

Interviewee: Julianne Dahrooge  
Interviewers: Meghan Guarino and Kelsey Kozikowski  
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Transcribers: Meghan Guarino and Kelsey Kozikowski

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**Abstract:** Julianne Dahrooge was born in 1979. She was raised in Brooklyn, New York, with her two parents and brother. After graduating college, she moved to Worcester to pursue a career at Assumption College as a Residential Director. She now lives in Worcester with her husband. Together they spend their free time fostering special needs animals, especially dogs. Throughout the interview, Julianne focuses on her relationships with members of her family and career history. She is an optimist with a gentle heart who cares deeply about people, animals and the world. Julianne discusses the timeline of her life that has led her to be the successful business woman she is today. Julianne was raised in Catholic schools in New York and received a history degree from Providence College. Julianne began her career at Assumption College and left after a few years to pursue a career in financial services with New York Life. This led to her opening her own business with her best friend. Julianne explains her journey of creating a career in a field that differed from her college degree.

**MG:** We are completing a citywide oral history of the lives of women, Worcester women, aiming to collect stories about a broad range of experiences. Based on the goals of the 1850 National Woman's Rights Convention in Worcester, we are focusing on the areas of women's education, health, work, and politics and community involvement. We want to focus today on your experiences with Chan-Dahrooge Financial Group LLC. Thank you for your help with this important project! And Julianne Dahrooge do we have on the date of, [**KK:** September 29th.] September 29th, do we have your permission to record and interview you today?

**JD:** Yes.

**MG:** Okay so do you want to start?

**KK:** Okay, so our first question is, what is your full name including both maiden name and married name if, if applicable?

**JD:** Yup, so my full name is Julianne Dahrooge and my maiden name is Julianne Hertell.

**KK:** Okay when, when were you born?

**JD:** July 26, 1979.

**KK:** Okay, have you ever been married? Yes, what is the name of your husband?

**JD:** Aaron Dahrooge.

**KK:** Okay do you have children?

**JD:** I have a stepson, his name is Sims, and he's 23 years old.

**KK:** Okay do you have grandchildren? [laughs]

**JD:** No. [laughs]

**KK:** What cultures/ethnicity do you identify yourself with?

**JD:** I'm Caucasian.

**KK:** Okay, tell me about your parents.

**JD:** So, my parents are both still alive. They live in Brooklyn, New York. My mother came here when she was somewhere around 20 -years- old from Ireland and this was like the late--- probably like around 1960 [**MG:** Uh-huh.] I want to say-- when a lot of the Irish had to leave and [**MG:** Yeah.] had to come to the United States, or go to England, or Australia just because of the job market there. [**MG:** Mhm.] So, she came over here with her aunt. She stayed with her aunt for a little bit and with her sister, my aunt. And they just started their life here, and then she met my father, who's from New Jersey, [**MG:** Mhm.] and they met on a blind date and [**MG:** No.] then my brother and I came along! [laughs]

**MG:** That's awesome.

**JD:** Yeah.

**MG:** I don't have anything interesting like that.

**JD:** Yeah.

**KK:** I definitely hear your accent now that you've said that.

**JD:** Oh really. [laughs]

**KK:** Yeah.

**KK:** Okay, so the next one is where have you lived during your life?

**JD:** So, I was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, then I lived in Providence, Rhode Island, in that area for college and for three years after college. And then I came to Worcester, and so I've lived in Worcester for 14 years.

**KK:** What did you do in Providence after school?

**JD:** I worked at Bryant College, now [**KK:** Oh!] yeah now, it's Bryant University.

**KK:** Yeah, my boyfriend goes there. [laughs]

**JD:** Oh, okay yeah, it's a very different school than it was, but yeah.

**KK:** Yeah I'm sure.

**JD:** [laughs]

**MG:** If you were not born in Worcester when did you arrive--- your age--- how did you come to live in Worcester?

**JD:** Yeah, so I came in 2004, so 13 years ago. I came in 2004 and it was a job offer from Assumption College that brought me here.

