

**Aissatou Bey-Grecia Interviewed by Ibrahim Ali, Barry Goldenberg, and Robert Randolph. Audio Conducted by Christopher Brooks**  
**Feb. 25, 2015, at the Sandy F. Ray Building, McKissack & McKissack, Harlem, NY, 10027**

*[beginning of recording]*

**IBRAHIM ALI:** My name is Ibrahim. And we're-, and today is February 25th. And we're at the Sandy F. Ray Building interviewing Aissatou—

**AISSATOU BEY-GRECIA:** Bey-Grecia.

**IA:** --Bey-Grecia. And to begin with, tell me about yourself. Where were you born?

**AB-G:** I was born in—

**IA:** --where you grew up.

**AB-G:** --Cincinnati, Ohio in 1953. Um-, it was a segregated town. Um-, I lived in um-, the black section. You might be surprised to know. And-- (laughs)

**IA:** (laughs)

**AB-G:** It was not officially segregated, but it was. So the high schools were all black. The elementary schools were all black. The high school that you went to was sometimes segregated. But the town, everybody who lived in my neighborhood was black and of varied income levels. It was, you know, because it was segregated. Segregation was interesting because it was segregated-, the rich people and the poor people all live in the same place because they were black and they didn't matter, you know, whether you were rich or poor. You were black. You lived in the same-- So, you know, I lived in a, a homogeneous black neighborhood. My mother was an opera singer, which was an unusual thing for a black person to be in the fifties. And um-, strange-- Just to digress a little bit in terms of history. So after the war in Europe, a lot of people – Jewish people – migrated to Ohio, strangely enough. And so—

**BG:** I'm from St. Louis.

**AB-G:** OK. Why don't I do a back—Migrated to the Midwest. Right?

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** Which is not far from St. Louis.

**BG:** Yeah. Not at all.

**AB-G:** And St. Louis is probably very much like Cincinnati. And it probably was not as segregated when he went to school-, was going to school, but it probably was lightly segregated. But it was probably highly segregated the generation before you. Your parents, right? And so the Jewish population migrated to the Midwest during, after the war. You know, after Hitler, that whole thing. And a lot of the artists-. And it was a heavily art-, heavily infused in art of Eastern Europe at the time. So there were a lot of opera, a lot of good people, right? Leontyne Price is from Ohio. Because the schools had this heavy concentration of music. So by the time I was in the sixth grade, I was playing an instrument and had been playing it for a long time. And my mother was an opera singer who was trained by many Eastern Europeans.

**IA:** Wow.

**AB-G:** So she spoke a couple of languages. You know, she could speak German and she could speak Spanish all through the music that she had learned in high school in Cincinnati, just, just to show you. And she spoke fluent Latin. Because Latin was also taught in the schools. I'm just giving this cause I'm—

**BG:** No. This is great.

**AB-G:** Cause the kind of guys that you guys—

**IA:** This is, yeah—

**AB-G:** --that might be of interest. Because it informs everything that happens to me later.

**BG:** That's important.

**AB-G:** Yeah.

**IA:** Wow. And how did you end up as a student at Harlem Prep?

**AB-G:** Well, OK, so I'll, I'll piggyback on top of that conversation.

**IA:** --Cincinnati. Yeah.—

**AB-G:** So because I was a musician, right? I came--. My mother came here to uh-. Her best friend, actually, her friend who was her pianist at, at the high school that she was at, he had gotten a scholarship to Julliard. He got, worked on his doctorate at Julliard. And my mother was a single--. She had me by big surprise when she was 18. So she was there with this talent, with a, a, a single parent, mother. He sent for her to come to, to be his soloist at a church here in um-, Harlem. St. Mark's Church on 35<sup>th</sup> Street. And so we came together. And so, you have to know that already I had a-. You know,

I was just 13, but I had already a pretty developed music sense. So it was the--. 1967.  
It was after the riots of Detroit.

**BG:** OK.

**AB-G:** Cause that was what was going on. And I'm trying to set, give you a, a uh-

**ROBERT RANDOLPH:** Set the tone.

**AB-G:** Set the tone for what the country was like.

**RR:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** And what the black communities were like. I was in a huge riot in Cincinnati, um-, that summer. So that's summer of '67. My mother, she had--, or maybe about six months la-, before, she decided to come to do opera in New York cause there was a huge opera movement also that was developing in Harlem. And then she sent for me in the summer of '67. And I came. We lived on 147th Street and uh-, right around the corner from your school, 147th between 7th and 8th. And it was a fifth floor walkup, a three-room apartment. And let me just tell you that I moved-, we moved from an 18 room house.

**BG:** In Cincinnati.

**AB-G:** In Cincinnati.

**BG:** Wow.

**AB-G:** Right? Eighteen-. I grew up in my-. My grandfather was a self-taught engineer, worked for Woolworth's. We had a huge mansion like house on one of the hugest, biggest streets—

**BG:** (heh, heh)

**AB-G:** --there with stained glass windows. I'm just trying to—

**BG:** Yeah. This is—

**AB-G:** --you know and just, you know. And we moved to a fifth floor walkup on 145th Street--, 147th Street between 7th and 8th Avenue. I thought my mother had lost her mind.

**BG:** That must have been like a shock.

**AB-G:** It was. And I spent that whole summer in the house looking at New York because I was scared to death. OK? So just think about that. But I had a music ear. I had a music sensibility. And City College was ablaze. So there were these huge riots, just

like the riots you were talking about at Columbia [speaking to Ibrahim Ali]. It was huge riots that were going on up there. And in the middle of there was what is now A. Philip Randolph. Right? But it was the High School of Music and Art which is now LaGuardia. Right? So it sat in the middle of--, on Convent Avenue, In the middle of Harlem for all intents and purposes. In the middle of the sixties, you know, 1967. And in the middle of students rioting and students shutting down buildings. And Music and Art was 97 percent white.

**IA:** Wow.

**AB-G:** There were no black students. No black teachers. And hardly no black students. In fact, it was heavily Jewish for probably some of the same reasons that we're talking about, right?

**RR:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** But there were no students from Harlem. So the Harlem community pressed on Music and Art to take students from Harlem who had music ability.

