

Darin Godfrey  
Dartmouth College Oral History Program  
Dartmouth Community and Dartmouth's World  
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DONIN: Today is Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013. My name's Mary Donin, and I'm here in the Collis Center with Darin Godfrey, whose title is?

GODFREY: Counter worker.

DONIN: Counter worker. Okay, and Darin's looking official. She's got her white DDS—I mean,—yeah, her white—what do you call that?

GODFREY: Apron. My apron.

DONIN: Apron. [Laughs.] With her DDS sticker on it and her Collis T-shirt, and she looks very official.

Okay, Darin, the first thing, just to let people get to know you a little bit, is to tell us how and when you ended up coming to Dartmouth, and what was your background that prepared you to come and do this job?

GODFREY: I've been here for eight years. In September I start my eighth year.

DONIN: Eighth!

GODFREY: Never expected it to be that long.

DONIN: That fast. So this month.

GODFREY: It's already September. This month. I've always been into cooking. I tried to do nurse's aide. That's actually what I went to school for. I worked in a nursing home for three years. But in high school it seemed I was always in the home ec room, even though they tried to kick me out. [Laughs.]

DONIN: 'Cause you were—

GODFREY: “Darin, go back to class.” “I don't want to. I want to hang out here.” [Both chuckle.] And in eighth grade, I was actually teaching seventh grade home ec.

DONIN: Amazing.

GODFREY: To the boys.

DONIN: [Laughs.]

GODFREY: The girls all wanted to do sewing, but the boys—they thought sewing was not necessary for them, and they wanted to learn how to cook. And the home ec teacher said, “Darin, if you're gonna hang out in here all the time, we might as well put you to work.” So she said, “I want you to make up some simple things that the boys can learn how to do on their own, at home, make a grilled cheese sandwich, things that are simple, and be able to feed themselves snacks and take care of themselves.” So I started teaching seventh grade home ec in my eighth grade year.

DONIN: Great.

GODFREY: And from there I started working at the elementary schools. Actually, I started out in Hanover High School. I was in Hanover High School for three years, but they were also connected to the Lyme and Orford schools at that point, so I would sub at Lyme and Orford. And I ended up going to the Orford school for three years. Two of those years, I was head cook because the head cook had gotten done. But it was her assistant that gotten done before; that moved me a little closer to home. And so I took over there. And then Rivendell came about, so I went from Orford over to Samuel Morey in Fairlee.

DONIN: Oh, yeah.

GODFREY: So I never really changed jobs. [Chuckles.] I just changed—

DONIN: Location.

GODFREY: —places, going with the flow of. And I was there for seven years, so I kind of went from a K through 12 to an elementary school, and now I'm in college. [Laughs.]

- DONIN: You're working your way up.
- GODFREY: Slow but sure.
- DONIN: That time with elementary-age kids and high school kids prepared you perfectly for being here.
- GODFREY: It really did. And I was always, like, with *my* children's age group, so, you know, I just seemed to go with them, and as they've gotten to this age, I'm now with this age student as well as my children. So to me, working here is a lot like being with my kids.
- DONIN: Yeah. Isn't that nice?
- GODFREY: I have a 24-year-old and a 25-year-old, and these guys are all in their 20s.
- DONIN: More or less, yeah.
- GODFREY: So it's like being with your children, and you still treat them all like your kids.
- DONIN: So how did you find out about the job? Was it in the paper, or word of mouth or—
- GODFREY: Actually, a friend of mine works here and somebody had gotten done, and she came to me—I worked at a camp, and she was my assistant cook when I was at camp. I was a cook for 250 people.
- DONIN: Whoo!
- GODFREY: [Laughs.] Eight weeks. And then there was pre-camp, post-camp, so I was assistant cook one year there and head cook three years there.
- DONIN: So you're not daunted by these—
- GODFREY: And that was—
- DONIN: —big numbers.

- GODFREY: No. Numbers are—it's actually harder to cook for my family—
- DONIN: [Laughs.]
- GODFREY: —small numbers. [Laughs.]
- DONIN: You must have a lot of leftovers. [Laughs.]
- GODFREY: Yes. So I was always—always used to big crowds, big groups. You know, to me cooking for 100 is really not that big of a deal as long as I had a menu. It doesn't—I don't get wound up about it. It's, like, normal to me. To cook pot roast for that many is no big deal.
- DONIN: You're used to the big ovens and all the equipment here and that kind of thing.
- GODFREY: For me, to try to put a sheet pan in my small oven to home is frustrating. [Laughter.] I want a large sheet pan to fit in my home oven, and it just doesn't work.
- DONIN: Right.
- GODFREY: So that was always something that was difficult for me. I don't want to cook two dozen cookies at a time. I want five dozen in my oven at a time. [Laughs.]
- DONIN: Same time.
- GODFREY: So that was a difficult part of switching back and forth.
- DONIN: Yeah.
- GODFREY: So when I got the job here, somebody had gotten done. It weren't in the paper. I don't know the situation. But I had a friend here, and it was when Don Reed was manager here. And he lives in Fairlee as well, so he knew *of* me. We did not know each other, but he knew what I did, and he could easily ask about me, which was I think helpful.
- DONIN: You probably barely needed an interview here.