**MG:** So where do you live in the city now, have you lived in multiple areas?

**JD:** Yeah, so now I live on Sears Island which is over by Indian Lake, which is a great little community. I lived over off near Elm Park for--- so I lived at Assumption College first, so from 2004 to 2007, then I lived over near Elm Park. I bought a condo over there and lived there for a little bit, then I moved in with my now husband who was living on Vernon Hill at the time in a building that he owns. [**MG:** Mhm.] And then we bought our house on Sears Island.

**MG:** Hmm. What challenges do you think the city still faces what would you change about the city?

**JD:** So, I'm a huge Worcester proponent, I lived in Providence when Providence hit its tipping point, so it's really exciting and I think that Worcester is there right now, I think that Worcester is really coming into its tipping point. I think the problem with Worcester is--- I think the asset to Worcester is first, so I'll start with the asset that it, it has is that Worcester has so many transplants of people just like myself and we've chosen to stay here. We've chosen to start our businesses and to get married and to start our families here, and buy homes and buy properties and so forth and we are by and large Worcester's biggest advocates, where I think a lot of people that were born and raised here have kind of been let down by Worcester over the years, so there's a little--- they're a little more negative just as a generalization. [**MG:** Yeah.] So, they're a

little bit like, “Oh I’ve been there done that, it was promised to us and it never happened.” Whereas it, it kind of detracts some of the energy that is going on in the city right now.

**MG:** Yeah.

**KK:** That’s really interesting to think of it that way, yeah.

**MG:** Yeah, well they’re more like, more like providing, like not providing for it like, just for Worcester and everyone that kind of lived here is kind of like, “Let’s get out and go somewhere else.” Like you chose to come here...

**JD:** Yeah, and we chose to stay here. [**KK:** Mhm.] We chose to start our [**KK:** Yeah.] businesses and start our families, [**KK:** Mhm.] and so we’re really rallying behind it. I can’t necessarily say I blame the people [**KK:** Mhm.] that were necessarily [**MG:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.] born and raised here, just there’s a little bit more optimism I think from the people that are transplants.

**KK:** Yeah, definitely.

**MG:** So what do you think women’s experiences in Worcester have been like generally?

**JD:** I can only speak for my own experience, and for me, it’s been really positive. I--in the business world I think it, it’s just been a very, very positive experience. I don’t necessarily see the things that I hear people talk about and you hear on the news and you see and read in books and documentaries, such as you know the wage gap and the glass ceiling, but that just might be the life I’ve carved out for myself.

**MG:** Hmm.

**JD:** You know I-- you know-- I own my own business, my husband owns his own business, then together we own a real estate business together.

**KK:** Oh wow!

**JD:** And so, we own a number of rental properties, so it’s just never--- I don’t, I don’t see that, that women have any more significant challenges, [**MG:** Mhm.] especially in Worcester.

**MG:** Hmm, do you think that’s still recording even though your phone’s locked?

**KK:** I think we’re good.

**MG:** So, we’re going to move on to the education part.

**KK:** When do you want to do these, I mean guess we could do those first.

**MG:** We'll probably put them into any like specific, you know what I mean.

**KK:** Okay.

**MG:** So where did you attend school, what were the names of the schools, and did you pursue any educational programs or vocational training, name programs if applicable-applicable?

**JD:** Okay, so I assume you want high school and above or....

**MG:** Sure, yeah.

**KK:** Why not.

**JD:** [laughs] Okay, well I went to Catholic school up until the eighth grade and then in New York City I went to Stuyvesant High School. Then after Stuyvesant, I went to Providence College, and then I started my working life. And then after I left Assumption, and then I started-- - decided I wanted to go into financial services. I've gone through different training programs from different insurance companies and financial services companies, and that sort of thing.

**MG:** How did you chose to like go from what you were doing here to financial, is that what you got your degree in?

**JD:** No, no not at all. So I got my degree in history.

**KK:** Wow!

**JD:** [laughs] Yeah. [laughs]

**KK:** That's funny.

**JD:** When I was getting ready to leave here--- there was someone that I had actually known from here, from Assumption who's very, very involved in the community. And I reached out to him and I said you know I made the decision--- I want--- he's someone from Worcester that's a Worcester-huge Worcester advocate...

