

Diedre Badejo Interview

Wed, 2/23/22, 51:10

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Ghana, Baltimore, university, UB, faculty, UCLA, African, Nigeria, theater, community

SPEAKERS

Interviewer: Bedell Terry

Interviewee: Diedre Badejo

Bedell Terry

This is Bedell Terry. And it's February 18. at 2pm. I'm with Dr. Badejo. On this online zoom platform, we're about to begin our oral history interview for UB stories. The purpose of UB stories, the 100th anniversary oral history project, is to celebrate the university's centennial by preserving the memory of those influenced by the University of Baltimore over the years. We will be creating a digital archive, an exhibit and making these recordings available online through the Internet Archive. So thank you very much for joining me today. The basic format we're going to use is that I'll ask a few questions about yourself as well as your experience at the University. We'll have between 60 and 90 minutes to have a conversation about both those things. So getting started, where were you born and where did you grow up?

Diedre Badejo

I was born and raised in- I was born actually in Harlem and raised between the city and out near LaGuardia Airport in a little area called Corona.

Bedell Terry

I know Corona.

Diedre Badejo

Okay. Okay. Yeah.

Bedell Terry

I went to school on Long Island.

Diedre Badejo

Oh, did you? Okay. Yeah, I did all of my early education in Catholic and public schools, St. Gabriel's in Corona, East Elmhurst and Forest Hills High School is where I finished high school at. Yeah, my last two years.

Bedell Terry

What was your family life growing up? Did you come from a large family? Small family?

Diedre Badejo

Very large family, in a multi, you know a large family in a multi-generational household. So, I grew up with my parents, my grandparents. My great grandfather had passed away, I guess two couple years before I was born. But my great grandmother was there. And I spent most of my time with her. She was born in Baltimore.

Bedell Terry

Did you find that was an advantage as far as having a support of your family there to have multi-generational?

Diedre Badejo

I think so. And as I've raised my children, I've tried to keep them very close to the older generations, because I think I benefited from it. It wasn't because they could actually tell me what was coming ahead, but they could give me advice that I use throughout the years. Sometimes I paid attention, and sometimes I didn't. But it was very useful. And in that regard, you know, there is nothing new under the sun. And sometimes that older perspective can help us better understand what we're facing and how to make decisions.

Bedell Terry

So you graduated high school from Forest Hills,

Diedre Badejo

Right.

Bedell Terry

And then made the jump to USC?

Diedre Badejo

No, I didn't jump directly to USC, I went to Los Angeles City Community College. I went to stay with my dad who lived in California at that point, and got myself into Los Angeles City Community College and graduated from there and ended up, on the recommendation of one of my instructors, applying for the Ford Foundation Scholarship Program for Upper Division Students, which I received and then I went to USC (University of Southern California). And as they say the rest is history. I finished my bachelor's there, and then I applied to UCLA, got accepted into UCLA's Masters' in African Area Studies (M.A.A.S.) and completed my doctorate in Comparative Literature with minors in History and Political Science at UCLA too.

Bedell Terry

African Studies, was that just an emerging program when you went or was that established?

Diedre Badejo

It was well established at UCLA. There were certain schools and land-grant universities, mainly public research institutions like UCLA that had been developing this a field for a long time. Wisconsin was another place where African Studies was very prominent, and Michigan, a couple of other places that had really developed their African Studies probably program, Howard University was another one. And many of the graduates from UCLA program ended up seeding the next generation of African Studies researchers and faculty. It was a burgeoning field of cutting-edge publications from that point.

I was fortunate that year, as were many of us, because the UC System was running the study abroad program, and I ended up with a seat in that program. So, I went to Ghana for a year as a graduate student, and studied with the faculty there at the University of Ghana in their Institute of African Studies. I actually performed a little tiny part in a play. I spent the winter break in Nigeria as well. And then years later, I went back to Ghana as a Fulbright Senior Scholar and taught in that same program.

Bedell Terry

Tell me about your experience in Ghana. Was that just studying or did they have you out in the community?

Diedre Badejo

Oh, no, I was in urban, local and rural communities. Because my work involved theater, oral traditions, and oral historiography, I was very much in the community doing research. I worked in a variety of the major cities in Ghana and went into many of the smaller communities and villages as well. I worked with friends that I had known from UCLA and did field research on festivals and festival drama, which influenced my doctoral research years later. Those experiences and research influenced my teaching and scholarship and continues to do so.

