trying circumstances. It's been my commitment to work at supporting the ability of physicians to be able to do the good work that they do.

WCR: *Al, you were in Alaska how long?*

AJA: Almost 5 years. Then I took a job in California at Northridge Hospital, the flagship of the UniHealth System. I was recruited there in September 1989. They had a successful development program, and my job was to make it even more successful.

WCR: *How big is that hospital?*

AJA: About 450 beds.

WCR: *What made you leave Alaska?*

AJA: There were a lot of reasons. The biggest one was that the chief executive officer at the time in Anchorage got crosswise with the medical staff. He was eased out—kicked upstairs

to a job in Seattle. I didn't think the circumstances called for his being treated in such a way. I was vulnerable when the recruiter called. I thought maybe it was time for me to look elsewhere. I took the job at Northridge. It's a great hospital, a jewel in the San Fernando Valley, known for its very high quality. When the quality movement hit health care in the early 1990s, Northridge was one of the places that became a "poster child hospital" for quality health care. It was a great place. I got to work with some good people—Paul Teslow was the chief executive officer of UniHealth, a visionary guy. He had built Northridge Hospital to be the flagship of the system he had helped create. It was a fully vertically integrated system. This was where I got my "MBA" in the business of health care. I got an "MHA" working there. It was amazing. I was exposed to all of the very intricate business plans and contractual arrangements, all these things that exist now in spades in places like Baylor, but we didn't have them much then. Managed care was coming into its own in southern California. I was able to help create the philanthropic piece for the whole managed care. It was an exciting time.

WCR: *What does FAHP mean?*

AJA: I'm a fellow in the Association of Healthcare Philanthropy. The association was founded in 1968. In those 35 years or so, there have been only about 150 fellows among the tens of thousands of people who have been members. I'm proud of that.

WCR: *What year did you get that fellowship?*

AJA: I got it in 1986.

WCR: *How long were you at Northridge?*

AJA: I was there for 3 years. We didn't like California. We loved Northridge and we loved the people. Our family was still pretty young. Our daughter was in second grade when we moved there, and our middle son was just starting seventh grade. Sally and I together raised my oldest son because I retained custody after my divorce. He was already in college. The other 2 were young. We decided that we were not going to raise a family there. I helped build their program and did good work there. When a friend, who was the president of a small college in Anchorage, called and asked me to be his vice president for public affairs (university relations), I said yes. I went back to Anchorage for another 3 years. That was the only time in my career spent in higher education. I was at Alaska Pacific University, a college with only 200 full-time students. The president of the school was then, and still is, a good friend. He prevailed on me to come help him. He said, "The school is struggling, Al. I'm not going to paint you a bed of roses. You'll have to work hard. If you'll join me, this will help put this school back on the road where it needs to be."

WCR: *What did you do during those 3 years?*

AJA: Everything. The school had a president, a provost, and a vice president (me). I raised money to make payroll. He'd come into my office on a Wednesday saying, "We need payroll on Friday. Any chance of accelerating that gift from so-and-so to get the money for payroll?"

WCR: *That was an interesting decision to leave the hospital arena to go to a university that was struggling. You knew it was struggling. You, Sally, and your kids must have wanted to get back to Anchorage.*

AJA: That was the major reason for our moving back. We wanted to get back to Anchorage. We all loved it there and had a lot of friends there. Our son was going into his high school

years. Our oldest son had had a very good experience in high school there. We thought this would be a good move. Careerwise, it was quite a risk. I was close to the top of my game at Northridge, so to take this move into uncharted waters was risky.

WCR: *How did you enjoy it? That change must have been instructive to you.*

AJA: It actually was. It was broadening from the standpoint that I found I was able to move fairly quickly into a new arena (higher education) and still succeed. I found that there were some similarities. The prima donna professor is not that different from the prima donna physician. The political workings of a university are not that different from the political dealings of a hospital. I found that I was able to apply a lot of the skills that I had developed in health care. What I didn't like about it was that higher education moves slowly. It values consensus thinking. I don't know how universities ever get anything decided. The long and short of it is that they don't. It takes forever. Even a little place like Alaska Pacific University moved at glacial speed. I was used to the tough and tumble world of health care where decisions get made rather crisply and quickly. You live with the consequences, either up or down. I discovered that I did not like higher education from that standpoint.

