

Interviewee: Bob Brown

Interviewer: Justin A. Cummings

Date: April 21, 2015

Location: B & C Associates Inc., High Point, North Carolina

Justin Cummings: Alright, so this is Justin Cummings sitting here with Bob Brown. Lets just start with what part of town you grew up in?

Bob Brown: I grew up a section called Burns Hill on East Commerce St. It's a black community with dirt streets, and when it rained it was muddy all over the place. If they hadn't dug the ditches out good there was water everywhere. During the summer time there was a lot of dust, because a lot of the times it didn't rain and sometimes it would get so dusty that we would complain and the city would come with the water trucks and water the streets down. At night you could see the dust separating from the air, it was unbelievable. It was a poor area, you know back then not too many people cared about that, because it was poor and it was black, so it didn't make that much difference.

JC: I'm guessing you had to walk to school?

BB: Oh we walked everywhere. Walked to school, downtown, to school, walked everywhere. I used to shine shoes up on the corner of Washington and Wrenn. There used to be a lot of pool rooms up in there, and there if there was furniture market or something like that, I always jumped up in there. When I really got older, I was about in the 10th grade, I started shining shoes at a shoe shine shop that was right there by the railroads, called Philip's Place. This Greek fella pressed clothes in the back, and had a shine parlor in the front, where you could shine probably 10 pairs of shoes at a time. People would sit up there and I would shine their shoes, so I did that for about 3 or 4 years until I graduated from high school. I had 2 or 3 jobs in high school. I had a job at a warehouse down on Hamilton St., which this fella owned that I had met, and this is the job I got in about the 11th grade. I kept that job until I graduated high school, and the guy who owned it became a good friend. So I worked there at night as sort of a shipping clerk manager. I had two or three people working with me, we would get the boxes and orders together, seal them up, and send them out.

JC: So you were a hard worker at a very young age.

BB: Oh yeah, I worked all the time. I cut grass, shine shoes, I did a little of everything.

JC: So you worked at night and still went to school?

BB: Oh yeah.

JC: When did you sleep?

BB: Oh I slept. It's never taken a lot of sleep from me, because if it had I would have missed out on a lot of things. My first job was a policeman here in High Point [North Carolina] and I had work around the clock. Every month we would change shifts, first shift, second shift, third shift, so when I was working the third shift many times I would be working a hustle on the side, because, you know, police didn't make no money. So if I was working the 2nd or 3rd shift I would have some other kind of job. When I left that job after a couple of years, I got a job as a federal agent in New York, and I couldn't have another job then because I was working all the time, traveling, working on the mafia, undercover, and all kinds of stuff. I worked in Canada, New York, Pennsylvania, all over the place.

JC: They even sent you up to Canada?

BB: Yeah

JC: That's actually cool. Lets backtrack back to William Penn. Did you have any siblings? Did you grow up with them?

BB: Yeah I grew up with one of them. My older brother and I grew up together. My grandmother raised us, and the rest of my siblings grew up in Newport News, Virginia, where my mother and stepfather were. We stayed here with my grandma, she just wouldn't let go, and she was an absolutely unbelievable woman. Strong, brilliant, very little education, her father was a slave in Eastern North Carolina. So she was an unbelievable woman.

JC: What was her name?

BB: Nelly. Everybody called her Miss Nelly, Nelly Brown. She was an incredible woman. That's her picture right there.

JC: You speak about her fondly.

BB: Oh she was something, man!

JC: Strict woman?

BB: She was fairly strict. You know, you had to toe the line. If she told you to do something you better hurry up and do it. If she told you you're staying in the yard today because there are all these crazy people on the weekend, people getting drunk and stuff, so if she told you to stay in the yard, you stayed in the yard. If you went to church you weren't playing around in church, you know how kids go to church and they'll be moving all around, making noise. If we started fidgeting my grandmother would look at you, wouldn't say nothing, just look, and you knew right then whatever you are doing, drop it.

JC: Stop

BB: Stop. Immediately. You wouldn't move no more until church was over.

JC: She put that fear in you.

BB: She put that fear of the Lord in your heart. She was also loving, she would give you anything. I know when I started in business, I left the Bureau and wanted to start my own business, I moved back to North Carolina and everything was segregated here.

JC: What year did you move back?

