

Carroll- So I'm going to ask us all to introduce ourselves again for the purpose of this recording. So I'm Tamar Carroll. I'm a historian at RIT. This is?

Benjamin- Kadin Benjamin. I'm a student researcher.

Ca- And we're working on learning more about the history of the Kodak Lambda employee network. So if it's okay with you, we'd like to interview each of you together as a group about your experiences with Kodak Lambda and would like to record the interview. And if it's okay with you, and you'll have a chance to view the recording before we would do this, but we would consider adding it to the University of Rochester Special Collections library where they have other interviews related to LGBTQ life in Rochester, life and activism.

So if each of you would be willing to just say your full name and say if you consent to us recording the interview and to considering donating it if you're happy with the recording afterwards, that would be great.

Kathryn, do you want to start?

Rivers- Sure. I'm Kathryn Rivers. And I forget what, but I'm fine with having this recorded and archived at the University of Rochester.

Ca-Thank you, Kathryn. How about you, David?

Kosel- Yeah, my name is David Kosel, and also known as Ko-sel, and I'm okay with this being recorded and saved at the RIT archives.

Ca- Okay. And just a quick correction, it would be even though we're here at RIT, we would just be giving it across town to the University of Rochester. They have Evelyn Bailey's interviews that she did for Shoulders to Stand On, and they also have Kodak's records. So just to keep things together.

K- Sorry.

Ca- No, no, not at all.

I just wanted to be clear about that.

And Chuck, how about you?

Collins- Hey, I'm Chuck Collins.

And I'm totally fine with anything that you record going to the U of R archives.

That's fine.

Ca- Thank you so much.

That's wonderful.

B- All right.

Thank you.

So to help set the scene, may you all say a little bit about your job at Kodak and what the general attitude in Kodak towards LGBT people was like before the network? And anyone can start.

R- Go ahead, Chuck.

Co- Okay.

I'll just start.

Prior to going to Kodak, I was a school teacher.

I taught in Rochester for several years.

And then I had a good friend who was a software engineer who said, you better get into software engineering.

Because that's where the future is at.

So I went to RIT and obtained a degree in computer science in 1985 at age 35.

And Kodak was wonderful and hired me.

I was delighted.

And I joined a software quality assurance group at Kodak.

Really just making sure that the software on their blood analysis equipment was not going to cause any kind of problems.

And then I eventually became a trainer at Kodak because my supervisor recognized me as a teacher, knew that I had a teaching background, and said, we need to start a training group.

And so I initially taught groups of engineers, programming languages, design characteristics for international markets.

Was really an interesting job for a few years.

But then Kodak started outsourcing its educational programming, its training programming.

And I thought, well, I love training, but it looks like engineering training is not in the future at Kodak.

So I joined a human resources training group at that point.

And that was really pivotal in my experience as a gay employee.

Because all of a sudden, instead of focusing on engineering principles and design characteristics,

I was more concerned about human qualities and how was the workforce doing?

And what kinds of skills did the workforce need?

And that was the entire workforce, not just engineers.

So I love that group that I worked with.

We developed all kinds of training programs.

And part of that was humanistic training, training for working in the workplace.

How can you be more effective in the workplace?

And that just really led me directly into Lambda and joining Lambda.

And I got involved as much as possible in the training effort, meeting with managers

about what it was like being gay in the workplace.

But then eventually in the late 90s, I read the writing on the wall that even that kind of training was going away.

It was being outsourced.

And I really wanted to teach.

I mean, that was very clear to me.

So I wanted to go back into education.

So I left Kodak voluntarily in 1997.

Couldn't find a teaching job in the Rochester area.

And I may be getting back to that because I think it was related to my being gay, quite frankly.

So at that point, I decided to return to Iowa, got a teaching job, and the rest is history.

So I would say my experience at Kodak was very positive.

It was after Kodak that I was running into employment issues.

Yeah.

Ca- Thank you.

B- If you need me to repeat the question to Kathryn or David.

K- I didn't hear you. So I don't know what you just said.

B- Oh, sorry.

I asked if you need me to repeat the question for either you or Kathryn.

I can.

R- All right.

Well, I'll jump in here then.

I started at Kodak in 73 as a technician and worked there for 10 years.

And a lot of hands-on work, worked with a small group of men who were responsible for measuring and calibrating measurement machines for the photographic products.

So this was a continuation of Kodak for 100 years.

I just jumped in the last 10.

I did go to night school and eventually left for a couple of years to get an engineering degree and then was rehired.

And I don't know, I enjoyed working, mostly men.

There were some women there.

So it wasn't totally a male environment, but it was a male kind of culture.

But educated people who were nice and considerate and all that.

And I was on a project.

This is how I heard about Lambda.

I'm in a cubicle and I'm typing away at something or another.

And someone comes in that we shared the wall of the cubicle, and he's all upset because

he was with a group who wanted to have a network of employees be created for the veterans. And they got turned down, but he said, and you know what? They're going to have a gay network, but they're not going to have the vet. So I said, wait a minute. That's really interesting. Let me get online and see what's going on. And that's how I found Lambda, just over the wall. And maybe just back up a little bit, Kodak was supporting these different employee networks. I think the first one was Women's Network. I'm not entirely sure, but there were several. Network North Star was the African-American network. So it was supportive, sort of, but we also were reminded that we weren't anything that looked like a union, because Kodak wasn't a union company and apparently didn't want to be. So anyways, I worked there a total of 33 years, and I left. I was invited to leave, as I like to say, but it was kind of a soft landing and not bad. But I would say my process of coming out in the last, well, I don't know, five or plus years, 10 years, the environment was changing. The company knew it had to be more diverse and it started from a very narrow place and it was really doing its best to change the culture. So I guess that's it. I don't know if there's anything else from my working career to toss in here.

Ca- And do you know why the veterans were not allowed to form an employee?

R- Well, eventually they were. And so I don't know what the sticking points were, but yeah,

Ca- So that got worked out.

And yes, and just to clarify one other thing, when you said you went online, did you go on to the like an intranet at Kodak to find out more about Lambda or?

R- David, you may be able to help, but there was an internal network for employees only. Yeah. Yeah. So David can fill in some of the details, I'm sure.

K- I can't remember the name of it, though.

R- I can't either.

Ca- But so even early on, technology was important for, you know, for sharing information and finding out about the group.

All- Yes.

K- Profs.

R- Thank you.

K- Yes. P-R-O-F-S.

R- Well done.

K- Thank you. Just takes a lot longer to get out now.
All right.

R- I don't think there's anything else for this topic to add.

K- So.

I started at Kodak in 1981, got laid off in 1981.

Eighty two, started in 82, laid off in 82, called back in 83 and was banished into retirement when I got 30 years.

So it was a blessing because the people I worked with were super and made sure that I had a full retirement package because I was missing it by 11 days.

So, I mean, they they pulled all the stops to make sure that I had a great retirement.

And so I think my earliest thing is we had a meeting at our house with my partner at the time to talk about a gay network having when the rumor of the woman's network, we thought, why not a gay network?

And so we met at our house and we talked about it.

And then shortly after that, my partner was part of some HR thing and was invited to a conference out in Santa Barbara, I believe.

And we, he could hit a plus one.