GODFREY: I'm trying to remem—I don't think I actually sat down and interviewed. I met him, and he showed me through, but that was about it.

DONIN: You didn't have to cook up a menu for him.

GODFREY: I think he pretty much had checked me out before then [chuckles]—

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: —and knew my background and knew all about me, which made it easier for both of us.

DONIN: It's great. Just word of mouth, and you're both known to one another, and—

GODFREY: Here I am.

DONIN: Here you are.

GODFREY: I jumped in in September, at the beginning—I think three, four days after the start of fall term, and it's been like home, and I've been here ever since, even though they keep telling me I'm home, and I argue with them that I'm not.

DONIN: [Laughs.]

GODFREY: [Chuckles.] It really is like home.

DONIN: What is it about the job that makes it feel like home to you?

GODFREY: The students.

DONIN: Aw. Yeah.

GODFREY: And I think because, you know, they are my kids' ages and they're very friendly, very sweet, you get very attached. It's the smiles that truly make you remember 'em. A lot of them ask, "How do you remember one from the other?" And a lot of times, it's the smiles. It's the face that you get. They come in in the morning; whether they're sleepy smiles or bouncy smiles, it's usually the smile that makes you remember.

- DONIN: And are there sort of patterns? Do the students adopt one particular dining hall as their favorite when they're here? Do you get that sense?
- GODFREY: Oh, definitely, definitely. We have this— Of course, I love the big guys, 'cause I've always had boys, so to me they're really, truly like my kids. And some of the football players—I have an older son who's their size, truly. He's six-six and over 300 pounds, and they will go to '53 because they can eat all they can eat, but they still tend to come back to Collis. I think they want the home cooking, they want some of the connection, and they want to get it made their way.
- And it's kind of funny because the boys a lot of times eat healthier. I know you expect a lot of the girls to get just egg white, but you'd be amazed at how well, particularly the sports boys—and girls—the sports-minded are really into their health and taking care of themselves and eating right. And I think here they get that. They get what they want and they get it their way. They can get the extra meat if they feel that's what they need, but they can also get the extra egg or just the extra Collis love. Sometimes kids need that.
- DONIN: Yes, indeed.
- GODFREY: Especially bein' away from home.
- DONIN: Yeah. So what is it about the way Collis produces its food that's different, say, from '53 or from, you know—what do you call it over there? Food Court.
- GODFREY: Well, I know that food court does do—
- DONIN: Made to order?
- GODFREY: Made to order, but, you know, being grilled and things like that—it's not always the healthier—
- DONIN: Oh, it's fried.
- GODFREY: It's fried. And I think our choices here at Collis are healthy. There are some made-to-order—there are some things already made grab-and-go if they want to run, but most stuff they can just get their way, and they can get it as healthy as

they want it. If they feel like the burgers and things like that, they do have that option other places, but—

DONIN: So here, for instance, in the morning they can walk in and order, like, an egg white omelet made to order, with veggies or whatever.

GODFREY: With just veggies if that's what they want.

DONIN: And you're working the grill right there in front of them.

GODFREY: Right.

DONIN: Wow.

GODFREY: And it's all out of a frying pan. We have a lot of girls who get very little oil. You know, they can really—with a grill you can't do little oil; you have to make sure it's greased up so it don't stick. But our fry pans all get wiped out, so we can do a little oil, and they like that. They like—

DONIN: It's like home.

GODFREY: It *is* like home. It's—well, like Mom. [Laughs.]

DONIN: Right. Exactly.

GODFREY: Being taken care of, and that's what we do. And that's why I like my job. I like being able to have that sense of taking care of them.

DONIN: And the one-on-one connection with each of your customers.

GODFREY: Yes, the visiting, the learning where they're from,—

DONIN: Their food likes and dislikes.

GODFREY: You just—

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: You become so attached to them, and them to you, really, because we *can* visit. But it's also fun to learn about different places.

DONIN: Sure.

GODFREY: I've never been to Alaska or, you know, [chuckles] Louisiana or any—you know, from the top to the bottom. I've driven up the coast from Florida to here, and Maine, and that's about it. So to find out about places in between and what home is like—you know, they can ask us the same questions. You know, "What do you do around here?" "Where can we go?"—things like that. It's very interesting, and they're also willing to visit.

DONIN: And Ray [Crosby] was telling me that sometimes because this operation is smaller than the others, the Collis operation, that if some kid from Texas likes a particular kind of hot sauce or something—

GODFREY: [Laughs.]

DONIN: —Ray will have, like,—

GODFREY: Dusty's Hot Sauce. [Laughs.]

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: [Laughs.]

DONIN: And you really personalize the experience, it sounds like.

GODFREY: We try to.

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: We really try to. It feels more like home here. I think when you're running a grill, you can't turn around and visit with somebody—the noise and the sizzle of the grill. Or if you're throwing together a wrap for 'em, you really don't have that time to interact, where what else are we gonna do when the omelet's cooking?

