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Interview with Dave Micha

RCA Heritage Program

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[START OF TRANSCRIPT]

Dave Micha:

Hi, my name is Dave Micha. How I got started, very interesting story. So, I grew up in upstate New York in the Catskill Mountains, 35 kids in my graduating class, graduated in 1979. Went to the State University of New York at Fredonia for my undergraduate degree. Graduated in 1983 in May. So, as soon as I got done graduating, I was a business and economics major, I was looking for a job and I spent about six months looking for a job the traditional ways and finally my mom called my aunt who said, "Your nephew needs a job." So, she worked for the National Security Agency at Fort Meade, Maryland and my uncle also worked there and he was a very senior executive. In fact, he was the person who was responsible for giving the RCA plant here in Camden a lot of work. So, he said, "Geez, let me see what I can do." So, he called me about a week later and said, "Would you like to come down and work for the National Security Agency in Maryland?" and I said, "Absolutely, that sounds great." He said, "It'll take about 18 months for you to get a security clearance and we can probably hire you sometime in late '85." And I said, "Well, I kind of need a job now." So, he said, "Hang on." So, he hung up and about a day later he called back and he said, "I've arranged for you to travel to south Jersey," and I had never been south of northern New Jersey. He said, "There's a plant there called the RCA plant. I want you to go down there. They're going to call you for an interview. You should go down and interview." So, that was at the end of April in 1984. So, they called me, set up an interview, I drove to south Jersey here. Like I said, never been south of north Jersey. Came down Admiral Wilson Boulevard, came into Camden and I wasn't quite sure what kind of place he sent me for an interview. So, I parked my car, I walked into building #2 on the corner of Front and Cooper Street and went up to the Personnel Department and they set me up for interviews.

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And I found it the strangest thing because I was 23 years old, entry level position and I looked at the interview slate and they had me interviewing with three Vice Presidents and two Directors, which I thought was very strange for kind of an entry level position. So, I went through a series of interviews and they were all pretty short and I was a little nervous, obviously. Being 23 these people had all been here for 30 years and I think it was about a week later I got an email, or, I'm sorry, a letter that said, "Congratulations, you've been hired at RCA in Camden. Your start date is May 8th, 1984. Your

starting salary is \$18,000 a year and you have been selected to be in the RCA, very exclusive, training program.” So, I sent back a letter, said thank you very much and I came down here and reported to work that first day. Now, since I had never been down here I didn’t know where to live. I got lost about ten times going across the Ben Franklin Bridge. I didn’t know if I was in Philadelphia or New Jersey. I finally found an apartment in Voorhees, but I started May 8, 1984, in the RCA training program. So, when I came in the first day it was pretty interesting. They said, “You’re going to be in this very exclusive program. Only the best and brightest get put in this program and what’s going to happen is you’re going to work six weeks in every organization here at RCA in Camden. You’re going to work six weeks in engineering, six weeks in the program office, six weeks in manufacturing, six weeks in business development, six weeks in quality, contracts, the pricing organization. You’re going to do that for a year and at the end of the year we will figure out where the best fit for you is.” So, that was great for me because I learned the entire business and I worked for some people that were unbelievable because I was pretty young and I couldn’t believe really how smart the people were here and how little I actually knew.

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Every six weeks I rotated. Every week I had to actually write a weekly report to the Chief Financial Officer here. His name was Ed Williams and I thought that was kind of strange that a trainee would actually send a report to the CFO but I got to meet some fabulous people. I met Art Llewelyn in the program office. I met Joe Christopher and Chris Scarpello in manufacturing. Met Bob Roadside, Ed Williams in the finance organization. Met Don Parker. Met Jack Saraphin who were in the executive management team here. I just met a lot of great people, Phil Gehman from the contracts organization. And that went on for about a year. So, at the end of the year they called me in and I was waiting for them to tell me where I would go work and they said to me, “Oh, where would you like to go work? You can work in any department you want.” And I said, “That’s the strangest thing. This industry is great. They let you go anywhere you want, pick anywhere you want, and I couldn’t really figure it out being 23 years old so I decided, I really had my career well thought out you could tell, I decided I wanted to go work in the pricing department. And why did I pick pricing? I picked pricing because at the time there was a number of senior people in that department that were ready to retire and they had just hired about six guys that were my age and I said, “Oh, this will be fun. They’re my age. We can go out and play softball and hang out together.” It had nothing to do with my career. I just thought that organization had people my age so that’s why I joined the pricing

department. And what I didn't realize until several years later is the only reason I interviewed with three Vice Presidents and two Directors is because of who my uncle was. And the only reason I got to pick what organization I wanted to work in is because of who my uncle was and it really went to show me a lot that sometimes it's about who you know and how influential they are versus what your skills were, but it was a great experience for me.