So I went out there and we took separate classes so that we weren't together, but we were there. And I happened to be sitting next to a woman named Susan Connolly, who was from Kodak at the time.

And I had no idea who she was.

She had no idea who I was.

And they had a panel out there and they were talking about disabilities and the African-American culture.

And I remember sitting there because I'm really I have no real education other than high school and pseudo associates, but I don't really have the brain to put it all together. So I'm more of a fly by night person.

And. I was just like devastated that if the African-American community was still having these troubles after all these years, where was any hope for us?

Because we had an equal culture that would have to be reeducated and open.

So we came back and well, we went out to dinner with Susan and she said, we're trying to find people who are diverse.

And so we kind of became close.

And my partner and I kind of started this meeting at work.

And it was at the same time that Colorado had passed a law prohibiting gays or something. And we were we were on profs and we were going back and forth and people who had joined our network were reading these things.

And Colorado's like, no, we're not all like that.

So we had to take down our profs account until we sorted out some things.

And then I was the person who would get all the profs emails at the time.

And it was quite quickly discovered that the hate mail was going to be so bad that it should be monitored because I didn't want to have find out about somebody who was really against gays and lesbians.

So I went back to the H.R.

and I said, I don't know that I should be responding to these questions and getting involved with the hate mail part.

So they took the account away from me and started to filter the emails so that H.R. was dealing with the people who were struggling with us.

And I would just go they would forward to me the other email so that I could respond to the people that were being positive and let them know what was going on.

And it was shortly after that that the Elm Grove group was brought in and joined us.

I don't know how that all managed, but I had support of the H.R.

in that Kodak office where I worked.

I know that my partners, he was a supervisor or manager or something, and they were really concerned that he was throwing his career out and didn't know why he would be involved in this. And because he was divorced, he had children.

So, I mean, there was no really clue that he was gay.

So his managers were steering him away.

And then, of course, we broke up and I said I didn't want to be a part of the group because I didn't want to have to participate with him.

And the head of H.R.

at that time said, well, we would rather you stay and let him go away.

So that's how I got so involved with the group.

And for me, it was a wonderful experience.

I never had a real problem with being out.

You know, I never hid it.

Obviously, I didn't say gay and all that, but people figured out that I was gay pretty easily. And then I think the rest is when, you know, when Katherine and Emily and Chuck all became part of the group, it really formed the Lambda Network.

And with all of their expertise, intelligence, interest, energy, we built a group that was award winning.

And I would have to say a leading group for Rochester because we were asked to go to other companies and talk to them.

We were asked to, you know, suddenly all these brown bag lunch meetings or lunch educational opportunities.

We were called to go around and do some of those.

Somebody decided that we should have a manager's event and they were a success.

We can talk about them at different points, I think.

And all in all, again, my experience was wonderful at Kodak as a gay person.

I don't know what else to say.

I do want to point out one thing.

Both Katherine and I were at the very first U of R gay dance.

And so that was before I never knew that.

And she didn't know me.

But so that was like in the early 70s.

R- Very early.

Yes.

K- You know, when they had their first gay dance.

And we both actually were there.

So I don't know, is that enough?

Do you need more?

Do you have?

Ca- I have a couple of follow up questions for you, David.

Was that conference not an out and equal conference, the one in Santa Barbara?

K- No, it was a human resource conference.

And I really couldn't tell you anything more about it other than it was.

It was about this specific conference was about all the different disabilities.

Oh, like I remember seeing this guy up there and he was so normal.

And I thought, now, what could you possibly have that's diverse?

Well, it turned out he was legally blind.

But you couldn't tell just by looking at him and listening to him.

And there were a lot of African, not a lot, but there were several African-Americans.

And people up there talking about the post office, it was a diversity from all sorts of companies.

Ca- Yeah.

K- So I do want to just go back before I and I did forget it, but I'll remember.

And I'll tell you later.

Yeah.

Ca- OK, and one other quick follow up with Susan Connelly in HR at Kodak.

K- You know, she was like a vice president of HR.
She was, I think, if I understand right.
And I could be making this up because my memory is not always there.
But she was brought in specifically to help create the networks.
I don't know if it was all the networks, but she that seemed to be her project because she wasn't like a long term Kodak employee.
She was somebody who was brought in specifically to do something.
And she stayed a while.
Oh, I know.
I want to just say that we became the benchmark for quality networking with everything that we did.
All the other networks kind of stepped up to many of the things that we were doing.
OK.

B- I have one question, quick question for you, David.
You mentioned a group that joined LAMBDA
with Emily in it at one point.
Yes.
The group that joined with you.
Can you tell us a little bit more about that?

K- Well, maybe Kathryn could expand on it.
My understanding was while I was going through this at Kodak office, there was a group in Elm Grove that was also going through a similar you know, how do we do this and stuff?
So listening to you, Emily or Kathryn,
I always thought that there was a group out there doing this same work that we were doing.
But it sounds like you heard about us and then came into the group or sought the group out.
Is that right?

R- Right. And I wasn't involved with the Elm Grove group until we all got together.
You know, and I'm trying to figure out how I met Emily at one of the early meetings at probably Kodak Park.
We had a meeting there and I met her there.
There might, there was less than.
It wasn't a large group, more than 10 people.
And I don't think you were there.

K- We only had one meeting there, and that was in building two.

R- Yeah. OK.

K- And I don't think you were there.

And that was in building two.

Yeah. OK.

So Elm Grove wasn't necessarily the key,
but there was conversations going on about a group
from two different parts of the company.

R- Yeah

K- You have to understand at that time, Kodak was huge.

And it was, you know, 65,000 people in Rochester.

So.

R- All right.

Chuck, were you out at Elm Grove?

Co- What I'm trying to figure out what the time frame is
of all of this happening.

I was at Elm Grove from 85 until the early 90s, mid 90s.

That's right.

That's when it started, because.

Yeah. And I don't recall a conversation at Elm Grove
about forming a network.

K- OK.

Co- I may have been out of the loop at that point.

K- My information is wrong because it was definitely Kathryn
and I assumed they said Elm Grove,
but it was definitely Kathryn that they were referring to
at the time.

So and this was the time frame for me would be 91 to 92.

And then 93, I went on solo.

So.

Co- OK.

K- Anything else?

B- Yeah. Yeah.

So that was all great.

Can you say a little bit more about why you thought creating a network was possible?

Kodak already had two previous networks, and you said it was already interested in creating diversity, curating it in some way.

Was there any more that was happening even outside of Kodak?

K- Yeah, I think if I understand your question, I think when they were doing the networks, they wanted to make sure they had everybody represented. And so maybe the veterans thing was that there are other groups that you would fall into. Originally, but they were doing they had the woman's forum coming out. They had the North Star, which, again, is the African-American. I know that they had a Hispanic network.

R- Yeah. And Native American.

K- And then so we were like the fifth one being brought up coming out at the same time.
So.

Co- And and I think it's important to mention that the greater Rochester community was having more gay visibility with the gay chorus becoming an important aspect of the cultural life in Rochester. I know that the gay religious community was extremely strong in Rochester and was gaining national attention. So when those kinds of events happened, I can't help but think people like Sue Connolly and others at Kodak thought, you know, this is a community we really need to pay attention to.