**RR:** Hmm-

**AB-G:** Right?

**IA:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** So September, they auditioned and they let—

**BG:** And what year was this?

**AB-G:** '67.

**BG:** '67. OK.

**AB-G:** --They auditioned—

**BG:** --And what grade?—

**AB-G:** I was going into the seventh grade.

**BG:** OK.

**AB-G:** They auditioned and let a bunch of us in all that, that September. So they auditioned in September, and I was admitted in September. And that's where I started going to school, the High School of Music and Art. So you got to know, I was who I was Ohio. That whole thing. But I still had perfect pitch, this incredible ear, and this, you know. And there we are in the middle of the school where the teachers did not want--, they did not want all those little black kids coming up that hill integrating what the-,

their little situation. Right? And they treated us in that manner. And they told us daily we should be lucky, they did-. You know. They, they just treated us horribly. And I was just not having it. Right? I was dissatisfied, unhappy, and I was also 13. So--. (laughs) I wasn't very patient. Um-. I was in New York for the first time in my life. You know. And New York had all this stuff that's offered. And then we had--, I mean if I could tell you the level of um-, concentration of, of uh-, subversive activity that was going on, on the campus and in the school during that time. I mean, it was like Ferguson personified. Right? It was like that was the, that was the climate, right? So if you were a black student in a situation where people were being kind of, you know, a little racist, you weren't having it. It was like: Hell, no. We're not going for this. You know? And, you know, I, I can honestly say that my school work suffered. My ability to be a good student suffered, right? And like I said, I was 13, 14. So, you know, what did I know? And, you know, my mother was navigating New York just like I was. You know? And you know, um-, we had-. I mean, I could name you many, many different people that were there with us. Um-. Uh-. I'm trying to think of the most famous person. Well, uh-, Kenny Gerlich, now known as Kenny G. He was a student there.

**BG:** (slight laugh)

**AB-G:** At the same time. Laura Nyro. She was there. These are all a little older than you. Um-, the-, what's the guy's name um-. I see all these actors all the time.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** There are lots of people who were, you know, on late night, the--. A lot of people became fa-, famous musicians. Noel Pointer. He was there. Miriam Makeba's daughter, Angela Makeba was there. Um-. And there was a woman, girl named An-. Um-. Angela um-, Co-. I mean, Lori Kochiyama. And her mother is a very famous Asian woman who is from the, like the Manhattanville Projects. They were the only Asians living in the Manhattanville Projects during that time. And she used to be with Ma-, Malcolm X. She was used to be with Malcolm X. She just died recently.

**BG:** Yeah. She did.

**AB-G:** Yeah. Yuri Kochiyama. So Lori went to school with us.

**BG:** Oh, wow.

**AB-G:** And Lori--. And her mom was always on the campus talking. I [laughing while talking: you know, she was--]. You know. So anyway, and then in the middle of it all, Martin Luther King gets shot. We all-. You know, so all of this is going on. I'm just trying to give you a--

**BG:** No. This is wonderful. This is—

**IA:** This is great.

**AB-G:** This is where we were, 1967, '68, and '69. And I'm trying to go to high school in the middle, in the--, and the world is just ablaze. And it's just-. And I'm really feeling all of it, right? So-. About 19-, uh-, 1967. I'm in the ninth grade, tenth grade. I'm in--. '68, I'm in the tenth. And by the end of the tenth grade, I'm like fuck this. I'm not doing it anymore. I can't do it. And it wasn't the school. It wasn't that I wasn't doing everything else. I just didn't want to do school anymore. I was disillusioned. I was tired. I, I was sick of the white people treating me the way they were treating me. And I just told my mother: "I'm not going back. I'm done." Right? So I uh-, went to uh-. My mother said: "Well, then what are you going to do?" That, that was her question. And um-, at that time, many of the corporations--. Because those riots scared--. New-. Uh-, America was not ready for the riots. The riot-. They're ready now. They weren't ready then.

**BG:** (heh, heh)

**AB-G:** They were totally caught off guard by that whole riot situation. So um-, the corporations then started to respond by having these programs, satellite schools, and all these things. So there was a, a street academy on 133rd and Madison. Um-. There was a guy named um-, you might want to look him up in your research. And his name is um-, hm-. I just lost it. Um-. I just lost it. Oh--. (pause) I'll think of it. I'll think of it before we go.

**BG:** OK. No problem.

**AB-G:** Um--. But he was--. Actually, he followed me to Baltimore. We were both in Baltimore because he did this--. It's called Lincoln Academy. And he must have graduated from like Yale or Harvard. And he was probably only about three years older than me. But um-. He, you know, had a school on 133rd, which was a small school. It was sponsored--, like somebody, like Standard Oil.

**BG:** Something like that. Yeah.

**AB-G:** Something like that, at that point. Cause that's what they were doing. These big corporations. They don't even exist anymore. (laughs) Um-. Were doing that in the community. Uh-. Anyway. Uh-. So anyway, and, and--. I don't know why I can't think of his name because I can see his face. You know, I just can't think--. Anyway. So that—I went to the Street Academy. Um-. And um-, he uh--.

**BG:** It was the Urban League, right? The Urban League Street Academy?

**AB-G:** It wasn't Urban League.

**BG:** Ok.

**AB-G:** It was somebody else.

**BG:** OK. OK.

**AB-G:** Um. No. The Urban League did not sponsor this one. This was Standard Oil or somebody—

**BG:** OK. So--OK.

**AB-G:** --like that, right?

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** And I was young for a Street Academy person. Cause you have to remember that my peers were people that had gone to Vietnam and come back. People that had done some time. People that had, you know, um-, you know, just a different--. There was a different, you know, so he, I think, just took a-, he took an interest to--. So we used to talk a lot. And now that I know it was a mentorship. Right? He was mentoring me. I didn't know that's what it was then, but that's really what it was. And with what I would do next, cause again, I was young. And um-. I contin-. I started dance-, doing African dancing. I totally-. I played bass violin. I totally put down my instrument.

**BG:** (heh, heh)

**IA:** (heh, heh)

**AB-G:** I um-. You know, just changed my life, you know, in, in every way. And, you know, um-. And like I said, I started studying African dance. And the Frederick Douglas projects. And one of those afterschool programs. It's interesting, the afterschool programs then always had these like incredible artists teaching because that's the, you know. They would—so, that's who would--. That's--. So the, the dance teachers

in the, in the projects were people, all danced professionally with Olatunji. Or, you know, the, the-. You know, so you got really good training. Um-. Um-. So anyway, um--. Um--. I then discovered Harlem Prep. Right? And like I said, I was young but went in, you know. They-. I applied. One of the younger people that--. And they let me in.