BB: I moved back at the end of 1960. Everything was segregated, so my supervisor said, "You know, you're crazy for doing that." "You are a damn fool," that's what he said. He said, "Your people can't even go into a restaurant in North Carolina, and you talking about going back there and going into business. The public relations business, ain't no negroes in that kind of business." I said, "Yeah, but I'm going to try, it's something I want to do." I was going to be doing it all over, so I came back home, with my wife and we were struggling, I mean big time. My grandmother just kept encouraging me, she kept saying, "If you want to do it, I always told you, you gotta stick to it, got to give it everything you got. Take the Lord with you all the way and she said you're going to make it." She said, "I'm not an educated woman but what you tell me that you are trying to do, you are going to help a lot of people. So she said just keep on going." So I kept on going.

JC: Is that when you established B&C?

BB: Mm-hm

JC: Nice, you guys have been open for awhile.

BB: Oh yeah, a long time. After awhile I got it going. One thing led to another, and another, and another. Working with Martin Luther King Jr., he became one of my closest friends, I traveled with him, sat on his boards, I went with Coretta to pick up his body after he was killed. Bobby Kennedy, who I met when I was with the Bureau, and he was the chief counsel for the Senate Rackets Committee, when he left there he wanted to run for Senate. His guys called me and I worked with him to make him a U.S senator. When he wanted to be president, we worked together and I tried to help him with that. Then he was killed. It's funny though, you know, I saw him and his wife and we were all in my suite at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Atlanta when Dr. King was killed that night. Me, Earl Graves, Sydney Poitier, and a whole bunch were sitting around talking about where the country is going. He [Bobby Kennedy] chatted with me about helping him to be president, so I agreed to do that, and a few months later he's dead. He's killed, so my world is turned upside down. 'Cause here Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., who I traveled with, was close friends with, and who I served on his board, his executive committee, it was tough. It was a tough time of my life, it was 1968, it was a tough year, but also a dramatic year because after Bobby was killed I wanted to not deal with

anybody, anything and all of a sudden I run into some friends of mine who are working for the Republican National Committee and Nixon. They courted me and asked me to give him advice and counsel. I didn't have to change my registration from Democrat to Republican. They said, "We just need your advice, your expertise." So I agreed to work with them a couple of days a week. The first week was 5 days, and the ensuing weeks it was almost 7 days a week, until Bob Finch, who was Nixon's campaign manager, got in touch with me and said that Nixon wanted me to travel with him everywhere he went, because I had handled some very sensitive problems.

JC: You were the minority advisor, right, or something like that?

BB: For Nixon?

JC: Yes

BB: Yeah, I was the Special Assistant to the President for domestic affairs, but I concentrated on the whole minority effort and everything that dealt with that, I was the President; I mean, Nixon didn't speak to nobody without me, I told him what to say. I have memos, pictures everything.

JC: I have them, and we're actually launching the website at the High Point Museum April 30th.

BB: It was an unbelievable time, one thing lead to another, and another, and another. We were able to get a lot of things done because I set up special commissions. We didn't have black folk in the hierarchy in the military. We only had three blacks in the hierarchy in the whole military. So we changed that, and the way we changed it is that we came up with an initiative. Every time that the Pentagon would send over the list of people who would be named flag officers, the President would have to sign that because he was the Commander and Chief; that list would come to me. I had my ways to find out if there were any blacks, women, or minorities. Most of the time they weren't on there, they didn't even think about that. So I would give it back to Haldeman to send it back to the Pentagon unsigned, Nixon would never see it, we would just send it back unsigned. So we did that for maybe 4 or 5 months, boy they got that message. They finally got the hint. So after then, every time they sent a list there was somebody black on it. We had plenty of blacks in the military, top blacks, brilliant, but because of the color of their skin...

JC: They could only go so far.

BB: That's right, so we let them know that nobody was going to do shit unless we got what we wanted. We put them in charge, General Fred Davison was the Army chief of staff in Europe. So what I would do with our people is from time to time if we were having trouble on base, I don't care if you are black, white, yellow, or green, I would just show up at base. I'd get on the White House plane and when I'd be about 30 minutes away I would have the communications officer on the plane call and tell them I was on the way and I'll be there in 35-45 minutes. I would drop down on that base and they

would be scrambling. If they didn't have no black men, they would be trying to find some. Then I established a small commission of some blacks and whites who traveled all over the world to these military bases, and that was their job to talk to the people to see what they are doing.

