

*Across the Bridge*

**INTRODUCTION**

[music plays]

**Lisa:** Hi listeners, welcome to our podcast, “Across the Bridge.” My name is Lisa and I’m a senior studying public health.

**Lily:** My name is Lily and I am a senior studying computational biology.

**Matthew:** My name is Matthew and I am a first-year student studying Spanish and linguistics.

**Lily:** We are all students at the University of Rochester, and this semester we are enrolled in a course called “Translation: Interpreting and Adapting”. Throughout the semester we have translated a range of materials in different mediums, including textual and audiovisual. Through this, we have come to understand the process of translation, and the choices we have to make during that process, including language and cultural awareness of both source and target audience. We then had the unique opportunity to apply these skills through the community engagement component of this course.

**Matthew:** The purpose of our community engagement course is to learn about issues in the neighborhoods surrounding campus and work with local partners to help apply theories and methods of cross-cultural communication that we learned in class. Our class counts towards the community engaged scholarship citation, and is an opportunity for students to branch out and see the real-life effects of their classroom learning.

**Lisa:** For our final project, we decided to create a podcast to bring more awareness to the greater Rochester community and two businesses in SW Rochester, The Wok and D&L Groceries. By hearing Maria from the Community Design Center Rochester, listeners will learn a bit about Rochester. Additionally, we will hear from Wayne at The Wok, and Dolores and Linford at D&L Groceries speak about their experiences in Rochester and their businesses. We hope that students and community members will visit the businesses and engage with the community across the bridge.

Additionally, our other classmates Monica, Diana, and Fawzi have created a complementary documentary which you can find on our class website.

***TRANSITION*** [music plays]

**Matthew:** We first spoke with Maria Furgiuele (fur-jew-ellie), the executive director of the Community Design Center Rochester (CDCR). The CDCR is a non-profit organization of design professionals who work to bring awareness to the importance of building sustainable communities through encouraging thoughtful use of resources and design quality. The organization works directly in the community through developing various plans and providing support for various community projects. You will hear Maria speak about her experiences, community engagement, and the importance of urban design in building communities.

***TRANSITION*** [music plays]

## **MARIA'S INTERVIEW**

**Matthew:** Would you like to introduce yourself and what your role is in the CDC?

**Maria:** Sure. I am the executive director of the Community Design Center Rochester. This is an organization that is existed for 20 years. And we exist in the community as a resource to educate about how the way we shape our physical environment impacts the way we build a community. So we do that through education, advocacy, and what we like to call community engagement.

**Matthew:** And are you originally from the Rochester area?

**Maria:** No I'm not, I'm from Venezuela. So I'm from the tropics, I came here when I was 5 with my family. We settled here in Rochester, and this has been home ever since.

**Matthew:** And you said you went to college in New York City and when you came back, was there something that drew you to the Rochester area?

**Maria:** Uh no. [laughter] This was home so this is always a great place for family gatherings, being that age when you're ready to fly the coop and spread your wings out, explore new territory, I was very excited to go to a big city area like Long Island, and New York. And I was very much interested in staying in that area except the best job offer I got was back here in Rochester and that's the reason I'm here now.

**Matthew:** And what are some of your goals with the CDC and in working with the Rochester community, being a member of it from a very early age, to now that you're working here?

**Maria:** Well, our goal is to really help influence the way Rochester becomes a better city. There have been a lot of statistics recently regarding the high, high poverty rate, the terrible segregation that exists in our community and planning has something to do with that. A lot of this happens because as people had resources to leave the city, to build a new home in the pristine countryside, the people that couldn't, that didn't have the choice to do, those remained. So that concentrated the people that didn't have the resources. So we feel that planning can play a part in helping to rebuild the city in a way that will be more inclusive, that could be more reflective of the diversity of the community, and also to help create the paths that people that don't have the resources need in order to be able to start moving up the ladder of financial stability.