**IA:** How did you hear about Harlem Prep?

**AB-G:** I am not sure. Probably because I was on the circuit. I'm on the alternative school circuit. You know? I'm on the alternative school circuit. And so once you are outside of the public school circuit, then you hear about things. You know? And remember, Harlem Prep was the biggest game in town. Everybody else was small. But Harlem Prep was the, was the—was the kahuna. Yeah. And it was, you know, right on 135th, on 8th Avenue. You know. It's a church now. Between 135th and 136th. There was a-. And it was a grocery store before. It was an A&P. And then, you know, they had renovated it. And, you know, uh-, Ed Carpenter. And that's his wife, Ann Carpenter there. Right?

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** And um-, Ed and um-, his wife started the school. A bunch of Baha'is. You know who Baha'is are. Yeah, so it was a lot of Baha'i based—we now know. We didn't know that then. But now we know it was a Baha'i. But the Baha'is were always there. We didn't really know what that was. You know. So--. And there was just this homogeneous group of people that were my age who had very similar experiences. Um-. The one thing that we all had in common that wherever we were, we didn't like being there school-wise. Or we had come back from, you know, some situation and we needed some school, you know. A school experience. And that was the place that welcomed everybody. And, you know, so that's the answer to that question.

**IA:** And which year was this?

**AB-G:** Um-, it had to be—. Had to be '69, '70.

**BG:** OK. So you started in '69-70.

**AB-G:** '69, '70. Something like that. And the name of the teacher at, at the Academy, was Irving Hamer. And Irving Hamer, if you, if you look at him, you can Google him. He



was Virginia Fields education czar. And was real instrumental in building Thurgood Marshal Academy, which they thought was going to be like the Harlem.

**IA:** Yeah. (heh, heh)

**AB-G:** That's what they thought. And there's some of it, there's some pieces of it—but yeah, but I think that--. You know, it gets lost in translation. Yeah. It got lost in translation. My grand daughter goes there.

**BG:** Oh, really?

**AB-G:** Yeah. Yeah. But I think that that was the general thought. Yeah. What else you need?

**BG:** Yeah. No, I mean, there's—

**AB-G:** You got another question for me?

**IA:** So what made Harlem Prep—

**BG:** --plenty (laughs).

**AB-G:** Huh? [seeking to clarify]

**BG:** So what made Harlem Prep different than other schools?

**AB-G:** Well, the number one thing, and you know, the people were older. Everybody was older. I was one of the younger. But there were a lot of people older. And I was a dancer. And so they knew I was a dancer so they just let me teach dance, right? And so that's-. We had a little dance company that formed. That's why I had, you know, you could see that we were dancing at the uh-, the traditional African dance. I continued to study dance. I continued to, you know, dance. And then I continued to study along the lines of things that were of great interest to me. And um-. I had never--. I was always a C student. I was never an A student. And I went to Harlem Prep and I got to be an A student. Um-. And I remember the first report that um-, I did on Tanzania with Dr. Ben. He was the African history teacher. And he sent me to the Tanzania Embassy and had me to interview—

**BG:** Oh, wow.

**AB-G:** Had me interview the dag gone ambassador and um-, to go to, you know. And to, yeah, and I got--. I aced it. (laughs)

**BG:** (laughs) Wow.

**AB-G:** Yeah.

**RR:** So what was it like first for going to school there?

**AB-G:** It was very comfortable, you know, cause it was like, you know, a lot of conversations going on, lot of debates. You know, there was class. There was a caring--. I remember one of--. Dr. Ben, he was great for this. So school started at 9:00, 9:00, 9:30, something like that. And um-, you know, you'd go-, you'd go in and you could see the front door because it was an open classroom, right? So you could see the front door from every classroom. So if you were late—

**BG:** Everybody knew.

**AB-G:** --you could get yelled--. Yeah. Everybody. You could get yelled at from across the room, you know? Hey. What are you doing just coming in? You know, that kind of thing.

**BG:** That's funny.

**AB-G:** [Raises voice to mimic yelling: Or you weren't--. You didn't--. You weren't in second period, Aissatou.] You're, you know. So I was like: OK. Uh--. You know. OK.

**BG:** That-, that's funny.

**AB-G:** Yeah. So—it was interesting. It was different. It was stimulating. It was all-. It was hard to leave. It was hard to not stay late. It was hard not to come early and hard not to stay late. It was a community more than anything. Um-. And the-. It was a-. You know, we were a community, a community of students, a community of teachers, and a community of both students and teachers. There was a way that we functioned that, you know, made us a, a, a cohesive community. Um-. Lots of things were going on. I mean, there were, you know, women who were-, girls who were pregnant. Girls who had been pregnant. You know, there were lots of things going on. There were like sub-cultures all through the--. There was the culture and then there was the sub-culture. There were lots of them. And you had the opportunity to go in and out of all of them. You know.

**BG:** It seemed like a di-, like a diverse place and—

**AB-G:** Very diverse.

**BG:** And not—

**AB-G:** Diverse in many different ways. Lots of people from, you know, like the teachers were from all place-, all kinds of places. The students were from all-, every social

economic group. And then, you know, there was those, you know, the Vietnam veterans who were quite frankly a little shocked from that, you know?

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** You know?

**BG:** Totally.

**AB-G:** So you got a chance to see that up front. Like, you know, if a car backfired at any day you could see a bunch of students hit the floor. Be like—

**RR:** Like what was your experiences with that specifically?

**AB-G:** With that particular thing?

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** Like I said, you know, I don't think we even had a clue cause the Vietnam War in the middle of all this other stuff that was going on, Martin Luther King, there was also the Vietnam War. Which, you know, people had some problem with, right? So there we were, um-. I guess, you know, we were students. We were like 13, 14, 15. We didn't really have uh-, any, you know, real connection. Except we could see what was happening on the news. But then when you saw what it was-, what was happening to the people that were there, what was happening to the young men, how they were coming back. How the drugs had affected them. You know. There were people that were struggling with drugs. There were people that were still on drugs. That were still there. You know. There were all those things. That, that you could see. Those are the things that you didn't hear about on the news. Those were the things that you could see in your faces, what had happened to families. You know.