WCR: *You didn't know that before you did it?*

AJA: I didn't know it before I got into it. I was there for about a year and I said to myself, "I'm approaching my 50th year. I'd better see to my career." It was about at that point that I decided to take a very serious look at what I really wanted to do and where I wanted to be. I was at Alaska Pacific University for 3 years and then went to the Swedish Hospital System in Seattle, which was the culmination of a long search and of a long process that I really explored.

The Swedish Hospital System is a small system based around a rather significant hospital. In many ways it's like Baylor, although it's about half the size. It has a very significant core operation and then some smaller satellites. It's very successful and, like Baylor, known as a hospital. Swedish never got involved in chasing after all the various iterations of managed care. It never tried to vertically integrate. It never tried to own a lot of its physician practices. It never tried to own a managed care product. It always concentrated on being a hospital, a high-quality hospital and a doctors' hospital. The man who hired me was their first nonphysician chief executive officer since its founding in 1910.

WCR: *Swedish, I presume, was founded by Swedish immigrants there?*

AJA: Yes, although its name doesn't have to do with that. They did not set out to be a hospital for the Swedish community that had settled in the Pacific Northwest. It was a matter of happenstance. Swedish Hospital was formed as a different hospital in a different part of town by the founder. Summit Hospital, which is where Swedish now is, was a more successful operation. Its founder and chief executive officer died tragically in Seattle's first car accident. The people in what is now Swedish, the founders, quickly bought it up because it was in a much more favorable location. Summit Hospital had S's emblazoned everywhere so they said, "Let's change the name of our hospital to something with an S. How about Swedish?" That's the history of the name.

WCR: *Swedish Hospital in Seattle is huge?*

AJA: Yes. It is to Seattle what Baylor is to Dallas.

WCR: *How did you, Sally, and your family like Seattle?*

AJA: We loved it.

WCR: *You went there in 1996?*

AJA: Right, on January 2, 1996.

WCR: *You were there nearly 7 years?*

AJA: Yes.

WCR: *When did you come to Baylor?*

AJA: On August 5, 2002.

WCR: *How did you like the situation at Swedish, and what accomplishments were you most proud of there?*

AJA: I am most proud of the tremendous growth we experienced. I inherited a program that had raised \$3 million a year; this year, it will raise \$10 million.

WCR: *What did you do that the person preceding you didn't?*

AJA: We developed a very strong volunteer leadership program. I made it so that these leaders could be put in front of people with money. We worked on the timing issues for the monetary requests. There are a lot of programs that go through the machinations of trying to make things happen. I believe in execution.

WCR: *When you went there you didn't know anybody in Seattle?*

AJA: That's right.

WCR: *You're not going to get much money from the persons on the street. You get money from the leaders of the community. You went about meeting them the same way you had done in Anchorage and at Northridge?*

AJA: You're exactly right. I got involved in Rotary. I quickly got involved and was recruited to the board of the symphony. I ended up being a vice chair of the board of the symphony in Seattle, which is a prestigious and great board to be on. I had been the chairman of the board of the symphony in Anchorage. I got involved with United Way. There was an established board at the foundation at Swedish. I was able fairly quickly through that contact and mechanism to meet lots of folks. Again, I had to be tested. I had to pay my dues.

WCR: *Is the Swedish Hospital System connected with a religious organization?*

AJA: The only religious place that I've worked was Providence. That was Catholic.

WCR: *How did the Baylor position come about?*

AJA: We haven't talked about my professional affiliation with the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy other than the fact that I'm a fellow. I've been in the leadership of AHP. It's an international group with members in Australia, England, Canada, and the USA. I was chairman of the association about 10 years back. I've had the opportunity to travel within hospital circles. I think I know the industry well. I know where the great hospitals are. Baylor is one of the great hospitals, an exceptional place. It is one of the top 10 hospitals in the country. I feel that I've got one of the top 10 jobs in my part of the industry in the country. It's an opportunity. Using a sports analogy, I'm a football coach and have been at Colorado State University, which is a pretty darn good program, and now have a chance to coach at Notre Dame, a truly great program.

WCR: *How did the Baylor opportunity actually come about?*

AJA: A recruiter called me in January 2002. I happened to have known the recruiter for years and have helped her make contacts.