**Matthew:** And have you noticed any changes in the community over the past few years?

**Maria:** Yes! It's been a really exciting 10 years. I've lived in this, I've lived here in Rochester, I've lived in this country for 50 years, we just celebrated our 50 year anniversary last year. And I remember my father used to work in Hickey Freeman's and we only had one car, and every morning, my mother would drive him there so she could have the car to run the errands she needed to run and every evening we would go back and pick him up, and we'd stop by World Wide News to get the paper and we'd drive down Main Street and whatever. And then we kind of went through a couple of decades of the city really becoming



kind of a lonely place, Main Street was vacant, the shops were closed up, there was very little activity, and we're seeing over the course of the past 10 years especially, a lot of interest and excitement about urban living again. And I think one of the things we don't understand –or, we understand better now as we look back, the way things have been is that the more we cater to people being able to drive everywhere with a car, the more it deteriorates your urban experience. And so we have to be very understanding of the fact that if we want to accommodate cars, it doesn't make it a nice place for people. And urban places need people. So now that we know that, maybe we can start to design a place much more intentionally understanding that we have to make places for people, and also find a different place for the cars to be, so that we can all be happy together.

**Matthew:** Besides walkability, are there like other factors that go into making an urban space popular for the people?

**Maria:** Absolutely. This whole concept of the city became a place where people only came to work, there was nothing else that was being offered here, it was just a couple of office towers, and people came in the morning and worked, and left at 5 o'clock and the place became a desolate place. So we definitely need a variety of uses, you need to be able to activate spaces over the course of the 24 hours, not just for that short period of time. So, having that understanding really helps us to realize the value of creating the housing that is being created downtown, and with housing, with residents all of a sudden need to be able to shop downtown, so then they start to put some little pressure on being able to have the kind of access to resources that they want for their day-to-day living. One thing that has become, that is being, something that is happening that I think is really interesting is, now we're seeing our residents looking for things, like they want a dog park, they want all the things that you would normally want any other place, and so we're not used to seeing our downtown environment as an actual community. We have never referred to it as such. And so now we're having to kind of reenvision what that means. People live downtown, then they can be a neighborhood and they want the same things that every other neighborhood has: access to greenspace, places to do special things. So that's kinda cool.

**Matthew:** So in terms of Southwest Rochester, the Brooks Landing/ 19th Ward community, has your organization done any work or have looked at any projects in that area or has experience with it?

**Maria:** Yeah, actually, when we look at the history of our organization, over the course of 20 years we have been involved with practically every neighborhood in the city. So we have done work in the PLEX [Plymouth-Exchange] neighborhood. We did work with Corn Hill Neighborhood Association with the Corn Hill Design charrette. And, so, a lot of things that we have seen happen in Brooks Landing are result of some of that community engage process. One of the things that we really value highly is what we call community engagement, which is a process that we bring expertise to a community, but we are also there to listen. And, so, through regular series of meetings, we talk to the community about design strategies, they talk to us about the things they're concerned about. Often times it has to do with parking, fast-moving cars, access to greenspace, and sometimes it's relative to some project that's been proposed from some outside entities. We really try to educate people about how can we build communities from the inside out, from looking at the resources and the people, and the established systems that are existing in the community, and then help them understand what they need so that they can invite those resources into their community. So it's a very different kind of landscape than somebody comes in and recognizes wow, there's this wonderful vacant lot here, and I can build this! You know, we think you need that! So, most of the education is what we really are excited about.

**Matthew:** And, in this room we see a lot of displays with the different potential projects the CDC is working on, is there an upcoming project or ongoing one that you want to discuss or one that you're passionate about?