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It was probably one of the top three things that happened to me in my 31 years here because I got to meet so many people and see all the aspects of the company. It was really very beneficial. So, that's how I got started.

Interviewer:

Once you got finished enjoying, sort of, figuring out your personal ways that you connected with RCA, what ended up making you feel energized in doing work at RCA?

Dave Micha:

So, what I quickly realized being down here is that RCA was an institution. I knew a little about RCA. Everybody's grandparents either had a Victrola or TV set but as I started to live down here for the first couple of years I realized how many people worked here. How many people's parents worked here, and grandparents worked here and the people here were so prideful of the things that had been accomplished here. All the inventions and the innovation and that starts to get into your fabric here. It's more than just a job. This was really a family. Things like, it was called the family store here, the RCA family store and people are really like a family here. Everybody treated me great and I have to say to this day, 31 years later, when new people come into this facility to work, and it doesn't matter the name of the company I think it's the location we're at here, people make you feel very welcome and they did that to me. There was a lot of social functions, retirement parties, company events where it really was just a family atmosphere and everybody had the same mission. Everybody knew the work we were doing was critically important for the country. So, I just thought it was a great place to work because they made you feel like a family and that's what I really liked about it.

Interviewer:

Did you have any work mentors? People who led you through your career?

Dave Micha:

Oh, yeah, absolutely. So, early in your career you have a lot of mentors and what I learned is what you want to do is take all your mentors and take the good traits from all of them and some of the traits that you may learn you didn't like so much you try to shed those.

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But, yeah, I had a lot of great mentors. Early on I had Phil Gehman in the contracts organization really helped me significantly. Bob Roadside was my first real boss in the pricing organization. Bob was a very intense guy. His expectation is that you worked about 70 hours a week. So, that kind of instilled in me the mindset. I worked for Paul Morocco who was a program manager here and was incredibly smart and showed me a lot of interesting things. As I started to get into my career a little more I worked for Jim Hemschoot who was a program manager at the time then worked himself up to a very senior staff level position here. I worked for Fred Blakelock who was in the finance organization. Just a lot of great people that really helped me and they treated me as a person that they wanted to help grow so they showed me a lot. There was never any, we're not going to tell you, we're not going to show you, we're trying to protect our job. A lot of people really tried to help me grow in the organization. So, yeah, those are some of my early mentors.

Interviewer:

Do you have a story that can demonstrate how they would try to help you grow as a person?

Dave Micha:

Oh, sure. So, it was really interesting. One of my first business trips was up to Fort Monmouth, CCOM and we went up there on a trip and the gentlemen, Ed Propst and Harvey Weiskettle were the two people and Harvey was a senior contracts administrator and Ed Propst worked in the pricing department. They only took me on the trip. They didn't need me but they wanted to expose me to my first business trip where I'd be in front of a customer. So, they said, "We're going to take you. You don't have to do anything on this trip but listen and learn and watch how these things go." So, we went up to Fort Monmouth in northern New Jersey with the Army customer and it was those two and it was about three people on the Army side, a colonel and a couple of his assistants. My role was only to sit there and just observe. Well, my nature is not really to sit there and just observe and I had only been here about four months.

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So, about 20 minutes into the meeting I started interjecting my thoughts and I could tell the other two guys were okay with it. They let me do a few things that they probably wouldn't because I was asking some questions and how we could help the customer and that kind of showed me that if you can add value to a meeting or add value to the whole business operation people will let you participate. I was really thankful because on the way home they said, "Listen, we didn't expect you to do anything but sit there and learn but anytime you take a proactive role to try to help the business and move the business ahead and conduct yourself

professionally that's a good thing." That was like my first experience with a customer and those guys let me kind of go out on my own and really help them. That was a great experience.

