

Judy Dobles: Perfect.

Tamar Carroll: And I'll shut the, just in case, it's pretty quiet here in the summertime, but just in case someone comes in the mail room, I'll shut that door. Okay. All right. How are our sound volumes looking?

Emmarose Dabin: Good.

C: Good. Okay. So my name is Tamar Carroll, and today is August 10th, 2023. We're here in the College of Liberal Arts at RIT, and I'm here with...

E.D.: Emmarose Dabin

C: who is an undergrad research assistant and a Humanities, Computing and Design major. And we're here today to interview Judy Dobles.

Judy Dobles: Yes, correct.

C: Judy, is it okay with you if we record this conversation?

J.D: Yes, it is fine.

C: Okay, great. And is it okay if we use the recording as part of the Lambda Archives project?

J.D.: Yes.

C: Okay, super. Thank you for being willing to talk with us about your experiences at Kodak, and specifically with the employee resource group, or the networks, as they were also known as. Yeah.

J.D.: So do you have questions where you want me to start, or ...

E.D: Yeah, I can start. So we were, as we said, we're really interested in learning more about the networks, and how they functioned. Is it right that you participated in both the Women's Forum, as well as the Lambda Network?

J.D.: Correct.

E.D.: Okay.

J.D.: And a couple others.

E.D.: And a couple others? Okay. Can you tell us more about all of those?

J.D.: Yes. So I would like to start back up just a little bit, and say that although I was not sitting in the corporate officers' meetings when they talked about it, they decided that it would be very important to have networks at Kodak. And so therefore, the structure of the networks was a corporate officer was basically the sponsor of the network. And so obviously, that was a very small group of people from whom to choose the sponsors. And then every network had sort of the next level down a management sponsor. So there's a corporate sponsor, and their role was basically advocating for the group at the corporate level. So if you can imagine, any meetings that happened, and they were in the meeting, they had their hat that they wore, whether it was marketing, or finance, or whatever. But then in the back of their mind, they were always like, oh, okay, what about the Women's Forum? Or what about Asians? So they were advocating for them. And then below corporate officers, I don't know, maybe there were like 100 of them, 50 or 100, I don't remember, then sort of the next layer of management, then they chose management sponsors for the networks. And your role as a management sponsor, so I ended up being a management sponsor for several years for the Women's Forum, and then for several years for the Asian Apex Forum. Our role then was more active. We attended all the meetings, all the planning, all the behind the scenes meetings, all the regular meetings. And our role was one of bringing resources to bear. If they were talking about, oh, you know, it would be really good if this organization helped us, then if they didn't really have a good in, so to speak, then my job is then I reached out because, okay, people would listen to the management sponsor, where sometimes they don't listen to other people. However, the management sponsor, my role was not to run the network, you know, so in meetings, you know, you sort of sat back, you let everything transpire. And I remember one of the women from the Women's Forum said, Judy, it's so interesting, you just sit there and you're so quiet. And then just when we need it, you come in with, you know, a statement or a thought, and then we sort of get our bearings again. So you weren't supposed to be, you know, take over the whole thing, but you were there to help everybody grow as they were, you know, learning how to do that. So I just wanted to say that there was sort of that corporate oversight on the networks. And then if I could, should I just go through quickly through each of them? So there were eight official networks, and then late, mid to late aughts, we also started quote, a new hire connection, wasn't officially a network. I was also the management sponsor for that. But as you can imagine, in the mid to late aughts, how many people were companies hiring? So when they hired me, oh, my gosh, you know, there'd be hundreds of people that were in their mid to late 20s, all of a sudden in the mid aughts, you're hiring like five people and they're looking around going, are you my grandmother? I mean, it's just like, whoa. So it was almost like it was turned upside down. And I was the person that was helping, you know, the small group of new hires acclimatize to an organization when you looked around, I'm going to say it in quotes, like, oh, these are all old people, you know, it's like, where are the people that are my peers? So the first one I'll start with is the Women's Forum of Kodak Employees. And as the name suggests, that was really focused on women. But I will tell you that none of the membership was exclusive. So anybody, so in this case, men could join the Women's Forum. And we actually sort of encouraged different people to join all the different networks because it doesn't really help to be exclusive. But the focus of all the programming for the Women's Forum was, you know, was around creating opportunities

