

TRANSCRIPT: JIMMIE NAIL INTERVIEW

Jimmy Nail · Expert in Cotton Cooperatives

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An interview with Mr. Jimmy Nail, Pioneer Cotton Cooperative Initiative. Nail is a 1954 graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry.

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My name is Jimmy Nail. I live in Lubbock, Texas. And I am retired. Previous to that, I worked for 25 years for Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, and before that I managed a co-op gin in Brownfield, Texas. My whole life has been involved with cooperatives, and that's because I, when I was at, down here Texas A&M, I was, I took a course in cooperatives under Howard Whitney, Dr. Howard Whitney. And we learned about cooperatives, and I was convinced that that was the way to go and what I wanted to do with my life. And I then made sure that all the courses I took led towards cooperatives. I did my master's on cooperatives and minored in rural sociology because I would be working with agriculture people.

What were some of the highlights from your career?

Well I spoke, one of them would be graduating from Texas A&M. I, and then, and then the other one was when I went, was able to go to work for Plains Cotton Cooperative Association. And I worked there in field service. And they, one time I was awarded a Distinguished Service Award by the Cooperative Council and the Federation of Cooperatives. And then later on, I received Cooperator of the Year. So, I guess those were three of the – three highlights to my career.

Can you tell us a little about Ty Timm?

Ty Timm was Head of the Department whenever I was here. He, when I came back, I took a two-year absence and went to the military and when I came back, Dr. Timm was Head of the Department, and it was growing, and he was a very dynamic person. He was the kind of person that inspired you to do the best you could. I was lucky enough to take one course that he taught in policy. Well he kind of reserved that for a bit, at that time, he taught the policy course and all seniors took that course. And I was lucky enough to get to have a course under Dr. Timm. And he was very inspirational, and he did a real good job of covering the policy and what was involved with policy as far as agriculture was concerned. As far as the Department's concerned, he brought in very, very good professors. They were inspirational. And I worked with some of them for a long time, even after I left college.

What advice do you have for students looking for career success?

My advice to any student was to think long and hard about what he wants to do. Many times, students end up taking courses that they – are the graduated degrees that they don't ever, they don't even use it when they get out. I was lucky enough that I, I made my choice, and I want to encourage others to do the same thing, to figure out what they want to do. I made the decision that I wanted to work for cooperatives, so I selected courses and my electives that were in, and since it was a business, in the business field. And there were some courses that we had to take anyways. That was accounting and statistics and things like that. So, I was at, the other courses I took were salesmanship and credit collections, things that, that was used in the business world because that's where I knew I was going. And I would encourage any student to kind of try to figure out where he wants to go so that he doesn't make the mistake of starting out in

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going one, one way and then he ended up having to go back and take other courses to build up to get to somewhere else.

What about for a student unsure of what to do next?

Well, what he has to do then is take general courses and go around and talk to some of the professors in this, in the departments and get their views because they've all had enough experience with their students that have come and gone that they can give them some pretty good advice. And I would also suggest that, that they, if there's – in – around the college if there are businesses that they could go talk to and see what, what's the required or what they're looking for or what they would like to see their, their, their students have experience in and then they can do that. But start off taking general courses as much as possible, but then you, some, some point you've got to start taking electives, and you've got to make a decision. So, you need to be out making that decision as fast as you can, before you get to your junior and senior year.

Any last thoughts before you go?

I'm just pleased that the Department is doing as well as it is, the Department of Agricultural Economics. And I proud of it, and I know that they're going to get a new building. And I would encourage any student that's coming to Texas A&M to look long and hard at Agricultural Economics and, and the, the branches that are within that because they're doing more things now than what they were back when I was in college, and I think there are more opportunities out there for them.

Thanks for listening

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Molly Luhrs
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