Interviewer:

Okay. Can you tell us about one or two of your major projects you worked on while here at RCA?

Dave Micha:

Oh, sure. So, from 1984 probably to 1992 what I really wanted to be, after I worked in finance for five years, the only thing I ever wanted to do was be a program manager here because I thought being a program manager was absolutely the best job in the plant. You were responsible for everything on the program. You got to work with every single organization. You got to lead a group of people, you got to deal with the customers. Sometimes it was a tough job because you were responsible for everything and sometimes in control of nothing. But it was my hope, from the time I was 24 years old that's what I wanted to be, a program manager. One of my first significant jobs is they just don't let you be a program manager here and they certainly never let you be a program manager unless you have an engineering degree. For the first eight years of my career people would say, "You really can't be program manager, you don't have an engineering degree." But I was convinced I could do it. So, eventually a gentleman by the name of Paul Morocco, who was a program manager here, said, "I'm going to make you a program manager."

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"But, we're not going to make you a program manager, we're going to make you deputy program manager. You're kind of the helper to the program manager." Then he said, "Well, in fact, we're not really going to make you the deputy. We're going to make you the deputy to the deputy program manager." So, they let me work on a program called the high rate tape recorder, which is a program for NASA. It was a tape recorder program that went into space and I was responsible for some of the major subcontractors who were working for us. They gave me a technical person to assist me and that's how I really got into the program office. That was a wonderful job because I learned the difference between building equipment for the military for an airborne or ground application and building stuff the space environment. When you build stuff for space it's very high reliability. There's a lot of documentation. It's a whole different thing. That gave me the opportunity to really learn what this business was all about. So, I kind of graduated from deputy program manager and then eventually they made me the full-fledged deputy program manager on that job. Then what happened? A couple years later we got another job and these jobs got in a little bit of trouble because they were very difficult so we had some cost pressures and

technical issues. So, they had to split these jobs up and put a manager in charge of each one and at the time I was working with Jim Hemschoot who was in charge of our space station program, I think. I think he was in charge of space station. They came to me and said, "You know, we're going to give you this Landsat program to be the program manager of the Landsat seven solid state recorder program that went on the Landsat seven satellite. So, I said, "Wow, I'm going to actually be in charge of this thing?" So, they put me in charge of it and that was in the mid to late 90s and it was a great experience because I got to deal directly with the customer. I had about 40 people working for me in engineering and manufacturing and it was my real first shot at being a program manager. No safety net. I had to report directly to the staff level person and it was a great opportunity.

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That was the first big thing that happened to me in my career in terms of management. Now the second big thing that happened to me is at the end of that time period in 1997 when I finished up that program, I was working for Jim Hemschoot on the space station program. Jim was the program manager at the time. We had a large subcontract with a company called Motorola in Scottsdale, Arizona. So, Jim and the president of this division, Greg Roberts, called me over to the office and said, "Hey, we need you to go out to Scottsdale, Arizona for about a week, or two weeks, and help manage this subcontractor. They're having a lot of problems. We need another person out there from L3 in Camden." At that time we had just become L3, 1997. So, I packed up, told my wife, I had a young daughter, my son was about five, my daughter was just born, and I said, "Okay, I'll go out to Arizona for a week or ten days to help get them straightened out." So, I got on a plane, I went out to Arizona and what they said is, "We'll go with you." So, Greg Roberts and Jim Hemschoot took me out to meet the Motorola management. They wanted to say, "Dave Micha is going to be here on site at your plant to help you." Now, remember they were working for us. We were the customer. So, I'll never forget it. We walked in to meet the President of the site out there, at Motorola, and I'm standing there, and it's Greg Roberts, Jim Hemschoot and myself and they introduced me to the President of the Motorola division and they said, "Dave's going to be here to help manage you." and they said, "We don't want him here." And I said, "Do they realize I'm standing right here? They told me they didn't want me here." So, I said, "Okay, this is not going to be really a great relationship." But what it did is it got me out away from the plant and got me to learn how to work with a subcontractor and manage myself away from this place. Now, ironically it was supposed to be a

seven to ten day assignment, it ended up being a seven month assignment. I was there from the middle of July in '97 until Christmas Eve 1997.