for women, mentoring women. You know, what does mentoring really look like? Having programs that were educational. So when we had our forum meetings, a lot of times it would be educational. And then everybody would listen to whoever the presenter was. And then it's really up to you to do what you want with it. So again, we weren't trying to artificially create anything, but trying to create opportunities and exposure for people. I also think this is true of all of the networks. It did provide a good opportunity for practicing your leadership skills prior to taking that leadership role wherever, you know, wherever it might be. And it also provided opportunities. So for example, with the Women's Forum, there were several times that Kodak was honored at outside, you know, outside organizations would have a big gala event, maybe in New York City, maybe someplace else. And at those sessions, corporate officers would be the ones that always got to get the little trophy or whatever, but they would always bring along, you know, maybe enough people to fill a table. So the conference board is one of those groups. And I don't even know how they're operating now, but a lot of corporations would be members of the conference board. And then they had different, you know, a finance segment, a diversity segment, all these different ones. And so they'd have their annual awards ceremony, and let's say they had tables of 10. Then 10 women would go as guests of the corporate officer. And so again, you got to network outside of the corporation. And just be careful, you're dripping, your computers, they don't like that. So that was another benefit of the networks. The next one is HOLA, which was the Hispanic Organization for Leadership and Advancement. And that one, I don't know too much about. I do know that it was fairly active. Obviously it had, you know, some corporate officer on the board, but that one I wasn't hugely active with. I guess the other thing I would say, this is sort of for all of them. They all did have membership fees, or dues, nominal, \$25, \$30. And it was one of the things that I sort of went around talking to everybody about. I was a dues-paying member of every single network. And that was really how they got a lot of money. And so I felt as an example, I could then go around to my peers, to the corporate officers and say, oh, I'm a dues-paying member of every single network, are you? Because that is a way to provide support, even if you choose not to go to the meetings, you get their newsletter, you get their email, you're in the in crowd, so to speak. And then you can share that with people that might be interested. I don't know how many other managers did that, but I really, really tried to say, come on, that's like \$200 a year, you've got to be kidding me, pony up. And then Network North Star was focused on African Americans. And again, that was very, very active. The management sponsor did not have to be, or the, I don't mean management sponsor, the corporate sponsor did not need to be a woman or, you know, it was whoever we thought was best suited to that. So for example, Marty Coyne, who is male, was the corporate sponsor for the Women's Forum. And I can't remember HOLA, and there were quite a few for a while for Network North Star. Each network had its own personality, and I don't mean that good or bad, it's just what they sort of focused on and, you know, what was important to their members. The next one was VetNet, which was for any veterans of military service. And this one I found really interesting. And of all the networks, I would probably tell you this was the most moving. When they had their meetings, they would, like one time they did the veterans, when they have certain events, will set a place for a soldier who's not returning. Well, that's hard enough to sort of look at it by itself, but then when the speaker starts talking about it, there was not a dry eye, and I mean, I'm thinking, this is sort of interesting that you go to a network event and then you end up

crying. I mean, the first time it happened, you're sort of like, I'm crying at a network event. Okay, but it was very impactful, and I think a lot of people who aren't attached to the military aren't really familiar with that. And then the other thing that I think VetNet was also good about, I'm going to use an example that I wish VetNet had been around when this had happened, but I was working at Kodak Park in black and white paper manufacturing, and they needed to run on the weekend. And, oh my gosh, we don't have a salaried person to be here on Saturday. And I won't remember the gentleman's name, but I said, well, you know, Paul is here. Well, Paul is, I mean, he's not a salaried person. And I sat in the meeting and I said, okay, but let me tell you something. Paul was a medic in Vietnam. Now, if this building is going to catch on fire or, I don't know, you name it on the weekend, I want Paul to be in charge. So it was very interesting that here in the military, you can garner such tremendous skills, and then they're not valued in the workplace. It's like, oh no, you fit in this box. And it's like, well, okay, yeah, Paul is in that box, but Paul's the guy I want to have in my back, not this engineer that is, I'm, you know, 21, just graduated from college, and it's the second week on the job. He's not the one that I want watching over the building with 500 people running machines. So that, I think, is a real value of something like VetNet, where they can say, you need to start valuing some of these skills that people bring. Another one was Empower, which was for differently abled people. And again, this was probably one of the newer ones, and I did not participate as much with this one, but I think one of the key things about Empower was you can't always see disabilities. And so I remember talking to a lot of people when the legislation was passed, the Americans with Disabilities Act, they slowed down all the elevators so that people could get on and off the elevator. And weren't we proud before of our elevators that, I mean, boom, if you don't get in the elevator, you're not getting on the elevator. You know, those doors just close really quickly. And then I remember after we slowed down the doors on the elevators, I remember people going, I can't believe the elevator doors are so slow. And then I was like, okay, but some people can't, you know, if you're in a wheelchair, you can't get on the elevator that quickly. So that's why it seems so slow to you. And that was, I think, a real eye opener for people, because they were like, oh, oh, okay. Don't we all think about it from our own perspective, not from the perspective of the other? So that was sort of interesting. And then APEX was the Asia-Pacific Exchange. And that was an interesting one, because that was heavily focused. And for a while, I was the management sponsor of that network. A lot of people in the Asian community did not speak up for themselves. And so a lot of their work was helping people to get their voice, to say that it's okay, that you don't have to sit back, that you don't have to be passive. And so I think that this network was an interesting one, highlighting the fact that each network focused on really what was most important to them. And let's see, NAC, the Native American Council. I went to most of their meetings, and that one was quite instructive about, you know, if you're not familiar with the legal situation with Native Americans and the reservations and, you know, laws, how the legal system is different, and that was really pretty interesting. What was interesting on that one is not everybody wanted to identify as Native American. So I think that one, it was a little harder trying to get, you know, more people to participate. And then Lambda, you obviously know a lot about Lambda, but again, what was interesting is a lot of people, you know, participated in quite a few of these. So for example, like Claire Steig, S-T-E-I-G, you know, she was very active in the women's forum, but then she was active in Lambda, and, you know, I tried to be active in all of