JC: So you didn't have to make those trips anymore.

BB: Well, I made a few. I always made some, just to make sure they understood. One of the classic trips I made was, Roy Wilkins called me one time, he was the head of the NAACP, and he said, "Bob, I got some reports that an Air Force base in Mississippi, Biloxi, Keesler Air Force base..." its still there, it's a huge base.... "I got the word that blacks couldn't go in all those restaurants and bars that surround the base." Blacks couldn't go in 'em.

JC: And this is in the 70's?

BB: Oh yeah, this was in the 70's. So I said, "Really?" and he said, "Yeah, man." I said, "Don't worry about it, let me check it out." That day, I call. we had appointed a black guy as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, I think his name was Howard something, he was a former judge out of Minneapolis, he was a big tall guy who liked to pontificate everything. I called Howard and said, "Look , we're going down to Mississippi tomorrow, I want you to let the General who is in charge of that base know that were coming down there to look around and see if there are any discriminatory practices going on. Tell them I just want to see, and I want you to go with me." He said, "Oh yeah, I'll do whatever you want." So we get on a White House plane the next morning and we fly down to Mississippi. We go to the base commander, the general in charge of the base, he's a 3 star general, or something like that, and the first thing he tells me is, "Mr. Brown, I want to let you know there is no discrimination at all around here. We're all on top of that." I said, "Yes sir, but we got a little report and I wanted to come check it out myself." He said, "Yes I know. We have our military police there, and the colonel here is our base commander, he will take you where you want to go." I said, "Ok, thank you general. I'm going to make rounds and then well get back together later on this evening."

[Interruption for a phone call]

Anyway, they had the military police lined up so we got two cars and we're in the car with the base commander. We pull out of the gate and as soon as you get out of the gate that is civilian [territory], so all around the base they have bars and restaurants. So as soon as we get out of the gate I see all these airmen going into these bars, and I didn't see not one black going nowhere, not one. So I told the man, stop the car, and he said, "Oh no, Mr. Brown, were going over here to another area where most of them go." I said, "No stop the car now." So he had to order them to pull over, you know, all those motorcycles and cars. So they pull over, and I see restaurant after restaurant, bar after bar, so when we stopped, I said, "Let's go into this place right here, I see all these airmen going in here." So we get out and we walk up in there, and as soon as I walk in the door this white

woman comes over to me and she said, "We don't serve coloreds in here." I said, "What?" She said, "Oh, we don't serve no coloreds in here." I looked at Howard Bennett, who's deputy Secretary of Defense, he's black, I'm black, and the Colonel turned about 50 different colors of red. He jumped up and said, "What do you mean you don't serve coloreds in here?" She said, "Well that ain't me, that's just the policy. Non of these places served coloreds." Boy, you coulda bought him for two cents. So I said, "Ok I don't need to see anything else, when we get back in the car, get on the radio and call the general. Also get a hold of my pilots and tell them we are headed back to Washington, but I want to see the general right now." So they take me back over there, go into the general's office and the general said, "Mr. Brown what happened?" So I told him. He said, "Well I haven't heard of that." I said, "General let me tell you something, I'm going to give you a choice. Your choice is that by close of business tomorrow, if all of these places that I see these airmen going in that black people can not go in, if all these places are not off limits to every soldier, then we gonna have a problem out here at this base." Man he turned about 50 different colors, he said, "Yes sir, I'll be in touch." I said, "I hope you will." So I walked out of his office and flew back to Washington. The next afternoon, I get a call from Howard Bennett, from the Pentagon, he said, "The general issued an order and I better not see nobody in any of these places." Done deal. The next day all those owners of those places got together and integrated every place. The next day. Effectively I put those establishments out of business.

JC: Right without the airmen there wasn't enough people around.

BB: Right, without the airmen you ain't got no business, there is no business. So I put them right out of business.

JC: Force change.