Bedell Terry

So you came back, got your doctorate, then you, you taught at University of Louisville?

Diedre Badejo

I did. I taught at the University of Louisville for about six years, they were just beginning their Pan African Studies program and I ended up there in its early years. But I first taught at University of Rhode Island where I got tenure and did quite a bit of writing. I also received a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship to Brown University in the Rights and Reasons Theater, which was an extraordinary program. It was mainly focused on African American theater, writers, producers, and I worked with the late, George Houston Bass, who was its director. In fact, I think he was the founding director of that program. So, I had a lot of good exposure, a lot of very close work with people who were in the field as professionals as well as academics. And it really enhanced my ability to understand the subject that I had taken on as my life's work. It also sharpened my understanding of the relationships among oral traditions, folk narratives, and performance.

Bedell Terry

What brought you to that life's work? You know, when you select a major, sometimes you don't know what the result is going to be.

Diedre Badejo

Right.

Bedell Terry

What drew you to that?

Diedre Badejo

I tell this story all the time. That's why I'm smiling. When I was about 10 years old in New York, and you know, New York, there's music around you all the time and festivals around you all the time. And I love salsa music, and I fell in love with African music. And there was an album I played to my grandmother's dismay over and over and over again, by Babatunde Olatunji, called Drums of Passion. And I just fell in love with the rhythm, I fell in love with the music, with the language. I mean, I didn't understand what they were saying. I just loved it.

And my grandmother, who was born in Baltimore herself, was actually a performer with Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle, the earliest known African Americans to produce shows on Broadway. She performed a what was known as the Chocolate Dandies on Broadway in the production of "Bamville." They did 72 shows on Broadway. I found her in the theatre archives in New York. She actually was part of the ensemble that included Josephine Baker. So I had theater all around me, I had music around me. But it wasn't just the theater. I was really interested in what made it work, how they were using story, what stories were being told, the craft itself. And because of that, I ended up pursuing, as part of my Master's degree program at UCLA, an area in African American theater with the late professor Beverly Robinson.

I did a lot of work on African American theater, and unfortunately, most of the places where I was teaching, I could only sneak it into the curriculum, I couldn't actually do a full course on African American theater the way that I wanted to. Because it's not just literary, it's understanding the use of language. It's understanding the socio-political dynamics, it's understanding characters. And because I grew up in this multi-generational household, and I had theater around me all the time, I felt that I was drawn to it.

There was nothing else that was going to satisfy me, quite honestly, I thought about going to law school and I said, "I'm going to be bored to death. There's no point in me doing that." I had thought about medical school at one point. But I know I would be crying all the time, because I was going to do pediatrics and I love kids, and I couldn't take it. So this was fine for me. This was great for me, in fact, because I'm also a writer. So the fact that I was exposing myself to so much creativity was very helpful. As I began to develop my own art, I used to do performance poetry in Los Angeles. I was very much involved in various parks and recs activities at the time, when people were doing performance art. So, it just suited my personality, and I feel that I made the right choice. And then I married a choreographer.

Bedell Terry

There you go.

Diedre Badejo

So, you know, that was it.

Bedell Terry

There you go. You can't get away from it even at home.

Diedre Badejo

No, you can't. And you know, my grandmother and my choreographer husband got along quite well. They would just talk about different things in dance because she was a dancer as well as a singer, and they had great conversations.

Bedell Terry

Now, while in Ghana, you did a research- as a framework for K through 12 developments. Were you able to, to implement that?

Diedre Badejo

I wrote up quite a few things. But no, I've never been able to implement it. And it's, it's unfortunate, but no, I've never been able to implement it. The way that in the kingship area, where I was working in this local area, is they call it a local community, but it's a large swath of central, southwest Ghana. And when I was there, I was observing drum music, actually, and the language of drum music. And I noticed that there were a lot of children around all the time. And I asked the linguist, as well as the master drummer, how they trained children, you know, how do they know which children should be under their wing to train them as future drummers? Because it's a very important activity in the community.

And he gave me quite a few good examples. One was that by observing children, saying that the more you observe them, and the more that they demonstrate interest in a particular thing. Like some kids, one of my grandson's loved bugs when he was young. So we thought he was going to go into some form of science. And so the family took him around, you know, plants and all kinds of things where he would get that exposure.