them, but I, Lambda, when they had their skits and things, they would come and ask people, would you participate, and then you would say, of course, I will participate. And so I think Kodak was one of several companies that really felt the more everyone can be involved and the more people can understand each other, the more successful we will be. And that leads me to one thing that I thought was very interesting, and unfortunately, when I look around at what's going on in the world today, like in America, I really wish everybody would have been forced to read this book called White Men, Women, and Minorities, because Mae Snowden was, she was our chief diversity officer for a while, and she was African American, and she basically said, well, isn't this lovely that you have all these networks, where are the white men? Now, the white men can play such an important part in supporting the networks, but where are we in talking to them about how they feel? And, you know, all that sort of stuff. So we had a really interesting, we had a big workshop in 2003, and we basically put together a panel of men, they were not all white, and if you've, I don't know if you've had a chance to look at these, but it was basically a panel discussion where we had men, sort of all through the spectrum of the company, shop floor guys, corporate guys, Kodak office guys, factory guys, you know, all different things, and we had it at what's now called Theater on the Ridge. So that seats, like, over 2,000 people, I mean, that's a huge auditorium, and I thought, this is so cool, because here we are talking to men about how they feel about all the networks, and how can we help them, and how do we, you know, are they feeling left out, are they not feeling, you know, what do you guys feel? How are you feeling? And so we started to have some of that discussion, but that was 2003, and financial issues start to, I'm sure, crept into all sorts of companies that had really interesting networks that, but I just wanted to share that, because I think that the networks, while very, very important, everybody has to feel included somehow, and not that they're excluded, and so I thought that was quite forward thinking on the part of May to do that. And I also believe, personally, that if you can find a book, I mean, even if it's an e-book now, it just gives you a place to coalesce your discussions, rather than, you know, all over the place, so. And then I do have, if you're interested, I have some names, if you ever feel like reaching out to other people. I think most of these people are on LinkedIn, and very findable for some of the names I did not write down, because in one of the documents I gave you, it sort of listed, like, Marty Coyne, who's a guy, and we had a lot of people at Kodak that the names were, you didn't know, when you just heard the name, you didn't know if it was male or female, and when I was at Kodak Park in the early 80s, Wendy Cook and Kay Whitmore were at Kodak Park, and that was the manager of the plant and the top finance person, and somebody was going to interview them, and they said, I think it is absolutely fantastic that you have two women running that huge manufacturing site, and I said, sorry to disappoint you, but Wendy is a guy, and Kay is a guy, so, but I mean, the names were just like, okay, what name is this for? But Celeste Amaral was involved in HOLA, as was Felix, who was one of the guys that came to Lambda. Yeah, so Felix would probably know more, and then Network North Star, a person who has overflowing passion is Antonia Bernard, so Antonia, so it is a woman, Bernard, B-E-R-N-A-R-D And she was still on LinkedIn. VetNet was Nelson Blish, B-L-I-S-H. And Apex was Tom Pian, P-I-A-N. I didn't look for him today. And then I was looking for NACC. And it looks like, I can't tell if NACC is still going at Kodak or not, but there's a woman, Lila Bethmann, B-E-T-H-M-A-N-N. And she was listed as the spokesperson for NAC. And then the other person that hopefully would be willing to come and

talk to you in person, but I don't know. Essie Calhoun was on your list of invitees for the Lambda event. But I think she might have declined. I think Mary Burkhart might have said yes, but Mary didn't show up. They were two corporate officers.

C: She's a former board of trustee member here, too.

JD: So somehow you could suck them in for a conversation. They should hopefully be willing to do that. But they were a lot of fun. The events tended to be at night. We did have a situation where Kodak agreed to pay overtime, or pay, if you were a non-salaried employee. I will not remember when that law went into place, but the law that basically said, if you are not salaried, then if you're going to a work event, then you get paid. And I think some people were sort of like, well, this is a little bit personal. But then it was like, and I think I don't think it came out as an overall, what do I want to say? Absolute. But I think people were given the flexibility. If you really wanted this group of people to go, and they were not salaried, then we're not talking like a lot of money. Just go for it. Or give them the time off, or some comp time or something. So that eventually caused a bit of an issue. You know, when laws change, and then you have to figure out how to deal with that. But they were all very active events, at least once a quarter, all very interesting. Usually no food. I would say when they had their annual meeting, there might be food. But a lot of them didn't have food. I think food can be a plus and a minus. Because you have to pay for food. And then that prevents some people, because they don't have the money to pay for the food. Or choose not to. That's not how they choose to spend their money. So what questions does that leave you with, now that I've talked for so long?