WCR: *Baylor called a recruiter. What recruiter did Baylor call?*

AJA: It's a firm called Paschal-Murray. The woman's name was Collette Murray.

WCR: *They focus on what?*

AJA: They concentrate on not-for-profit executives, particularly in health care. They also do higher education placement. They'll place university presidents and others, particularly in development. They are definitely the *crème de la crème*, one of the top 2 firms in the country. It helped a lot that that's who called. That's important. I knew them and I knew if they called, it was really something. When she said it was Baylor Dallas, I paid attention.

WCR: *What happened after that?*

AJA: She sent me some material. We talked. I decided to throw my hat into the ring. She told me that Baylor was 100% committed to finding the best candidate. They were going to look as long and as hard as they needed to find the very best person. I thought, "Okay. That's the kind of process that I would want to go through." I wouldn't otherwise want to leave the Emerald City, Seattle, and the great job I had there.

WCR: *What did you go through?*

AJA: Interviews with the recruiter.

WCR: *Did she come to Seattle?*

AJA: She came to Seattle to interview me. After arduous work (they do a tremendous amount of work trying to develop a profile for what would fit at Baylor), she determined that I was a good fit and presented me as a candidate to the search committee that Joel Allison had formed. I was asked to come to Dallas for an interview.

WCR: *Who called you from Baylor?*

AJA: Nobody. Baylor set it all up with Collette. The first person I met was Joel.

WCR: *When was that?*

AJA: In May 2002.

WCR: *You met Joel in his office?*

AJA: Yes. Thereafter, I met many others.

WCR: *Who was on the committee?*

AJA: The committee included the 12 members of the system board of directors. I met with some of them individually and others in groups of 2 or 3. I met with some of the Foundation leaders, some leaders from outlying campuses, and some physicians.

WCR: *Which physicians?*

AJA: Butch Derrick and Mike Ramsay interviewed me that first go-around. I also met Tim Parris, Gary Brock, Lydia Jumonville, and others during that initial visit. That first visit was for 1½ days. I was asked to come back.

WCR: *How long was the interval before you were asked to come back?*

AJA: About 2 weeks after the first visit (in late May). I was asked to bring Sally on the second visit.

WCR: *What happened on the second visit?*

AJA: It was more of the same except this time I met with a Realtor. I had a longer time here. We spent a half day with the Realtor.

WCR: *Had you known Joel before?*

AJA: No.

WCR: *Had you ever seen Baylor University Medical Center?*

AJA: No. I knew it only by reputation.

WCR: *Had you been to Dallas before?*

AJA: Yes. Growing up in Texas, I'd had occasion to come to Dallas from time to time. My sister, who graduated from Hardin-Simmons, once lived in Dallas.

WCR: *How long did it take from the first time you came to Baylor to the time you were offered the position?*

AJA: I was offered the position in early June 2002.

WCR: *A month?*

AJA: Right. They offered me the position, we came to terms, and I was able then to give notice on about June 5.

WCR: *It sounds like the chemistry was just perfect right from the very beginning?*

AJA: Absolutely heaven-sent!

WCR: *You liked it and they liked you. Did Baylor interview other people?*

AJA: Yes. I don't know the details there. The ethics of going through the process precludes my knowing. It's none of my business.

WCR: *The fact that you had lived in Texas as a teenager, that you had gone to college here, and that your father was a Baptist minister in Texas certainly didn't hurt. The fact that you are quite a religious person didn't hurt. That you are obviously an outgoing person who works well with others certainly didn't hurt.*

AJA: It was just so right. It feels so right for me from a career standpoint. Baylor is really up there in an unassailable leadership position. I have always retained a fondness for Texas as my home, as one does for the place where one grows up. The Dallas Cowboys have always been my team. Part of me has always been here in Texas. My parents stayed here long after I had moved to Colorado. They were in their home in Harlingen until my dad died in 1980. Then my mom went to live with my sister in California.

WCR: *How did you find the Foundation here? When you came, you'd had a couple of months to think about what you wanted to do when you got here.*

AJA: I felt privileged to come. For the first time in my 30-year career, I've moved into something that isn't a turnaround. I didn't have to come and fix a place that's falling apart. Quite the contrary. My predecessors have done an exceptional job of building this program. Have we fallen a little in the marketplace? Maybe. There's always opportunity. I'm also blessed with a very strong staff. There are competent, knowledgeable, very effective professionals in virtually every spot. I've got the enviable position of being tasked with taking a team of racehorses, doing some enhancement to the team, and putting them in a new course where we can accomplish even bigger and greater things. It's a very exciting challenge for me.