DONIN: Right, right.

GODFREY: Visit.

- DONIN: Right. Great.
- GODFREY: And you *can* find out their likes and dislikes, and we *do* have fun spoiling ‘em. That’s I think what it’s all about, is having fun with your job.
- DONIN: Yeah.
- GODFREY: We had a couple visit that were here to get married. And they wanted to leave mid-morning, before stir fries started, and that’s just this summer. And all’s they wanted was a Collis stir fry. “Oh, what time do you open?” “We don’t do stir fries until almost 11.” “Oh, we kind of wanted to leave before then.” “Oh. Well, let’s make it now, then!” They were shocked. Seven o’clock in the morning, Ray and I are making stir fry for this couple. [Laughs.]
- DONIN: It’s literally like walking into Mom’s kitchen and getting Mom to cook up whatever it is you want.
- GODFREY: If we can do it,—
- DONIN: If you can.
- GODFREY: If we can, we will.
- DONIN: Wow.
- GODFREY: And that’s just what we do.
- DONIN: Yeah.
- GODFREY: Because we do try to make it like home.
- DONIN: So does each of these dining halls have its own sort of personality?
- GODFREY: I think so. I really—you know, I don’t really visit the other ones too often, obviously. The only time we get into ’53 much is when we’re closed down, and quite often so are they, so it’s a little more limited. But everybody’s busy at their station, it feels like, in the other ones. They’re busy at their station. They’re busy doing their job, which—we’re busy doing our job, but part of our job *is* interacting with the kids.

DONIN: Mmm, that's curious.

GODFREY: And I always felt like no matter what's going on in the outside world, when you walk through that door, it's a different world. You know, you're there for the student. You're there for the fun of your job. I love my job because I love the interaction with the kids. You know, the employees—sometimes you spend so much time together that you do tend to get on each other's nerves.

DONIN: Like a family.

GODFREY: I'm sure some days I drive Ray crazy, though I can't imagine why. [Laughter.] But, you know, the students come and go, and you can visit, and then they're off to their next class, and—

DONIN: And you've got a new crop coming in right now, right?

GODFREY: Yeah!

DONIN: Class of whatever it is, '17?

GODFREY: Wow! That's hard to believe.

DONIN: Crazy.

GODFREY: But you get to teach 'em all over, and to watch 'em grow. Some of 'em come in: *I'm the big kid. I just got out of my senior year in school*, and sometimes you get that little bit of arrogance or *I'm better than thou* and *I'm the big kid*. And they realize, *Ooh, I'm not the big kid anymore*. [Chuckles.]

DONIN: They're back at the bottom of the pile.

GODFREY: *And I need a little help*, and you're there for them to teach them that, but you also watch them grow, because when they come in, no matter how big they think they are, they're just little kids. Truly. And to watch them grow for four years—it's amazing. You watch 'em grow into young men and young women, and you almost feel very proud of some of them, their accomplishments, 'cause they tell you about their classes and the accomplishments that they've made and

what they're going on to do, and you feel very proud for them.

DONIN: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

GODFREY: And— 'cause they're like your kids.

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: [Laughs.]

DONIN: So when you first started here, how was it fitting into what appears to be a close-knit sort of family right here at Collis? Is it hard to sort of slide in as the new person? 'Cause some of these people have been here a *long* time.

GODFREY: Some of these people have been here very long, and they have seen a lotta help come and go, so sometimes they really don't expect you to stay. Sometimes you get the feeling, *Why get too close to somebody? Because they're just gonna leave anyway.* It *can* be difficult. It was a little bit of a struggle. There was a downstairs versus upstairs kinda thing going on when I came.

DONIN: Oh. You mean the kitchen people downstairs, the cooks downstairs?

GODFREY: Yes.

DONIN: Versus what, the servers upstairs?

GODFREY: Versus the upstairs, yes.

DONIN: Oh, that's interesting.

GODFREY: That was a little hard to pull apart, but because I was an upstairs worker and I had a friend who was working downstairs—

DONIN: Ah.

GODFREY: —and in the afternoon I would go downstairs to do cut and wrap...that really tore the world apart. [Laughs.]

- DONIN: You were like a bridge between the two.
- GODFREY: Yeah, and that was difficult for a while. But I, for the most part, take things with a grain of salt.
- DONIN: Good attitude.
- GODFREY: Most parts I can laugh off, and sometimes if I'm—I'm a people watcher. So if I'm laughing at somebody, it's not really *at* them; it's more *with* them, and I'll think to myself, *I hope somebody gets as much enjoyment outta watching me as I do them*. I'm good with that. I don't care. I know I can act silly, but it's also fun watching others act silly.
- But the upstairs-downstairs thing was interesting, and I could just—most of it I could let roll off my shoulders.
- DONIN: And by now you've paid your dues, so to speak, and it's all good.
- GODFREY: Yeah. [spoken with a hint of hesitation]
- DONIN: Is that fair to say?
- GODFREY: It's all—we get along well now, and I think it changed things. I think it brought the upstairs and downstairs together. But you work together, and you get what you give.
- DONIN: Right.
- GODFREY: So if you give the smile, that's what you're gonna get. If you give the cranky, you're gonna get it back.
- DONIN: Mm-hm.
- GODFREY: So I always—I try to walk in with the smile and with the "Good morning," even if somebody mumbles, "Mornin'." You know, you still give them the smile and the "Good morning," no matter how you feel, and that's what you're gonna get back, 'cause if you're feeling yucky and somebody grumbles back at you, that just makes everybody feel that way.
- DONIN: Yeah.