**Maria:** Oh, I'm passionate about community building and I'm passionate about educating people about how important it is that we understand that the way we create space has a very intimate relationship with the way we build community. So just as an example, as we let more cars kind of take over our city streets, or the streets of our region, the roadway starts to become an impediment, starts to disconnect the different neighborhoods from each other. As people have more difficulty crossing the roadway, then people start to stay within a certain area or they start to say well, it's too hard to get from here to there, so let's just not go there. So, educating people about the very intimate relationship between intentionally deciding if we want to build an inclusive space, if we want to create a community that has access to resources, we have to make sure the physical environment allows for that. Part of this is access to neighborhood schools, and a big part of that conversation is being able to find ways that there are jobs within the neighborhoods, as opposed to just places where people just get in the car and go off to work somewhere else. And the more that we can create the ability for people to stay within their areas as much as possible, then you have a better chance of building communities because when people interact with each other on a regular basis, that's when they start to have a conversation. You see people walking down the street and two or three times you pass them, you smile, the third time you say, "Hello! Who are you? You want you walk together?" you know? But that won't happen if we're each in our own car, so that's the important relationship there, but as far as projects go, to answer your question.

**Matthew:** And branching off that, in terms of the future, as we're seeing Rochester development, where do you envision the city going in the coming decades, and are there some things you're looking forward to?

**Maria:** Yeah, as I said, the 10 years have been really exciting, and seeing this rebirth of interest in the urban environment. We're seeing and understanding the need to eliminate and narrow some roadways, so a great example of that and it's actually a project that's gotten national recognition is filling in the interloop and when we first started doing that, we understood the value of that but the community at large really didn't understand, and the reason that happened was that because it was a sunken roadway, every crossing was a bridge, and all of the infrastructure for this system was deteriorating, and needed repair. And so it was cheaper for us to fill in the interloop and create a surface roadway than to repair all those bridges. And as a result, that helps us to net the fabric of the city together. But the wonderful thing is now when you see what's already been done, you already see how people start to be able to cross that what was very intentionally a barrier, and now we're beginning to see how people can just go through that and kind of lose the -the edge is softened. And once that base starts to get built upon, all of a sudden it will be erased. So that's a terrific project, and we'd love to see an advocate for the rest of the interloop being taken away, but people are still concerned about well, what about my 5 minute connection to the expressway to get to the airport? And the airport's 15 minutes away, people! It's not like it's *that* far, so instead of taking you 15 minutes, it might take 20 minutes.

**Matthew:** And is there anything you would want the community members of Rochester, maybe students coming to RIT or the University of Rochester to know about the Rochester area? What's the one thing you would want them to take away if they had to learn about Rochester?

**Maria:** Well -

**Matthew:** I know, it's a big question. [laughter]

**Maria:** Well, no, we – so often people go to a place and they are engaged in their community and their environment, and they don't venture beyond that. So not just for Rochester, but wherever you go, certainly make sure that you know your community, and your place, but also have the curiosity to explore beyond that because campuses tend to be somewhat isolated, and that is one of the complaints that we as an urban place or even as a region complain about. We have huge populations of students in this area, but we have very little interaction with the community, wherever they are, so I would say Rochester is a great place to explore and have some great resources, it's small enough where you can make an impact in whatever you choose to do and that's one of the best things about it.

**Matthew:** I know just speaking from my own experience, coming here, it wasn't until this semester I started to explore the city more: going to the memorial art gallery, concerts at Eastman, walking along the Genesee Parkway, there is a very beautiful city that has a lot of resources that I think not many students know about, or people come into the city initially, so I think that's definitely something important and I hope with this interview, people get to learn about what is available in the city and how to explore it.

**Maria:** Sure, definitely. Everybody tries to find how I can make a difference, and to be in a place like – I was thrilled to go to New York City, I just love the energy, and – but, it's really hard to be impactful in a place like that. A place like Rochester, I mean, when the mayor became mayor, she hired this young guy, I don't know where he came from, but he runs the – he's the Director of Innovation in Rochester. Fresh out of school, I thought he was like 18, but he must have been like 24, but still, to be able to have the opportunity to go into a place and start to effect some change is amazing. So hopefully we will be able to lucky enough to keep some of you guys here.

**TRANSITION** [music plays]

**Lisa:** We spoke with Linford and Dolores Hamilton, who are the owners of D&L Groceries. They are originally from Jamaica, and they sell food and spices from the Caribbean and Africa. D&L Groceries first started in 1986 and is one of the longest-standing businesses in the Southwest Rochester area. They are a pillar in the community and serve as a model for many local businesses in the area. Dolores and Linford will speak a bit about their experiences living in Rochester and what it's like to have an Afro-Caribbean store.