**KK:** Oh really?

**JD:** And I want to stay in Worcester, but I need some help. I want to change careers. I don't know what I want to do, can you help me? And so, he taught me how to network. He taught--- and introduced me to people for inter-informational interviews and so forth and he was just--- I mean he's just tremendous in shaping where I'm at right now.

**KK:** Yeah that's awesome!

**JD:** And so yeah, yeah he's just amazing. And so, one of the informational interviews I went on was with someone with financial services and I kind of liked what they had to say. And I kind of pursued the process a little bit, and I was brought on board by New York Life.

**MG:** Wow. What were your challenges in education, if there were any?

**JD:** My challenges in education... I think the challenge for me would be best that--- I didn't care about it as much as I should have.

**MG:** Yeah.

**KK:** I mean you hear that plenty of times.

**MG:** Yeah, that's a very popular thing.

**JD:** Yeah, you know like junior year. I think my junior year I made Dean's List, but the first two years I was barely skating by [**MG:** Yeah.] and skipping class and I just didn't care about it. And by the time I got midway through college--- I found the major I was interested in and I found something that I wanted to do. I wanted to be in class and it wasn't just gen-ed [general education] things like we talked about a few minutes ago. [**MG:** Mhm.] It was--- and so then I started doing really really well but...

**MG:** Yeah. Okay so you want to move on to work?

**KK:** Sure.

**MG:** Okay.

**KK:** Okay so what was your first job?

**JD:** So, my first job as a whole, I mean aside from babysitting and things like that.

**KK:** Hmm.

**MG:** Yeah.

**JD:** I worked for a company called Fexco- F-e-x-c-o foreign exchange company of Ireland over in Ireland because my aunt had helped me get a job. So, I was 15 years- old and--- so a little bit of background for me. When we were growing up, my parents would send us or bring us for the summer to Ireland to stay with our grandparents. And so, we used to spend our whole summers--

- my brother and I--- growing up in Ireland. And so when we were 15,---and it's really difficult for a 15 year- old to find any type of a job in New York City, my aunt in Ireland [said], "Oh come over here for the summer and you can work for Fexco, you can work for my company." [MG: Wow!] And, so yeah, so it was great. So, my brother did that for a couple years because he's a little bit older than me, then I did it for two years and...

**KK:** Did you like it? Like did you enjoy that?

**JD:** Yeah! I mean it's just office work.

**MG:** It's like a summer job, yeah.

**JD:** So, the job was just, you know, a summer office job, but I mean the experience--- again I didn't appreciate it at the time--- [MG: Yeah.] hindsight I'm like holy cow! [laughs]

**MG:** Yeah. [laughs]

**JD:** But yeah it was great.

**MG:** Wow that's cool. People vacation on the Cape, and you went to Ireland.

**JD:** Yeah exactly, exactly.

**MG:** That's so cool.

**KK:** I couldn't imagine.

**KK:** Okay, so what other jobs have you had and what do you do now?

**JD:** Yeah, so I worked at Fexco for a couple years and in college. I was an RA [resident advisor] for a summer when I was in college. I went back and worked in Ireland again for Fexco but up in Dublin instead of Kerry in the stockbroking division. Then I came back for my senior year and I worked for Bryant College, now it's Bryant University. Then I got a job working up here at Assumption College in Residence Life, and then I started in financial services through New York Life. And then I started my own business at--- with, with a business partner, Chan and Dahrooge Financial Group.

**MG:** So how did you guys meet?

**KK:** I was just going to say.

**MG:** Yeah.

**JD:** My business partner and I?

**MG:** Yeah.

**JD:** We met very organically in the business and we...

**MG:** Did you guys work together at New York Life?

**JD:** No, at New York Life you're kind of independent contractors. So, we were in the same office, [**MG:** Yeah.] but not really working together. [**MG:** Yeah.] And so, we just kind of became friends in the office and then became best of friends and then the next organic [**MG:** [laughs]] step was to...