K- You know, because like I said, when we were in Santa Barbara, she really reached out to me to say, OK, let's talk about this. So I think I honestly think that the company sent the signal it was going to be acceptable to start this network to make it bigger than what we imagined. And by the way, religion, even Bishop Clark hosted a Sunday mass at the Sacred Heart Cathedral for us.

R- Good point, David.
Thank you for bringing that up.

K- Yeah, it was it was nice.
Some of our suppliers called me at work the next day and said,
I saw you on the news.

B- So can you all say a little bit more about the emotions
that accompany the formation of the network
and the support you receive from both the company
and the greater Rochester area?

R- I think it was mixed.
You know, you there.
David got the full front of a lot of the initial reaction,
but it kind of some people were, you know,
I guess even today, some people were more open,
you know, and other people were didn't like the change.
But, you know, when you work with the same group of people,
you can sort of be, you know, do you fully participate
in the conversations and the jokes
and the sharing your home life, you know, in a measured way?
But people do that all the time.
And so if you don't, you know, you're kind of stuck someplace.
You know, what do you do?
Do you make up things?
Do you just you don't have a personal life
or do you openly share in it?
So it's not something initial,
like if you're of a different race and you walk in the room,
you know, that that's revealed immediately.
But over time, it becomes an issue.
And I would say, I don't know,
it was a mixed how people would react.
You know, people kind of like today.

K- I think in the beginning for a gay person,
well, for a person who was involved with this,
it was an exciting time, right?
Because, you know, suddenly you could put your spouse's picture
on your desk or you could talk about your spouse.
So, I mean, this whole thought of bringing this group
to light with the talent in the room was really,

it moved quickly.

I mean, you know, we had our struggles,
we had our moments, but we even we had to learn things.
We had a person that was coming in that was presumably straight,
but was wanting to be more of a woman.
And, you know, our group said no.
Well, originally it's like it was an issue
because no, we're gay and lesbian, we're not transgender.
And so, but that person, I'll never forget this,
made it very clear to me, and he was in HR also,
or she, whichever,
you're the last train leaving the station
and you're not getting out of here without us.
And so that was Pam's whole intention
was we were the group that would help them get out
and get acceptance.
So we quickly included that,
but I don't think we had any members.
And it wasn't until the group was a really solid,
well-recognized group that Pam started to transition at work.
Although there were more, I met several of the people,
but I think that was one of the key things
that our group had to discuss and accept.
And, you know, I think it was a bonus for us.
Now, at the time it was a little hard
because it was like, wait, why our group?
Why our group?
You can belong to any of the other ones,
but we were the group.
All right, all right.

Co-

Another thought that comes to my mind
around the acceptance of gay and lesbian Kodak employees,
the acceptance of our being gay.
Speaking personally, the groups that I worked with,
like my training group at Kodak office
and my training group at Elm Grove, they loved me.
I mean, we had great relationships,
but the unknown factor,
and I think an important unknown factor
were the people who attended the workshops,
the brown bags, what have you, and left quietly.

Were they accepting?
Were they okay with all of this?
They didn't come up to me afterwards and say,
I really enjoyed this session and I learned a lot.
They just left quietly.
And the reason I mentioned that, I was like,
David, you mentioned how it was an exciting time
for all of us who were involved.
I was so excited.
I mean, I was out there.
I was out at Kodak.
I was out in the gay chorus.
I was out in my church.
I was out, out, out.
Well, then when I tried to get a teaching job
in the Rochester area, I will never forget.
I had a teaching job in one of the suburban junior highs.
And my principal came to me one day and said,
if you don't have good Regents exam scores,
when the Regents exams are given to your students,
I can't have you back next year.
And that kind of hit me between the eyes
because I thought it was an excellent teacher
and I didn't understand.
Well, then I later found out that it was kind of rigged
because she went to the teacher,
the teacher who had my students the year before
and made sure that all of his students passed
even though they were failing his course.
So they came to me with a failing grade
even though I didn't know that.
I'm kind of digressing here a little bit,
but she eventually said to me,
I can't have you back next year.
And I said, why is that?
And she said, some of the parents have been complaining.
And I said, well, why am I just hearing about this now?
I'd be glad to meet with them.
No, you wouldn't like to meet with them.
Well, can you at least tell me what their concern is?
You wouldn't want to know.
Very obscure.
Anyway, I was not hired for the next year.

That's when I left eventually to come back to Iowa.
But in retrospect, I must have had parents
who were Kodak employees.
And through the grapevine or through one of my sessions,
they found out that I was gay
and did not want their youngsters
to be taught by a gay teacher.
So particularly one who was effective,
a role model for young people.
So long story short,
we have wonderful notions of what we do
within the Kodak boundary.
But we need to realize that when we leave Kodak,
there's a greater world.
And we can be affected in ways that we don't even imagine.
Right.
Yeah.
Yeah.

Ko- Well, and to just go off on that,
we were blessed because we went to New York
for the Gay Games
and we met all these other networks
that were forming around the country.
And so you're right,
we had created an environment
that we were really safe in.

Co- Yeah.

K-
Evidently, as long as we were at Kodak
or AT&T or Bosch,
all the other ones that were there.
So that's a very good point.
I never thought of that.
And because I didn't leave,
I didn't realize that.

Co-
Yeah.

B- And Chuck, I just have a quick follow-up question for you.

Was that, I don't know the exact date,
but I know the city eventually approved
an anti-discrimination ordinance
in student sexual orientation.
Do you know if that was before or after?

Co- I can't recall.
I can't recall.
I'm sure that if the city of Rochester enacted that,
this particular suburban community would not.
I think it was a fairly conservative community.
Yeah.

B- Thank you.
Hmm.

Ca- So one thing I've heard in some other interviews
that maybe relates to what Chuck was just saying too,
is that more people who joined the Lambda Network
were in like, for lack of a better word,
white collar jobs at Kodak.
And fewer people on the shop floor were involved.
Could you say a little bit more about what you perceive
to be the kind of class and educational dynamic?

K- Well, I would just say really quickly
to maybe get the conversation going.
That's probably a true statement.
But I think in order,
I would say the reason was
we have more flexible in our scheduling.
If you were in production or if you were in a line,
you really couldn't take an hour or two hours
to go travel somewhere and come back.
I do know, I mean, I think of Jim Shaw.
I mean, he had a more of an on-hands job.
And he was able to participate.
And people who could talk to their group
could probably get away occasionally.
But I'm guessing that it's mostly
because our schedules allowed it.
You know, if he had a desk and a phone,
you could always call in and listen.

You know, I just think it was more convenient for us than if you were, you know, if I was back on the packaging film, I don't know that they would have let me leave or go somewhere and participate. So.

R- Well, and yet, let me, I can think of some individuals who had these sales jobs or hourly jobs. And like you described, David, you know, their flexibility was a lot less. But also you had to be willing to be out to go talk to your boss to say, hey, by the way, I'd like to attend something that's going on in a different building. So I can remember people contacting us who not only didn't have the flexibility, but they weren't willing to be out, but they wanted to have the connection. So some of the, you know, I, anyways, so that's how it worked, or talk about their work situation and why, you know, they weren't getting supported. So, all right, but it wasn't, it was internal within the Kodak network. It wasn't things that were shared. Okay. So they were looking, but they saw the network as a source of support, even though they weren't going to be out themselves yet. Yes, definitely. Yep, there were, yes.

