

Interview Questions for Jennifer Gilbert

- 1. You have been our favorite tv news anchor for many years, tell us about your experience serving as our Mistress of Ceremonies for several MWMCA Annual Spring Breakfast events? Which event was the most memorable?***

The annual MWMCA breakfast has been a rite of spring that I have looked forward to for many years. It is always an impressive gathering of the top women and men who are driving the economic engine of our region. The event draws the most powerful political and business leaders who are committed to providing opportunities for women and minorities. These are people who make connections, and make things happen. I have served as MC for many events over the years, but MWMCA's Spring Breakfast is truly one of my favorites. The communication and planning is superb. My job was always made so easy by the helpful and attentive staff of MWMCA. Pat and Wayne Frazier have always been so incredibly gracious to me over the years. They treated me like a queen - complete with a "Miss America" style bouquet and a fabulously dramatic introduction! My favorite was the year they played "Nobody Does it Better." I still have the paperweight with those words inscribed on it in my office. MWMCA has enriched my life by connecting me with so many accomplished people, and giving me the opportunity to learn something new each and every year.

- 2. Why did you choose to pursue a career in broadcast journalism?***

It was a dream that started when I was a sophomore in high school, and I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do for a living. It was tough for me because I loved all subjects in school. It was around the time that Jessica Savitch, a true pioneer for women in the television industry, was killed in a tragic car accident. I was at the dentist office one day, and there were magazine articles in the waiting room about Savitch's life and career. As I read about her career, a light bulb went on. I realized that being a journalist is a way of learning something every day—a way to be a student of every subject imaginable. Additionally, I had an interest in high school theater, so the performance aspect of television appealed to me. It was a perfect fit.

- 3. Why did you select the Baltimore City market to establish roots over other areas throughout the United States?***

I was offered a job in Baltimore in 1993. Frankly, I saw it as a good steppingstone in my career path, having come from the smaller market of Lancaster/Harrisburg, PA. Baltimore immediately drew me in. I fell in love with this city, its people, its character, and its small-town feel. Even when I had opportunities to go elsewhere, nothing measured up. It was also appealing that Baltimore was only 70 miles from my childhood home, where my parents still lived, and where my father still lives to this day. My son was born in 2007. It's a wonderful place to raise a child, and now he has roots here.

4. *What is your vision for Baltimore City, Maryland and how can the City get on the right track?*

I've expressed my love for this city. It is sad to see the struggles. Baltimore needs strong, honest, leadership. My hope is that the people of Baltimore decide that we can do better. That we deserve better. My hope is that pressure is put on the right people in the right places—both state and city political leaders—and those within the communities that can make a difference—to truly bring about real change.

5. *What advice can you offer to young, aspiring broadcast journalist seeking to pursue a career in the industry?*

Technology has changed the industry monumentally. A journalist no longer has to wait to be hired, to produce work, and to become known. She or he can start their own blog, become active on social media, start their own YouTube channel—all things that will help jumpstart their career. Additionally, get as many internships as possible. One of my internships led to my first real job in the industry. And don't just sit around during the internship! Make yourself useful. Get to know people. Offer to do everything you can. Be nice. Work hard. Say yes to every assignment.

6. *Who do you feel was the most iconic figure in Greater Baltimore during your time on air at WBFF-TV Fox 45 and why?*

William Donald Schaefer. I first learned about “Mayor Schaefer” when I was growing up in southern Pennsylvania, and I watched the news on Baltimore television stations. This was during the time of the “dollar houses.” In those days, I never dreamed that I would one day become a television news reporter covering William Donald Schaefer as he was governor of Maryland, and later Comptroller of the state of Maryland. William Donald Schaefer was far from perfect. He was human with flaws and rough edges, but I don't think anyone could question his love and commitment to the city of Baltimore. He was dedicated to making Baltimore better and his mantra was to “Do it now.”