

# From the Elders to the Kids: What I Wish I'd Known

MARCH 3, 2017

We asked journalism students around the country to talk to seniors about retirement. This is what they recorded.

By STUDENT JOURNALISTS on March 3, 2017. . [Watch in Times Video »](#)

When you're in college, retirement seems so far away. How do you even wrap your head around it? We asked journalism students from five colleges and universities to talk with retirees, and find out what they wish they had known when they were the students' age. The conversations have been edited.



Lucille Biondi and Grant Viola

**Lucille Biondi, 93**

**Spot welder at Junior Toy, retired at 60**  
*Macon, Mo.*

“I like to work. If a job was open, I’d go back right now and apply for a job. At 93. I would ask to work about 3 hours a day.”

—*Grant Viola, Ohio University*

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Brad Baznik and Megan Magensky

## **Brad Baznik, 58**

### **Tech support for wireless services, retired at 55**

*Naperville, Ill.*

“You’re going to want to plan, especially if you’re married and have children ... You’ve got to start thinking about how long you want to stay in your house, if you’re going to stay in your house forever? Do you want to be close to where your children are living? How long is your spouse going to work?”

—*Megan Magensky, Columbia College Chicago*

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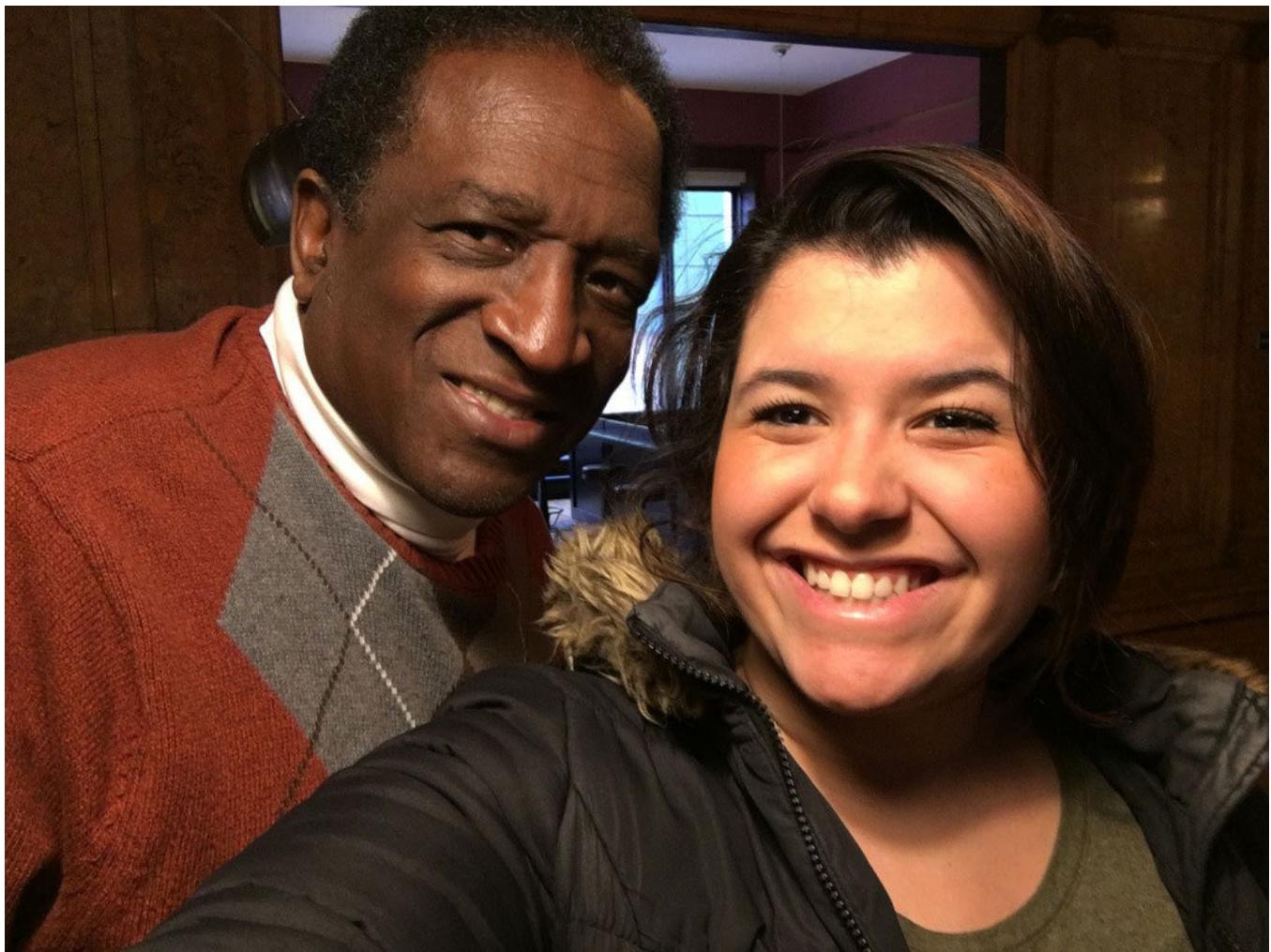
Gerald Bernabei and Bianca Cahue

## **Gerald Bernabei, 76**

**Manager of farm services/farmer, retired (sort of) at 67  
Lowell, Ill.**

“I was farming about 1,200 acres my whole career until I just kind of retired about 10 years ago. But I still farm over 450 acres ... Health is the biggest factor. If you’re healthy and stay active, you’ll do well.”