C: Could you take us back? Were you at Kodak before there were networks?

JD: Correct, yes.

C: So how did you first learn about the networks? Do you remember?

JD: I think... So I started in 1980. And you first heard about the networks because it was sort of a big deal. Because the very senior group of senior managers said, we are going to sponsor the Women's Forum of Kodak Employees. And so that became a, it filtered down through supervisory communication. And as they told the story about Lambda, in order to form the network, a group of people had to go to senior management to say, we want a network. But then once the network was formed, then it just trickled down through supervisory communication. And so we were just starting to get email in the mid 80s. Well, no, even earlier, like 82, 83, 84. But then, just a little bit after that, then Kodak had, I don't want to call it, I don't want to say it's a newsletter. But there was a site that you could go to that just had information about the goings on at Kodak. So...

C: Like a message board?

JD: Like a message board. Yeah. Maybe a little more well-developed than just a straight message board. But it was essentially where to go to find out information. And obviously, that

morphed over time so that it almost became your internal library. Oh, I want to know about accounts payable policy. Well, if you're really interested in that, you could go through the finance thread to find those. Or I want to know internal control policies. Or I want to know HR policies. Or I want to know then, OK, now there's going to be a network thread. You know, the threads would talk about when the annual meeting would be, when the quarterly conference calls would be, the earnings calls would be. And so it started out pretty basic, like a message board, and then really was very holistic. So you knew it's, that's how you would find out. And if you didn't use the message board too much, then you, so forget me at this point, individuals would really rely on their supervisors because this stuff was pushed out.

C: Mm-hmm.

JD: And then perhaps word of mouth because I'm friends with Emma Rose. And I tell Emma Rose. And Emma Rose is friends with Betty. And she'd, and it just sort of. Yeah.

C: And what was it like for you before the Women's Forum? Like, what was it like to be a woman working at Kodak?

JD: Oh, it was hard. It was hard because there were not a lot of role models. If you, it was sort of the luck of the draw. If you drew a good supervisor, male or female, you were lucky. If you had a bad supervisor, well, then you wanted to be really careful about what you talked about or where you went and who you took things to. And I'm not going to share the details of the stories. But I am going to say that there were some things that I saw that went down at Kodak that you were just, wow, things that were very negative for women. And well, I guess I can share one because it revolves me, revolves around me. But they had a suggestion system, which I thought was really pretty cool. So anybody, if you saw something that was sort of wasteful, you could write it up. And if there was value in it, then you would be paid x percent of the savings. And I remember writing up something. And then all of a sudden, I saw something being implemented. And I'm like, well, who got paid the money for that? Well, Joe Schmo got it because, well, he's got a disabled child at home. So he needs it more than anybody else. And it's like, what does that have to do with? I mean, I have empathy for this individual.

ED: But it's irrelevant.

JD: If my idea got in the inbox first, why are you deciding that it goes to this person rather than me? And so I think there was still a lot of the old boy, you're single. You don't have kids. You don't need the big raise. You don't need the money. And it's like, it has nothing to do with anything. And on the other hand, you had to deal with stuff on your own because there weren't necessarily people you could turn to, even in HR. I remember I had an assistant in finance. And a gentleman came down. And he obviously got much too close for her comfort, her personal space. And she told me about it. And so I said, OK, I'll take care of this. So I walked up to his office. And I said, I got to tell you something. I don't really know what happened. But my assistant was very, very uncomfortable this afternoon when you were in the office. And he said,

you are kidding me. He said, I would not do anything to hurt her. But he had no, he was a very in-your-face sort of guy. She was a very conservative, religiously conservative. She was very young. So she was probably, she was fresh out of college with a double A.S. So let's call it 20. He was 45, very imposing. And so the good news was, is I went up there and I talked to him. And he said, Judy, it will never, ever happen again. He said, she is the last. I really like her, not from a relationship. He was just like, she is so good. It will never happen again. I said, I'll be watching. But you had to take it upon yourself to just go do things. And I remember a guy in finance who had an inappropriate cartoon up in his office. And I walked into his office and I'm like, oh, no, no, no. So I have to think about things a little. I have to get my words together. So I left and then I came back probably a couple hours later. And I said, that cartoon has to come down. It's really very bad. He's like, well, what? I said, all I'm going to tell you is tonight you discuss it with your wife. And then you decide tomorrow morning what you're going to do about it. Well, that cartoon was gone. But how would I say this? I also believe you couldn't have a chip on your shoulder. It was what it was. And so I just talked to everybody that needed to be talked to. And I mean, obviously, I didn't go up to the president because I didn't really see what the president was doing. But you just talk to people and you sort of say, here's my perspective. And it's really not appropriate. And in general, most people, they respond to that as opposed to somebody who goes off on a screaming fit.