**MG:** So she was your best friend?

**JD:** Yeah! Yeah.

**KK:** That's so funny.

**MG:** That's awesome!

**JD:** Yeah, yup, yup so yeah so.

**MG:** I'm excited for you guys.

**KK:** [laughs]

**JD:** We're very, very lucky we're very, very fortunate so...

**MG:** Yeah.

**KK:** Okay, what are your primary responsibilities in terms of housework and child care?

**JD:** Well the child care is done [**KK:** [laughs]] because my stepson is out of the house. [**MG:** Yeah.] I mean that's interesting. My husband and I, we really, I mean we really split it. [**MG:** Mhm.] I do more of like the day to day tidying up, but he does every single day. He's the one that does the sink full of dishes. He does more of like the heavy lifting outside like... [**MG:** Mhm.] You know, I'm thinking of the jobs that we have to do over the next couple weeks. [**KK:** [laughs]] You know, moving the lawn furniture to the garages and you know we have some water toys. We have a pontoon boat and a jet ski, so he'll be in charge of putting that away. I might help with that [**MG:** Yeah.] [**KK:** [laughs]] a little bit. You know we're very---in a very fortunate position that we're able to get help when we need it. We have a friend that likes to take on extra jobs, so we hire to clean our house once a month, and we have another friend, who again

also could use a little bit of extra cash, so we hire him to mow our lawn. [MG: Oh.] And so, the heavy lift---I guess the [MG: Yeah.] really cumbersome housework is already done for us, but yeah, we split it pretty evenly in our house.

**KK:** What about cooking or laundry?

**JD:** Laundry we split, [KK: Hmm.] we pretty much do our own laundry. Cooking is usually me, but my husband is---has been lifting at the gym lately, and he's on a wacky diet.

**MG:** [laughs]

**KK:** No way.

**JD:** Because of that so we just do our own food [laughs] right now, but usually if he's not on a wacky diet, it's usually me that does the cooking. [KK: Uh-huh.] But it's really because I'm better at it so. [laughs]

**KK:** [laughs]

**MG:** Okay so we're going to go on to politics and community involvement.

**JD:** Yeah.

**MG:** Do you consider yourself active politically?

**JD:** No, not particularly.

**MG:** Okay.

**JD:** Well no, so no not particularly in terms of like attending things that are going on in the city, but in terms of my business, extremely so. [MG: Yeah.] Because I think in, in my profession which is---and what I do is I'm a financial advisor, so I sit down with people at their kitchen tables. At their businesses they tell me what is important to them, and I have them get there whether it's retiring, making sure that their family can provide for themselves in case they were to die prematurely. And, you know, make sure they don't pay too much in taxes, so that's what I do. So, I'm very, very active both on the state level and on the federal level making sure that the plans that I'm setting up with my clients, that are going to benefit my clients, don't get altered by legislation, [MG: Yeah.] so on the political side very, very active professionally.

**MG:** So have you been involved in volunteer or community work in the city of Worcester?

**JD:** Yeah so, my husband and I are very active volunteers with Broken Tail Rescue which is an animal rescue, **[MG: Oh!]** and so we fostered 84 dogs over the last six years. I found homes for them.

**KK:** Oh my gosh!

**JD:** Plus, a couple cats, plus a couple bunnies, but really dogs specifically older or special needs dogs is what we really like... [laughs]

**KK:** What was your favorite one? Do you have a story or...[laughs]

**JD:** I don't have a fav--- I mean I always say like, oh that one was top five definitely, but like...

**KK:** [laughs]] top five is like 20 dogs.

**KK:** [laughs]

**JD:** I mean like I've had ---Lazy Daisy was one of my favorites. So, she was brought into a shelter and we don't know what her back story ---she ended up in the shelter. She was blind, and we learned very quickly that she never learned how to be blind. And so I think she had degenerative condition and so we kind of taught her ---like I was literally crawling around the floor of my house, saying what would she bump her face on that might hurt and like putting a piece of furniture in front of that or putting a pillow in front of it, and just kind of giving her the confidence to be blind and finding her a great home.