- GODFREY: And it's not worth it.
- DONIN: So how much impact does the management of the place have on the feeling of how you all get along?
- GODFREY: A lot. Here at Collis, our managers work very close with us. I know in union areas, it's much harder because the union workers have to do their work, and the management is supposed to manage.
- DONIN: Ahh.
- GODFREY: And—I mean, I don't know if they get the feeling maybe they're being barked at constantly because they're short or whatever.
- DONIN: When you say "they're short," that means...short of food?
- GODFREY: If they're short of help. Their managers need to push them to do more, is the feeling I get, where here at Collis, our managers are able to jump in.
- DONIN: Wow! That's a big difference.
- GODFREY: It is, because of not being union, they don't have to stand aside and say, "I hope," you know, or push for more. They can say, "Gee, we're short o' help. I'm gonna jump in and give a hand." I think it's easier for them to be able to do that than it is in some of the other areas, in which case I find that our managers work closer with us, maybe,—
- DONIN: Sure.
- GODFREY: —than others.
- DONIN: Well, that makes a big impact on the atmosphere, that everybody's working for the same goal, which is to get the job done and feed these kids.
- GODFREY: It's all about the students.
- DONIN: Yeah.
- GODFREY: It's not about each other. It's not about us.

- DONIN: Who's boss and who's not boss.
- GODFREY: It really doesn't matter. It's about the students and feeding the students and making the students happy. And truly if the students are happy, *we're* happy, because there's less head-butting amongst each other, amongst the students, amongst everybody. Everybody's happy.
- DONIN: So why is Collis not union and everybody else *is* union, in DDS?
- GODFREY: You know, I don't really know. For some reason, Collis way back never voted in union when everybody else did.
- DONIN: Were you happy about that when you came to work here?
- GODFREY: I'm good with that. I had a hard time with—the school was union. I understand what the union is for, and it does help out, but with anything, there's goods and bads. Union is not all positive. But it's also not all negative.
- DONIN: But this works for you here.
- GODFREY: This works for me. I think it's happier, I think because we can help each other, we can jump into each other's spots, because we're all basically on the same level instead of trying to climb those union stairs. We're not fighting amongst each other for that position; we're just all here for each other to feed the students.
- DONIN: So you really do sound like a family in a lot of ways.
- GODFREY: We are in a lotta ways, a lotta ways. There was one young lady—Ray and I are doin' better now. We used to argue a lot, which was fun arguing?
- DONIN: Yes, yes.
- GODFREY: A very teasing argue.
- DONIN: Yes.

- GODFREY: And there was one young lady—I'll never forget her face. Ray and I were bickerin' about something—course, halfway chuckling at the same time, but I don't think she really see that.
- DONIN: She didn't get it.
- GODFREY: And I was gonna go on the other side of the line for something, and I looked at him, and I said, "Fine. I'm leaving you. This is it. I'm done. I want a divorce." [Laughs.] And walked around the corner of the line. He's like, "Fine. Whatever." And she looked at us, and she said, "Really? You're serious? You're getting a divorce?"
- DONIN: That's hilarious.
- GODFREY: [Laughs.] It was always kinda the joke, is your upstairs husband or your work husband or your work wife. [Laughs.] That was the joke for the longest time, but we're sort of backing out of that now. Because we are all so close-knit, you have to be able to argue but do it in a teasing way and be able to move on with your jobs, so.
- DONIN: Well, not only close-knit that way, but you're also close-knit in terms of working in tight spaces here. When this place is crammed with students, you know, there's, like, nowhere to breathe.
- GODFREY: There's nowhere to breathe.
- DONIN: So you guys are close-knit physically as well.
- GODFREY: You better love 'em and love each other. If not, somebody's getting hurt.
- DONIN: Yes!
- GODFREY: [Laughs.]
- DONIN: 'Xactly.
- GODFREY: And you've gotta be able to love that.
- DONIN: Right.

GODFREY: 'Cause if you don't, you do get very frustrated with your job.

DONIN: Right. It could wear on you and grate you down after a while.

GODFREY: Very much so.

DONIN: Right.

GODFREY: But for me, I just laugh at all the very tall boys because I'm used to it at home. You know, us short girls out there. I'm like, "Look at him! Watch out for your head!" [Laughter.]

DONIN: So it sounds to me like—well, you know, the sort of lens through which we're doing these interviews and looking at people who work at Dartmouth is whether or not they feel like part of the Dartmouth community, and what I'm learning here at Collis is nobody feels like an outsider here. Nobody feels marginalized, 'cause if you did, you wouldn't be working here.