Now he's on his way to college, and now he wants to study real estate. So you never know, you never know. But, the lead drummer said that if the children show interest, then they start developing that skill set for them, not to force them into it, but rather to help them understand their own talents, abilities and interests. And the same drummer told me that he was a stutterer. And so he learned the drums as a way to communicate because it helped him to learn how to communicate rhythmically, and he ended up growing out of the stuttering as he developed the proficiency in talking drums.

Bedell Terry

So, you were in Ghana for a year.

Diedre Badejo

I was in Ghana for a year twice, ah, first as a student, and then the second time around as a Fulbright. I also spent several years going to Ghana for conferences and other academic activities.

Bedell Terry

Now as a Fulbright, can you tell me about the experience of being a Fulbright Scholar?

Diedre Badejo

Um, it was quite an honor. And still is, what the Fulbright offers scholars is an opportunity to go someplace in the world and pursue their area of interests and proficiencies are - sort of, you know, mid to upper career type of opportunity, where you can focus on your work, and you're not really in a classroom or those kinds of things. And the first time that I went to Ghana, I was a student, obviously. And so I was in classroom, I took classes at the Institute of African Studies. I studied with several professors while I was there. So even though I was in Ghana, for that year, I was actually more of a graduate student than I was a scholar at that point. So going back as a scholar, allowed me to pursue my research interests more in-depth.

And I do have several publications that came out of that. But it was mainly in the area of oral tradition, oral literature, and Gender Studies, and cultural studies, writ large, from the area. So, the Fulbright gave me access at a different level. It also gave me access to other scholars in Ghana, some of whom I'd already known, and who supported my application. It also allowed me an opportunity to go places that were in part, supported by the grant itself. And then when I came back, I had to write a report, which I did. And I got several publications out of that, and several invitations to contribute to other publications, both in West Africa and elsewhere. One piece that was published, oh, gosh, I've forgotten now where some of those pieces are published in Nigeria, and so forth, they came out of that evolution of my scholarship.

Bedell Terry

You seem to be a continuous writer of publications. Can you tell me about your journey as a writer? I don't have that gene. To write publications. I can write research, but publications, but tell me about some of these publications that you've been published in?

Diedre Badejo

Um, well, I've published two books. One book was commissioned for advanced placement students in secondary school focused on the African Union. That was in 2005, I think. And then, the other one, the other major book that I published in 1996, and that has quite an audience is called *Ọsun Sẹ̀gè̀èsí: The Elegant Deity of Wealth, Power and Femininity*.

And that directly came out of my experiences in Nigeria. And it's the book that I think among my publications is most popular and most often cited. The other articles, professional talks that are published in journals, and in collected essays by various academic journals and in topical publications include ***Women Writing Africa: West Africa and the Sahel***, which was published by the Feminist Press. I contributed to the Introduction and to selected sections in the publication. I also contributed to writing head notes for certain oral poems that were included in the volume. I've always loved to write. I remember writing my first story in eighth grade about jeans, because I was not allowed to wear jeans.

My great grandmother would have a fit if I wore a pair of jeans. So, I wrote a story about jeans, and how I liked jeans, but I couldn't wear them. And I said at the end of the story, I wrote this story because I

cannot wear jeans. It was sort of a little rebellious state that I was in at that point, of course, in the eighth grade. But I've always loved to write, I've written poetry. I've published poetry. One of my poems was published in the National Library of Poetry and read in one of the annual publications. I have, I think, two poems in a collection. Then there was a tribute to Nelson Mandela called "Mandela, A Mandala." I have a longer piece in the oh, goodness, I'm going to forget the name of it. The African American Literature Forum, it's a scholarly publication, and they change from Black American Literature forum. And publications on World Cultures showing in several places, so you know, I, I think I've done fairly well as a scholar. And I'm still writing, I've got a book that I'm editing now. That's with a publisher who's reviewing it, and a memoir. So, I'm still writing.

Bedell Terry

Good. Good. You mentioned Nigeria.

Diedre Badejo

Yes.

Bedell Terry

Were there for research?

Diedre Badejo

Um, I was there for research, and I was there because I married a Nigerian.

Bedell Terry

Well, that would bring you to Nigeria.

Diedre Badejo

That would take you to Nigeria. Yeah. So um, so I lived in Nigeria. I've been in and out, I still go in and out of the country for family and professional events. And I picked, boy, did I pick up a lot there. But that takes me back to the Drums of Passion. It was Yoruba language that I was listening to as a 10-year-old but didn't realize it. So, I learned a lot there. I learned a lot in Nigeria.

