

Michael J. Ahearn, PhD, tells a story about MD Anderson History and Leaders

Michael J. Ahearn, PhD joined the faculty of MD Anderson in 1965 in the Department of Clinical Pathology. He served as Dean of the School of Health Professions from 1987 until his retirement in 2011. In an interview conducted in 2011, he shares memories of MD Anderson's first full time president, R. Lee Clark, MD. Dr. Ahearn passed away in 2016.



R. Lee Clark's Legacy of Care

Anderson has had some fantastic people on their faculty and administration through the years.... And they've all shared the vision. ...I remember when I first came ...I was here really late sometimes ... and when I would leave ... Dr. Clark would be down there, because they had benches built in around the wall that were seating area. People that had family members in the hospital would many times be asleep down there on those benches at night, and he would be distributing blankets and pillows. If there was an empty bed somewhere in the hospital that he could take them, he would carry them upstairs and put them to bed upstairs in the patient rooms that weren't being used. A very dedicated person and ... that kind of concern has never left the institution, even though we have increased in size. The care and the love of people, the Anderson spirit has been there, and I think it's very unusual for an institution to move from a small place like that with that kind of feeling and caring from the leadership all the way down to the present time. I think you still see that. People that are trying and concerned and helping other people.... I think that's been something that we've been blessed with, and certainly has been nurtured by the administration of this institution.

This interview clip was taken from an in-depth interview conducted for the Making Cancer History Voices Oral History Project. This ongoing project currently contains almost 400 interview hours with MD Anderson institution builders.

The transcript has been edited from the original.

The content is available for all uses.

To explore the full interview go to: <http://mdanderson.libguides.com/AhearnM>

Note: this clip was read from Dr. Ahearn's transcript by former faculty member, Warren Holleman, PhD.

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