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It was really tough on my family and my children growing up but it was a great experience. I worked really hard but being still pretty new to that kind of game, traveling business, I didn't really work out all the logistical details with the company. So, for example, they said you'd be here for two weeks so I went and stayed at the Camelback Inn in Scottsdale, Arizona. It was July, hot. Nobody goes to Arizona. It was really incredibly cheap. The room was only \$99 a night, a beautiful resort. Now, since I thought I was only going to be there two weeks I didn't get any long term agreement with the resort. I didn't get any long term car rental agreement. I just stayed there for two weeks. Now, you're supposed to put your expense reports in every week to the company. Well, I kind of forgot to do that and what happened is, I was there in July, I was there in August, and I was there in September. What I didn't realize being kind of naive is September 1st the rates change because now people want to go to Arizona. So, the rate went from \$99 a night to \$349 a night. Well, I didn't know and I was just staying there for seven months. I was supposed to put my expense report in every week. Well, when I came back Christmas, December 24th of '97, I said, "I better add up all my expenses." So, I added up all my expenses and I went to see Jim and I said, "Jim, I guess I should have put my expense reports in before this because my total expenses for living out there is like \$42,000." It didn't get me fired. It was probably the only time that I came close to getting fired. They called me over and Jim basically saved me. He went in to see the President and said, "Oh, you know, the young kid he made a mistake." But I was living pretty good, Alaskan King Crab legs every night, macadamia nuts. I didn't realize what it took to really do a long term stay but that was really a big change and got in a little bit of trouble but we recovered from that.

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Then probably the next biggest thing or maybe the most important thing that ever happened to me here in my 31 years, when I came back from that assignment, December '97, L3 had just formed as a company. The CEO, Frank Lanza was looking to get into some new markets and he thought we had the ability here in Camden to get into the airborne market and provide something called a solid state data recorder for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions. These were basically, think of it as a fancy VCR that would go on an airplane that would record images from a camera. Well, most people had been putting tape recorders on airplanes for 30 years. Frank's vision was to put solid state equipment on there, so, no moving parts. Basically, flash memory. So, I said, "Geez, that'll be

really cool. Can I be in charge of that?" and they said, "You can't be in charge of that. What do you know about airplanes and that?" Well, the problem was the CEO wanted us to do this and nobody really was available to do it. So, I put my hand up and said I would do it. So, they put me in charge of this new project and I got some independent research and development funding from the company and I was told to put together a team of engineers and business development people and try to go make this something. Well, we did. It took a lot of work. We made it into something called the STAR product line and I was kind of the project manager for that. We had a great engineering team led by John Waring, Steve Montgomery, a number of fantastic engineers, hired some business development people and I was responsible for not only kind of inventing the product, not technically, but the vision of it. I did all the business development, the marketing, the branding. I met all the customers and I got to travel all around the world to try to sell this product. The best thing it did for me to help my career? It got me to meet all the people at L3 corporate because this was really the CEO's project. So, I got to meet the Corporate Vice President of Business Development, the Corporate Vice President of Engineering, of Strategy, all the people in the L3 corporate Washington office and by doing that I just got great exposure through the company.

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The first couple of years were tough. We didn't sell anything and we spent millions of dollars of the company's money developing this product. When I couldn't sell the black one that was one foot by one foot I just decided, hey, we need an orange one that's a little bit shorter. So, they gave me more money to build the orange one. Well, we couldn't sell any of those either. So, then I said, "I need a longer one that's a different color." So, they kept funding millions and millions of dollars into this for the first three or four years and I produced no business. So, I was getting a little nervous. So, finally we got our big break. We won a job in 2001 called the SHARP program. It was the shared reconnaissance pod for the F-18. It was a huge program and by winning that program it really launched the product line because as soon as we won that we won the F-16 program. We won a program in Sweden, a program in Denmark, a program in South Korea. It just started to take off and we went from no business to ten, twelve, fifteen million dollars of business a year. Then in 2004 we won a huge program called the P8A program where we put a whole suite of recorders on that aircraft and we got that business up to about \$30 million a year. That single thing that I worked on from probably 1997 to really about 2005, that was probably the single biggest thing that actually propelled my career because I got such visibility, great team of people, engineering,

marketing, manufacturing, quality, finance. We just had a great team of people. It was one of the most well-known things in L3 and it's because it was one of the CEO's pet projects, Mr. Lanza. That is what really helped propel my career in some of the senior level management positions.