WCR: *What charge were you given when you were asked to come here?*

AJA: To take us to that next level of greatness. We had achieved but had "plateaued." Our fundraising has pretty much plateaued at around \$20 million a year, which is pretty remarkable. That's really quite successful. To accomplish all the things that Baylor needs to accomplish and to maintain its viability and strength, we need to raise almost twice that amount. Obviously, to do that is not a matter of flogging the horses harder, you have to put in new systems to add some enhancement, change the

program so that it can be a lot more effective, and get your crowbar deeper in the ground and move a lot more earth. I also was charged specifically with helping launch our centennial campaign. As you know, 2003 is our centennial year and the powers that be thought that it might be a good year to do a fairly comprehensive campaign. I agree with that view. The opportunity that we have through the centennial cannot be squandered. We certainly have, centennial or not, a very strong case in the community in terms of who we are, what we represent, the level of care that we provide, and our overall vision. We ought to be able to raise money in North Texas with the best of them.

WCR: *Al, what are your priorities? I'm sure that you have priorities. I'm sure that the administration, Baylor Health Care System, has priorities. Physicians have their priorities. I'm involved in the heart disease arena. We're knocking on your door. I'm also involved with BUMC Proceedings. We're knocking on your door. You have a lot of demands. Who determines priorities?*

AJA: One of the things I was expected to do was to become a partner, to use Joel's words, with Joel in the full integration of the fundraising into the hospital. Up until fairly recently, the Foundation was left to operate according to its own devices. It was pretty much isolated from the rest of the hospital operation. Looking forward, we simply can't do that and we know that. We have to fully integrate. In so doing, one thing we have to do is make sure that my priorities are in clear alignment with those of the medical center. What does that mean? We need to raise money in 3 or 4 major areas. One is *capital*. We need the capital for the Baylor University Medical Center enhancements that are on the drawing board and that are so desperately needed. We need capital to support our plans in Plano and to support what we're doing at All Saints, in Grapevine, and in Garland. Capital is one of our goals.

The other is in *education*. Baylor didn't get to its position of excellence without having been a teaching hospital. We are a bona fide teaching hospital although not affiliated with a medical school. We're unique in that respect. We need not only to celebrate that fact but to think of ways of telling that story in a very compelling way to those who have resources in the community. What makes Baylor a jewel in the community is the fact that it does education so well. We have opportunities to raise money for chairs and fellowships. I include the *Proceedings* under education.

Another is *research*. It is growing and burgeoning, although still young. We have one of the strongest and best clinical laboratories on this planet. The opportunities for research are huge.

Then, there are the *community outreach* aspects of Baylor. Baylor is what it is largely because it made a commitment that was embodied in the famous words of George Truett 100 years ago. Baylor is a place that serves the health care needs of every person regardless of creed and background. Baylor hasn't wavered from that in 100 years. We're in East Dallas and we're here to stay. Is that the most economically viable place in the metroplex? No. We know that and we know that our location produces challenges. We need to provide care to that portion of the community who otherwise wouldn't get quality care.

Where does cardiology fit into what I've said? That's what we together have got to figure out. I'm embracing the teamwork concept that Joel is putting together. I sit at his senior leader-

ship table and participate in the discussions, and I'm able to determine the priorities of the hospital and the system. Because of my attendance at medical board meetings, I'm able to appreciate the medical staff's priorities.

In the past, I've had such limited staff that I've had to concentrate on a very narrow focus of priorities. I can broaden that at Baylor. I can assign people to other things at the same time we're looking at the very high priority items. I meet with Joel at least once a week and also with the other senior leaders at least once a week either formally or informally.

WCR: *Although you are president of the Foundation, you act as a senior vice president in the system in that you are involved in the high-level meetings of Joel, Tim, Gary, Lydia, and the board. You know what's going on throughout the system.*

AJA: I wouldn't have come otherwise. Joel wouldn't have hired anybody who didn't have the commitment to want to do that either. It was the bringing together of both sides. We've got to integrate quickly. The Foundation can no longer be a separate entity.