—Bianca Cahue, Columbia College Chicago



Travis Newsome and Maria Cardona

## **Travis Newsome, 67**

**Finance, retired at 60**

*Chicago*

“Retirement is not a place where you go to prepare to die, but instead a place where you just go to prepare to live. I did not know that 65 would be the new 40, and had I known that, I would have been less stressed about retirement.”

—*Maria Cardona, Columbia College Chicago*

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Lauren Dunn and Susan Jeng

## **Susan Jeng, 75**

**Accountant for automotive parts company, retired at 51**  
*Anaheim, Calif.*

“The most important thing when you want to have a happy retirement life is to have a good relationship with your spouse. I think we have a wonderful relationship. We go travel together, we see our friends together and we do things together.”

*—Lauren Dunn, University of Southern California*



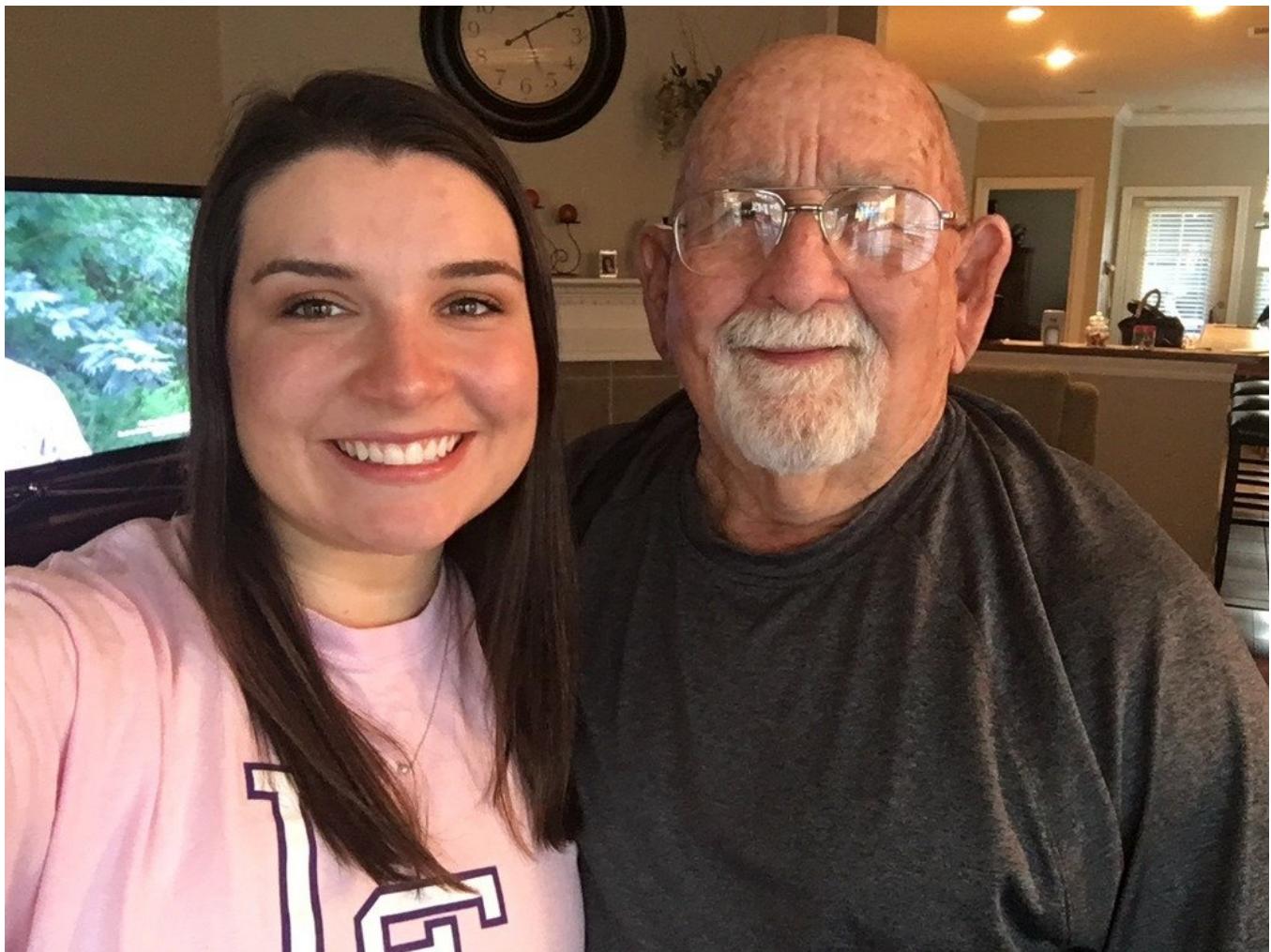
Ed Grimsley and Giovanni Moujaes

## **Ed Grimsley, 67**

**Education service officer in the Marines, retired at 67  
San Diego**

“The millennials are not all bad. It is what it is. But it’s up to us to mentor them, to make sure they’re doing the right thing and become better assets to the American people, and to this country.”