Interviewer:

Great. So, you talked about having a great team of people you worked with. I've heard that from a lot of interviews. So, can you tell me a little bit about the people you worked with here at RCA, L3, and GE and what made them such a strong group of employees?

Dave Micha: [0:22:00]

Yeah, so, it's pretty cool. When you come in here as a 23 year old when you sit in a room with these people you realize just how smart they are. They're not the smartest people in the building. They're not the smartest people in south Jersey. They're some of the smartest people in the country doing work for the national defense. I was working in the classified business area and I got the opportunity to work with people like Maurice Timken and Conrad Haber and just really brilliant people. I worked with John Waring. I worked with Mike Riddle. I worked with just really smart people. As I started to form my own teams as a manager here I had people like Gene Cassai and Tom Cassini and Bruce Pieconous and Steve Horvath and Tom Nann they're just all brilliant, brilliant engineers, software, hardware, mechanical, systems and it's just incredible how smart they are. Sometimes you feel really in the presence of brilliant people. What made them great is not only their technical ability but most of them were terrific with customers, they listened, they understand what the customers' needs were. But the thing that I think always separates the people here is – I asked somebody here a few years back, I said, "How are we different than every other defense contractor?" Because all their defense contractors have smart people and they have passionate people and they care about the national security work we do. But the one thing that people always said here and it's true and it's still true today is when we take a project from the government and we work on it there's always issues because we're doing really hard things here and there's schedule pressures and there's cost pressures and there's technical innovation, things that we're trying to do. We're trying to invent things here that have never done before. But when it's all said and done the thing that always is true on every job I've ever worked on the people here will always get the customer to the end.

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Meaning whatever – it may take a little longer than we said and it may cost a little more than we anticipated but at the end we will get them there. We will get them the thing they want and that's what's really impressive about the people here. There's no give up. There's

no we can't do it. We'll always get there and provide a solution for their needs. It's just really incredible. That's the number one thing that I think through the 30-some years here I've seen in everybody. Whatever it takes we'll get them there.

Interviewer:

Can you tell us about the transitions from RCA to GE and L3?

Dave Micha:

Sure, that was very traumatic. So, when I started I was an RCA guy, right? In 1984 and the whole place was RCA and I was here a couple years and like I said I met a lot of great people, understood the family tradition. Then, of course, in 1986 Jack Welsh from GE decided he wanted to buy RCA. He primarily did that because he wanted to own NBC. So, only being two years in the business, when that notice came out in 1986 it was a big shock because I didn't even know what it meant. But after about a week things settled down and it was really great. I was sitting in my office one day thinking okay same thing, everything is the same, and we got a new name change. I didn't have business cards at the time so I didn't have to worry about that. They came in my office one day and said, "Great, let me tell you how GE works and how we're different from RCA. You don't get to stay at the facility you're working at. The GE theory is we're going to move you around the country so you get broader experiences." I was just married and kids and I didn't want to move anywhere. I had just made friends here and I had just kind of settled in south Jersey and they said, "Tell you what, we'll give you two days to tell us where you want to move. There's some openings in Utah. There's some up in Massachusetts. Where would you like to go work?" I didn't want to go anywhere. So, I went home and I was really worried about this and I was talking to my wife and I didn't know what to do. I came back in the next day and they came down to see me. It was actually the CFO, his name was Mark Meeches and Mark said, "Good news, you're going to move but we're only going to make you move over to Philadelphia."

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"You're going to move over to Chestnut Street where we have a GE operation over there, re-entry systems." That was about 1997 or 1998, and I didn't want to move but since it was close I decided I'd do it. Now, in fact, it's not much farther from my house to here than it is over Center City, Philadelphia, but it was a completely different state, I had to go over a bridge, pay city wage tax, didn't have a place to park. But I went over there in the late 90s and I stayed for three years and, again, it was one of the best things that happened to me because ultimately when that business closed after the cold war many of those people came over here to work in Camden. It was a great experience because I got to meet Greg Roberts and Bob Tally and Bob Neff, John Tierney, Mike Blanco, just a lot of people