GODFREY: You wouldn't last this many years, that's for sure.

DONIN: Right. This is really—this is your community at Dartmouth, and the students.

GODFREY: It would be like walking out of your house. It would be like walkin' away from home.

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: Like I said, I can't believe I'm gonna start my eighth year.

DONIN: Right.

GODFREY: Where did that go?

DONIN: Right.

GODFREY: The first couple o' years, I did feel a little outside—

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: —but then, when you get to the point of knowing the graduates and seeing, so to speak, your children move on, kind of *feeling*—I think it was the third or fourth year, I went into the TV room and I watched some of the students graduate. And I was, like, *I know so many of 'em*. To me it was just an amazing feeling. You just had this internal, proud feeling.

DONIN: Pride over these students that you fed.

GODFREY: It was amazing just to see them. *Oh, my goodness! That one's actually graduating! I didn't think she was!* [Laughs.] *I didn't realize it's been that long already.*

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: I did know one undergraduate student when I came, through Camp Billings. And that was neat because she would pop in with another friend of hers, who I also know from Camp Billings, and it was fun to see her, and I actually stepped in and was able to watch her on the big TV screen. *Oh! I know her!* You know, it's a neat feeling.

DONIN: Were you intimidated when you first got here, by these very smart, Ivy League students? I mean, did you find them—At the end of the day, are they any different than the high school kids you took care of or the elementary school kids?

GODFREY: They are no different. They are still a young man, young woman, just growing up, just spreading their wings. They're still a child. You know, when you're older than them and they're *your kids'* age, they're still a child.

DONIN: Right.

GODFREY: And I think my mother still calls me a child, you know? [Laughs.]

DONIN: Yes.

GODFREY: Just as I do my kids.

DONIN: Right.

- GODFREY: And they're just learning. They're just growing.
- DONIN: So after this couple of years where you were feeling a little bit like you didn't belong, then seeing those kids graduate made you realize, *I'm part of this place.*
- GODFREY: You're so much a part, watching them grow and seeing them walk down the aisle on this big screen. It does make you feel very much a part of it.
- DONIN: So do you feed many staff and faculty in here, or is it mostly students?
- GODFREY: We actually see a fair amount of staff, faculty. There's a lot of 'em that come through.
- DONIN: I imagine at lunchtime especially.
- GODFREY: Um—
- DONIN: Or breakfast.
- GODFREY: We have quite a few who come through for breakfast. You know, they don't want to be in the middle of—or try to work their way through the crowd—mostly inner building or very close to that might come for lunch because they know the times to skip through. But a lot of 'em come at breakfast time, or if there's meetings over here, you know, the deans, the presidents—President Wright would always come in. Wonderful man. Absolutely the sweetest man. Would always come in and would always speak, and we'd always have a cheery word for him. Sylvia [Spears], who was the dean—*wonderful* lady. We had some of the best times in joking with her.
- DONIN: Mm-hm. Great sense of humor.
- GODFREY: Oh, wonderful sense of humor.
- DONIN: Yeah.
- GODFREY: We would holler across the room as soon as she came in, and we got Charlotte [Johnson] as soon as she came through. [Chuckles.] And President Kim. First time he came

in, we bellowed across the room and waved to him. “Hey, glad you came in!” We have not seen our new president, really, so we haven’t got to pick on him much, but I’m sure he’ll be around—

DONIN: He’ll be around.

GODFREY: —and we’ll get to tease him just as much as we have everybody else.

DONIN: So how much does the personality of the president trickle down to what it feels like to work at Dartmouth? Does that have much of an impact?

GODFREY: I don’t think it really impacts *us* as a Collis community. I don’t think it impacts us a lot. The stress and the tension of the upper staff I think is more—you know, the things that he deals tighter-knit with.

DONIN: Yep, yep.

GODFREY: Separate areas, maybe—you know, if the dean’s office is very busy, you know, Inge[-Lise Ameer] comes in. “[Sighs.] So tired.” You know? And we tease her. We actually tell her she’s the dean, and Charlotte’s her secretary. [Laughter.] You know, you can see the tiredness, but we always try to give ‘em a smile before they leave, make ‘em laugh and feel like their day’s gonna be okay.

DONIN: Give them a moment of lightness.

GODFREY: Yeah. And when there’s a tragedy, you know, we get that feeling. But as far as the whole stress of the president and what he puts on the staff in general—we don’t get a whole lot of that. I think when they come in, they come in to eat, and they come in to smile.

DONIN: Right.

GODFREY: They don’t come in to worry about—

DONIN: Take a break.

GODFREY: —whatever’s going on at the office.

DONIN: Yeah. Well, this is a good place to come in and forget your troubles—

GODFREY: [Laughs.]

DONIN: —‘cause the staff is so friendly.

GODFREY: That’s what we do every day. [Laughs.] We come through the door and forget our troubles and all.

DONIN: Forget your troubles, right.