C: So did it change the dynamic when the Women's Forum began meeting? Did you feel like there was more support or a change in the culture?

JD: I would say it's, I guess I would say it in a different way. I think the networks were really very empowering to the people that were in the networks. And the only reason we can have the networks is because senior management was starting to change. So it was sort of people were, each of the networks was sort of saying, we need to have a group of people who can address some of the issues that we see. But senior management had to be open to it. So somehow you had both coming together. And so I think in some cases, like with Lambda, what was the cart before the horse with Lambda? Did Lambda cause Bob Berman to go stand up in front of Congress about same-sex benefits? Or was it Bob Berman was able to have a cadre of people that he could talk to? It's hard for me to separate which was really the driver, because in a large corporation, if all you had were the networks and you did not have the senior management support that we had, there would be nothing. That's an exaggeration, but it was the marriage. And I think of the networks as the outward representation or the outward show of support by senior managers for diversity that really started making the difference. Because you can have policies and procedures, but maybe people lower down in the organization don't understand the policy and procedure. So the networks, in one sense, provided such a beautiful platform to show that senior management was engaged and involved in promoting diversity. Because I think when Kodak would be invited to go to some of these events outside of Rochester, there were some companies there that were very envious, because they were like, well, we have a network, but there's no way we have corporate officers supporting us. It's sort of like we're on our own. So I think that was sort of magical about Kodak, is you can't make forward progress without policies and procedures and a chief diversity officer and an HRVP that are, if they're not all driving towards the same thing, then you're not going to have anything.



So if it was only the senior managers, it would have taken a lot, lot longer. If it was only the networks, I think it would have,

ED: May not have been as successful.

JD: It might have been nice for the people in the networks, but it wouldn't have changed the policies. The thing is, though, is participating in so many of the networks, I'm not, I think the women's forum was early enough. They might have really had some impact on policies. I know Lambda probably had some impacts. But some of the other ones, I think it was, what's the right word? They were safe. This was another point I wanted to make. They were safe places. And so as you're going on the journey of diversity, I need to be able to, I have questions. I have things that are bugging me. And I need to be able to go to somebody and say, this is really bugging me, without fear that they're going to say, well, you bigoted so-and-so. And I'm going to use an example. Again, this is myself. But to show you the openness. So Network North Star, we were having a small committee meeting, which I was part of. I was invited to be part of it. And this was just before Barack Obama was elected president. So it was 2007. And my mother-in-law came to visit. And she proceeded to, in very shocking terms to me, bash Obama, bash his type, bash African-Americans. And you're sort of like, we're eating dinner. And you're like, wait, excuse me? And I politely laid into her. And I said, this is my house. We accept everybody here. I don't care, 10 fingers, five fingers, pink eyes, gray eyes, black, white, gay, I mean, name everything on here and even more. I said, they are all welcome at this table. And there will be no bashing, no negativity about anybody. And my mother-in-law was just like, she didn't talk for the rest of the evening. So my point in sharing that story was the next time we had a meeting with Network North Star, and so I think this is true, but I think I was the only white person in this group that we were working with. I think. Maybe there were two of us or something. And I said, Antonia, before we start, I have to tell you something that happened at my house. And so I told her the story. And I said, how do I accept my mother-in-law? How do I do this? She's like, Judy, it's OK. Calm down, calm down. She said, Judy, she's your family. She said, you don't have to accept her views, but she's your family, so you can't hate her. You can't write her out of your life. But it was being able to just go and say, what do I do? Because I am in a privileged position when I have family members who come and start trashing, my immediate thing is to not like them. And so it was very, it was so safe because they didn't, there was no judgment. There was no, I just.

C: Open, honest conversation.

JD: Right. And that, to me, was one of the biggest benefits of the networks is because all the people that were in the leadership of the network, that was the whole thing. If people come to you with, I don't want to say innocent, but I have questions. How do I get them answered if I don't go to the source? You're the only person that can answer that for me. So I felt that was very, that, to me, was one of the really big values.

C: Yeah. So you talked about, I love the phrase, the journey of diversity. And your mother-in-law

didn't get on that journey, or at least she wasn't on it in 2007. So what made you get on that journey?

JD: So I haven't, I guess, luck of the draw. And I'm going to start really young because it's sort of, it feeds on itself. So my church, very early on, was, it still plays in my mind, Jesus loves all the children, yellow, black, brown, white. So as a very young child, I had that. In high school, then, I belonged to Y-Teens. And that was part of the Young Women's Christian Association. And their mission is the elimination of racism and the empowerment of women. I did not know that when I was in high school. But based on little workshops and stuff, looking backwards, I can sort of see that. Fast forward, my very first job out of school, I worked for the Young Women's Christian Association in Detroit. And I was asked by my manager to be our representative on the Northeast Interface Center for Racial Justice in Detroit. And so at a time when diversity was not even on the map, we were having workshops with paper on the wall, magic markers. I mean, I didn't think anything of it. I just graduated from college. And OK, this is what you do. You do these workshops. You talk. But their mission is the elimination of racism. And so we had all this stuff we were working on. And so then you come to Kodak, and you sort of go, oh, they're a little bit behind the last place I was working at. And I guess I just went all the way back to when I was four and five, because I feel like you're in this environment where people are just people.

