

2-13-2019

## Nathan Sauer Interview 2019

Cullen Rance

*Western Oregon University*, crance17@wou.edu

Jeffery A. Pittsenbarger

*Western Oregon University*, jpittsenbarger18@wou.edu

Tyler J. Stauff

*Western Oregon University*, tstauff18@mail.wou.edu

Damon Solomos

*Western Oregon University*, dsolomos17@wou.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.wou.edu/oralhistoriesofwou>



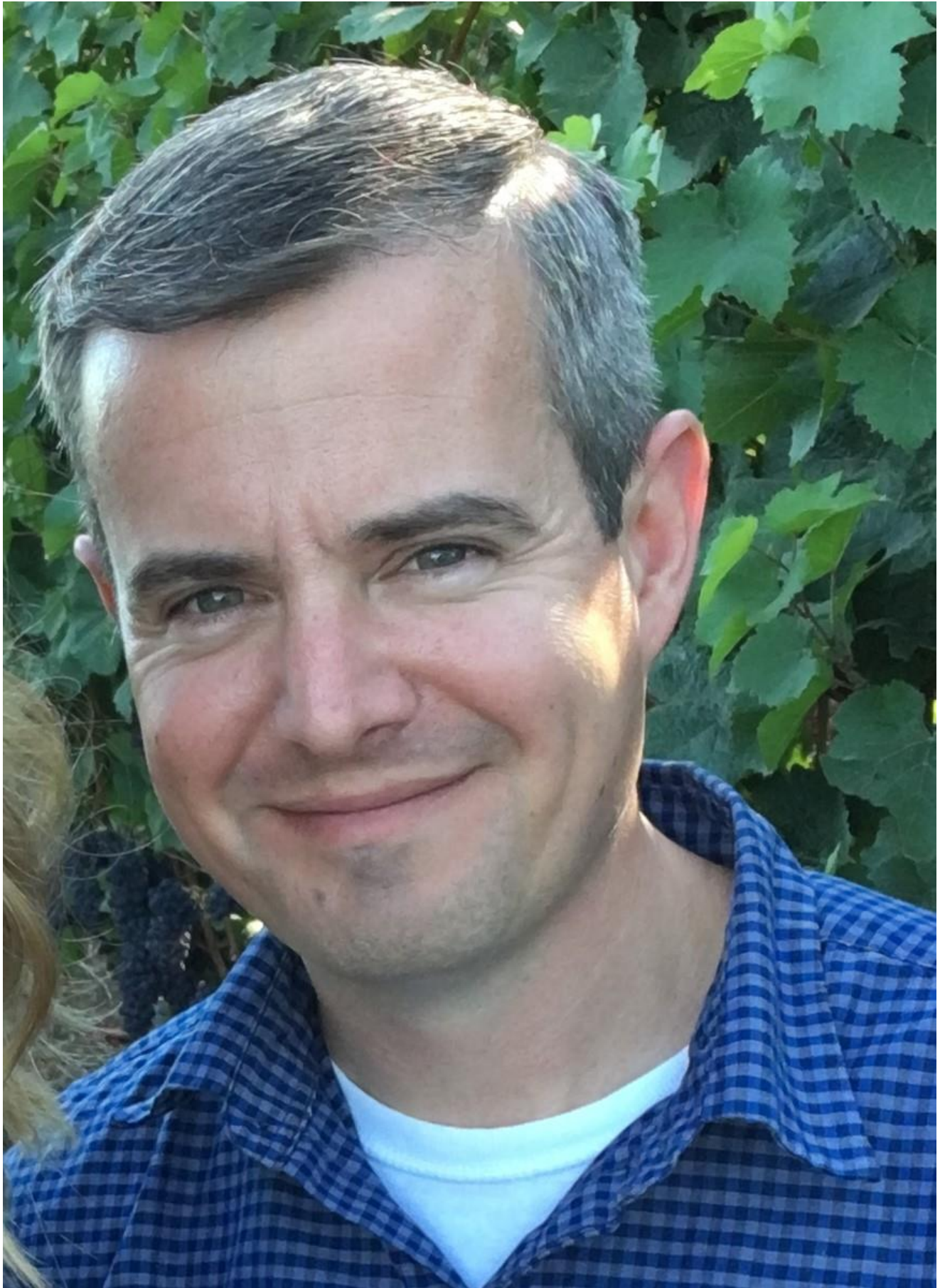
Part of the [Oral History Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Nathan Sauer, Interviewed by Cullen Rance, Tyler Stauff, Jeff Pittsenbarger, and Damon Solomos, Western Oregon University Oral Histories, Hamersly Library, Western Oregon University, March 11, 2019.

This Oral History is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of History at Digital Commons@WOU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Oral Histories of Western Oregon University by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@WOU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@wou.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@wou.edu), [kundas@mail.wou.edu](mailto:kundas@mail.wou.edu), [bakersc@mail.wou.edu](mailto:bakersc@mail.wou.edu).