B- And y'all had a few, there were a few initiatives to reach out to the shop for, right? It was like a shop for outreach projects. Did that happen during your time with Landa?

R- I can remember a few brown bag sessions where, well, let's say a department may have a, and I don't know what they called them,

but a group of people that wanted to be
kind of like a subset of the diversity,
you know, so for example,
we went to one where it was a machining area.
And so they had some people who self-selected
some African-American,
a woman who worked on the machining floor.
So we would get invited to those.
So those are sort of like the brown bag
that we're talking about.
And so they would invite the different networks
to come and talk to them.
So that was sort of an internal department arrangement.
So we did a few of those.

K- Yeah, I remember,
I just have two things I want to make sure I tell you about,
just so that it's part of this history here.
I remember going to one,
and it must've been a forced,
you were required to take this training
and to sit in on this.
And I can remember sitting in a little panel
in this conference room,
and this guy sitting like right away from the stage
or this little platform we were on.
As we talked about being gay,
and, you know, we tried to put out statistics,
like, you know, that pedophiles are not necessarily gay.
As a matter of fact, I don't remember the number,
but there's a percentage
that would show a high percentage of them are not gay,
but they just like children.
And I can remember to this day,
this guy sitting there and his face was so red,
I thought he was going to explode.
And I really felt bad for him
because he didn't want to be there.
It obviously was a touchy subject for him.
And I don't know that it was healthy for him,
but most of the time, the reaction was wonderful, okay?
And I want to go back to early in the formation.
This one guy worked in a manufacturing area,

and for Valentine's Day,
he gave all his male coworkers roses for Valentine's,
and they were furious.
And he just thought, well, I love them.
And I remember HR calling me and saying,
do you know so-and-so?
And I said, yeah, I do.
You know, we're not friends, we're acquaintances.
And so they told me what was going on,
and they asked me if over the weekend,
I could talk to him and help him understand
why this was not well-received.
So, I mean, there were things always going on
that we either knew about or didn't know about.
But this was one example of a gay person
just trying to be nice.
And I'm on the other side.
I remember a guy from work who knew I was gay,
and we always joked and laughed.
And he brought flowers in, and he gave them for Valentine's.
He gave them to all the women,
and he's come to me and he said,
I'm sorry, I just can't give you a flower.
And I'm like, it's okay, it doesn't bother me.
So, I mean, those are the different things
that were going on, I think, behind, so.
But the other thing I want to make sure we talk about,
and that is our annual meetings,
events, our Lambda events.
One of the things that the group had thought of smartly
was we would go and talk to our managers.
But we would go in groups of two
so that there was somebody.
We would give them a pre-program
so they understood what was going to be discussed.
And I really struggled because I had a,
my bosses were good, but this one manager was just like,
and so my approach was,
it was very hard for me to go talk to him.
And so I just went and I said,
I'm here because we're doing this event,
and I didn't want someone to say,
why wasn't my manager there?

And I said, I was too afraid to ask him.
So I'm here asking you, blah, blah, blah, blah,
to come to our group.
And in true form, he said,
well, I have a dentist appointment at that time.
I said, oh, that's fine.
I just want to make sure you were invited
and you can make your own decision.
But I had other bosses that were a piece of cake.
You'd go and talk and then of course I'm going to go there.
And we had another organization that,
you're all too young to know,
AIDS Rochester event every year.
And we would post on the pros,
looking for volunteers.
And I had a supervisor who,
her and her boyfriend at the time,
they came and they volunteered to help out.
I mean, we really provided, in my opinion,
a welcoming professional group.
I mean, I would say that half the people
that worked with Lambda were straight.
And they were just there maybe because their child was gay
or because they really are convinced
that this thought needed to be there.
So our events were well attended.
They were.

R- And I would say we had more than our fair share
of HR individuals, which was good,
but they were definitely interested in participating.
You know, it reminds me of something else, David.
When we did our first event at the Burgundy Basin
and it was, we didn't have much resources
to actually pull this off.
So anyways, it worked out.
But what was, I think it's still amusing.
George Fisher was newly appointed the CEO
and he brought his wife, Ann Fisher.
And so we're in a room that's not that big.
And so I remember the managers from top down,
they were all over at the bar.
The whole room was divided

and they're at the bar drinking.
And the rest of us were over
on the other side of the room.
And so anyways, that was the first one,
but we learned a lesson from that.
So when we did do some of these meetings
with the managers to fill them in
on what we were going to do at this event,
like you said, and two of us would come.
But we would also offer to say,
would you like an escort?
And some of them said yes, which was great
because then we could go around
and introduce them to people
that maybe they wouldn't know how to approach
or we would have that connection.
This is Tom who works in this.
So that was, I think, very valuable.
So some managers were fine.
They knew how to work a room,
but other ones really appreciated
the offer to have an escort.

K- Yeah, we helped them
get through an uncomfortable situation.
If it's your first time dealing with gay people
or being out, maybe some of them
were gay themselves
and they didn't want people to know.
I mean, there was all these closets
that we opened doors to.
So yeah, we allowed people to open the doors.
We did not open the doors.

R- Well said, David, right.

K- Yeah, I did a phone interview once
when I kind of was involved
with the gay pride festivals
and all that also.
And somebody said about struggling
when you talk to people
and forcing them to talk about gay issues,

that this is what we were doing and it's good.
And I said, no, I think we're giving them
the opportunity to talk about it.
And it really was always Lambda's view
of helping people,
not trying to accuse people
who are throwing a party at them.
I learned so much.

Co- I'm just sitting here.
I have to say, David and Kathryn,
I'm sitting here so appreciative
of your leadership
through the steering committee process.
And then when Lambda was actually formed
and the way you handled situations
is just beautiful.
And I'm very appreciative of that.

K- Well, I'll throw my credit to Kathryn.
I think that was a little pain in the knee
because I wasn't as smooth.
But I think thanks to Kathryn and Emily,
the group really became
a polished professional group.
I'm a lot more mature today than I was back then.

R- We all are.

K- You know, it was harder for me
to move as quickly as the group is moving.
But thanks to Kathryn and Emily,
I mean, it became a, again,
I got goose bumps.
It was an award winning group in my opinion.

R- It was, yes.
Part of it was since there were other groups
that had formed,
particularly the Women's Network
and Network North Star,
which was the African-American.
And then the American Indian Network

formed a little later.
But what we were watching is
there were managers who would brag
about supporting these different networks.
Well, they weren't bragging about supporting ours.
So I think that was the impetus
to do a management event,
we called it, educational event.
And so as much as we were progressive,
we also kind of watched
what was going on around us
and said, we need to clean some of this up.
Yeah. Like for example,
we, every management event had vignettes.
And so to kind of show
what life is like for gay people,
you know, and they were very, very successful.
And I think that they would walk away
feeling like now I get it.

R- That's what, yes. Yep.

K- Yeah.
And you'll probably see them
in some of the videos, actually.
I forgot you had the management events.

Ca- Such a creative approach.
Kathryn, just to backtrack just for a sec.
So were there a lot of interaction
between the different employee networks?
And were there people that belonged to both?
Like, were there lesbian women
that belonged to both Lambda
and the Women's Network?
Or were there African-Americans
that belonged to your group,
but also the North Star?