that worked over there that came over here and I got to see a completely different business. So, that a different experience. GE had a different mindset. They were a lot about making money. We had to make sure we made money on everything we did. But then I came back here and then, of course, GE sold the operation to Martin Marietta so we got back to a more traditional defense contractor. Somebody who was just focused on defense and then the merger happened between Martin Marietta and Lockheed to form Lockheed Martin. That was okay but now we were a big, big defense contractor and what I kind of didn't like about that is we were just a small fish in the big Lockheed Martin machine and we didn't get the visibility or the acknowledgment or the investment that I think we deserved and that was kind of a problem. But when Frank Lanza and Bob LaPenta formed L3 Communications all that changed. This has been a great company to work for because it was founded on flexibility, innovation, and people and it's been that way for the last 18 years. So, I like to say I worked for five different companies, I've never left the company. Worked for RCA, GE, Martin Marietta, Lockheed Martin, and then L-3.

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The people at the beginning at RCA and the people now at L-3, the bookends, are what has really made it special because it's just the same kind of mindset in both of those and I've really enjoyed it.

Interviewer:

You've talked about the RCA family and you've kind of eluded that L-3 feels very much like the RCA family. What do you think attributes to that continuation? Is it the fact that there are a lot of employees that still work there or is it that Frank Lanza was important to that?

Dave Micha:

I think it's both. I've been here 31 years but there's many people who – When I got into a meeting I have skip level meeting with employees, not on my staff, some of them have been here for three weeks, some of them have been here for 35 years. So, I've grown up with a lot of these people. When I became President, I actually became President 28 days to the year. So, I started here May 8th, 1984, I became President May 8th, 2012. I can tell you, some of the people I started with when I was just very young and inexperienced are the same people that work here now and I'm kind of leading the organization. So, you just kind of grow up with these people and now they want to call me sir and so forth and that was a hard adjustment me quite frankly because we all grew up together through the ranks and there's just a lot of great people here. So, I think it's the time and the heritage of the long tenure of many people here. The current tenure of our employees is 17 years. So, people come here and they don't leave. I think Frank Lanza's inspirational spirit, innovation, entrepreneurial mindset just kept

things going here. He was very proud of this division. We have done a lot of great things here. We've contributed to a lot of national security issues but he always was about engineering. The thing I always say about this operation is, and now as the President it's easy to look at, I have an engineering organization, a manufacturing, quality, finance, program offices.

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We have HR, IT, but this is an engineering company. The only reason we get any business is because of engineering. Everybody else is here to support engineering. We're not an insurance company. We're not an accounting firm. We're an engineering company. So, people give us business because of the engineers we have here and it's all about how engineering does and the rest of us, quite frankly, are here to support engineering. All very important critical cogs in the machine, but without engineering there is no business here. So, Frank Lanza, that was his mindset. He was a true engineer's engineer. I remember the first time I met him he was the CEO and I had briefed admirals and generals and executives of other companies but when you go in front of the CEO for the first time it's a little nerve wracking. I had prepared for my first briefing with him for about two months and I remember the second question he asked me is, "What kind of connectors we were using on the system we were building?" and I thought that was a very, very, very detailed question for the CEO to be asking. I thought he was going to say how much money can we make or how much could we sell. He asked me about the focal length of the camera. He asked me about what kind of hardware interfaces so he was incredibly technical and I think the people here really respected that because it is an engineering company.

Interviewer: Yeah, I think that engineers loved working for RCA.

Dave Micha: Right, sure.

Interviewer: So, I can see that.

Dave Micha: People want to invent. When people come here they want to invent things, absolutely.

Interviewer: Definitely. So, what was the best thing about working for RCA?

Dave Micha: I think the best thing about working it for me was that I was really young and they let me experience so many different things. I didn't know the difference between HF, and UHF, and VHF. I didn't know the difference between an Ohio class submarine and a Los Angeles class submarine. I didn't know that when you put equipment in

space the quality, the parts had to be a much higher quality than the quality of parts you put on the ground.

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I didn't understand that things you do had to be completely documented. What RCA allowed me to do was experience so many different people, technologies, customer areas here that you grow up really quickly. You just learn a lot. I think other companies kind of shuttle you through the program. They make you take years to learn different parts of the business. Within two years here I felt like I knew a lot about this business and RCA gave you the opportunity to do that. They provided training. I went to a lot of training programs early in my career. They let you work as much as you want as long as you were contributing to the end product. So, yeah, I think that was the best thing about RCA for me personally. I got such just great experience. Such fast experience.