**BG:** How were, how were-, how was the administration, and you know, Ed Carpenter and teachers, like, you know, able to foster such a community beca-, among such different groups of people?

**AB-G:** Well, because you know, they, they kept it--. They were--. You know, they, they dealt with it. They dealt with it as--. They dealt with us at--. And I know we weren't equals. But they made us feel like we were. You know, we never felt, you know, that there was a—

**BG:** The hierarchy was gone.

**AB-G:** Mmm. They just, we could, we could tell them no, we didn't agree too. No.

[Pretending to talk to administration: "We don't agree with that. No, we don't think we should be here at 10:00."] Because, you know, [laughing while talking: you know.] [Pretending to talk to administration: "We don't think we should be studying that. We want African History to have this. We need--."] You know, we could say that. And then they would give us an intelligent retort rather than because I said so, which is more the public school piece. Yeah. you know what I mean? It was more, you know: Well, you need this to do that. And then this to do that. And so to do that, you've got to do this to get that. Or-. I mean, cause you choose not to do that if you want. But this is the consequence. You know, that kind of thing. The other thing they did. [laughing while talking: you know.] So that was sort of how they dealt with you, which was, you know, intelligent. Right? So the only problem with that we spent all that time doing that at Harlem Prep and when we got in the world, it just wasn't like that. But there's a piece of all us that's still like that. You know? And we bring a piece of that with us that, you know, we demand that intelligence. You know. From the world. Um-, through college, through um-, our professional lives. All of that. That's, that's the legacy. That they, they left, they left us.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** Yeah.

**BG:** What about, I mean you touched on this, but yeah, favorite teachers, favorite classes, and something--, you talked about, you know, before, you know, you were taking, you know, African History. But you know, what were some of your favorite classes?

**AB-G:** Well, Dr. Ben was one of my favorite. But and, and Sandy was one of my favorite. But you know, Sandy was another one. He wasn't that much older than us.

**BG:** Yeah. He was young. Right?

**AB-G:** And there was a whole bunch of the teachers like that. In fact, there's quite a few Harlem Prep marriages that happened.

**BG:** Really?

**AB-G:** Some teachers that married students.

**BG:** Teachers and students.

**AB-G:** Because there was not that much of an age difference. So a lot of the, you know, so like look at it. So here's your teacher. He—you're a doctoral student.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** So you'll be graduating.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** If you taught at a high school and taught seniors, you could conceivably meet somebody who was five years, four years, three years younger than you.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** That kept hap-, that happened. You know. And so people would—

**BG:** (laughs)

**AB-G:** There were marriages. I mean—a few people I know, they're still married who were a teacher and a student.

**BG:** Wow.

**AB-G:** You know at the time. You know. I was real young. And remember that a lot of the Harlem Prep students were not 17, 18, 19. Some of them were 20 year old people that had not gotten, you know, their high school diplomas. And we had 23 year old college graduates who were teaching.

**BG:** Yeah. Go figure. Yeah.

**AB-G:** Yeah. Yeah. So—

**BG:** What was that mentorship like between like the older students--. You were 15, you're, and there were 22 year old students there. You know. What is-, what was that like, I mean—

**AB-G:** It was, it was very different. It was very different. It made me have to grow up. I had to have conversations that were grown up. I had to have my research. If I was going to engage, I had to enga-, I had to bring it. I had to bring my “A” game.

**BG:** (laughs)

**AB-G:** So, you know, it, it taught me how to bring my “A” game—young. I wasn't fif-. I was like 16, 17. But it taught me how to bring my “A” game at a, as a young person.

**BG:** Yeah.

**IA:** Alright.

**AB-G:** So um-. Yeah.

**RR:** From a student's perspective, what made Harlem Prep so effective in engaging students?

**AB-G:** It was the respect, the respect that happened from the administration. From the teachers and from everyone. And they fostered an atmosphere of respect. You know. So it didn't matter if I was a smarter mathematician. I was a smarter, you know--. Or if somebody else was a smarter mathematician. And I was a better dancer. All those things le-, you know, they, they fostered respect. That respect for where you-, what you brought to the party. And I guess that really is just the world that, as Harlem Prep people, that's the world we live in our heads. In our heads, that's how the world is. Everybody brings--, they bring their own thing to the party. And you, you have to respect what that is. Whether it be, be different or whatever. You know, the Five Percenters, the, the Nation of Islam, whoever it is, you have to learn to respect that even if you didn't agree. You got to respect it, you know? So—

**BG:** That's cool. That's powerful.

**RR:** It's great.

**BG:** It doesn't happen today. You know.

**AB-G:** It doesn't--, yeah, you gotta learn it. You gotta learn it and you gotta--, you have to see the effects. You've got to see what happens when you really have that going on. When you really have that happening, where people are really respecting each other, even with their differences, respecting each other, it's a powerful moment. It's a powerful moment. And it's a synergy that then happens because then you can just take all of that and go to another level with your conversation, with your world view, with your myopic view, with the vi-, the way you're viewing people. The way you're viewing the community that you're in. You can take it to another level. It's not on that base level, you know what I'm saying?

**RR:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** Yeah.

**BG:** So um-, right, while you were at Harlem Prep, how did you view the community as a whole?

**AB-G:** Which community?

**BG:** Like Harlem?

**AB-G:** Um-. Harlem needed help. And I could help it.

**RR:** Hm.

**AB-G:** And that's what I was groomed to do.

**BG:** And that's one thing I want-, I know, I did read up on your community work and before we jump to that, I had a question similar to your [nodding to Robert] question about that but like, you know, cause the other folks we've interviewed, talked to, weren't from Harlem. But you were living in Harlem. I mean, how did, or did Harlem, you know, the community, how much were they involved with—

**AB-G:** Totally supportive.

**BG:** --Harlem Prep?

**AB-G:** And what they did is like there was a reason that they had our graduation in the, in the street.

**BG:** Yeah, which I love. It's so—

**AB-G:** --Cause they were taking it back to the street. They were like: “OK. So we took you out. We cleaned you up.”

**BG:** (laughs)

**AB-G:** And now we're putting you back. And that's sort of how, how it was. I mean, you know, and like I said, I wanted you to read my community work because I wanted to know that I'm truly a Harlem Prep student. Yeah. I've spent my whole life doing what I was taught to do. You know. In different ways. But I've stayed true to—you know, cause I work anywhere. I'm educated well enough, you know, to work anywhere. I made a choice. I'm staying here and making a difference. So, and I do that in many different ways, you know?