GODFREY: You can’t deal with them, anyways. You’re at work. So you might as well worry about work and having fun on the job and being as happy as you can be. Those troubles at home are still there, but you can’t solve ‘em when you’re at work, so you just have to leave ‘em behind.

DONIN: Do you see kids—Do you encounter kids who appear to you to be experiencing not feeling like they fit in here? Like, they’re a little bit lonely or left out?

GODFREY: Definitely, definitely. We had one young man actually just come through a couple of weeks ago who had that feeling, and he moved back home but came back to visit.

DONIN: Aw.

GODFREY: But he worked with us for a while.

DONIN: Oh, nice.

GODFREY: And that’s really when he started coming out of his shell. That made a huge difference, / think. He was very shy, very closed in. He was homesick so badly.

DONIN: Aww.

GODFREY: But when he came into work, we teased, we joked, and he really started to get into it and loosen up. He was able to talk about home and what he missed and what he was gonna do when he got home, and I think it helped him to relax and

enjoy what little time he had left here before he went home. But he definitely started coming out of his shell.

DONIN: You think he'll be back?

GODFREY: He came back to visit, and he looks like a different young man.

DONIN: Oh, isn't that interesting?

GODFREY: He was definitely very open, and when he come in, we of course recognized him right away and hollered across the room, and his eyes lit up, and he hollered back and waved, and you could see a different young man. And it's been less than a year, so I think it helped.

DONIN: So with this new crop of students coming in, you'll probably see a fair number of them who are adjusting to—you know, *I don't belong here, I don't know anybody here, Dartmouth isn't a good place for me*—all of that.

GODFREY: It's hard.

DONIN: So many freshmen go through that, finding their way.

GODFREY: We tell them, "Come and hang with us. We get paid by the hour. We don't mind.

DONIN: [Laughs.]

GODFREY: "Stand and visit a minute. If you need to find something, ask us. You know, don't worry about, *Oh, I can't find the butter, so I shouldn't —I'm not gonna put it on my toast because I'm afraid to ask.*"

DONIN: Or, *Where am I gonna sit?*

GODFREY: *Where do I go from here?* "Just ask us." We always tell them, "Just ask. Don't be afraid to ask. There is no stupid questions." [Chuckles.] Sometimes we can't answer 'em, but—

DONIN: Right.

- GODFREY: —we do our best, and we tell them, “We’re here for *you*. Our job is to be here for *you*, to help you feel more comfortable, to make sure you eat right, to make sure things are going good and your day starts out right,” you know? That’s our job. We’re here for them.
- DONIN: And you must watch their comfort level increase as the days go by.
- GODFREY: You do. You watch ‘em grow. You watch ‘em open up. You watch them become a different person.
- DONIN: Maybe they have a friend with them sometimes, eventually.
- GODFREY: “Okay, where’s your sidekick? Where’d you leave him?” You know, you notice those things, and you notice who they start out with and where they migrate to as they pick up new friends. You do see a lot of that. You notice that. You tend to follow them a little, mentally, as they come through. You watch ‘em grow.
- DONIN: It sounds to me like you need a certain—Working here requires a certain personality to be able to not just do your job, the one that’s written on the paper, but the other job, which is watching out for these kids and noticing, you know, how they’re doing and whether they’re thriving and whether they’re down in the dumps.
- GODFREY: You definitely can’t be a grumpy person to work here. [Laughs.] Because the way we feel reflects on the way the students feel, and vice versa, so to make their day, you’ve gotta have the upbeat smile and make them smile, which also makes us smile back.
- DONIN: Do you think there’s a place for every student here at Dartmouth? I mean, are some of them—the young man you were just describing—some just can’t find their place here?
- GODFREY: Some just can’t. I don’t think that number’s very big. It just takes some longer than others. For this young man, no. Home—I think he’s such a homebody that his homesickness really took over. So I don’t think for everybody, but I think for most. I think the number is small.

- DONIN: So you've been here for eight years. Has the face of Dartmouth changed dramatically? I mean, as the college continues to recruit more students—international students, students of different religions and ethnicities and financial standing in life? You know, they're trying to diversify who goes to Dartmouth. Obviously, they did that with women in 1972, but they've tried in all other ways to diversify it since then. Do you notice that? Have you noticed that much over the eight years you've been here?
- GODFREY: I think in Collis we get everybody anyways, so for us it's always a mixed bag, and you don't really pay attention. You know, to us it's another student. It's another person, another smile, another—you don't really stop to say, *Oh, there's so many of this and so many of that* or *We have more of this than we do that*. We don't really look at it that way, I guess,—
- DONIN: Right.
- GODFREY: —in our job.
- DONIN: Mm-hm. But, for instance,— You know, if you've got students from other countries who maybe ask you whether you can prepare something that's, you know, spicy if they're from Thailand or—you know what I mean. Or, like, the Texans want hot food, and students want more vegetarian food, that sort of thing.
- GODFREY: We do. We do see a lot more vegetarians, I think, than ever, and a lot more gluten-free, a lot more allergy-type things. And that has evolved tremendously since I've been here. In elementary school, I had two—brother and sister, who were gluten-free. I think she was in second grade and he was in fourth grade when they really started figuring out what was causing their health problems. And, as a matter of fact, they're both friends with my sons now, so I still feed them, even at my house.
- So when I came, that was a big issue for me because in school I had to be so careful what I fed them and how I fed them or lettin' their mother know what we were having; could she send something? Making no-bake cookies and keeping 'em in the freezer so if they couldn't eat the desert, they