**TRANSITION** [music plays]

### **DOLORES AND LINFORD'S INTERVIEW**

**Dolores:** I'm Dolores Hamilton.

**Linford:** I'm Linford Hamilton and we are the proprietors for D&L Groceries.

**Lisa:** And to just kind of start off we wanted to kind of speak about what brought you guys to Rochester and why the Brooks Landing area specifically.

**Linford:** Well, coming to the states from Jamaica we first were living in Philadelphia and my father were living in



Rochester. At the time, Rochester was still a growing town. Xerox were expanding. Kodak were expanding. It was a chance for - it's a better location for people who want do other education, to further education. MCC was new, building up. And RIT had just moved from downtown to the new campus so we did courses at MCC and some at RIT downtown. And so it was more convenient, easier and there was work and we found work. She [Dolores] found work at the Strong Hospital. Strong Memorial Hospital. And I worked in the electrical industry.

**Matthew:** What part of Jamaica are you originally from? Can you speak a bit about your time?

**Linford:** Here are the mountains. The Bullhead Mountain is here and here and over here we have the peaks and over here they call it Ganja Mountain. And this area is where one of the Maroon towns is. In the hills here and between the Ganja Mountains where the outer settlement is. I'm from this area and one of my grandfather was a full blooded maroon. So we lived in this area over here. And this the other side of the hills over here. If you were to look up Jamaica you see Mandeville is up here and is one of the older towns in Mandeville. Down here is town called Black River. It was one of the first areas in the Western hemisphere that had electricity even before Washington.

**Dolores:** Even before the United States. [laughter]

**Lisa:** Dolores, what about you, are you from the same area or?

**Dolores:** We have parishes in Jamaica like you have states here. We are from the same parish but different areas. He's from the north and I am from down south.

**Linford:** Right. This is like Manchester, Mandeville is here, she's from down here, and I'm from up in the hills, yeah.

**Lisa:** How did you guys meet? Can I ask this story? [laughter]

**Linford:** We met in Kingston.

**Dolores:** When we migrate to Kingston, the capital. [laughter]

**Linford:** Kingston is over here, which is the capital of Kingston -- the capital of Jamaica. That's where we met.

**Lisa:** So what kind of got you guys into the business or of of grocery if what kind of brought you guys first was kind of the...

**Linford:** We were just trying to fill a need. There weren't any except for one grocery that carried Puerto Rican food in the area and that was across town. So we decided we would start with our Jamaican store and then evolve into.....

**Dolores & Linford:** African food.

**Lisa:** Alright.

**Lily:** Can you tell us a little about how you mentioned you started selling Puerto Rican food, how that kind of transformed to selling Jamaican and some Afro-Caribbean food.

**Dolores:** Puerto Rican and Jamaican we all eat the same food, just prepared differently....and which one?

**Lily:** Afro-Caribbean. And so you mentioned the differences and how you decided what sorts of cuisine you serve here.

**Dolores:** He'll answer for the African cuisine.

**Linford:** Well the story behind....the story behind the store starting I , as I mentioned I was an electrician, I was in the union. And at that time it was very difficult, I was actually the first minority member for a local agency, the union, the workers' union. And work was difficult after a few years, so after I got my master's license I applied and formed a company to work. And I bought this property and I was working from my home, my basement, and I bought this property. And this part here was a butcher shop the man that owns it . While after we remodeled the building and our offices were in the back area. This part here was empty and was looking for tenants, and then we decided why not open a Jamaican store, and bring ethnic foods here. And my bookkeeper accountant was a Nigerian who just got here from Brockport and who doing the same thing travelling to Toronto and he asked me to get African food, so we found an importer in Newark, Jersey, and we started dealing with and became the African store, African-Jamaican store, and a Caribbean store to other people who from Central America and the Caribbean.