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** I raised my kids here and they're raising their kids here. And all of them are powerhouse people. You know? All of them. My son is a Olympian.

**BG:** Oh, wow.

**IA:** Wow.

**AB-G:** He's an Olympic fencer.

**BG:** Oh, my.

**AB-G:** He's an Olympic fencer.

**BG:** Oh my goodness.

**AB-G:** You know what I'm saying? So and, and he's currently teaching. He's the first African American coach at Columbia.

**BG:** Oh, wow.

**IA:** Wow.

**AB-G:** In the fencing department.

**BG:** Oh, wow.

**AB-G:** Yeah. Yeah.

**BG:** That's incredible.

**AB-G:** Mmm-hmm. And then I have another daughter who's uh-, works for the United Way. She--. I always say, you want to be me when you grow up, I say. You want to do community work. I got it. And then I have another daughter that's an entrepreneur. She does concierge work. You know?

**IA:** Yeah. Right.

**AB-G:** And then I have a, a grandson, he graduated um-, last year. And he's a film-, wants to be a film maker. So he's trying to figure it out. He could have really used a Harlem Prep. You know, he's trying to figure it out. And I have another daughter, grand daughter, at TMA that wants to go to medical school. So—you know, but all Harlem based. They were all raised here. And they were raised to be here. You know.

**BG:** And you feel that Harlem Prep really fostered that—

**AB-G:** Oh, yeah—

**BG:** They, they—

**AB-G:** Yeah. That the community needs you. Community needs you to be strong. They need you to be competent. They need you to—you know.

**BG:** Were other groups, I mean, you know, other community organizations involved in Harlem Prep?

**AB-G:** All--. You know—

**BG:** Were they—

**AB-G:** --that's what he tried to do. He tried to get everybody involved. You know, so everybody felt like they had a, they had a place. So, you know, at any given time, we could have--. Like I didn't know Billy Taylor was a big deal cause he used to just



come play the piano. You know, like he just had-. Wynton Marsalis. Those people used to just come. And just be in the community. He had everybody feeling like they were a part of it. But that was how, that's how Ed Carpenter was. He was very charismatic. And very alluring. And so you, it's be hard to know him and not want to come and do something for his project. Cause his project--. Then that was his project and his baby. He was amazing. You know?

**BG:** Yeah.

**RR:** Um-, did you notice any school policies that changed over time?

**AB-G:** Which, which school, school policies from where?

**RR:** Harlem Prep.

**AB-G:** The policies that's changed? Yeah. Uh-huh. Over time, cause remember when we first were there, we were an independent school. We were a charter school. If you really want to know. We were ear-, we were like a charter school. So we didn't have the same rules and “regs” that came out of public school. Public-, the public school system eventually bought them in. And then things started to change. And then they were gone.

**RR:** So you, what you're saying is that as soon as the public school system bought into the school that's when—

**AB-G:** That's was its demise.

**BG:** If you graduated--, what year? I'm not sure.

**AB-G:** '71.

**BG:** OK. So you were there two, two years?

**AB-G:** Two-, two—

**IA:** Three.

**AB-G:** --about two and a half years. Yeah.

**BG:** Did you notice any changes in Harlem Prep just in general from those two years, from the—.

**AB-G:** Well. It got--. The bigger it got, you know, we still, they still maintained—you know. But the bigger it got, the harder it got to maintain that family atmosphere. But they didn't go too-, they didn't stray too far. It-, the things that made Harlem Prep

strong were in the fabric of the organization. So it was-. You know, they did a good job of maintaining that.

**BG:** Yeah. What about the-. I mean, you mentioned briefly like the, the space is still like mind boggling to us. Like this open space and what dividers-, as class-, like blackboards as dividers.

**AB-G:** Yeah. But have you ever been into—

**BG:** --Can you describe the space?--

**AB-G:** You even been to an open classroom uh-. I mean, cause I, you know—

**BG:** I can't say I really have.

**AB-G:** I, I've, I did an open classroom Masters at Colum-, at um-, at um-, City College.

Viv--. What was the name? And it-. (sighs) I don't know. Anyway, she--. They--.

There's, you know, have you ever been to Central Park East?

**BG:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I actua—

**AB-G:** Central Park East?

**BG:** Yeah. Yeah.

**AB-G:** Yeah. That's open classroom. Right?

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** Central Park East has open classroom. It is the Harlem Prep elementary school. You know. My kids all went there. (laughs) So yeah--. Um--. Vanguard is really the Central Park East people.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** So that's Debby Meier, Vivian Weber, all those—

**BG:** Yeah. I heard—

**AB-G:** All those people.

**BG:** --that kind of kind of stuff. Yeah.

**AB-G:** Yeah. They, they all come--. You know. And if, you know, on the real, these are old Reds. They're all old Reds. I mean, I don't know if those people-, particular people were, but the concept was an old Red concept. You know what I mean when I say old Reds?

**RR:** What do you mean?

**IA:** No.

**AB-G:** They're all Communists. And so they've used Communism--, education as their means toward developing education. They all stopped rioting in the streets and went for education. So what I'm saying to you, all this philosophy got a little Communist thought to it. You know what I'm saying? People couldn't say it cause if you say it, you know. But, you know, that's—, it's in there somewhere. Somebody somewhere decided that in order to change society, you had to change the educational—uh, modality. And this modality works—in getting people to think, not just robot.

**BG:** Yeah. Yeah. I'm trying to think. Can you just--, can you describe the space in terms of uh-, we're trying--. I guess one thing we need, we're still trying to find this, find more pictures. We've seen some pictures—

**AB-G:** Yeah. Did you, did you see what Hussein--?

**BG:** Yes. So we've seen—

**AB-G:** Yeah.

**BG:** --pic-. So I'm still trying to pic-. Yeah. You know—

**AB-G:** OK. Let's see.

**BG:** --picture the open space and—

**AB-G:** Let's see. Let me, can I draw on here? [on Robert's notebook]

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** So, you know what an A&P is like, right? [Drawing in Robert's notebook] It's just a big room.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** So then there would be one classroom with a partition.

**BG:** OK. This is awesome. (laughs)

**AB-G:** Like some-. I'm just-, I'm--. Now you know, I'm 62 years old—

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** --children.