Bedell Terry

You have a very diverse background at Kent State and California, California University East Bay. That would be up in the San Francisco area.

Diedre Badejo

Right, yes. in Hayward.

Bedell Terry

Ah, okay. Okay. I lived in San Jose and San Francisco for a while.

Diedre Badejo

Oh okay.

Bedell Terry

So I know where Hayward is.

Diedre Badejo

Yeah, that neck of the woods.

Bedell Terry

So, what drew you to the University of Baltimore?

Diedre Badejo

Well, as I mentioned earlier, my family, my great grandmother, my grandmother, my grandfather, my maternal grandfather, no, my. Yeah, my maternal grandfather, my mother's grandfather. They were all Baltimoreans. My mother's mother, not my mother's father, because he's from South Carolina. He's from Charleston. So I had those connections and as a child before I started school, they used to bring me down here, I mean to Baltimore, every summer because my great grandmother's parents were still alive.

And so, I had great grandparents and great great-grandparents here. My great-great grandfather passed away when I was maybe two or three years old. But for some reason I have an image of him in my mind. My great-great grandmother, I remember her very well. She passed away before I started school, but I remember her. And I also have pictures with her when I was younger, so I have very deep roots in Baltimore. But as I've been doing my genealogical study, I have deep roots all up and down the East Coast. As recently as a year ago, I found a relative who was born in Florida, that was shocking to me. But mainly my family comes from South Carolina, Charleston, Gullah, Gullah-Geechee and Virginia, huge number of people from Virginia and Maryland.

My father's side is Virginia and New Jersey. My mother's side is South Carolina, New York. So it's, you know, the whole east coast is where my family is based. And after I finished well, I didn't finish, but after I kind of settled down a little bit from globetrotting and dragging my children all over the world, I moved back East. My mother was getting older, of course, my grandmother, thank God I got back when I did, because she passed about a year and a half after I came back from Nigeria. And, you know, like I said, I was very close to her.

I was very close to my great grandmother, but she passed when I was in high school. And that was a real trauma for me. But I came back, I guess, because I wanted my children to really know those older generations. And my brother was living in Connecticut. And I ended up taking the position first in Rhode Island, because it was a 45-minute drive between my brother's place and mine. And he had three kids and I had three kids. So it worked out pretty well. And then he started moving around, I started moving around, you know, where that mobile generation.

And so I went back to California for a while, I went to Louisville, and then Ohio, and eventually back to California and down to Maryland again. So I had a lot of reasons to come to Baltimore. I was comfortable in Baltimore because of family ties. I reconnected with one of my older cousins, whom I hadn't seen in years, and who I always thought was my big brother. But he wasn't. He is a cousin. And

then, you know, just being around family, I think, was something that I wanted to do. And I wanted my children to have access to UB, I thought, was a good opportunity to fulfill that. Fortunately, I was there when my eldest cousin passed, she was 94 - 95. So, coming back to Maryland, afforded me to be around her until she passed.

Bedell Terry

So you came to UB, uh, 2010 or so?

Diedre Badejo

Yes, that's correct.

Bedell Terry

And while you were at UB, what kind of changes did you see in the university? Did it progress? Did it stay static? What was your view? What is your view?

Diedre Badejo

Well, let me take a step back for a second. Um, what attracted me to UB was not just the family. What attracted me was the location in the city. I knew a lot about Baltimore's history, both from family, but also from reading and, you know, doing a lot of work in the civil rights movement, and so on and so forth. So I thought that it was the kind of place that someone like me would thrive and be useful. So, I was attracted to it because of that.

I was an ACE (American Council on Education) fellow in 2006, and actually came to Baltimore and interviewed the previous president on academic leadership at that point. So, I was familiar with the campus and where the campus was located. And I was excited by that. Because it was not only in an urban setting, but the cultural setting is just extraordinary. And I saw UB as having a lot of potential I still do. When I came to visit what used to be the college of Public Policy and Liberal Studies, I think it was called at that point, and it was merged with the Yale Gordon College.