BB: Mm-hm, force change. So we handled a lot of things like that, in terms of getting blacks involved in businesses and stuff, stuff that right now is being neglected by the current administration with a black president. I mean I don't see nothing going on. You have to stay on your case, and it don't make no difference if you are black, white, blue, or green who's up there, if you are going to take care of the business, that's all that matters. So don't ever forget that, I supported this guy because I thought this was the only time in my life I was going to see somebody my color be president. He's a nice enough guy to talk to, I've been with him in the White House several times, and he's a nice enough guy, likes to play golf, but taking care of business for us [African-Americans]...

JC; Haven't seen it.

BB: Like all these blacks being killed, if I were there, or Nixon was there, shit man I would have had a big meeting at the White House with chiefs of police, and who ever is in charge in the Justice Department. Man I would have been kicking their ass and taking names. You understand? This guy you can hardly get a peep out of, blacks are being killed all over. I mean it's open season on black men.

JC: Someone just got killed a couple weeks ago.

BB: Oh, a couple days ago. Its open season, and you ain't see him. What kind of shit is that?

JC: I feel you on that. I was actually at his inauguration standing out there in the cold.

BB: Oh yeah I was there too. But what I'm saying to you is, what I think we as a people (black folk) learned from this is that we don't care what the party label is, if you're right wing left wing, we don't care, as long as you take care of business. Nixon was supposed to been the devil reincarnated so far as black folk are concerned, but we got more out of Nixon then any other president we've ever had.

JC: Partially thanks to you.

BB: Well you know, he gave me the leverage. No one countermanded what I was saying, and I attended all the cabinet meetings with all the cabinet members. Nixon is telling them, in the cabinet, that Bob handled this, this, and this. So they knew, they got the message, cause I had my own seat. Had my own chair with my name on it, a little brass plate. You got to have the action oriented towards...and black folks had never gotten any major contracts out of the government, and we changed all of that. And all of them that got contracts, I brought them into my office to let them know what the deal was. I said, "I want to work with you all, but here's the way it's gonna be." You all are still going to be getting the lion's share but we are going to split it up a little differently, ain't nobody doing nothing now. All the enterprise offices we set up all over the country, Obama is closing those down. I haven't heard one peep from the NAACP, you understand what I'm saying?

JC: Mm-hm, we are going backwards. Real fast.

BB: It's a pitiful situation.

JC: I guess that's why they call it a struggle, right?

BB: Yeah, but I'll tell you what, he better get in front of this stuff that's happening now, with all the killing, because the stuff is going to burst wide open. People are going to come out of these side streets, and these ghetto men are gonna be killing people, and it's going to be a terrible thing. Blacks are going to suffer as well as whites, cause they ain't just going to be killing white people, they are going to be killing anybody that gets in their way. You can't continue down this road without it having a devastating effect on the country. You can't do it, it will not work. There will be an effect on government, businesses, it's going to throw the country into turmoil, big time. I'm telling you, just watch. It's gonna burst wide open.

JC: I heard it here first.

BB: I hope they have enough sense to get it together. Up to now I haven't seen, you know, no real initiatives. Have you?

JC: Just the protests that followed.

BB: Yeah I'm talking about a constructive initiative that says do this and do that. I mean yeah you can protest, but we've got to do a hell of a lot more than that, we got make something happen. You ain't making something happen, the protests aren't doing anything. So it's a tough situation. I don't care who the President is, because the Presidency is the toughest job on the face of the earth, very difficult.

JC: Do you think because he [Obama] is black he has to tread more lightly than if we was a white man on these types of issues?

BB: Oh no, no, no. What you talking? Shit, you kidding me? You would expect him to be doing more and he's doing nothing. Tread light? How you gonna tread light when its open season on young black men. You are supposed to get out in front of that, because all of this is stuff that is bottled up. Like this situation in Baltimore, you have a black mayor, you have a black police commissioner, but the people doing the killing are white. Guy gets in a truck, he's normal, he's breathing, everything is ok, then he gets downtown and his back is broken in several places, neck broken, and everything broken. Now how is that gonna happen 'cause he fell down in the truck? You strain my intelligence, man. People know, and people are going to explode, and what's going to cause them to explode is that we have people on the street looking for jobs and opportunities, and they got nothing to do. There is a whole lot of killing going on any, too many guns, and too much dope. So it's a tough situation.

JC: I definitely agree with that but let's backtrack a little bit. You talked about segregation a lot after you were out of William Penn, what were your feelings about segregation while you were at William Penn or just as a child in general?