**BG:** Yeah. You're recalling!

**AB-G:** So I'm recalling.

**BG:** That's more than what we have, you know?

**AB-G:** That would be like the front door. So there was a big space open here and then, there was just these little, little cu-, like these, and there--. And this is a big place. This is a

place with 20 people. All right? And then there's a big common area. They had a little piano on the side. And then there was a downstairs. And they had administrative offices were off there somewhere. So--. That was basically—

**BG:** That's awesome. Yeah.

**AB-G:** You know. So this would be Ed-, uh-, Fred Doug. Or 8<sup>th</sup>. And this would be uh-. Well, there was a place next to it, so this would be 136. So it would be right on that corner, so something like that. The door hasn't changed. The door's in the same—

**BG:** Still there.

**AB-G:** So maybe the door would have been on this side. Maybe it wasn't over there. Maybe the door's over here. I'm trying to picture it. And then they had, you know, glass windows in the front just like a grocery store. You know. But um-, so you could see inside. You know. There were no, no bars. Yeah. Um--, the counselor, you know, you should have, have-. Have you interviewed uh-, Sandy?

**BG:** Yeah.

**IA:** Yes.

**AB-G:** Yeah. Because the counselors were--. I think the woman who was the big counselor, our favorite, she was like an ex-drug addict. You know. But she had known the streets so well so you couldn't bring any nonsense to her. You know what I mean? Like that's the kind of stuff that he did. He brought people who were from the community to do community work. You know. So it was--. And I'm sure that they didn't have their certification from--

**BG:** Yeah. I've read--. Yeah. I, I read the few newspapers that, that was one of the--, among many of the tensions, once the Board of Ed took it over that oh, well, hey, some of the teachers don't have certifications. Then we can't hire them. And—

**AB-G:** Right.

**BG:** --once you started to get rid of the teachers who made it so special—

**AB-G:** Right. That had done 'Cause I think Dr. Ben-. Who knows if Dr. Ben had a doctorate.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** I think there was always a question whether he had—

**BG:** --(laughs)—

**AB-G:** --a doctorate.

**BG:** (heh, heh)

**AB-G:** But I didn't care. He knew more about Egypt than anybody that I know and when I got into the world, I realized he knew more about Egypt than anybody. (laughs)

**BG:** (laughs) Yeah.

**AB-G:** [laughing while talking: So--.] So, you know, he's an Egyptologist of great magnitude. And then there was Dr. Simmons as well. And he—that was his protégé. I see Dr. Simmons on a bus out on 125th Street talking about Egypt and the empires of Africa and that kind of thing. Any day. Any given day. I'd be like: “Hey, wait a minute. That's my, my history teacher.”

**BG:** Yeah. That's awesome.

**AB-G:** Yeah.

**IA:** Awesome.

**AB-G:** So that's how it was.

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

**RR:** Even teachers like Sandy, like you, you wouldn't be too sure cause like when we interview him, we weren't like really too sure specifically if he graduated or not. Because like, he would dwell into like him being at school. But as soon as he was in school, I think he did like one or two years at LIU or some school like that.

**AB-G:** Right.

**BG:** Then he just started teaching at Harlem Prep.

**AB-G:** Right. (laughs)

**BG:** Yeah, he just went straight to Harlem Prep.

**IA:** Yeah.

**BG:** Like out of--. Yeah.

**AB-G:** Right. So now, so let me just tell you what happened to me. So I dropped out of school cause I'm--. And, and, and what I'm saying to you—

**BG:** In after Harlem Prep.

**AB-G:** Aft-. No, before Harlem Prep.

**BG:** Before.

**AB-G:** Remember, I dropped out. I went to Street Academy. I went to Harlem Prep. I went to college and kept going. I, I've been in school ever since. Right? Cause they taught me how to love education. Taught me how to love it. Not only love it, to, to be as on the end of it as a learner but also as a teacher. So I thought I was going to-, I thought I was going to be a teacher. And I thought I was going to be a teacher that would be at a classroom with 30 kids. And that's all I would do. And then, I realized that I could be a teacher in bigger ways. And that's, that's--. So what I do now is I work for the oldest African American construction company in the country. And my job is to make sure the people of this community work on construction sites that are here. Um-. So I was involved in the Harlem Hospital project.

**BG:** Oh, wow.

**AB-G:** When I first came there to work on this project there, they told me that they only had 50 jobs and they had um-, that um-, they were only going to be able to hire-, to, you know—so um-. And that, that's all I could do. And— [doorbell rings while talking]-- I hired 250.

**BG:** Wow. (heh, heh)

**BG:** Take your time. No worries.

[pause while Ms. Bey-Grecia walks away. Aside: Can I help you? Voice responds on intercom: [inaudible]. Come on up, Diane.]

**AB-G:** One of the people from Community Board 11 who I did a project with. Um-, and, you know, so--. Um-, I, I have a place that's open enough that people feel comfortable to drop in and be a part of. And they can talk to me about stuff. I can talk with them about what's going on. So I maintain the community presence for the company I work for. No one knows Harlem better than me. Yeah. So that's uh--. That's what I do. You can read about this oldest company. My—

**BG:** Yeah. I read a little bit myself.

**AB-G:** Yeah. They were sold out of slavery into construction. The ancestor that um-McKissack. [This next section is an aside to woman who arrives.]

**AB-G:** Diane? You can come in. Come in. Come in. Come in.

**GUEST:** You having a business meeting?

**AB-G:** Oh, it's, it's--. No. You, you're welcome. You, you can and tell them who you are.

**BG:** Please.

**GUEST:** Come tell them who I am?

**AB-G:** Yes, ma'am.

**GUEST:** As I'm bumming out today?

**AB-G:** No problem.

**GUEST:** OK.

**AB-G:** No problem. This is a very distinguished member of our community. So she can tell you--. These are some young people from FDA. And they're um—

