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Gail and Walt Phillips

Anchorage, Alaska

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Leslie McCarthy, interviewer

Jeanne Phillips, Sherry Modrow present

Gail Phillips said her girls grew up in Homer. Robin was into new technology and computers. Kim played basketball in high school. Robin decided to go Outside for her education. She decided to go to the University of Colorado. It was a very large school in comparison to what she was used to. She worked in Colorado and Wyoming and decided to come back to Alaska. Kim wanted to play basketball and got a scholarship to the University of Alaska. Kim studied natural resources and worked for the Division of Mines. At that time they were going up to Nome to mine. Their daughters came with them during their high school years. Gail said Robin's resume was unique because of her experience working in the mine. When her daughter Kim started school the dorms were mixed. There were multiple problems with the Lathrop dorm. They were concerned about the conditions. They painted and fixed up her room. She bought shower curtains for the bathrooms. She was told that she couldn't do these things. At that time she was working in the legislature. She made university maintenance a high priority and she used the dorms as an example. She said no student should have lived like that. Walt said they were required to sign a waiver knowing that their child was going to be exposed to asbestos. They finally put security phones in the dorms. Maintenance had declined on campus. It wasn't a priority. Kim started school at the university in 1989-1990. Kim married Everett Griffith. They lived in Fairbanks and decided to move down to Anchorage.

Gail talked about her activities with the university. She was president of the alumni board for many years. She has also served on many task forces. Walt said when they have a major fund drive Gail gets involved. Walt served on the alumni board in the 1980s. He said one of the biggest things that came up was funding for a new president's house. Gail said there was an attempt to move the Alumni Association out of Constitution Hall.

Gail said when they were kids the university wasn't accessible to everyone in Alaska. Now anyone can go to the university with all the different campus locations and online course work that is available. She said it is really a part of Alaska's structure.