And part of what happened at that point was that the administration, I believe at the behest of the UMS, the governing University of Maryland System wanted to grow the campus with freshmen and sophomore classes. It was then decided to split the colleges into two. And I was appointed to help that transition with the College of Arts and Sciences. I think that the transition from an upper division university transfer program to a four-year lower division university was a challenge. Because the institution itself had been built on that upper division degree completion format. The identity was established for upper division programming and the upper division understanding of certain processes, such as recruitment, retention, funding challenges and so forth. I worked at huge institutions: Kent State for example. I left Kent State as an associate dean focused on curriculum and program development. When I went to California, I was a dean of a large college of liberal arts and social sciences. And so, I was used to operating in large environments.

The transition from an upper division to a full four-year program was a challenge, I think, for most of the people who had been at the institution for a long period of time. They were committed to adult transfer students who also worked during the day and attended classes in the afternoon and evening. They then

were now asked to do this, this other thing that involved challenges to how they worked and focused on their profession, and their abilities were just extraordinary. It was the transition into the four-year program that presented the most challenges.

Bedell Terry

How did you, uh, address those challenges?

Diedre Badejo

Well, I'm, I'm gonna answer that both ways. I think because I understood the four year and in fact, the full range of freshmen to doctoral programs that I was able to see where recruitment could improve and do better. But as we did in Northern California, there were ties to the high schools, and sometimes to the middle schools. That was, well, in the Hayward and Concord communities, for example. Then there were very deep ties that were fostered by the Cal State system with secondary schools and the universities and particularly the public universities and communities. So there was already a structure in place.

We didn't have to put a structure in place. Okay. And I think that that was part of the UB challenge, because that meant that, that faculty who were used to working at that level, at that upper division level, then had to start thinking about well, what do you do with, you know, kids who are coming in from high school. I'm watching it with my grandson, for example, watching him make this transition to college, he's a little bit of an egghead, so he'll be fine. But his maturity level is not quite there.

And that's to be expected. He's 17 years old. So, for people who are used to studying with students and directing students, who are more mature, who are basically working during the day and coming to classes at night, that for the faculty, I think it was a greater challenge than I estimated. And for that reason, I think there were some things that I could have been done better. And I think that the support that was needed, didn't quite match the goals and the ambitions of the institution at that time.

Bedell Terry

So you not only taught but you helped form the change.

Diedre Badejo

Right. Right. That's what I along with others were tasked to do.

Bedell Terry

I look at some of the organizations, you're part of the American Council on Education, the Authors Guild, the African Studies Association and the Council for Black Studies. Alpha Lambda, Delta, National Academic Honor Society, EFA, Kappa Alpha, Alpha Kappa, put my teeth back in Alpha Kappa mu, system, Honor Society, five, Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars at Kent State, and several other professional organizations. What did working with those groups, how did you bring that into your product into your writings and teachings and publications? Was it a one-way street from these groups, too? Or was it you bringing it into the groups?

Diedre Badejo

No, those are awards, recognitions, honors, you know, however you call it for mainly my scholarship. So it wasn't that I was bringing them in with the exception of the American Council on Education. The college's AACU, which is the American Association of Colleges and Universities, where we actually wrote a couple of proposals, one of which was funded to take a small group of UB faculty to one of the conferences as we were building out some of the college's new responsibilities.

And the others were just like, the International Scholars Award was a recognition for the work that I did. I took students to Ghana for a month and a half when I was at Kent State, so and then I worked with the International Affairs Office. I was a Fulbright Program Officer at Kent State. So, it was in recognition of that. You know, you have access to those organizations. The one that I think I was most active with, probably was the Fulbright Program. And for obvious reasons, I kept engaging with them over and over again.

And now, I'll probably go back to doing that because I was on several different committees, including interviewing applicants from across the country and participating at that level. With the American Council on Education, I was very, very, very active up until the pandemic hit. I worked with one of the offices where they bring people back in who have been fellows to work with the next group of faculty candidates and fellows who are going to transition out of faculty roles into department chairs or so on and so forth. I wrote proposals and presentations, and my colleagues also wrote programs from different perspectives.

And we would do a week-long leadership program with people who are recommended by their colleges and universities to attend these functions to learn how to manage departments, and so forth, all of the all the stuff that goes with being a department chair. So that's how I would engage those honors, awards, recognitions, and so forth, with wherever I was, whether it was University of Baltimore or someplace else.

Bedell Terry

You, um, to go back to the University of Baltimore, the transition from an upper level to a four year? What was your opinion of it?