**GUEST:** Oh, ok.

**AB-G:** They are uh-, interviewing me about my involvement with Harlem Prep.

**GUEST:** Really?

**AB-G:** Yeah.

**GUEST:** I come at the wrong time.

**AB-G:** Did you know about the Harlem Prep?

**GUEST:** No.

**AB-G:** OK. See. (laughs)

**BG:** Did everyone knew about Harlem Prep? I mean, everyone in Harlem during the time. I mean, like—

**AB-G:** I'm sure she knows what Harlem Prep is.

**GUEST:** I know what it is but I didn't know you went there.

**AB-G:** (laughs) I did. I did.

**GUEST:** Huh.

**AB-G:** And here's--. So you can spell my name correctly, that's the one thing I require.

**GUEST:** Oh, oh-. (heh, heh)

**AB-G:** That you spell my name correctly.

**BG:** Thank you.

**AB-G:** (laughs)

**BG:** You got it.

**AB-G:** (laughs)

**BG:** It's the least we can do.

**GUEST:** Did they video you?

**BG:** Thanks.

**AB-G:** They didn't videotape me. They um-, they have me on, on—

**BG:** Yeah. You're still on audio.

**AB-G:**--on record, so. So let me just talk to you about-, tell you about this just so that you'll know--

**BG:** Please.

**AB-G:** They're historians. They have uh-. You know, he's working on his doctorate. Um-, on educational history. So that's why--. There's a picture of me, Diane, right there. Graduating from, from Harlem Prep. So--. (laughs) And that's Dr. Ben giving me my diploma.

**GUEST:** Oh, my goodness!

**AB-G:** And I do have to just say that Louis Farrakhan was the keynote speaker. (laughs)

**GUEST:** Really?

**AB-G:** And that's in front of the Theresa Hotel. So um--. This is Moses McKissack, he was sold out of slavery. And this is 1822. In, to a construction, you know, to a, on a plantation, construction. And he was a brick maker. And he mastered making bricks. And he worked his way out of his situation and taught his son, his-, the trade. And his son also carried on. And then from this time, he had 14 children. Seven girls first and then seven boys. And two of the boys, Calvin and Moses, incorporated the construction business in 1905. So this is 1867. So they must have been, you know, young men. They incorporated in 1905. And in those days--. And this is Tennessee. If you were black, you could not, right around the corner from where we from. Tennessee. Cause I have a-, have my people from Tennessee, too. Um-. You could not um-, own a business or um-, be a-. Oh, well--. Construction and architecture were the same discipline. So if you built houses, there was no such thing as the architect. The architecture um-, field didn't come to be until the-, 1921. So if you built houses, you had to choose whether you were an architect or a builder, or a construction person. So they chose architecture. So they took the courses by correspondence cause if you were black, you could not go to school. You had to do it by correspondence. They passed everything. And they were denied the license repeatedly. Somebody on the board found favor, right? And in 1921, they were



awarded--. 1922, they were awarded number 118 and 117 certificates in architecture. Right? They were the first African Americans to get a governmental contract. And that was the Tuskegee Airmen Terminal. Right? So they built the Tuskegee Airmen Terminal.

**RR:** Oh man.

**AB-G:** Right? And they also built the Haitian airport during that time. Right? And so then they had--. Moses had--. This is Moses the first, Moses the second. This is Moses the third. And he had William. And William then carried the company on. And William had three daughters. Right? Cheryl, Deryl, and Andrea. And his wife, Leatrice. I work for Cheryl. Right? Which is one of the twins. Cheryl and Deryl are twins. And he had a--. She was a school teacher and she was a stay-at-home mom. And by this time, you know, they were millionaires. But when you—um, so she was a stay-at-home mom. He had a massive stroke. And was-, died. And Leatrice, who was a stay-at-home mom, took over the business with her daughters and grew it to where it is today. So--. Deryl built the Martin Luther King Monument.

**BG:** Oh, wow.

**AB-G:** OK? So-. There we go. (laughs) That's who I work for.

**BG:** That's amazing.

**AB-G:** (laughs) And I'm proud to work for them. So um-. You know. Yeah. So that's--.

That's where we are, guys. Any other questions?

**RR:** Um—

**IA:** What was your favorite part of being a student at Harlem Prep?

**AB-G:** Dancing.

**IA:** Dancing.

**AB-G:** (laughs)

**BG:** Was that a class or the actual activity?

**AB-G:** We, we, we danced. Whenever Dr. uh-, uh-, um—Carpenter spoke, we danced. So we had dance class. We had a whole community of dance--. If you look on my Facebook page, you'll see I have a Facebook picture of the dance. I, I, I got it from Hussein. Hussein got, got a picture. There's another woman who was--. She went to Music and Art with me and she went to Harlem Prep. She graduated from Music and

Art. And she graduated from Harlem Prep. And she sang background for Luther Vandross. So she is um-, another person that you can interview. She's an interesting person to talk to.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** Her name is uh-, Atila Kadija. She works for um-, works with, for NYCHA. New York City Housing. She's about to retire. Everybody's about to retire. And then Sherrie and then, you know, so--. And then Melody. You know. You know, the usual suspects.

**BG:** So I was interested to see, because usually kids graduated after one year at Harlem Prep. And it took you two years. Why?

**AB-G:** I was too young to graduate. And you can't graduate without col-. You couldn't graduate with a college acceptance. So I had to stay until I got old enough. (laughs)

**BG:** Until decided you're ready to go.

**AB-G:** (laughs)

**BG:** Was that kind of how it was? When they felt you were ready, they—

**AB-G:** Yeah. And when you got your acceptance, you could not graduate without an acceptance to a college.

**IA:** Where did you get accepted to?

**AB-G:** I got accepted to um-, Wesleyan uh-, to um-, Antioch. To um-, Hampshire. And--, there was one of those other girls' schools. One of those ones. I forget. One of those, I went there and that was like--. I, I wasn't down with the, with the girls' school, with the girls' school with the china for dinner. That was not my thing. And in the hall, you know, one of the-, it wasn't-, it wasn't happening. I think, you know, some of those--. So um-. I went to Antioch. Yeah. And at that point, Antioch had colleges, satellite colleges. It's usually in Yellow Springs, Ohio. But I went to the one in Baltimore, Maryland.

**BG:** OK.

**IA:** Great.

**AB-G:** I went there for undergrad and grad. And then I did some, I did some coursework at City College and some at Baruch.

**BG:** Did you keep in touch with Harlem Prep at all once you graduated?

**AB-G:** Yes. Some. Some. Yeah. But once it went into um-, public school, it, it wasn't anything I knew. And the people were gone. So, but I did stay in touch with Mr. Carpenter. We had a couple of reunions. Yeah.

**BG:** I don't want to take up too much of your time. Any final thoughts or reflections that you want to—

**AB-G:** I'm glad you all asked. I'm glad you came here to ask questions. So thank you for taking me down memory lane a little bit.

