

## OHS 50th Anniversary: Ann Linehan's Intro

[no sound]

Female interviewer: Ann, would you please introduce yourself and tell us a bit about your role?

Ann Linehan: I'd be glad to. My name is Ann Linehan and currently I'm the acting director of the Office of Head Start. And I'm responsible for the oversight of the Head Start program nationally.

Female interviewer: Can you tell me what your favorite part of your job is? What brings you into work in the morning?

Ann: Oh, the favorite part of my job. You know, I have to say... I've been around a long time -- over three decades in Head Start. And I always kind of kid, that if you took our blood type, it wouldn't be O-positive, or whatever, O-negative, it would be, you know, Head Start. Because, it really...there's something about Head Start -- when you understand what it does for children and families. It grabs you and you become passionate.

And I think those of us that get it: It is the passion that drives us, but I also have to say, after three decades of being in Head Start and twenty years of being part of Early Head Start, I am still challenged everyday. I still learn everyday. And I don't know how many people can come to work knowing that they're going to learn something they never knew before, or are going to learn how to resolve a problem that they thought was not resolvable -- and it's the excitement of knowing that you're making an impact.

Female interviewer: How did you come to Head Start? Ann: I'd like to say that I stumbled into it about 35 years ago. I came in; I was in the field of disabilities working at a pediatric rehab hospital. And applied for an executive director position for a Head Start program. And spent the '80s as an executive director of a Head Start program, serving children in about eight communities outside of Boston, Massachusetts.

In 1992, there was a position opened in our Region 1 office which oversees all the programs in New England. And someone asked me if I was interested. And what is so interesting about that is I never thought about federal service, because I loved what I was doing in the community. And applied for the job and so began my federal career in 1992. And I spent three years in the regional office being the

program manager. And, then I was recruited to come to D.C. in 1996. And had been in the -- we used to call it the Head Start Bureau -- for about 20 years now. And probably have held most senior positions in the Office of Head Start, was deputy up until about a year ago and then have been Acting Director for the last year.