—*Giovanni Moujaes, University of Southern California*



Anna Jane Howell and Tony Leger

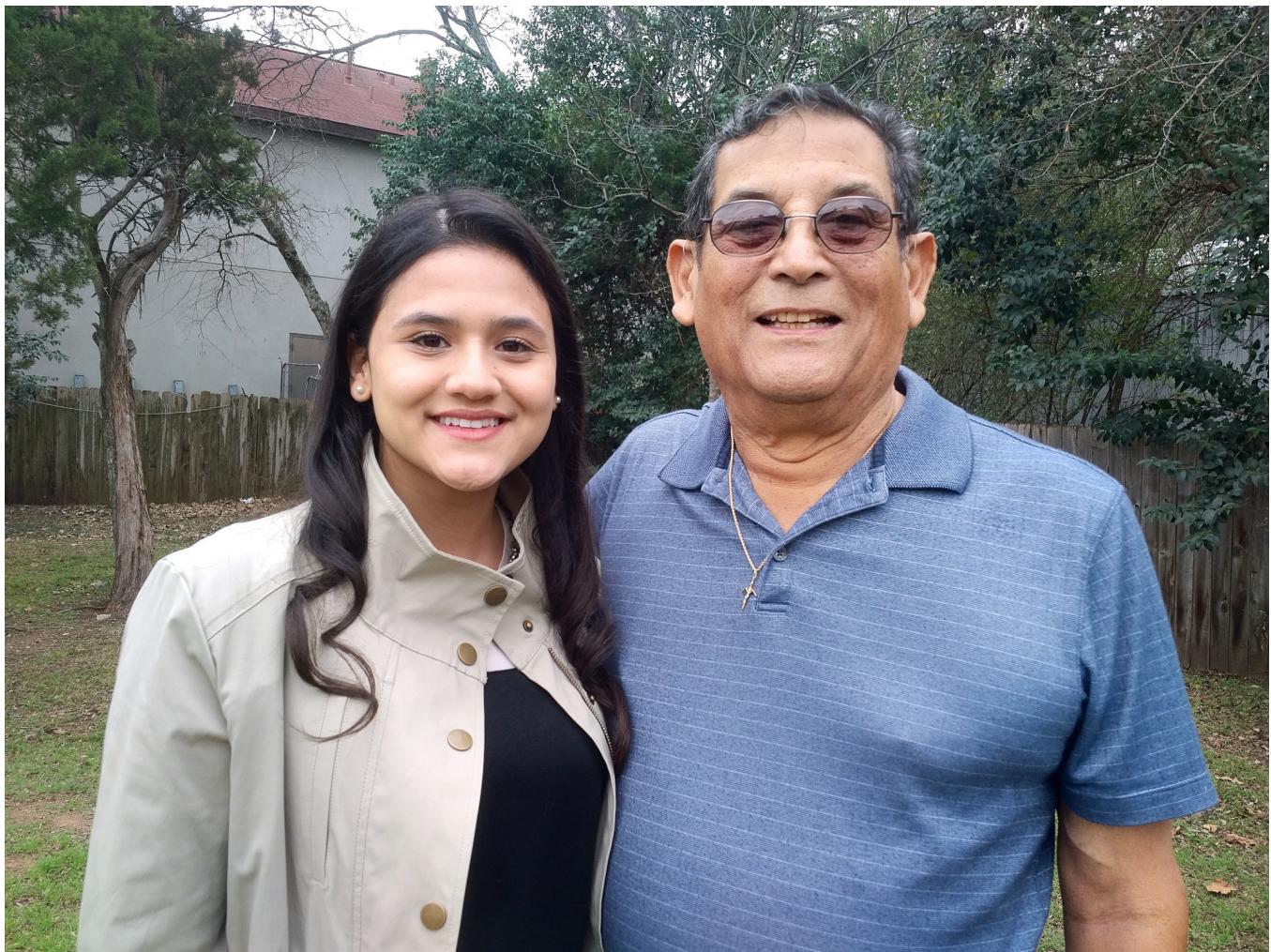
## **Tony Leger, 73**

**Fuel distributor, retired at 65**

*Baton Rouge, La.*

“Do I miss it? Yes. I don’t believe there is a week that passes that I don’t dream about it ... But when I tell the wife in the morning, ‘I dreamed about delivering fuel,’ and she says ‘Pop, would you like to do it again?’ I say ‘No.’”

—*Anna Jane Howell, Louisiana State University*



Tina Rico and Margarito Rodriguez

## **Margarito Rodriguez, 82**

**Air Force/federal government employee, retired at 62**  
*Austin, Tex.*

“Start thinking about 40 years from now or so. And what are you going to be doing? ... Because when I was growing up, I did not think about what I was going to do ... I kept thinking it was too early to think about retirement, and I believe that that was wrong.”

—*Tina Rico, University of Texas at Austin*