could still have something sweet when the rest of the kids were eating brownies. Or if I'm having pizza, to make sure I have corn tortillas to make 'em on. So to me, a gluten-free or just allergy in general was a huge thing. I was always looking out for that. So when the students came in who would ask—I would say, "Okay, are you gluten-free? Is that why you're asking? 'Cause maybe I could help you out." And I find that a lot more of our staff knows so much more about it now than they ever used to.

DONIN: It's a big change, isn't it?

GODFREY: It's a big change. It used to be, "Well, what is *that*?"

DONIN: Mm-hm.

GODFREY: "How do you look for *that* on a package?" Because it's not necessarily "gluten" that you're lookin' for, but that *could* be the word in the ingredient list. Being called different names also made it difficult. So we would stop to help students find things on packages. We would go get ingredients lists.

DONIN: Ah, yeah.

GODFREY: And now it's almost automatic—

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: —that we all are in some way, shape, or form looking for gluten, for peanut, for nut, for certain allergens, that I think we're all so much more aware of it.

DONIN: So it's more health related than it is choice of diet. It's all—

GODFREY: A lot of it's, yes,—

DONIN: Yeah.

GODFREY: —health related. I'm not sure there's many people [chuckles] in their right mind [laughs] who would go totally gluten-free if they didn't feel it to be a health issue,—

DONIN: Sure, sure.

GODFREY: —because it is *so* difficult and *so* expensive. But if you're truly allergen, you need that help. You need to know that your food is gonna be safe. And we try. We really try to keep an eye out and make sure the pans are changed. And, you know, as long as they mention it to us, we do anything we can. "Okay, how severe?"—You know, "What if?" Or if we accidentally put a drop of peanut sauce in somebody's stir-fry and they wanted something else: "Oh, are you allergic? Do you want me to make you a new one?"

We changed our chicken because our chicken was never gluten free.

DONIN: I didn't know chicken—

GODFREY: I, [makes sound]—there is gluten wheats in the strangest of foods, that you would never understand why. But this processed chicken had—

DONIN: Maybe they'd been fed wheat or something?

GODFREY: The capability of having that in the chicken, we were getting in raw chicken. Now we've just totally changed what we use for everyone. We brought in sauces that we never had before because they're gluten-free.

DONIN: Ah, interesting.

GODFREY: You know, we make sure things are marked "with nuts," "coconut," things like that that—allergy issues have changed so much since I've been here that it's tremendous, but it's always something that was in *my* mind because of the issues that I dealt with with students in elementary school.

DONIN: Right.

GODFREY: That, and when I was at camp I had a peanut issue,—

DONIN: Oh, yeah.

GODFREY: —and one might never think of Honey Nut Cheerios being a problem, and I had foreign staff. I said, "Go out and pick a cereal. You know, maybe Cheerios or something. But just pick something," assuming we all knew that that session was

a peanut free session. They came in with Honey Nut Cheerios and put 'em out on the table.

DONIN: Oh, dear.

GODFREY: Cleared the dining room. [Laughs.]

DONIN: I should say.

GODFREY: But somebody coulda got seriously, seriously sick by that, so it was scary, and it's something that you never forget.

DONIN: So you've had good exposure to all those risks.

GODFREY: It really makes you keep it in mind, so when somebody comes up to me and says their allergy, I try to remember the face, I try to remember what the allergy is, so I can say, "Okay, you don't want that," or "Do you know we have this tucked over in the corner you may want to go peek at," because we don't have a ton of baked goods per se that are gluten-free or something, so I try to remember when they come up, I try to remember what is available. And I'll go, "Oh, yeah! We have some of those cookies downstairs that you can eat."

DONIN: Great.

GODFREY: "They haven't come up yet, *but* if you'd like me to go down and snag some, I will."

DONIN: That's great.

GODFREY: And we all kind of do that. We all kind of keep our eye out for that type of thing.

DONIN: Well, that's certainly a form of diversity here. It's not where they're from or, you know, what their level in life is, it's what their food allergy is.

GODFREY: It's more their health.

DONIN: Yeah.

- GODFREY: Where somebody comes from—none of that means anything. They're just—they're another student, they're another young person, you know? A young person that needs to be cared for.
- DONIN: Right, right. Do you think the fact that Dartmouth is up here in New England and not near a big city—does that impact their sense of feeling like they belong or don't belong?
- GODFREY: I think it makes 'em a tighter community.
- DONIN: Yeah.
- GODFREY: What they have is basically here on campus, where, when you're near a city what you have is—
- DONIN: The whole city.
- GODFREY: —the pub, the stores, all those things that are in a city. Here, what they have is each other. And they have to make what they have here. They can't just walk a few blocks away and—
- DONIN: Escape.
- GODFREY: —go to the mall. [Laughs.]
- DONIN: Right.
- GODFREY: It's not here. [Laughs.] You have to travel for that.
- DONIN: It's not so easy—right, not so easy to get there.

