I was in a program at General Electric in Schenectady, New York, called the Program to Increase Minority Engineering Graduates (PIMEG). It was a program for middle school students and high school students to teach them about technology and careers in engineering. And we went on field trips — to UMass Amherst, Cornell University, Brown University, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Students from RPI who were minority engineering students actually came out and tutored us high school students, I think it was at the Urban League in Albany, New York. So, I was exposed to engineering as a potential college major through that early interaction with the college students.

So, I knew I wanted to do science, and I was in the academically talented track. The whole idea of doing engineering came through this program to increase minority engineering graduates. That was in the mid to late 1970s, and I think that was not too long after the National Society of Black Engineers came into being. Of course, as a young high school student, I didn't know that. I just knew that we were getting this literature in the mail that had pictures of minority engineering students and minority engineers. And then of course there were minority engineers at General Electric that were actually part of this pre-college program promoting engineering.

GE — So, you did your chemical engineering undergraduate studies at Brown University, and then you went on to Georgia Tech. What was the climate like for a young minority engineering student in the 1980s?

GRANT — Well, I really enjoyed my time at Georgia Tech. I enjoyed my time at Brown, too,

played a key role coaching and mentoring me to go on to get a PhD. And so, it was a very supportive environment there at Georgia Tech.

GE — And when did you first become involved in AIChE?

GRANT — I think that, as a graduate student, I probably went to some events as a graduate student —

supportive. I was going through the tenure process, and moving forward in my career, which was pretty intense. I worked with them.

GE — Do you recall any of the initiatives that MAC focused on when you were most active? This was prior to your being on AIChE's Board (2004–2006), correct?

some others that started coming together under SIOC. Now they were really working with some of the same communities — they were working on different issues, but they could collaborate under SIOC's guidance. So I think that was probably one of the important things that happened during the transition. There was a reduction in duplication of programming in AIChE; it also fostered a collaborative environment

GE — What do you think an organization such as MAC or AIChE could be doing in the future? We've gone through 25 years of the Minority Affairs Committee — Where do you think more progress is needed to make the Institute and the profession more inclusive?

GRANT — I think that anything having to do with diversifying the profession has to be everyone's responsibility. It cannot just be relegated to the Minority Affairs Committee. The Minority Affairs Committee has minorities on it who are very passionate about this whole endeavor. Then there are folks who are not minorities but who come to the group as allies and advocates and supporters. I believe that the message of what we (MAC) are trying to accomplish and what actions need to happen has to become everybody's — I don't want to say challenge — everybody's issue. Everyone has to embrace the importance of diversity to our global profession. It can't just be minorities helping, inspiring, coaching and mentoring other minorities. There's just not enough of us to do mentoring; and there is a richness that will come from professional mentoring across cultures, genders, and background overall.

Actually, in my role as Associate Dean of Faculty Advancement in a college of engineering I've led a number of initiatives for minority and women faculty development. I'm also starting to

contributors are a group of women that came together —some in the National Academy, others are leaders in industry from Canada and the United States and Australia — and wrote this book