WCR: *It's my understanding that the Baylor Health Care System through the years has been quite profitable. Now, all of a sudden Medicare is diminishing its reimbursements. The number of uninsured patients coming to Baylor University Medical Center is increasing. People are spending fewer days in the hospital, and more procedures are being done outside the hospital. Certain parts of Baylor are now for profit, but the big center is not for profit. Money available to operate this system is less than in the past. Additionally, we need money for education and research. The pressure being put on you now to fulfill these demands in so many different areas must be extensive!*

AJA: Pressures are high. Expectations are high. I would be kidding you if I were to say that it doesn't create the "gulp factor" for me as I look forward at what we're facing. But we cannot achieve that level of greatness unless the challenges are big. People will not fund programs unless they know that they are really helping to make a difference.

WCR: *Let me ask you about your day-to-day life. What time do you wake up in the morning? What time do you get to the hospital? What time do you leave the hospital? What time do you get home? What time do you go to bed? How many nights a week are you out meeting people spreading the Baylor word? You are like a senator or vice president. You don't have an 8-to-5 position. What's it like?*

AJA: That's right. Routinely, my alarm goes off at 4:45 AM. I take care of my dog, put on my gym clothes, and drive to the Landry Center where I work out and then shower.

WCR: *What do you do?*

AJA: I'm a runner. I love to run. I've never gotten into lifting weights.

WCR: *Why don't you run around your neighborhood? Why do you go to the Landry Center?*

AJA: It gets me downtown ahead of the traffic. I'm at my desk, after having eaten a quick breakfast in the cafeteria at Baylor, about 7:20 AM. I respond to my e-mail, finish up paperwork from the evening before, and generally I line out my day or go to my first meeting, which normally starts about 7:30 AM. (I have been to a few 6:30 AM meetings.) I am at the mercy of the calendar for the rest of the business day. I get none of my own work done unless I've blocked out time during the hours between 7:30 AM and 6:00 PM. At about 5:30 PM I finally am able to make



Figure 6. At a 10-K run in Fort Collins for Poudre Valley Hospital.

sense of the day. I try to make sure that what transpired during the day is followed up. At that time, I sign letters, sign checks, do paperwork. By 6:30 PM or 7:00 PM, I go home. We live in Plano. From garage to garage, it's about a 30-minute drive.

At least 2 of the 5 evenings during the week are taken up with some commitment. I go directly to dinners from work. (I've got toiletries in the office.) I have lunch today with a prospect. I've learned to discipline myself as to what I eat and drink. Often, even at a dinner meeting, except if it's at somebody's home or some intimate surroundings, I'll often go without eating. Last week I had a dinner meeting at the hospital and did not eat. I waited to eat at home so Sally and I could have that time together. I come in on Saturdays occasionally to finish up paperwork. I try to organize myself during the day so that I am available to those people who want and need to see me. My priorities are donors first, physicians a close second, and staff third. I invariably drop anything to make myself available to a donor or a physician. When doctors want to see me, they usually really want to see me. I've got the world's greatest assistant in Mary Crawford, whom I inherited. She is absolutely fabulous and helps keep me well organized.

WCR: *What time do you go to bed?*

AJA: Around 9:15 or 9:30 PM.

WCR: *You are getting about 7 hours of sleep?*

AJA: Right.

WCR: *Do you do pretty well on 7 hours?*

AJA: I sleep in on Saturdays until 6:00 AM. That generally catches me up. I sleep to 6:00 AM on Sundays as well. We tend to go to the earlier church service.

WCR: *What kind of dog do you have?*

AJA: Humphrey is a yellow Labrador. We've had 5 Labrador retrievers in our married life. We love them. They have been my running companions. They are great dogs. We've trained this one to help us get rid of the rabbits that have infested our yard.

WCR: *When you get home at night you try not to do any more Baylor work?*

AJA: Exactly.

WCR: *Music is a big part of your life. Do you have other hobbies? How much do you run a week?*

AJA: I try to run 20 miles a week.

WCR: *You've been doing that for how long?*

AJA: I trained for my first marathon in 1979. I've been running for 23 years (Figure 6).

WCR: *What is your best marathon time?*

AJA: Four hours and 10 minutes.