**MG:** Oh my God, wow.

**JD:** She p-passed away a couple months ago. I stayed in touch with the foster home, **[MG: Oh.]** but she passed away of old age. And the family said that they had like when they would take her for walks and she was a little miniature schnauzer and they had another schnauzer and people had no idea she was blind like so she had so...

**KK:** Really?

**JD:** .much confidence **[MG: Yeah.]** She had so much ability that **[MG: Wow!]**

**KK:** That's awesome!

**JD:** So, Lazy Daisy, we called her Lazy Daisy because we named her Daisy because we needed-- she needed like a sharp name like that. She **[MG: Mhm.]** could hear, yeah. **[KK: Mhm.]** You know versus like a softer name... And she was Lazy Daisy because when she first came in and before we realized she just didn't know how to be blind, she would just sit in the corner all day.

So, we're like oh she's so lazy, Lazy Daisy, but it turned out she wasn't lazy at all, [KK: [laughs]] she just needed to learn how to [MG: Yeah.] adapt to surroundings.

**KK:** That's so awesome.

**JD:** Yeah.

**KK:** That's like such a good story.

**JD:** Yeah, she was one of my favorites.

**KK:** Yeah, that's cute.

**JD:** But I have a lot of favorites. [laughs]

**MG:** Yeah, [laughs] I would too. I love animals.

**KK:** I was going to say you guys probably are busy too right so like...

**JD:** We're extremely busy, yeah.

**KK:** It must be tough to do that.

**JD:** It is, yeah.

**KK:** [laughs]

**JD:** So, I just had a foster dog that I asked another foster home just because this week we're moving offices, like I said, so it's just kind of crazy,

[MG: Hmm] So but I have friends that do it so

[KK: Mhm.] So if someone offered to be like oh yeah yeah bring the dog over I'll watch them for a couple weeks and....

**MG:** So, you guys are big animal people?

**JD:** Yeah, we really like animals.

**MG:** Do you have any animals of like your own?

**JD:** Yeah, so we have a dog named Lizzy and a cat named Delicious so...

**KK:** [laughs]

**MG:** What kind of dog?

**JD:** She's like a havanese mix so yeah she was--- [**MG:** Nice.] a family member passed away, and so we took her in.

**MG:** Oh and another foster dog coming in. [laughs]

**JD:** Yeah, yeah so she was the first one I guess.

**MG:** Really?

**JD:** She's the one that paved the way for the rest of them..

**MG:** Oh. Okay so what role has religion played in your life, if you are religious?

**JD:** Yeah, so I was born and raised Catholic, going to church, you know, being confirmed and everything. I don't go to church often. I go to church when I need to find--- when I feel like there is something missing from my life, like I kind of need some like- kind of as a meditative right. [**MG:** Yeah.] I suppose it's my Catholic upbringing. There's a lot of values that I've learned from my parents and from the Catholic upbringing. You know, in terms of serving others and always being good to your neighbors, and I mean that also goes to just the golden rule, but I'm being more invigorated by the Catholic Church now with Pope Francis because I think he's pretty amazing. And I had the ability to go to Europe for a couple weeks this spring, and we went to Italy and we went to Rome. And my husband's not Catholic, so it wasn't really important to him but I [**MG:** Yeah.] made him come with me to one of the papal audiences, [**MG:** Yeah.] which he does twice a week. And he goes ---Pope Francis goes around ---in the Pope Mobile and I was able to see him from like 15 feet away. And in those like two or three seconds that he was going by ---and I did--- I put my phone away, I put my camera away, I was like I need to just experience this. [**MG:** Yeah.] There was this overwhelming feeling and the only way--- the only time I think I've ever had that feeling is when I was actually saying my marriage vows, so it's a very, very overwhelming kind of confusing kind of feeling. But just he [**MG:** Yeah.] is pretty amazing, [**MG:** Wow!] so it reaffirmed to me just how much that Catholic upbringing really is in my soul.