C: What church was that that you went to?

JD: It was Greece Baptist Church. It's an American Baptist church here in Rochester. And I don't know. I just, you know, that, my parents, the Y teens, the Y, and you just see people as people. I mean, part of working at the Y was helping to give people scholarships. And back then, you needed to, I don't know what they do today, because guns and all those things were really not, nobody worried about that. You went, and you did a little interview with people. And I went into people's homes that I just thought, they're for the grace of God. It would be me. I mean, and you just think, these people, they don't want to be here. They don't want these circumstances. But yet, here they are. And I guess part of, you know, you just start seeing that people have, there's this innate goodness in people. And circumstances just somehow sometimes get in the way of things. And I had a really good friend in college who was gay. And again, you're just, so you're coming from Rochester. You're coming from Greece, very white. They had the redlining going on. My parents are dead, so I can't ask them if the first house they bought actually had that in the contract. I guess it did. But I would really like, I'm very curious. But, you know, so you start seeing these things. I came from, again, Greece, very white. I went to the University of Michigan, a very cosmopolitan school. And you're just like, whoa, okay. It's very, I mean, U of M and Berkeley, when I was there in the early 70s, we were written up by Time Magazine. I lived in the co-ed dorm. And we were written up in an editorial as the animals that live in the dorm, you know. And here you are, the college student, looking at Time Magazine going, what are they talking about? So it's, you're just like, how can you be talking about stuff that you don't know anything about? Berkeley and Michigan were, I'm sure there were other schools, but we were the ones that were in the news for like, going crazy.

C: So well, you were, you were, I mean, co-ed dorms, you're challenging the norms of curfews

for girls and, you know, dress codes for girls and all of that. Yeah, that was the time when it changed, though.

JD: My best friend from high school went to Purdue, opposite end of the spectrum. And I went to visit her. And she's like, Judy, we have to get home. I'm like, Jane, what are you talking about? It's like 9.30 here. I mean, I'm not a night owl, don't get me wrong, but I'm like, Jane, she goes, well, there's a curfew, they lock the dorm. And I'm like, they lock the dorm? I said, I, okay, let's go back to your dorm. But so it was, it was very, very eye opening. And yeah, no, we were one of the first co-ed dorms between Berkeley and Michigan. It was just animals having sex all the time. I don't know what. And it was so far, that was the farthest thing from the truth. It was more like you had brothers in the dorm. I mean, it was really, it was very interesting. But I guess my point is just throughout life, I've been lucky to have worked some very interesting places. And then the people I meet are just, they're just people. And I can't understand all the hate that is there, because they're just people. And so part of this, in particular, in particularly Lambda, if you don't know anyone who's gay, lesbian, et cetera, et cetera, well, it's easy to hate somebody. But if all of a sudden you know them, how can you hate, can you really hate them? And usually the answer is no. And so, so that's sort of, you know, little bits here and there.

ED: So I guess going back to what you were saying about hate and hating people, was there any like active resistance among like the other Kodak workers against the formation of all of these different networks?

JD: Not that I was aware of, but I will tell you that, I'll say two things, one with Lambda, I don't think there, I think there are people still that don't agree with, I don't even want to say that word, they feel it's like a lifestyle choice. And there are people that, I'm going to use the word, that hide behind religious beliefs, that they see people as a threat to their masculinity, because I think it tends to be more with gay men. So there, I think there were definitely people at Kodak that saw the network, you know, probably were like, well I still don't like those people, or, you know. So I think there are some closeted people, maybe some more overt now. But I also believe that there were definitely with some of the white males, some issues with the network, you know, with how do I participate and feel that I am valued, because I think maybe Sally got the job because Sally was a woman, as opposed to Sally was the best one. And I think that no matter what organization you're in, there's always going to be once or twice when you hire the wrong person, and then people are going to use all sorts of excuses for why they shouldn't have gotten the job. And I think as, and I think it's a microcosm, in my personal opinion, of our country. When the economics were really good, and everything's high flying, and you're not worried about losing your job, and you're not worried about losing your job, and oh my gosh, you're not worried that you're going to make less money than your parents may, when the economics, when everybody's boats are really floating and rising, I think there's not a lot of issue with any of this. I think as we started to see in the late aughts, and then in the 2000, in the 2010s, as the economy gets really stretched, and people are losing their jobs, and they're not making a lot of money, and they can't get healthcare, and they just seem to be floundering and not doing as well as their parents, then I think you start to look for other people to blame,

and therefore it's very easy to blame people that are different from you, as opposed to looking in the mirror. And I think, to me, I think you hear a lot of that when you read about a lot of the more conservative Republicans, that they're actually, what's the right word, trying to foment this discontent, like, oh, poor person, you got the bad end of the stick because of whatever, because of the gays and lesbians, the blacks, the blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. It's really sort of mind-boggling to me.