R- Some. Probably more crossover
with the Women's Network.
But, you know, I attended a few meetings
for the network North Star

and discussed some ideas.
I don't recall actually
getting involved in a project,
but yes, so.

K- We supported them.

R- We certainly did. Yes, I think that's right

K- And vice versa, I think.

R- That's right.
Yep.

K- And, you know, one of the things Lambda did
was they brought out an equal
to Rochester, right?
And hosted this very successful conference.
You know, we were very lucky
to have Kodak support,
the Lambda Network and Galaxy,
the other networks.
That was, I chaired it,
so I think it's a Lambda event, sorry.

R- Yeah.

B- Speaking of Galaxy,
what was your relationship with them?
Did you all know about them before starting?
Because they existed a little bit
before Lambda, right?

K- Oh, Galaxy?

B- Yeah.

K- Possibly.
I kind of think that we
came out of the womb
very close to each other
and grew from the energy
from the other side.

I could be wrong
because I don't really know.
I don't remember that much about Galaxy
other than the people.
And I know that our lives
were so intermingled with some of them.
That we really,
I think our success
is also a tribute to the synergies
that we shared together
as we tried to come out.
We hosted a Christmas formal
joint between Galaxy and Lambda
at the Eastman House.
And that was, I mean,
I can still remember the very first one
and people just coming in
and overwhelmed that here we are.
You know, and another event
that always makes me glad
is when Kodak gave us
domestic partner benefits
without us asking.
Elizabeth Birch asked for us,
but we never asked.
And the day that Kodak accepted
or offered them,
we quickly sent out a note
and we all met at the Eastman House
and had champagne
and toasted Kodak
for being such a good company.
And it was cold.
I remember that.
But, you know,
that was the camaraderie
that we had, I think.

R- And, you know, I think one other thing
is once we were visible,
other peaceful allies
wanted to engage.
And I do think

the domestic partner benefits
came out of that.
So that, you know,
we were the group,
but there were other people
who were saying,
yeah, we can help
and we can make this happen.

Ca- And was Elizabeth Birch
in Human Resources or?

R- She was head of HRC at the time.
And she was our first speaker.
So she came and spoke
at our first event,
the one that I described
at the Burgundy Basin,
where all the managers
were at the bar
and we were at the other
side of the room.

Ca - And what was Burgundy Basin?
Was that a restaurant
at the time or?

K- A party house.

R- A party house.
You could rent it,
you know, for events.

K- Yeah, they did weddings
and conferences and.
Yeah.

R- But it wasn't one
of our top tier places.
We just

K- could afford it

R- thought
we could afford it.

Ca- For the first one.

K- And it was interesting
when when when you think
about that, too,
because it's where
being ahead of its time,
you can imagine
what the waitstaff was thinking.
Some were probably very happy,
you know, and others
were probably like,
oh, man, they're all gay.

R- Yeah, that's right.
But people would, allies would show up
that that was one of the things
that always amazed me.
That we want to help.
What can we do?
Or I have an idea.

K- And they participated.
I remember in the year
that we did the
one of us is this
two of us are this
three of us are that we had
we had straight people
talking about it.
You know, I don't know
if you've watched the videos,
but it should be in there.
And so like I would say
one of us is Jewish
and then somebody else would say
three of us are Christian
or, you know, whatever.
And then you'd hit them with
four of us have,

four of us have tried
to commit suicide.
And then you pause.
And what we sent out surveys
and we just had people,
you know, answer the questions.
And then we took those questions
and made this little
vignette out of them,
you know, and try to show people
how we were alike
and how we were different,
how we had good times,
how we had bad times,
you know.
They would part.
I remember a couple
people who participated
in the actual presentation
who were straight.
They were just allies
and they were happy
to be a part of the group.

B- Was emotional involvement
like a large part of Lambda's function and educating of Kodak and other employee networks?

R- Well, definitely education.
I don't know.
Emotional.

B- I guess I mean, like getting
getting people to empathize
with the LGBT experience
who weren't.
You had a very large support
from allies
and straight people.

Co- I might just interject.
I while I was a Kodak
in my training capacity,
I was also involved

with a group called
the National Coalition
Building Institute in CBI.
And we would do workshops
regularly with a variety
of different groups
trying to break down walls
between African-Americans
and whites and gay
and straight people
and men and women
and you name it.
Any kind of wall
that was between people.
And part of that was
there was an emotional element
where we would have people.
We would have the group
break into caucuses.
And you had to join a caucus
that you belong to.
So there may be a caucus
of straight men, for example.
Or there may be a black caucus
or there be a gay lesbian caucus
or whatever the caucus is.
A Jewish caucus, whatever.
And we would talk as a caucus
about our issues,
things that we wanted
the rest of the group
to learn about and know about.
And then we come back together
in the large group
and have some speak outs
where members of the caucus
would speak out
in a very authoritative way
about what's going on
with our group.
You know, this is what
we're facing in society.
And those became very emotional.

And the reason I mentioned NCBI
is I think NCBI
did workshops for Kodak.
So we might have
a group of Kodak managers
from a certain division
or a certain department
in a workshop like that.
And I think some of that emotion,
some of that speak out,
some of that eked its way
into our educational events.
Not that we would be,
you know, word for word
like NCBI,
but you can't help,
at least I couldn't help,
but bring some of that ethos
into our Kodak
educational experience.
So to that degree,
there was some emotionality.
And then David mentioned
the red face man.
I mean, there's certainly
emotion there.
But I just mentioned that
when you ask about
an emotional element.

B- Yeah.

Ca- Yeah, that's really interesting.
Were there other sources
of inspiration
that you had for social change?
Or, you know,
it sounds like you had
a lot of education
in terms of methods of teaching,
you know, through your background, Chuck.
Was anybody else,
you know, inspired

by other social movements
or, you know,
were you participating
in other groups
outside of Kodak Lambda?

Co- Well, I would just mention
one other group.

And that is,
I belong to a church
in Rochester,
downtown Presbyterian,
that really was very
involved in ordaining
LGBT pastors
as being something
that the Presbyterian church
needed to embrace.

And we hired,
our congregation hired
an out lesbian
to be an evangelist
to go around the country
and speak on behalf
of LGBT seminarians
who wanted to be ordained
and to meet with them
and support them.

Her name is Janie Spahr.
She comes out of California.
And she inspired me
and I know a lot of others
in her way of meeting people,
her way of teaching people,
her way of speaking,
very inspirational.

So that would be
another source of inspiration
that I would mention.

One other thing
that I'm thinking about
is, Tamar,
have you heard about

the Can We Talk workshops?

Ca- We did.

R- Okay.

Ca- Emily described them
a bit to us,
but would love to hear
your thoughts about them as well.

R- Okay. Well,
Emily was my partner
in crime on this one.
So we,
the idea was that
we didn't want to preach
or tell people
what to think,
but we did want to expose them.
So the Can We Talk workshop
was designed
to have two groups,
a fishbowl kind of,
we didn't invent the model,
but it really applied well.
You'd have a group,
let's say managers
in a department.
And some of them
were first line supervisors,
but they would be
a cohesive group.
And then the Lambda members
would be the other group.
And I forget how we started,
but I think,
well, we did start
with the Lambda group.
So there'd be questions.
And the facilitator
might have up
to a dozen questions to ask.