**MG:** Yeah.

**KK:** Yeah, it's amazing how it can be like that in different stages of your life too.

**JD:** Yeah.

**KK:** Because I used to go to like Catholic schools and stuff and even Providence...

**JD:** Exactly, yeah so, it's important to me, [laughs] it was amazing seeing him, absolutely amazing.

**MG:** It's really--- it really depends on age when you kind of like find your faith within. Like I know when I was younger, I was like I don't feel the need to go to church.

**JD:** Yeah.

**MG:** I didn't feel the need to believe in God and all this stuff but as I'm getting older, [**JD:** Hmm.] I'm seeing more of a reason to get involved with it.

**JD:** Yeah, I will say that I am a little bit envious of my mother and her generation where the faith is just so deep, and my mother will say if something bad is going on, she'll be like well it's in God's hands. And she truly believes that, and I'm very envious of that [**MG:** Mhm.] because I think that's a really beautiful--- like to be able to place that trust in God is really beautiful I think.

**KK:** Yeah.

**JD:** I just don't have that.

**KK:** I think our generation is missing that and we don't have something to look up to as much as like they--- they would too like my grandparents [**JD:** Yeah!] are so involved. [**JD:** Yeah.] and they say the same kind of things and, [**JD:** Yeah.] but we don't, we don't think of it like that.

**JD:** Exactly yeah, so.

**KK:** Okay, the next section is about health. How have health issues impacted your life or those in your family?

**JD:** I mean, by and large I'm very, very fortunate. My family has been very fortunate, knock on wood. [knocks on table] I mean other--- I feel like I'm coming from a different kind of perspective in the sense of what my business is--- is I see people every day that deal with very, very significant, debilitating issues, whether it's themselves or they are taking care of a parent or a disabled child or something like that. So, I can honestly say in the grand scope of everything we're just very fortunate there's nothing extraordinary in my family.

**MG:** There's nothing wrong with that though, it's a great thing.

**JD:** Yeah.

**KK:** The next question is what are your experiences in accessing quality, affordable health care?

**JD:** I have no problem with it. [laughs] I have full access to health care. Even though I do have my own business, I still maintain the relationship with New York Life who has a health care program. It's quite high priced, and there's a high deductible with it, but I have treatment for a minor health condition that adds up and, I have to pay the deductible every year. And then it's covered. You know, last year I was in a skiing accident, and I blew out my knee. And you know, I had health care for that. My husband had to go to the emergency room for a minor emergency, and that was covered. And I mean we are just very fortunate that we work very hard, and we do pretty well for ourselves. We're able to cover the expenses that go along with it, so if there is a couple thousand dollar bill, you know we're fortunate that we can, we can, cover that.

**KK:** Yeah, it's not something to worry about.

**JD:** Yeah, it doesn't keep us up at night. You know we're in a very fortunate position where it doesn't keep us up at night.

**KK:** Whose health are you responsible for besides your own?

**MG:** If not, that's fine.

**JD:** Yeah, I don't think there is. I think there's nobody that is dependent on me right now. I don't look after my parents. I don't look after children, and I think that ---yeah I am concerned about my husband's health, and I think we're all responsible for our own health. [laughs]

**MG:** Yeah.

**KK:** Yeah, okay.

**MG:** So you want to ask those?

**KK:** Yeah, so then these are the other three. Who were your role models when you were growing up and who are your role models now?

**JD:** So, if you asked me this when I was growing up, I would say that my role models were, you know, somebody on TV or, you know, somebody in a book I read because I was always a voracious reader. But in hindsight if I look at who my role models were growing up as the people that really shaped who I am right now, it's all people in my family. So, if I start off with my parents, you know my parents didn't have much when they were growing up. And when they met and they just you know---whereas we didn't grow up in luxury, we never wanted. My parents put both my brother and I through college. They worked hard, they instilled great values, and they're just great human beings. And they're very, very modest where they do wonderful things for other people, and we find out about it because a third person told us about it. They just do things, and they don't talk about it. Then they are just really, really inspirational people in that way. And then growing up again especially--- this is hindsight--- I have a couple of aunts that are

just amazing. So, I have one aunt, that despite having some medical problems, just has a wonderful, wonderful outlook on life. You know, that's the outlook that I want. I have another, two other aunts that are extremely nurturing and extremely just, you know--- they're all fun, but just you know, very, very nurturing and those are wonderful qualities. And then I look at--- you know, my community service and being very involved with animal rescue, and that comes directly from a different aunt of mine who was extremely involved in animal rescue. And now she has been able to make her passion a career of hers, too. And so, my role models growing up would truly be those people in my family, although I probably wouldn't have recognized that when I was growing up