NS: Nathan Sauer  
DS: Damon Solomos  
CR: Cullen Rance  
JP: Jeff Pittsenbarger  
TS: Tyler Stauff

Transcribed and Edited by: Damon Solomos; Cullen Rance; Jeff Barger; Tyler Stauff, 2019  
2019 February 13

DS: Hello everyone, my name is Damon Solomos. Today I am here with Tyler Stauff, Jeff Pittsenbarger, and Cullen Rance. We will be interviewing Nathan Sauer for our Oral History class. Video and audio, as well as a transcript of the interview will be made public on the university digital commons web site. Lets get right into it with question 1. When did you start working at Western? What were the circumstances that led you to come to work at Western? And have you had different positions here? If so, what were they?

NS: Ok, so I started working here in July of 1996. I grew up in this area, I lived in Monmouth and Dallas. I went to school here at Central. At the time, my high school had a sort of an internship program that you could work with the technicians here on campus. We used to have actual repair technicians that would repair the electronics in the TV studio. We had an RF engineer so we had our own cable TV system on campus. So I got to work with them. I learned how some the repairs worked in the electronics area. So then after I graduated school I worked in construction for a while. Then an entry level audio/visual technician position opened up here. Basically, probably because of the time I spent working with those technicians, I knew the director of the department, I got hired on here as an audio/visual technician.

So, I started as an entry level A/V Tech. That really consisted of just delivering TVs, VCR s, and film projectors. We actually had, at the time, The Educational Media Center, housed the video tapes, and films, and slides. So we would take those out to the classrooms and set it up for the teachers. That's what they showed for their classes. Then I also did repairs on like the film projectors, and the old over head transparency projectors, and helped them load the film onto the spools.

So as it progressed, in 2007, I joined the Oregon Electrical Limited Energy Program as an apprentice. I was an apprentice for about four years, and then in 2011 I got my electrical licenses. So

then my job kind of changed a little bit. I did network infrastructure, and telephony, telephone system, security, fire panels, wireless network systems. So, I still work with the class room technologies, but then it kind of expanded a little bit.

TS:     Awesome. When did you start working at Western? What were the - What are some examples of work you've done here, and what does a typical work day for you like?

NS:     Ok so yeah as I mentioned I started in 1996, and a normal workday for me, some of the things I do. I come in about 7:30 before classes start, check the smart classroom systems – that's my primary role as managing the smart classrooms and taking care of that technology, and so if there's any issues if the systems are down or offline, I go out and check those. I also do the programming on those systems, so I'm constantly updating the software and the firmware and making sure they run correctly. And, I also work on support calls, so if we get technical issues that come in through our service request desk then I work on those, help faculty and staff with the A/V [audio and video] systems there. And, I also now – since I got my electrical license – I sit on the committees for the various projects. So, the big construction projects, remodel projects, I meet with the architects and engineers and review the plans. I manage the IT [information and technology] portion of the project, so any questions that come up with that I have to - help define what we want and make sure we get the right technology.

JP:     Alright, so what is the most interesting experience you have had while working here at Western?

NS:     So, there have been a few, but one that kind of stands out to me. In 2005, we received a significant federal grant to upgrade our technology on campus and there were several Oregon Senators that actually helped us get that grant. It was Senator Ron Wyden, Senator Gordon Smith, and Congresswoman Darlene Hooley. My job was to help use this grant, use the money to upgrade the classrooms, and one of the big ones was ITC 211, our big auditorium in the technology building. It took a lot of time, I spent a lot of hard work on that project, so then to show our appreciation for what they had done for us, the money that we got. They invited those congressmen, congresswoman, senators, and we had the president, all the upper administration. They all came to this big presentation that we were supposed to give in ITC 211. I was supposed to present in front of them and so I was super nervous. I felt like this kid fumbling through the presentation in front of all these administrators and

high people that, I guess it went well. They said that they appreciated it and it's probably something I won't forget from working here.

JP:     Awesome.

CR:     What are your plans and goals at Western, now and for the future?

NS:     Well, you know I've worked here almost 23 years, it's really become like a second home to me. I really like working with the faculty, staff, and the students, just getting to know them, kind of building those relationships and of course my goal is always to make technology more reliable, make it more user friendly. As technology is constantly changing, my goal is to just really stay up to date with it, make sure we have technology that works really well and sort of refine the systems that we have, and long term, I've been here so long at the university that I just really want to see it do well.

CR:     Is there anything else you'd like to add about your experiences working here?

NS:     So, maybe just something that not too many people are familiar with. There are a series of tunnels that run underneath the campus, maybe you've had a chance to look at those? They go from multiple buildings. You can kind of drop down in one building and then pop up on the other side of the street in another building, and so I've had an opportunity to go through most of those tunnels and kind of see how the inner-workings of the university functions. As you work kind of behind the scenes, you find all these secret spaces, mechanical rooms, and spaces throughout the university. So, that's been kind of fun to see that in the time I've worked here.

JP:     Alright.

TS:     Thank you very much for your time.

NS:     Alright, thank you.