And, you know,
depending upon
how the conversation went,
they'd pick and choose or,
you know,
and then there'd be
a facilitator for,
let's say the management group.
So we'd start with the gay group
and they talk amongst themselves
about how they felt about issues.
Or I remember the one
where Chuck Campanetta
talked about going,
shopping for a mattress
with his then partner
and how awkward that got to be
with whoever was helping them out.
But that kind of stopped.
So kind of stories
of personal whatever.
And then we'd break for
either a sandwich break
or something.
And then the groups would flip.
So the management team
would be sitting
in the outside circle,
quiet, just listening.
And then we reverse the roles
and then they would be in talking
and they would have opportunities
to share things they heard
with the other group.
But the idea was to just
talk amongst yourselves
around what you heard,
what's important.
And I thought those
were well-received
and really helped
with the learning
in a non-confrontational way

that was going on.

So that was the idea.

Right.

In fact, I think the Women's Network
did the first fishbowl, by the way.

But anyhow, it just worked
out really well.

Ca- David, you mentioned AIDS Rochester
and how you recruited volunteers
at Kodak for one of their events.

Can you say a little bit more
about how the HIV-AIDS epidemic
affected Kodak Lambda
or what your experience
of living through that time was?

K- Well, I was kind of naive
through the whole time, actually.

And it probably wasn't
until the quilt started
to tour the country
that I realized and really had
a sadness about it.

OK, I mean, I had heard
of people who had died,
but I really wasn't close
to people who died.

And the few people
that I found out later
who had died,

I had assumed they moved away.

And I remember this one guy, Peter.

I worked with him as a waiter
and I'm like,

I just never saw him anymore.

And then later I found out
that he had died.

And I was like, wow,
you know, I didn't even know
he was sick.

And because back then
you didn't want to tell anybody.

And so I didn't know.
I just wasn't in tune.
I mean, I was aware
I don't know, I just I never.
For me, it wasn't until much later
that I even became
concerned about it.
You know, I mean.
My behavior didn't put me
in the situations
that I had to worry about it.
And because people
didn't talk about it openly,
I only occasionally heard
of somebody who died.
So sadly, I just didn't
have a pulse on that.
So I don't know,
maybe somebody else does, but.

Ca- Was HIV AIDS a topic
that you ever tried
to educate other people
at Kodak about?
Like, did that come come up
in any of the sessions
with management or,
you know, for example,
like if Kodak's health care plans,
you know, provided coverage
for adequate treatment,
things like that.

K- I'm unaware of it,
but I have to say
there's a big time difference, right?
The AIDS crisis kind of
blossomed in the 80s
and we didn't blossom
until the 90s.
So by that time,
I think Ronald Reagan
had already said the words

and that, you know,
people were starting
to put money into it
and recognize that it was
needed to find a cure.
And so, and I could be
totally off base,
but I think because
they were so far apart,
it was not the issue,
an issue we had to deal with.
I mean, if anybody else.

R- No, I don't recall.

K- Yeah.
And I spent my free time
having a good time.
I was involved with
the group called Fruits and Suits
that turned into BeGurgleBot.
And, you know,
I was instrumental
in getting the picnic
turned into a week-long celebration.
And so I tend to have
my social focuses
because of what I've learned
at Kodak, at Lambda,
to try to make change
in the community.
And the holiday events
were always well attended.
So.

R- Yeah, we need some more
of that lately.
Everything has been in neutral.
It's really.
Yeah.

K- It's very slow where I live.

R- It's what?

K- Slow.

R- Slow.

Yeah.

K- Although there's a lot of
gay people in this area,
there's no place
that everybody meets,
although there's people
working on it.
And I was in at the beginning
and I thought,
I don't want to do this again.
But I told them
I was the nosy neighbor.
I just wanted to see
what they were about.
And so.

R- No, I think you should.
Everybody,
every group needs a leader,
you know, and it's hard to get.
Anyways, I'd encourage you
to reconsider, David.

K- Yeah, we'll see.
All right.
I'm married now.
I have other responsibilities.

R- Yeah, all right.

B- What are your proudest moments
or a proudest moment?
Just a proud moment
with the network.
A very empowered, or very empowering moment.

R- Well, for me,

pulling off that first
management event,
I think making that happen
and it went well.

K- You made everyone proud.
You really did.

Co- Yeah.

K- Well, I mean, it gave us
it gave us life.
Suddenly the world could see us.

R- It's true.
And again, we had allies
in the right places
to help support us.
Think conversations
that we never even knew about,
but they were going on
behind the scenes.
I'm convinced.
I don't know,
but I'm convinced
a lot of that happened.

K- And I would have to just say
it became something that
people actually looked forward to
was going to the management event.
You know,
when you think of
the numbers of people
that went there
and kind of how hard
it was to get us there,
we weren't sure
anyone would show up.
And suddenly.

R- Right.

K- You know, people were waiting for our next one.

R- Yeah.

Yeah, we definitely got a good reputation.

K- Yeah.

As I look back,
I would say what makes me happiest or proudest is the fact that we did include everyone on our train.
Because I know the person that Pam has a much happier life.
And, you know, she helped establish Lambda and she helped us move and grow to being closer.
And today, when you look around and I can't even tell you how many letters are in the LGBTQ plus.
But it just, no, it just makes me glad and proud that we were the drivers of a train and we got to where the world is looking at it today, you know, as opposed to just gays and lesbians or just men or women.
I mean, you know, I really think that the moment we're proud of is just the relationships that we we provided a place to for them to mature.
I guess.

R- Well, and David,

you mentioned the out
and equal conference in Rochester.
I think Kodak was
used as a good example
for other large corporations.
And there was a connection
Rochester.
Look what they're doing.

Ko- Yeah, I didn't.
We didn't even mention this,
but I kind of did
for the first time
that we were a network
as the Gay Games appeared
and we got Kodak to donate cameras
and we took them to the Gay Games.
And, you know,
they have all these vendor booths
where you could go get
information and all that.
And we had all these
single use cameras
and we put a questionnaire together
and we had to bring them back.
And I don't really know
if it was successful
and proved anything,
but we had a great time
being able to say,
oh, yeah, have one of our cameras,
have one of our cameras,
you know, and I think
we had a couple of hundred of them
and they were gone in no time.
So there are a lot of moments
that a lot of Kodak moments
that we were able to enjoy
and personally feel good about.
There was TV shows
we thought we went on.
I know I got interviewed
with Charlotte Clark,

I think her name is,
on a Sunday morning
about the Lambda Network.
Emily, I think, arranged that.
No, she gave me the video.
She made me a video of it or something.
I don't know, what else?
It was a fun time in my life.
I probably learned more
in those years
than I learned in all of my education,
you know,
because I had to pay attention, maybe.

Ca- Can you say a little bit
about how the racial dynamics
were within Kodak Lambda
and if they were similar or different
from the dynamics within Kodak
and maybe Rochester in general?

K- I'm not sure I understand the question,
so one of you two.

Ca- How would you describe the,
maybe to rephrase,
how would you describe
the participation of people of color
in the group?
Or was it mostly white people
that belonged to the group?
Or what was that like?

Co- I would just have to say
you'd have to look at the breakdown
of the Kodak employee base,
you know,
were there that many people of color
working for Kodak at the time?
That's my interjection.