**KK:** Do you have any role models now would you say?

**JD:** [sighs] Yeah, I mean it's all the same people.

**KK:** Yeah.

**JD:** Yeah just the way they live their life I really, really respect that. And it's really kind of who I aspire to be. I feel like it's always going to be like a carrot I can never taste because they are just really wonderful people--- yeah very, very blessed.

**KK:** Okay, do you think some men have threatened your---oh sorry, do you think some men have been threatened by your success in the past and do you think some men continue to be threatened by your success?

**JD:** So, in my field, to be perfectly honest, I don't feel that way, no. I feel that in my business when you--- like once you kind of prove that you belong at the table, you're welcomed at the table.

**KK:** Hmm.

**JD:** There's always--- in every field there's always that traditional all boys' club and that type of thing, but, you know, once you prove your value, I think in anything, especially in financial services, I mean you're welcomed at the table. I don't think anyone is really threatened by that.

**KK:** Hmm, okay so if you could change one thing about how society views women, what would it be?

**JD:** What I would say--and I never raised small children so coming from an outsider looking in, I think it--- I think that--- and I think women need to get out of our own way about it is that woman need to--- if women want to get ahead in business, for example, they have to be more conscious of the sacrifices they make. And the whole family needs to be on board with that. For example, if a child is sick it--- it's--- and it's not just school, it's the family that accepts this. Everyone calls the mom, and the mom has to ask the boss to go. And I'm talking about a

traditional husband and wife family, but the mom--- yeah, the school calls the mom, the mom has to ask the boss, the boss has to decide whether to let them go and let the child out of school, where it's not typically the other way around. It's not typically the school calls the dad first, and so it's not society necessarily, it's everybody and it's--- yeah the same expectation on the family too because the mom is the first emergency contact, it's not the dad.

**MG:** Hmm.

**JD:** I don't know if that fully answered your question or not?

**KK:** I mean that's definitely one way you could look at it for sure, do you want me to repeat it?

**JD:** Yeah could you repeat it?

**KK:** If you could change one thing about how society views women what would it be?

**JD:** Ugh [laughs] I think it has to be, and it goes right back down to the family level, it's that we're all in this together.

**MG:** Hmm.

**KK:** Hmm.

**JD:** Sort of thing is that, you know, I think sometimes woman--- you know in my field there's so few women in my field--- a lot of women try to do it but then--- and they're sold on the flexibility. They like the idea that there is flexibility. But then they end up using that flexibility to kind of leave the workforce for a couple years and stay home with the kids, until the kids are back in school and that type of thing. And if that works for you, that's great. But if we want to change things and if we want to eliminate the wage gap, and if that exists, that's the way to do it. There has to be more of that equality on the family level [**MG:** Mhm.] and then as it relates to work, and then as it relates to businesses, and as it relates to the kids schooling and so forth.

**MG:** So do you personally think it's kind of rooted from the family kind of like society's issues with women is rooted from the family up?

**JD:** I wouldn't say it's rooted from the family, but if it's going to change, it's going to change from the family.

**KK:** Yeah.

**MG:** That's where it's going to start. [sigh] Okay, so we just have some interview conclusion.

**JD:** Okay.

**MG:** So that was really good.

**JD:** That wasn't bad. [laughs]

**MG:** Just how do you get through tough times, like if you're experiencing something that gives you stress, how do you get through it. I know you said church was a big one, but is there any other?