WCR: *Do you read much now? Do you have much time for that?*

AJA: I do. I try to make time on the weekends in my den at home. I've set it up with a good sound system. I hide away there on Sunday afternoons with *The New York Times* and catch up on other reading. I'm a longtime reader of *The New Yorker* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

WCR: *What do you do on the weekends?*

AJA: I try to be active. We have many interests. We have Friday night seats at the symphony. We go to lots of movies, which we love. In Seattle, we both were avid gardeners. We haven't quite figured out Texas gardening yet. Hopefully we will. I love to ski. My entire adult life I've never lived more than an hour away from skiing, except in California, where it was 2.5 hours away.

WCR: *How much time do you usually take off a year?*

AJA: Not enough. I haven't strung 2 weeks together in probably 10 years. I tend to take a week at the longest. For instance, a couple of weeks ago we went to Boston to see our daughter. The 3 of us went to Cape Cod and had a great time.

WCR: *What was the thing that attracted you to Sally initially?*

AJA: She's a beautiful woman inside and out. We met at church. She and I share the same religious values. She's committed to our family and at the same time committed to an active and vigorous life. We enjoy being around each other and are really close friends. We have a lot of discussions on everything. She has her own interests. She's a wonderful human being. I just can't imagine life without her.

WCR: *That's beautiful. You have 3 children?*

AJA: Three children (Figure 7). "His, hers, and ours." Geoffrey is 32 and married to Monica Alvarez. They live in Anchorage. He's a land surveyor and travels all over the state. Andy, the middle son, and Geoffrey were raised together, so they are really brothers. Sally was a widow when I married her. Her husband happened to be a good friend, a great guy, who had fatal bone sarcoma. I raised Andrew and adopted him. All 3 of the kids are mine; only 2 are Sally's in a sense.

WCR: *The middle one is Sally's child?*

AJA: Yes. Andy is Sally's child, whom I adopted. He and I are a lot alike and have been good friends. I've known him since he was 3. I adopted him when he was 5.

WCR: *He is how old? What's he doing?*

AJA: He is 26. He also lives in Anchorage. He graduated from Alaska Pacific University with a degree in environmental science concentrating on outdoor recreation. He doesn't know exactly what he wants to do. It's going to involve being a guide or something of that sort. He's an avid outdoorsman. He literally lives in a tent. He's just amazing. He manages a climbing gym in Anchorage. He teaches rock and ice climbing at the university.

Our daughter, Sarah, is a junior at Boston College, majoring in psychology and political science. She wants to spend a year



Figure 7. Children Sarah, Andrew, and Geoffrey.

or two in the Peace Corps or something like that. She's been involved with Operation Smile, a medically related program where physicians and dentists volunteer their time to work in developing countries to help kids with cleft palates. They do reconstructive surgery.

WCR: *Al, is there anything that you'd like to discuss that we haven't touched on?*

AJA: Not really. I can't imagine what that might be. We are placed on earth to make it a better place. We're stewards, not only of the earth, but of each other. I feel strongly that I'm here to make life better for people and make life better for the planet. I do my little bit.

WCR: *Do you think you could do your job well if you weren't a religious or spiritual person?*

AJA: I do my job well because I am a religious person. I've never thought about the converse. I am driven largely by my ideology as a practicing and believing Christian. That's who I am.

WCR: *The atmosphere at Baylor is very pleasant, but underneath the surface, a very hard-driving atmosphere exists. Have you ever encountered such a wholesome atmosphere in your work before?*

AJA: Yes. The other place that was much like this, strangely enough, was the other religious institution I worked for—Providence in Anchorage. Like Baylor, Providence believes in what they say. They believe in their mission. They act it out in wholesomeness. It's a very healthy place. They've got their challenges and their politics, as does Baylor. We're Episcopalian, so the fact that we're not Baptists doesn't matter. Neither did it at Providence.

WCR: *You grew up Baptist though?*

AJA: I grew up Baptist. I left the church in college during my wild years. As I was coming back, I thought it was an opportunity for me to come back to who I really am. I went through a long search process, probably 2 to 3 years, and found the Episcopal Church. I have been Episcopalian for 30 years.

WCR: *On behalf of the readers of BUMC Proceedings, Al, I want to thank you for being so open. It's been wonderful. Thank you.*

AJA: You are very welcome.