**IA:** Thank you for letting us--

**BG:** For telling us your stories and—

**IA:** --your stories.

**AB-G:** Yeah. Yeah. So if there's, you know--. I'd like to see what it, what comes out. I'd like to, you know, see what comes, comes from that.

**BG:** Definitely.

**IA:** Me too.

**AB-G:** Mmm-hmm.

**BG:** Our, our plan is to have these interviews and kind of create some kind of digital exhibits about the work that these stories and then down the line for me to, to write about this story which really hasn't been told, and needs to be.

**AB-G:** Yeah. Yeah. It's interesting. I think the charter school conversation is re-, re-judging the whole Harlem Prep conversation, you know? So you know what, if I had my druthers, that I would do? I would be, like to be part of a project that started another Harlem Prep.

**BG:** Yeah. Could Harlem Prep exist today?

**AB-G:** I think it could. I think it could.

**BG:** I think so, too.

**AB-G:** Yeah. It would take some special people that understood it fully. But if I could-, I would-, that would-, the thing that would pull me out of what I do now, if I could be part of a project. And I wouldn't want to be a school--, I wouldn't want to be a teacher. I would want to be part of the think tank that put it together and maybe part of administration. But in a, in a heartbeat, I would, I would uh-, I would move in that direction.

**BG:** That says it. That says a lot, right? About what the experience meant to you.

**AB-G:** Mmm-hmm. Yeah.

**BG:** Thank you so much. Are there any other questions? Or comments?

**RR:** Um--. [slight pause]

**BG:** We could talk about it for hours! I know, there's so many things.

**AB-G:** Yeah. We could.

**BG:** Yeah. I know you, but uh--

**AB-G:** I could tell you a bunch of stories. I could tell you the stories about um-, you know, there were a group of guys there were kind--

**BG:** Please.

**AB-G:** That were kind of um--, they were kind of rough. They were a little rougher and more—

**GUEST:** Thugs?

**AB-G:** They were kind of a little more than me in that they didn't know how to--. But, you know. And, and, and at that time, there was a lot of conversation, you know, there were Five Percenters. And so there was a lot of conversation back and forth with them. And they had a way that they saw women and it was all chauvinist. And it was the time. Not that it's the time to be chauvinist with women. And women were ultimately, you know, we were like, you know--. And then we were young and then, you know, that kind of thing. So fast forward 25 years later, we're all in Harlem. I know them. They know me. We've had some pretty intense arguments in our time, right? And a situation came up that I needed some protection. And they protected me like they were my father.

**BG:** Wow.

**IA:** Wow.

**AB-G:** You know what I mean?

**BG:** That was the Harlem Prep connection?

**AB-G:** The Harlem Prep connection. And I did not even know they were there. But they were just like-, they just stood, they said: "Anybody having some problem here?"

**BG:** (heh, heh)

**AB-G:** (laughs) With the sister? [laughing while talking: I was like-.] So I love all of them. And that's basically how people are. We're family. We're family forever. All of us are family forever. So--. Wherever I see them. I see them in all kinds of places. But they—they know.

**BG:** Please go ahead. [cell phone music ringing]

**AB-G:** They know what they're doing. [cell phone music] Excuse me.

**BG:** Please.

**AB-G:** [Answers phone]

[recording paused and then resumed]

**AB-G:** I will take a picture of it.

**BG:** That'd be wonderful.

**AB-G:** --and send it to you. And it's really funny. There's a store because the, the, the logo, the uh-, school motto was Moja-logo. M-O-J-I-L-O-G--.] And it was a mistake.

**GUEST:** It was a mistake?

**AB-G:** It was a mistake.

**BG:** Really?

**AB-G:** Because the Swahili word is Umoja.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** Moja logo. M-O-J-A logo. And so, you know--. [cell phone rings while she talks: You know Dr. Carpenter always used to tell the story--. We didn't quite do our research right.]

**BG:** That's funny. Oh, my goodness.

**AB-G:** It stuck. But it stuck.

**BG:** Moja-, moja logo.

**AB-G:** Mmm-hmm. With unity, there's brotherhood. Yeah. So—

**BG:** That's a funny--, who would have guessed?

**AB-G:** Yeah. It was a mistake. And he, he teaches--. (heh, heh) Cause everything said Moja--. He just kept it.

**BG:** (laughs)

**AB-G:** OK. And he just said: “So does everybody know we, we kind of messed—

**BG:** --the hell with it—

**AB-G:** --that up. But it's, it's done.”

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** You know. So I have my moja logo thing. It's a-, black with gold and a spear with two, two um-, things. It's cool.

**BG:** Yeah. That's awesome. Yeah.

**IA:** It's amazing.

**AB-G:** Mmm-hmm. So yeah, I was looking at it last night.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** I don't know how I still have that.

**BG:** Yeah. Any--. I mean—

**AB-G:** But I do.

**BG:** Do you have any other documents or any pictures or—

**AB-G:** I'm-. Uh-. Hussein is the person—

**BG:** Yeah. Yeah.

**AB-G:** Cause Hussein was the person to talk to—. He, he had the photography--

**BG:** He'll have the pictures.

**AB-G:** --department. He's got the pictures.

**BG:** Yeah. But stuff like that, and patches or—

**AB-G:** I have a—

**BG:** --you know, any—

**AB-G:** Yeah. I have that.

**BG:** --papers, anything like that.

**AB-G:** And like I said, that was my-, like my uncle in Ohio, he came to my graduation. He just happened to have that. So I'm like--.

**BG:** That's cool.

**AB-G:** Yeah.

**BG:** It's awesome.

**BG:** We don't want to take up your time. I know you, you're working.

**AB-G:** No, we're good. We're good.

**BG:** Are you sure?

**AB-G:** Yeah. We're good. Yeah. I'm, I'm good. It's the end of my day and—

**BG:** It's so gracious of you to do this for us.

**AB-G:** Yeah. This is good. So I just want to make sure--. And you all can call me if there's anything you want to-, anything you think you forgot or anything else you can think of. You know.

**BG:** Yeah.

**AB-G:** But yeah--. I appreciate the fact that you are doing it.

**IA:** Thank you.

**AB-G:** So it's good.

**RR:** Thank you.

**BG:** Yeah, I guess Chris was can officially pause it—and um, thank you.

*[end of recording]*