**JD:** Yeah, the biggest thing before church would just be the perspective kind of maintaining perspective because the---like I said I'm so lucky. I'm so blessed. I'm so fortunate. And, you know, an example with right now is we're moving offices, and we're trying to kind of keep business open as usual with our clients and everything else. And so, you know, we're stressed to our limit but, but then you have people in Puerto Rico who have no water, [**KK:** Yeah.] [**MG:** Hmm.] and these are Americans that are--- I vacationed in Puerto Rico like it's--- they have no electricity, they have no water nothing. It's just all about perspective and it's easy to get wrapped up in yourself, and then just say alright enough's enough. You know, put your big girl pants on and get over it because it's not that bad.

**MG:** Yeah.

**KK:** Mhm.

**MG:** That's a good perspective to have.

**KK:** No definitely is.

**MG:** So how do you define success in your life and has this definition changed over time?

**JD:** Yeah, it's absolutely changed over time. So, success to me relates to business and having the business that I want that gives me the life that I want. However, I don't think you can be successful--- you can be considered successful in business if that's the only area in your life that you focus on. So, I believe that in order to be successful in business, you have to be committed to your family. You have to volunteer. You have to give to charity. You have to be--- you know church is important, so you have to go to church. You have to coach the kids' little league team. You have to do all that, so you can't be successful just in business. To be successful in business, you also have to be committed to the other areas of your life.

**MG:** Yeah.

**JD:** I also---with that said--- I also don't like the word balance. And a lot of people say there has to be the work- life balance, and I don't--- I think that is a word that is very female driven or a concept that is very female driven. And I think it's probably the concept that I loathe the most, to

be honest. [laughs] I think if you find a field that you like that you know--- most of us do need to go to work and make money every day--- so you find a job or a business that you like, and then you build a life that you like, there doesn't need to be a balance. You know, right now my business is getting more attention than my family is, but that's okay because I love my business. I love my family, and you know my family's supportive and so forth. So, I prefer the word harmony versus having a balance. I really don't like that women especially have to have some type of work life balance. I think that's ridiculous and completely unattainable.

**KK:** That's really interesting to me.

**JD:** [laughs]

**MG:** A lot of people don't look at it like that.

**KK:** Right.

**MG:** Even woman themselves will be like, "Oh I need to balance my work life with my family," but I like the fact that you're like [**KK:** Yeah.] it's intertwined you don't have to be one or the other.

**JD:** Exactly [**MG:** Yeah.] exactly yeah.

**KK:** Okay, so here is our last one. Now that we are working to tell a fuller story of the history of women then- than has been recorded in the past- sorry scratch. [laughs] Okay now that we are working to tell a fuller story of the history of women than has been recorded in the past, what should we be sure to include?

**JD:** [sighs] I don't understand can you repeat that again?

**KK:** Yeah I know it's worded kind of weird so now that we are working to tell a fuller story of the history of women now [**JD:** Okay.] as opposed to the women in the past what should we be sure to include about the woman now as opposed to then.

**JD:** Yeah, I think it's an amazing time right now because I think that the playing field has really never been more level than it is right now [**MG:** Yeah.] I think there is just amazing opportunities that I don't think were necessarily there 30, 40, 50 years ago for women to be just as successful as men traditionally have been in business. I think you are going to see more and more COOs [chief operating officers]- female COOs more and more female CFOs [chief financial officers] and more and more female CEOs [chief executive officers] of companies more and more women on the board of directors I think it's a really exciting time.

**MG:** So do you think it's going to go up from here for women?

**JD:** Oh yeah absolutely.

**MG:** You think so.

**JD:** Yeah.

**MG:** Do you think we are going to have a women president soon? [laughs]

**JD:** I think, yeah I think certainly in our lifetimes. [laughs] I don't know where the political world is going to go. The next election is going to be quite the big backlash.

**MG:** Yeah.

**JD:** But I also don't think that people- women should vote for a female president just...

**MG:** Just because...

**JD:** because...

**KK:** Just because absolutely...

**JD:** Yeah.

**MG:** Which is going to be a big issue if a female does...

**JD:** Exactly, exactly.

**MG:** Wow that was a good interview.

**KK:** I know! [laughs]

**JD:** Okay.

**KK:** Thank you so much!