**Lily:** Are there some stories about the background of the food that you offer here? We would love to hear a little bit more, just a few stories. You mentioned about the teas.

**Lisa:** And the jerk chicken.

**Lily:** Yeah the jerk chicken.

**Lisa:** Yeah that was a wonderful story. So if you could talk a little bit more about that.

**Linford:** About jerk? Jerk is a fairly new on the scene, but it's taken off worldwide now in most countries. You can go to China, and Japan, and Europe and you'll find jerk. Jerk comes from the settlement, if you call it the -in Jamaica there is one story about this. There is the story about the maroons, and the maroons were runaway slaves. They were brought to Jamaica by the Spanish and they run away into the hills. One of the things that they developed was herbs and how to make medicine from herbs and how to preserve food. And because they were in the areas were they were there weren't any buildings of sort so they learned to cook and they way they learned to cook was on the ground. They could always demolish and cover up their tracks and leave. Cooking on the ground with jerk the way it is digging a pit and cover it with special wood like sweet wood and pimiento and that would add to the food. And with the seasonings and everything, preserves and gives the food that special flavor. That special flavor is known as jerk.

**Lisa:** We want to talk a little bit about that. About the herbs, and the teas and whatnot. So can you talk a little bit more about your experience with using them and how selling this here kind of promotes that culture.

**Linford:** Well, yes because of those things not known in the area to general populous, the people who were immigrants would come here. One time we had people here from Fredonia, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Colgate

University down in Hamilton, and the others one in town here. The UofR of course and Brockport, they would all come here for the food and cultural things they couldn't get anywhere else. So that's how things got spread and developed And they would ask for items that they were accustomed to and would seek it out and that's how we would develop our inventory.

**Lisa:** Yeah, I guess one question we did have talking a little more about your relationship with the University of Rochester and the student population there. Can you speak a little bit about how that relationship has changed over the years that you've been here. We know that you've been here for quite a while now, so from the start to now, how that change had happened and where you see that relationship going from here. That might be a lot of questions, but. [laughter]

**Linford:** Well, in the early years you might have read about the UofR was much different. It was mostly white. Even for workers, manual labor, it was very rare to find people of color in positions like chemists and I was told they had to work in a basement area. I've been told it's come around quite a bit. You may have heard when Dandelion Day was born in the 80's, one of my daughter was a student there and she had formed a club, a Caribbean student association, now I think it's probably meld into one of the Afro-Caribbean. I'm not sure what the name is now. The president there decide one of the things he would do to overcome the static problem with racism and other things was to have this day called Dandelion Day where they would allow other ethnic music and food to come and demonstrate on campus where students and other faculties members could see what the foods are like. With UofR after we started doing prepared food, one of the other things we're doing is target the other colleges around by marketing our spices like our jerk chicken and our stew and curry. And when they have their ethnic functions they ask us how to supply the food. And sometimes instructions on how it's used and on its preparation. We get to go to places like Colgate and other places. With regards to going in and getting contracts to do work at the U of R, we do the annual welcoming of young doctors. They would have a part at the Genesee Valley Park and we would do the set up for them. But now with the personnel changes, and the dean that was here she left and she retired, so the last couple of years we haven't done that, that is something we hope to revive. And the different departments like history when they have meetings or seminars we will do the luncheons for them. Maybe one or two meats, and mostly they would have a lot of beef patties, different flavors. So now at one time, we had red program.

**Lisa:** Yes we did.

**Linford:** But then, that died out as the student body changes. The person might not have the same interest, and so I think it's time to revive those connections, and we hope to take it from there. With regards to attraction, the folks that would come here from the different towns around, it was mostly for spices. And we at one time we carried a good amount of cajun spices so if someone calls up from Louisiana, they would send them to D&L in Rochester, occasionally, for spices and stuff. That relationship kind of went away with Amazon. [murmured agreements] Amazon is hurting... we had a market on Amazon for a few years selling spices but they seem to change strategy. They sell it buy the cases so I think right now they are buying it directly from Jamaican. So us buying from an importer and selling it is not profitable anymore. And they kept increasing the percentage 15 then 17 then 20 and ended up at 33% and we realized we were just working for them. So we are in the process of planning to reopen our Amazon market but we are not sure how profitable, and we are trying to find items to sell that will be profitable.