Interviewer:

This is always the hardest question for everybody. What's the worst thing about working here?

Dave Micha:

What's the worst thing about working here? Wow. So, the worst thing about working here, well, I love coming to work. I have for 31 years. I get up every morning. I love coming here. As the President it's a little bit different because every job I had I kind of knew what the job was every day. As the President it's a completely different job because I deal with employee issues, city of Camden issues, corporate issues, real estate issues, facilities issues. It's not the things that you did for the first 28 years of your career. I think the hardest thing about working here to me is making sure that the job and the career here is fulfilling for everybody because at the end of the day life is short. You want to make sure you have a very fulfilling professional career but I feel responsible for all the people that work here to some degree.

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I want to make sure we are doing the job. We have three people that I have to take care of every day. I have to take care of our customers. I have to take care of our employees and I have to take care of our shareholders. Very important to me is that the employees that work here feel like this is a great place to work. So, it's hard, probably hard is not the right thing. It's I want to make sure people feel like they're contributing and this place is a great place to work. When I sense people are a little down or they're frustrated that's hard because I don't want them to feel that way. Because it's just a great place to work and I want them to feel like I'm providing a great environment for them to work in.

Interviewer:

How did south Jersey change in your time here and what influence do you think this company had on that change?

Dave Micha:

It's really interesting. My wife's father worked here. I didn't know that until I even met him. He worked here in the 60s. When I moved down here since I didn't know anything about the area I kind of settled in the Gloucester Township area and what's changed about RCA in terms of time and what I've learned is no matter where you go you see an RCA, people have RCA records, people have Victrolas, people have radios. People have incredible things from RCA and as the President now people call me all the time and say would you like to collect this, would you like to get this, I'm moving out of my house. But, I think RCA and the heritage here, it's embodied in the culture of south Jersey. I mean, there are people, Joe Pane will tell me that RCA invented the middle class here in south Jersey. There's so many people that have had great careers because of what RCA provided people. When I first started I didn't know RCA for anything but their commercial work, television sets, radios. I didn't realize the important things they were doing in the defense industry, the minuteman missile program early on, BMEWS, the trident submarine.

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I didn't realize they were doing all those things. It's such a diverse great business that no matter who you see in south Jersey somehow they either worked here, their uncle worked here, their children worked here and that's really pretty cool. They say what do you do there and I generally tell people I just work at the old RCA plant in Camden. I really don't say what I do but they always want to talk about did you know this person or did you work on that program. It's really pretty cool.

Interviewer:

That's great. So, how would you sum up your experience at RCA and L-3?

Dave Micha:

Well, here's how I would sum it up. I've only had one job. Got out of college, this is the only place I've ever worked. Like everybody else I've had plenty of opportunities to leave and look at other jobs. I've never left and it's because I just think this is a great place to work. I think it's a great company. I think RCA started it all, gave me the foundation. I'm very proud of the RCA heritage I have. I'm extremely proud to work for L3 and I just love the work here. Every day I get up I'm really excited to come here. It's really great to be the President. They tell me I'm the first homegrown President here in almost three decades. I work for really great people here. Some of the previous Presidents here I learned a lot from. Greg Roberts, specifically, he was one of my mentors and just learned so much from him, how to lead an organization and lead people. I would never put myself in his category or class of leaders but I've tried to learn from a lot of different people. This place is great. I plan to end my career here. I'm just very proud of what I've done but I'm more proud of the

people here and the people and the people I work with. It's just a wonderful place to work.

Interviewer:

Great. Anything else you want to share?

Dave Micha:

No, I think I would just tell people as you look back over your career, over the time in south Jersey think about all of the things RCA has done, both commercially but from my perspective all the things RCA has done to protect this country.

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Whether it's radar systems, systems in space. When Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, the communications systems he used. Whether it's forward deployed systems or classified systems. We've just done great things here. I tell my kids, I said, "You know, I can't really talk about the work I do here but I can tell you this. There are people around the country that sleep, and should sleep, easy at night because of the things we do in support of the national defense of this country." So, there's a lot of pride in that and people are very prideful of the work they do here. That's the thing I like every day.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]