BB: I felt it was wrong, that we needed to push ahead, and I felt that someday it would be over, but we were going to have to reach for the sky, reach for the top, and do some absolutely incredible things to prove to people that black people could do as well, and in many instances much better, than anybody else on the face of this earth. And then I read a lot about history, about who did what under certain kinds of conditions. I read about what has happened in America that didn't get much attention. You know, who designed the city of Washington, George Washington Carver and what he did with the peanut, people are still astounded. I read all of that and about different people. I met Mary McLeod Bethune when I was in the 7th grade. I was over at William Penn and she came to our school to make a speech, and the principal assigned me to take her around, and I spent the day with her. She told me a whole lot of stuff, she said, "Boy you are going to be a good man one of these days. I wish I could live to see it, but I want you to just work hard, and don't let nobody turn you around." She talked to me for a long time, I was just a young poor black boy, and I met many many many many other people over the years, so I got a lot of inspiration.

JC: Dr. Burford had a lot of speakers come into the school, right?

BB: Yeah, he was our principal, and he knew a lot of them. My uncle, my mother's brother, who graduated from the same high school, he was poor we were poor, we didn't have much but he went to Livingstone College and graduated top of his class. Then he applied to get into Boston University, and he didn't have much money, but they let him in. He graduated from there and got 2 or 3 degrees, and theology a masters. He later became a bishop in the AME Zion church for many years. He's dead now but he was an inspiration, because in the summer months my brother and I would go visit with him, stay with him, he would get us a little job or something because he knew everybody. He operated in Pittsburgh, Providence, Boston, and different places. I later became a member of the board of trustees for about 30 years at Boston University, where he went to school.

JC: That's where you sent Nelson Mandela's grandkids, right?

BB: That's right.

JC: That's still a fascinating story. You talked about Dr. Burford a little bit but can you talk about any teachers? What they were like, and specific instances...

BB: There were any number of them, people like Miss Ethel Cobb Hughes, she was a great history and civics teacher. Brilliant woman. Miss Wilson, who I took Latin under, English, and literature. She was such a smart woman, they had masters degrees, many of them worked towards their PhD's. Miss Birdie Kendall, who is still living by the way, she was a brilliant woman. She taught biology. I think she is the only one of my teachers that I know is still living. They were just a lot of brilliant teachers and they helped me, and I learned so much. I had a thirst for learning, I wanted to soak up everything I could. I mean, I couldn't learn enough, and I couldn't learn it fast enough.

JC: That's probably what makes you so successful now.

BB: Well it helped, because I still have the same thirst, it never goes away.

JC: I know this was a little before your time, because you graduated before all the civil rights sit-ins and everything like that, but were there any civil rights fever during your time? Were there any demonstrations or protests?

BB: We would have a few from time to time, but not many. People were concerned and there would be meetings, meetings at churches about whatever happened to somebody they would bring it to the pastor, and they would have meetings about how they are treating blacks at this place or that place. The word would go out, don't go to that place because they don't treat black people right. Hit a black woman or whatever Black folks had their own stuff right here in High Point. We had grocery stores, service stations, we had two black owned drugstores, and we had a lot of black doctors.

JC: Seems like a very tight knit community.

BB: We had a lot of stuff. Greensboro, same thing. Charlotte. We didn't have our own hospital, but the hospital was segregated. There was a black section in the hospital.

JC: Do you miss that in a way?

BB: No, I don't miss it. I think it was inevitable, I think the best society is one that's a holistic society, everybody's feeding off of it, equal opportunity for everybody, that's the best way. So I don't miss it, but in some ways it worked. It created incentive among a lot of other black folk, because they saw other black folk making it so they felt like they could make it too. It incentivizes people, it incentivized me.

JC: I feel like William Penn's a perfect example of that. I feel like because you guys had that space where you could see black people moving on to the next level, and see influential black people as teachers...

BB: That's right. And then many of the black people who graduated from William Penn would come back. The principal would have them come back and speak to the different classes, and speak to the assembly. I mean we had that all the time. The guy in the military, the guy'd be a captain or something. Boom, he'd have him back, show that hey he graduated from William Penn and did some other kinds of things. There'd be a successful preacher or teachers.

JC: Do you think that sense of pride has kind of left the community?