So let's see here. I'm just looking at these questions.

How do you feel the working staff—how does that fit into the bigger picture of a Dartmouth community? Or I guess my question—I should ask it a different way. Are there are lot of separate communities that make up the whole thing, or, you know, are people feeling that they belong to just—you know, *I'm a staff person here. I'm separate from the faculty. I'm separate from the students. It's just me. Or I'm union. Or I'm not union.* I mean, what is the group that you feel you belong to here? Is it the whole big thing, Dartmouth as a whole?

GODFREY: For me, I feel it's Dartmouth as a whole because we have staff coming in from everywhere. We have professors. We have people who work at the library. We have people who are at the Hop. We have artsy. We have [chuckles]—you know, all these different—and they just all come in and visit. So, “Why don't you come to the library? Why don't you get your card? Why don't you check out movies?” “Why don't you come over to the Hop and check out this new thing that we've got designed over here?” It feels to us like one big community because I think everybody comes in, they know us. We're always invited in different directions. We're invited to parties that are up in the dean's office type thing, but we're also invited to parties from office folks,—

DONIN: Right.

GODFREY: —we're, you know, “Come on over to the frat.” [Laughs.] I've been invited over to the frat next door. [Laughter.]

DONIN: Congratulations.

GODFREY: “Come on over”—well, they were playing a bean-bag toss game outside, and I came outside to have my lunch or something. “Darin, c'mon over and play! See if you can bring me luck.” I'm, like, “Uhhh.” Yeah. [Laughter.] Maybe I'll walk by and say good night as I'm leaving. And I actually did. I stood there for just a couple of minutes and said, “Okay, are you winning or are you losing? I hope you're beating him.” You know, “Don't let the boys win” kind of thing. And then I went on my way home.

DONIN: Yep.

GODFREY: But it's kind of funny that you would be invited to a fancy—fancier type dinner—you know, over to the [Hanover] Inn for shrimp, and also invited next door to the frat. [Laughs.] I guess that's diversity, huh?

DONIN: That *is* diversity.

GODFREY: [Laughs.]

- DONIN: And, you know, the thing is—first of all, Collis is at the crossroads of this campus, really. You're right on the Green, and everybody needs to eat, from the president on down to—you know, whoever.
- GODFREY: The neighbors walking by.
- DONIN: Yes.
- GODFREY: [Laughs.]
- DONIN: Well, that's a good point. I mean, the community, the Hanover community comes in.
- GODFREY: The community comes in.
- DONIN: You're famous—I mean, the soups are famous around Hanover.
- GODFREY: There's one lady who lives down by the school, and when the Hop is closed for the summer, she comes here.
- DONIN: Yeah.
- GODFREY: And we're on a first-name basis. [Laughs.] "Good mornin', Jane." You know, "Come on in!"
- DONIN: Yeah.
- GODFREY: "Whatcha havin' today?" You get to know how she wants her eggs cooked. And, "Okay, we're gonna be losin' you soon. The other eatery's gonna be open." "Have a great year." [Laughs.] And you do. You get to know the neighbors. And when I talk to people outside, it's, "So I just found out about Collis—anybody can come in." I said, "Course you can! Bring your money. It's okay. We don't mind." [Chuckles.] "We'll feed anybody. We take cash. You don't have to have a card." So it is neat. You do see a lot of different people. I've seen teachers from other schools that I've worked with. I actually have a neighbor who used to be a teacher, that works in a building out back here, so it's about the only time I get to see my neighbor. [Laughs.]
- DONIN: That's funny. Have to come to work to see your neighbor.

- GODFREY: Yeah! I've seen schoolteachers in particular, but one that I hadn't seen for numerous years, and she was surprised, after all those years, that I actually remembered her name.
- DONIN: Nice.
- GODFREY: In which case, she'd happen to been divorced, and [laughs] had changed her name back. But it surprised her to think that I actually remembered her, so that was fun, to be able to see people from the community that you wouldn't expect.
- DONIN: Right, right. Well, this place is a magnet. It's the people and the food that draw everybody in here.
- GODFREY: The hub of—
- DONIN: The combination.
- GODFREY: The hub of the college. [Laughs.]
- DONIN: Of the college, right.
- Well, unless you have something you want to add, and you're welcome to, I think we're done. Any other thoughts, closing thoughts?
- GODFREY: [No audible reply.]
- DONIN: No? Okay.
- GODFREY: Besides I love my job, and I love the students, you know?
- DONIN: That's great. That's a good message.
- GODFREY: I find it's a great place to work, and it makes my day quite often.
- DONIN: Okay. Thank you, Darin.
- GODFREY: Thank *you*.

**[End of interview.]**