Diedre Badejo

I don't know if I'd call it an opinion. I think it was an observation. Let me, let me put it that way. That in terms of a goal, I believed and still do, that it's a necessary opportunity for UB in terms of its own growth over time. I think the challenge to that and to that growth, is that, and I didn't know this at the time, there's a disconnect between the school system in Baltimore and the surrounding communities, and the University of Baltimore. Now that's not true across the board. It's not true with respect to College Park, but those are universities with a different historical structure, different outreach opportunities, and different visions of itself and therefore different resources.

So, you have a lot of young people who are scrambling to get into College Park, whereas young people in Baltimore City and particularly not necessarily just not necessarily the county as much, but Baltimore City, typically are not geared towards looking at UB as an opportunity. And part of it is that disconnect,

and I have not really been to any place where that disconnect existed between the university which is best positioned to house and to train those students, and the students themselves didn't exist.

Bedell Terry

Right, I think you absolutely hit it right on the head, as far as the disconnect between really recruitment of the freshmen and sophomores into UB I think I still saw that during my time at UB. Also disconnect with the community colleges that should serve as feeder should serve as a feeder into UB.

Diedre Badejo

Yeah.

Bedell Terry

President Schmoke I thought he had a fabulous-

Diedre Badejo

It's funny you mentioned the community- Not hearing you, I'm not hearing you. Okay, there you are. You're back. You were saying something about the feeder.

Bedell Terry

Yes, President Schmoke had a proposal to use UB the same way New York City uses CCNY, right? And I thought that was a fabulous idea.

Diedre Badejo

It's a great idea.

Bedell Terry

But we'll see. Politics.

Diedre Badejo

Yeah, exactly. Um, yeah, you see UB's faculty is really an extraordinary faculty. I mean, I really give the faculty a lot of credit and applause for the work that they do. They do a lot of what we would call integrated work within the communities, something like an East Bay, for example. East Bay was a very well-kept secret, because most of the faculty at East Bay wanted to teach. They did research but they wanted to teach more than anything else. And guess where they got their doctorates from: across the bay in Berkeley and at USF. So, you have this very high level of productivity and passion for teaching and whatever their area of expertise happened to be, they were interested in working with the young people in those communities.

And many of them had ties with people around the community, including the churches and synagogues, the mosque, the various yoga practices and all of that they were very integrated into, into the community itself, whether they still lived in Berkeley, or they lived in East Bay. And so making that connection with young people in those communities, and particularly the high schools, and vetting the students who were actually ready to take on those challenges was easier, I think, then, than the situation we find in Baltimore.

I'm a product of the recruitment pipeline between Los Angeles City Community College and the University of Southern California. My professors at that time said, hey, you need to apply for this fellowship. And funny, they told me, don't go to UCLA first, go to USC. And they supported me going to USC, because they said that I would do better on a campus where there were fewer students than a campus where there were 1000 students in a classroom. So, it's that kind of intimate knowledge that the community college faculty at Los Angeles City Community College had. Oh, by the way, Morgan Freeman put money behind the development of Morgan Freeman Theater at LACC now, that's how creative LACC was over the years. And it has expanded since then. So, I think that in my mind, this is what I saw, coming into this transition and trying to operationalize that in Baltimore, but not really understanding that, that there's that connection that wasn't there. And I don't think it's anybody's fault. I just think it's just the way that it was. Yeah, you know, we have to look at that in historical terms, to really get at the root of it.

Bedell Terry

So, we've come to the end of my questions. Is there anything you'd like to add?

Diedre Badejo

I still think that UB has a lot of potential. Not only because of its location, but I think that it has a lot of potential because of the uniqueness of the programs that are offered there. And the way that the faculty, the faculty really does think outside the box often. And so they've designed courses and programs made connections with, for example, to the program in Jessup with the connection between the College of Public Policy, the Veterans Program, the Honors Program in SIAT, which is really extraordinary, the students who work on the space programs and designing for NASA. I had a student in my Interdisciplinary Studies class, who was working on something for NASA.

Bedell Terry

At UB.

Diedre Badejo

Right. Now imagine students in that environment who have that ability and talent and desire if they knew and could get into programs that would help them achieve that. What a crowning jewel that would be.

Bedell Terry

Yes, it would let you serve the community, which is what it should do.

Diedre Badejo

Right. Right. Absolutely. That's what every institution I've ever been at has done, serve the community from UCLA right down to LACC.

Bedell Terry

Well, I appreciate your time with us today. And I want to thank you for your time with us today. And Fatemeh.

Diedre Badejo

You're welcome and thank you for inviting me.