C: Was that the case at Kodak, that as the company started doing layoffs, did you feel like attitudes changed?

JD: I would say no, because I think, you know, there may have been pockets, but I would say that we had been at it for so long that if there were senior managers or middle managers that didn't believe in this, they were deeply, deeply closeted. I don't, I really did not get the sense that this was more, that things had become more negative for some of these groups. I think the thing that they really faced more was, and I left in 2009, as we kept having more and more and more layoffs, there were just fewer and fewer and fewer people to participate. And, you know, a group like the Women's Forum, that was very large, but if you start thinking about something like NAC or VetNet or something, they're fairly small to begin with. And then if you start shedding huge swaths of people, then you don't have the critical mass, so to speak, for the groups. So I left in 2009, and I think we declared bankruptcy in 2011, yeah, okay. So I don't really know. I think some of this stuff might have come over with some of the groups, but, with some of the new formation, but I think, you know, when you think about it, Kodak goes through, well first, they start getting rid of stuff, so the health part of the business gets sold off to a venture capitalist, this part goes over here, this part. So a company that was 120,000 people globally, I mean, they ended up, so there were maybe over 60,000 people in Rochester when I started, and when I left Kodak, we were approaching like under 10,000. I mean, it is massive, and so all of a sudden, who's going to be doing the network, because there's no people.

C: Yeah. And if you're left, you're looking for a job somewhere else, right? Right, right.

JD: But I still think that Kodak had some pretty world class people, you know, as leaders and then just people working, and they were really cool and smart and energetic and pretty creative.

C: Yeah. Oh, for sure.

JD: So.

C: I mean, it seems to me that the network model is something that would be powerful for corporations to adopt now.

JD: I think that it, so this is my personal opinion, everything I've said is my personal opinion, but I think one of the bad things about what happened economically in the US, where a lot of companies just sort of got broken up and split up, and when there are massive companies like a

Kodak, you can afford to have 10 people in a diversity office, because really, that's like spitting in the ocean in terms of a very, very large corporation. But if all of a sudden, all you have are, oh, this little local company that's got 2,000 people and this little local one that's got 3,000, they can't do this. They can't do diversity. They don't have the wherewithal to do it. So I absolutely agree that companies today, and I don't know what a good critical mass would be, but companies today like Procter & Gamble, DuPont, IBM, all of those corporations, I think could, my guess is they probably still have their networks, I don't know, but you can really benefit from having this, and the model works. The model, I think, is actually energizing for a huge portion of your population. What I don't know today is what other networks would have to be considered. So for example, I participated in a discussion with, there's a global organization called Braver Angels, and they literally work to make sure their membership is 50% Republican and 50% Democrat. So do you have to have a political network? I mean, I never would have thought that in 2005.

ED: Yeah, that's interesting, because generally you think most of the time people are trying to remove their political views from the workplace, so that's very interesting.

JD: But I think it's so polarizing now, would you have, would that need to be considered? Would you need to have a religious network where people could understand Christian beliefs, Jewish beliefs, Islamic, I mean, I don't know, but is that something that is causing a lot of angst? So I don't know. This worked really well for us, but in this day and age, when I look at what comes across my news feed, I'm like, well, do I have to have guns and anti-gun people?

C: Yeah, that's a good point. What aspect of someone's identity is significant to them right now?

JD: Yeah. Yeah.

C: No, those are good, those are really interesting questions. I did notice that with Lambda, it seemed like it was largely white people that were participating in Lambda, and I was wondering if that was because, for example, African Americans might be more likely to go to North Star than they would be to go to Lambda, or...

JD: So I'm trying to think. So there are people, I do know people in Network North Star that were gay and lesbian, that were African American, gay and lesbian, but they put their energy into Network North Star. I think... I guess the real question there is, if this is a Venn diagram, you know, and there are other little bubbles, what... So if you're part of three of these, like, let's say, Apex and Power and VetNet, I'll just pick those three, which one do you identify, you sort of mentioned it, which one are you going to identify with most, because if you... Or where do you think you're going to get, you're going to be most comfortable, because I would, this, again, I'm coming from a spot where I feel like, how do I know when I say things like this, but given... If you identified with the community, the broader community with Lambda, but you were some of these other ones, do you feel like coming out as gay, lesbian, trans, and being Asian, and being a vet, and having a disability, would that just, like, overwhelm you? I don't... I've never really

thought about that, but I guess maybe there was... That would be a good question for the people in Lambda, I mean, in my mind, because being white, was it safer to come out being white than... I don't know the answer, obviously. But that's it. I hadn't thought about that before.