R- Go ahead.
We had several Hispanic men.

Right, right.
Okay, that was,
but yeah, not black people
of either gender,
I recall.

K- Yeah, I don't recall any of them,
any African Americans.

R- And it may be Chuck's point
about just the demographics
of the whole employee base,
but also they also had another choice,
they could be part of Network North Star.
And I don't know.

K- Yeah, and back then,
you know, much like the Hispanic community,
it was very difficult for them to come out.
You know, I mean,
black parents were not as loving as my parents.
Well, my mother was.
And so, you know,
there's probably something
that you didn't want to be out
because of family reactions.
I mean, I know Emilio
had a horrible reaction, you know.
So some of that,
if it could have been a part of it,
it could have been a part of the white culture.
I mean, we weren't,
I don't think,
I can say this for myself,
I was not as understanding
and accepting of diversity
for the first 30 years of my life
as I was for the next 40.
You know, again,
I learned so much along the way.

R- And how old are you again?
No, nevermind.

K- I'll be 70 on my next birthday.

R- Me too.

All right.

Going back,

one thing that just popped in my head,
we did one of these lunch brown bag sessions
and Jameiman,

I don't know if I should be
throwing out names like this,
but anyways,
because they're not here.

But one of the people
who was at our panel
and was talking to a group,
a diverse group from a department,
like we talked about earlier.

And one of our panelists,
Jim said,

you know, I was very worried
about coming out to my family.

I was afraid that they were gonna,
you know, disown me.

And after we were done
and we're getting ready to leave,
a black man came up,
talked to Jim and he said,
I can't believe that.

I mean, he was so stunned and shocked
about the possibility of losing your family.

And it was such a strong reaction.

It really stayed with me.

And so I don't know
if that was another layer of,
you know, if you were out as a black person,
how that went back and forth
with your worries about,
you know, what you were risking.

K- Yeah.

Okay.

Ca- Yeah.

Absolutely.

I think it sounds to me too,
from what you said, Chuck,
that it was maybe just reflected
broader patterns in terms of not just Kodak,
but also Rochester in general,
in terms of frankly segregated,
you know, largely racially segregated communities.

R- Very true.

B- Did Kodak's bankruptcy,
filing for bankruptcy,
did it affect LGBT people
or LMAC in a disproportionate way?
In general, what were the effects of that?

R- I would say by the time Kodak
was filed for bankruptcy,
the networks were really on their way out.
Just the volume of employees.
The last network was the Women's Network.
And they're gone now too.
I don't know if they're,
and I don't have contact
with anything internal.
Like maybe there's a general diversity network.
I have no idea.

K- Although the Lambda Network
does have a site, a Facebook.

R- Yes.

K- The Lambda Network,
so it still posts articles
for people who were part of the group.
So it lives in memory.

B- Do you know why the networks
were phasing out around that time?

K- Well, I think what Kathryn said

was everybody was leaving.
I mean, as people left the company,
you could not remain a member of the group.
And so people were laid off.
The company divided into two
when it went to Carestream and Kodak.
So I don't think people were targeted
because they were gay to be let go
or to be pushed out
or banished into retirement, as I say.

R- Right.
I agree.

K- It was just the numbers weren't there.
And people weren't thinking
about building a career anymore,
especially what's going to happen
in the company and my job.

Ca- What would you like,
maybe especially young people,
but really anybody,
what would you like them to know
about the history of Kodak Lambda?

R- I think it was the right organization
for the time.
We're in a different place now.
People can get married
and we have people
in elected office that are out.
I mean, it's a very different time.

K- And not trying to boast,
but I would say that
the networks in general,
not just Lambda,
but Galaxy and the AT&T
and all of those
really built a foundation
for the future
because so many people,

I remember like
they couldn't imagine being out
or they were so,
they could feel they could come out
because of all of the conversations
that happened,
you know, as we were in the newspaper
or those types of things.
But I do want to remind people
that Rochester was very progressive
with gay and lesbian people,
even though it was informal.
I mean, I remember my mother
and father coming home
and I happen to have two gay uncles,
which I didn't know about until later.
And they would always go to Bullwinkle's
because it was a place
that gay people would go.
So they would all meet at Bullwinkle's
and they would just have a gay old time,
you know, and that was in the 40s.
So it's not like
we had to start from scratch
like if we were in Iran,
right, where you might have to build
and convince everybody.
There was always an acceptance,
underlying acceptance.
You know, there were gay bars
in the 50s and 60s and 70s
before all of this came out.
So people,
we weren't unfamiliar,
but I think making us a household name
is one of the things that we helped do.
We built the foundation for that.
Yeah.

Co- And the other thing that comes to mind,
and David kind of hinted at this
when he talked about the gay games
and Kodak Lambda handing out cameras

to participants.

I think Kodak became aware of
the LGBT market.

And so Kodak corporate
really wanted acceptance
in the larger gay community in America.

And so I think that
created some
impetus for Lambda to do its work.

I mean, not that that was
the basis for Lambda.

I don't want to imply that,
but it's something that needs to be considered,
I think, in the grand scope of things.

Ca- It became good business for Kodak.

Co- Yeah.

R- It wasn't, it was the right thing to do,
but it was also good business.

K- And while I don't want to get into the details,
in case you haven't heard them,
but we were fortunate to have a company leader
who had a lesbian daughter.
So we didn't have to convince that person
that we had of who we were,
because he already knew.

R- Kind of like your uncles, David.
So you're...

K- Right.
My uncles, my cousin, my cousin's son, you know.

R- Yeah.

Ca- Personal relationships are important.
Yeah. Sure.

B- I guess, is there anything that we haven't
asked about that's on your minds and you'd like to share with anyone who will see this.

About Lambda or about Rochester's community and Kodak.

K- It was a fun time.

The 70s, 80s, 90s were a fun time in Rochester.

Co- Yeah.

R- Yeah.

And I would say, initially, it took a while
to sort of gel as a group.

There were some people who showed up,
who thought that domestic partnership had to be demanded.
You know, we had to make that happen.

I'm trying to think of some other issues,
but it took a while to say, this is who we are,
and this is what we're going to do
and how we're going to do it.

And some people decided that it wasn't for them
and left, and that was okay.

So, I don't know.

I just remember those early meetings
trying to sort all this out.

Ca- So, Kathryn, can I ask a follow-up?

Do you mean that they wanted the group to be more assertive
when they wanted you to demand things?

R- Yes, and we decided as a group not to do that.

We will just share who we are and you can listen
and hopefully that makes an impact, a positive impact.

K- We were definitely educational.

We never had any requests or any demands.

Yeah.

One of the funny things that happened
was when we first went live on Profs,
the conversation around unions,
meaning between two people of the same sex,
got us shut down because they were afraid
we were talking about unions.

And so, we had to explain to them that,
no, this is a gay term for getting married.

I remember that.

R- Right.

David, you were really in the trenches there, or the front line there.

K- Yeah.

And about Rochester also,
and of course, I can't remember her name now,
but even the leadership in Rochester was gay
in the 60s and 70s.

And Tim Maines, for example,
and there was a woman, I thought,
Tim Maines, for example,
and there was a woman and I thought of her name
and when I went to write it down, I forgot.

Do you remember who she was?

She ended up going out to California.