BB: To some extent. I don't think we have enough of that now. Everything is so-called integrated, and I think integration's fine, I think it's perfect, but we need to make sure that it's infused with all people, not just one group of people. Because these kids, black and white, are looking. You're teaching children, you're molding minds. That's important.

JC: I definitely agree. Just so we have the information, what year did you graduate from William Penn?

BB: 1954

JC: 1954. And then you came in at the seventh grade, right?

BB: Yeah, I came in at the seventh grade. I was at Leonard Street School, and Leonard Street went to the 6th grade, and from the 6th grade I went to William Penn, where I was in the seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth. By the time I was in the eleventh grade I was the editor of the school paper, and I was the editor for all the eleventh and the twelfth grade, the Students' Pen paper. I wrote editorials and went out and sold ads so that we could have some money to publish the paper. And we had other people doing things, we'd have articles, in fact I've got some of those papers somewhere.

JC: We've actually got them on file, over at the Human Resource Room at the Library.

BB: Oh do they?

JC: We have them cataloged, so I'll go back and see if I can find any of your articles.

BB: Well, I was the editor in the eleventh and twelfth grade, and that would be 1953-54. You can find my name in there in '52, '53, '54. You can find articles in there that I wrote, I don't even believe I wrote them myself. Editorials and such.

JC: That's interesting, yeah. I was actually reading one of Glenn Chavis' compilation books that he put together, and I saw that you won a couple of awards at William Penn.

BB: Oh yeah, I won a lot of awards. I won the Oratorical Contest, which gave me about \$150 to go to college. I won the Quaker Oratorical Contest, that was another \$150-200. That was the way I went to school. Then I got some scholarship money from the union, and they tried to get me to go to Johnson C. Smith, and now I just agreed to give all my papers, all that stuff, to Johnson C. Smith.

JC: Your college papers?

BB: All of my papers. I've got books, papers, a basement full of them. I've got them over in storage next door. I got 'em in the attic of my house. I've got 'em all over the place, all kinds of papers, books, stuff from my work, the Bureau, the White House. All this running back in here- papers. So Johnson C. Smith is going to build a building, and then they'll have scholars who come in and research.

JC: I'd love to check out that room. I'd love to check out all of it. [Pause] Do you have any kids yourself?

BB: I have one son. He's in Atlanta. He works for some company down there, I've forgotten. But the last few years he's been teaching in South Korea, he loves that. So he came back and we got him a real job, he's doing very well.

JC: Interesting. This has been a great experience, honestly. I'm happy we could sit down and talk.

BB: OK, well keep in touch and let me know what you're doing.

JC: Of course. Before we wrap this up, do have anything else to say or think I missed anything?

BB: I did hard work with a lot of people. I worked with Mandela. I worked with President Kaunda, who was the president of Zambia, about thirty years, he's been the longest sitting head of state on the continent of Africa. He's been here to High Point to play golf, stayed with me. Of course, Mandela and my relationship with him went way

back and President Shagari of Nigeria, who I worked for him and his campaign for reelection in 1983, he was a very nice man. There was a guy who was one of his top guys, he was the minister of transportation and principal advisor to the president of Nigeria. He was one of my closest friends, he died last year.

JC: Sorry to hear that.

BB: But he was [interruption to talk with employee]. Yeah man, I've worked all over the world with different people. I've traveled all over to China and Japan. Represented Japan Lines, had them come here to play golf, those guys love to play golf. Just different ones in different places all over Africa, all over Europe, Asia. There's so many of them I'd have to look through my books and see which ones.

JC: How were you able to be traveling all over the world and still build this place up?

BB: I'd be involved in different things locally, statewide, nationally, and I'd meet different people and people would seek me out. Like I had a guy come here from the South Sudan two or three weeks ago. He came and spent a day and a night with me. His father was one of the leaders who helped set up the Sudan area. He's a professor in England at one of the great schools there, but he still lives in the South Sudan. And we spent the whole time talking and meeting together, I introduced him to a lot of people, but just a tremendous man. I've agreed to send him some books, I sets up a foundation years ago, we've sent millions of books to Africa. We sent a lot of books, socks.

JC: So you're still doing a lot of work all over the place, not slowing down any time soon?

BB: Well, as long as the good Lord give me health and strength [interruption to talk to another employee].

JC: Well, I personally just want to thank you for everything I did.