C: From other research I've done, I do know that the black churches in Rochester were not particularly gay-friendly, unfortunately. So I think it may have been safer, specifically for African-Americans, for whites to come out than for African-Americans. There were more supportive institutions in the white community. Emmarose, how are we doing on our questions?

ED: We're doing good. We've addressed most of them. One thing that we were very curious about is if you knew anything about deaf people working at Kodak, and would they have maybe joined, like, the Empower Network? Or was there... We're assuming there's not, like, a separate resource group for deaf people, or something that was brought up to us recently, so I'm curious.

JD: As far as I know, there was not a separate resource. And I would have put them in Empower. Having said that, I know that we did have interpreters at a lot of our meetings.

ED: Oh, cool.

JD: Yes

C: Like American Sign Language interpreters?

And I would have said that if a deaf individual were hired into a particular organization, then it would have been that organization's responsibility to, along with the individual, to figure out how to make accommodations. I think there are perhaps certain places that they may not have been hired if hearing... Like, if I think of the factory floor, and I think about certain places that I supported as a finance person, there were a lot of auditory cues. Like, if there was danger, or you had little automated buggies going around, and basically the way... So they did have a light on them, but for somebody who has hearing, it was constantly going beep, beep, beep, beep, beep. So I think they would have... I mean, in its heyday, Kodak was big enough that there would definitely have been a place that they could have worked at comparable salaries. But I don't... I never worked with anybody who was totally deaf. I know I worked with some people that were hard of hearing, which impacted their speech, but I didn't know anybody who was totally...

C: Somebody who works here at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf told us she thought in the printing area that there were clusters of deaf workers.

JD: There could have been.

C: Yeah. I haven't come across any records of that, so it was just... It's just a new line of research that we're just exploring.

JD: Because that would make more sense to me, because I supported the printing. Financially, I supported lots of different groups, but when you think of a print operation, although if there were a fire or something, you were going to have lights and sound, but in general, you're working to get the printing plate ready. You're putting it on the press. You're running the press. I could see people working there without a lot of issue. Again, I can hear and all of that, but I've also worked summers. I worked in the darkroom at Kodak, and that would not really be a place I don't think I would... From a safety perspective, now all of a sudden, if you're in trouble and you can't talk and you fall down in the darkroom, who's going to find you? They're not going to find you until the end of the shift. You can set up a buddy system. There's all sorts of workarounds.

C: Was that before you went to college that you worked in the darkroom?

JD: Yep.

C: Did your parents work at Kodak?

JD: My dad worked at Kodak.

C: What did he do there?

JD: He was the director of training at Kodak. My intention was not to come back to Rochester. Because, well, I loved growing up here, but I have wanderlust. I was sort of like, oh, let's see this. Let's go here, let's go there. They offered me a job, and it's 110% of how I define my perfect job. What am I going to... Oh, okay, I'll take it. And then I was like, you know, you're young. I was like, I'll be out of here in two years, get my experience. And then every 18 months they offer you a new job. Oh, here's a new job. Oh, I'm getting a little bored. They don't know this, but I'm sort of like, oh, okay, I've done this. Oh, here's a new job, here's a new job. For the first 18 years, every 18 months I had a new job. And it doesn't get boring then, you know. New challenges, yeah. New challenges, new people. And I was also the regional finance director for Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Russia. And hence, that was why I sent that one little table, the transatlantic diversity model. Because to me, diversity has so many little threads that can go hither and yon. And you're working with people in Europe, and they think you're a jerk. And you're trying to figure out why do they think you're a jerk. Oh, well, read this little transatlantic diversity thing, and you think this. It's not good or bad, it's just different. And if you're not aware of it, so I actually used that a lot in different groups, meetings that I had. Because I would show it, and they'd be like, oh, yeah, that's absolutely true. I'm like, well, okay, let's deal with it, you know. And let's laugh about it, you know. If I say something, you can tell me what I should be doing. So it was really very helpful. And I'm sure there's some for other parts of the world, too. But I think too many people believe that they have all the right answers, when in point of fact it's just one answer out of many possible answers. And I think that was one of the best parts about working in Europe, is there's 20 ways of doing things. You've got the French way, you've got the German way, you've got the Italian way, the Brit way. But you know what? At the end of the day,

they all come back with the right answer. It's just how, when I say right answer, I mean they come back with the finished product that's absolutely perfect. How they got there, very, very different. They took totally different pathways to get there. But the final product converged on exactly what you were looking for. And so I found that really interesting, because it's so easy in the U.S. to be so, well, this is the way to do it. And I'm like, oh no, no, no. We have so many ways we could do this. And you go over there, and man, you see all the ways it can be done.

ED: It seems like you were really trying to promote open dialogue just in a lot of different conversations while you were at Kodak, which is just really cool.

C: And you got to satisfy some of your wanderlust.

JD: Yes, I did, I did, I did.

C: Well, thank you so much, Judy, for talking with us. Was there anything else you felt like we should discuss or you wanted to cover today?

JD: No, I think that's everything.

C: Okay. Well, thank you. Thank you.