She was on the governor's council.

Oh, my gosh.

She was a lesbian.

She probably still is.

A lesbian and Mitch Costanza.

R- Oh, Mitch Costanza.

Yes.

K- Yeah.

Told you it takes a little longer.

R- Her brother still runs the sausage shop over in Williamson.

K- Oh, really?

R- I drive by every once in a while.

Ca- Do you think that the approach of emphasizing education
rather than making demands,
was that based in Kodak's corporate culture?

R- Yeah.

I don't know if it's a corporate,
but we just felt that was really,
had to be our way of presenting ourselves.

K- I don't think we would have been able to allow,

we wouldn't be allowed to exist
if we were coming with a list of demands.
I think the success of all the networks
where they were there to provide education,
answer questions, open doors, change minds.

CA- I think it's really interesting
because I know that earlier,
Saul Alinsky had worked with a group of African-Americans
after the 1964 racial uprising in a group called Fight.
They did come with a list of demands
for both Kodak and Xerox to try to diversify,
to hire more African-Americans specifically
to work at both corporations.
It really didn't go anywhere.
They didn't get a lot of traction.
It's interesting to think about
different organizational strategies, different methods.

K- Well, Hay was more accepted in the 60s, right?

Ca- Right. It was also a different time, for sure.
Passage of time, but I do think there's something
kind of enduring about Kodak's corporate culture.
It seems like that kind of was reproduced over time
in terms of people's experiences of working for the company
and the sense of camaraderie,
but also not challenging too much.

K- Yeah. Go ahead, Kathryn.
I know you want to say something.

R- Well, when I first got hired in 73,
I worked with this group and one of the men was Italian.
And he talked about it was very hard
for Italians to get a job at Kodak.
So Kodak had its own process of evolving as well.
And there is a clear difference when you're gay.
You may not know right away.
I think usually people figure things out over time,
but it's not the barrier to getting a job
or getting a mortgage in a certain neighborhood.
That to me, so I can understand that a need to demand

for the African-Americans versus...
We needed a different approach to be successful.

K- Yeah, because we were there.

R- We were already there.
Right.

K- Yeah.

R- Or they kind of knew, but they didn't know with a capital K.

K- Right.

R- All right.

Ca- You have to acknowledge.

R- Right.
Right.

K- But we also didn't speak about it as freely as we do today either.

R- Yes.

Ca- Do you have any pictures of Pride marches
that were Kodak Lambda employees participated?
Like, did you build floats for the marches?

K- Yeah.
Yeah, there was a couple.
I don't have it.
After the second time I moved, I just threw it all out.
Or it's in a box in the loft and I don't realize it.

Ca- Does anybody do...
Chuck or Kevin, do you have any photos from that time?

R- No.

Co- The only memento I have is my favorite...
Oh, very nice.
My favorite sweatshirt to wear when Iowa weather turns cool.

Ca- Nice.

K- Yeah, how about our plush shirts?

Co- Yes.

R- Yeah.

K- I still have a gurgle buff shirt and I just love to wear it.

And I love that it still fits from time to time.

Yeah.

You know, if you wanted to ask somebody,

David Frischkorn would probably be the type of person

that's like Emily that somewhere has a tucked away.

I don't know if you've made contact with him.

He was with the Galaxy Group.

R- It's Xerox.

K- He was, yeah.

He's retired now also.

I can send you some information to contact him if you'd like.

Ca- That would be great, yeah.

And his last name is Frischkorn?

K- Frischkorn.

F-R-I-S-H-K-O-R-N.

Ca- Frischkorn. Okay, thank you.

Co- And have you asked Dan Sapper if he has any?

Dan might be one.

R- Dan's in the loop, yes.

Have you talked to Dan?

K- They mentioned earlier that they have gotten stuff from Dan.

R- Yeah.

Ca- And he did give us some photos, but I don't think we found any of Pride yet.

So we were just curious.

K- I have a box full of photos in the garage,
and I can move the surfboard and go check them out.
It's my husband's surfboard because there's no way I could stand up straight.
I will look and see if I have some.

R- All right.

Co- Another source might be,
and I don't know what their current name is with the Gay Alliance, have you asked?

R- They're called the Out Alliance now, and they're struggling.
So I'm not sure who, I don't know if they would.

Ca- Evelyn Bailey actually helped put me in touch with Dan.
So Evelyn Bailey.

R- Evelyn knows half the city.
She is the perfect person to talk to.

Ca- Right.
And she's still involved with the Out Alliance.
And she did get in touch with Dan and Emily.
So yeah, but I think she probably,
she may also have some additional materials at her own house.
So I can check back with Evelyn too.

R- All right.
And I'll take a look because one of my lists of to-dos is to tackle the photographs in my life.
Because I got family and we got my own personal.
So there might be something in there.

Ca- It just sounds like your events were so,
you kept using the word fun and really vibrant.
And I'd just love to, what did it look like at the George Eastman house
when you had your winter formal with Galaxy?

K- Everybody was all dressed up.
Well, not everybody, but most people came all dressed up.

R- All right.
Yeah.

But pictures would be great.
I can talk about, yeah.

Ca- Right.
So there had to be, I know that people were taking pictures, most likely.

K- I might have a couple.
I'll have to check.

R- At least a couple.

K- I just suddenly had this visual blur of this box of photographs underneath in the garage.
So I'll go look.

Ca- Thank you so much for your time and for being willing to share your memories.
And it would be great.
Yeah.
If you do find photos, would love that.

B- Thank you so much.

K- If I can be of any more help, you've got my name and number.

R- Yep.

Ca- Super.
Yeah.
We may follow up and we will send you a draft.
So Caden is working on a website, a web-based exhibit, and I'll be writing something.
But his will be done sooner and we'll share that with you.
And before anything goes live to the public, we'll share it with you.
And if you have any feedback or want any changes, we'll be happy to make those changes.

K- So just for, are you doing all of Rochester gay life history or basically networks?

B- We're just focusing on the Lambda network.

K- Okay.

B- I will touch on some peripheral organizations like the Gay Alliance of the Tennessee Valley, Galaxy, Out and equal, and other workplace movement related.

K- I know there's a historian guy, and I don't know if I still have his contact,

who was collecting stuff of the gay movement.

And I don't know that it was just Rochester, but he was in Rochester last time I knew, and he was collecting data for that.

So maybe I'll see if I still have him in Facebook and I can send you his name.

If it's something you want to look at for some other project.

B- But that'd be great.

That'd be great.

Thank you.

Ca- Super.

R- Wow.

Tamar, thanks for the reunion.

K- Yeah.

R- Wow.

Ca- Thank you all.

This is really helpful.

K- I'll keep in touch.

Co- Yeah.

Good to see you, David and Kathryn.

K- Yes, absolutely.

I mean, I saw your picture, your faces, and immediately I was like 15 years younger.

So let's keep in touch.

R- Let's keep in touch.

Especially if you're coming to Florida.

That's my plan.

November.

As long as there isn't some travel restriction.

K- All right.

R- All righty.

Co- Okay.

K- Bye.

Co- Bye

K- Thank you.

Nice to meet you.

Good luck.

I look forward to the results.

B- Yes.

R- Yes.

Ca- We will keep in touch. Bye.

B- Thank you all.

Ca- Bye.

B- Thank you.