



**The University of Akron Evening College of the
Community and Technical College**

Ann Otto

I completed my college course work several months before graduation. What to do? Through Kathryn Vegso I was offered a position with the group of graduate students serving as Evening College counselors. Charles “Chuck” Blair was dean of the Evening College, and Mary Jane Kelley was the administrative assistant (and task master!). Years later, Chuck took Mary Jane with him when he became the associate dean of the new Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine.

Most of our students were employed fulltime at local rubber companies in what was then the “Rubber Capitol of the

World.” Many hoped to continue for a four-year degree in manufacturing or engineering after the two years with us. Counselors learned their class curriculum and tried to ease the anxieties of these adult students who had been out of school for a few years and hadn’t been on a college campus. It helped that most, like me, were first generation college students from blue-collar families.

Some sat with shoulders bent, leaning forward, hands clasped, feet crossed or flat in front of them and asked, “How can I make time to study?” “Will the classes be hard?” “What will be required in an English class?” They appreciated the fact that we had recently taken many of their required general courses.

I learned years later from a friend who worked at Goodyear that many of these students went on to important professional, manufacturing, and leadership positions at Goodyear. What a great contribution to Akron’s workforce!