**Lisa:** I guess one question then if we are talking about problems is that that's one problem. So are there other challenges that you face as a business owner.

**Linford:** Well in the early years it was somewhat easy because we only did as needed. So we didn't have to get a bank loan to start. But after time developed and things changed and we were doing the electrical business anymore and we wanted to expand the office area in the back for the grocery. Now we are in the process of trying to fill another need which is, this area, the Brooks Landing area is designated a food desert. So we are trying to have a general grocery. That is our future plan.

**Fawzi:** Yeah, one of your favorite parts a store?

**Dolores:** I enjoy meeting different people from all parts of the world .Talking to them about what I didn't know where they are from. And just in general seeing people. I am a people person. So I like to talk to people. Where are you from? They ask me where I'm from, I also ask them, and they tell me their culture and I tell them mine, and I enjoy that. And people come in and buy stuff and I enjoy them coming in and I encourage them to come back and they do. And I hope you all come back too.

**TRANSITION** [music plays]

**Lily:** Wayne Luong is the owner of The Wok, a family-owned business that started in the Southwest Rochester area 4 years ago. He is originally from Vietnam, but is of Chinese descent, and you can see his cultural background reflected in the menu items, which offers an array of dishes from different cultures such as Vietnamese, Chinese, and Thai. You will hear him speak about how he got started in the restaurant business, his experiences working in and with the community, and future aspirations for increasing student engagement.

### **WAYNE'S INTERVIEW**

**Wayne:** Hello, my name is Wayne Luong and I'm from The Wok at 912 Genesee Street.

**Matthew:** And what brought you to the Rochester area?

**Wayne:** We moved back [to Rochester] in the '83. We came to America to York, Pennsylvania. But we lived there '79 to '83, but the economy was going down. There was not enough jobs, but back then, Rochester was booming. So my sister got married here and then the whole family; everybody moved for jobs, education. It's a good community.

**Lily:** So where were you initially when you first moved to Rochester?

**Wayne:** We are from Vietnam. I'm Chinese, but I was born and raised in Vietnam.

**Lily:** Yeah, because I would hear you guys speak Cantonese and I speak Cantonese.

**Wayne:** Oh, you speak Cantonese? Yes, yes. I speak Cantonese, Chaozhou (dialect of the eastern Guangdong province), and some Mandarin. Mainland China or Hong Kong?

**Lily:** Mainland.

[Speaking in Cantonese Chinese]



Wayne: Guangzhou? Guangdong?

Lily: Kaiping.

Wayne: Kaiping? Where is Kaiping? I don't know where that is.

Lily: Two hours from Guangzhou. South of [Guangzhou].

Wayne: I've only been to Shenzhen, haven't been to other places. Next time you take me there.

Lily: Yes, next time.

Wayne: What nationality are you?

Lisa: Sorry, what?

Wayne: What nationality-

Lisa: South Korea, Korean.

Matthew: And I'm from here. [laughter]

Lisa: Did you move to the Brooks Landing area?

Wayne: Uh no, Henrietta, Henrietta.

Lisa: So when did you start the restaurant business?

Wayne: I start- I worked for someone when I was in high school. But my own- when I start my own, it was the year 2000. In the year 2000, yes.

Matthew: And what made you want to start your own business versus continuing someone else's?

Wayne: It's a venture, and also you have more control. Yeah, that's why I like [it].

Lisa: So you started at RIT. Like at RIT-

Wayne: It was Downtown. I started at South Clinton, the South Wedge. It's a tiny restaurant with two apartments on top. But it's always busy, then I keep expanding, expanding.

Lisa: And then you mentioned, I think, you work with your family members-

Wayne: Yes.

Lisa: So we wanted to ask how's your experience working with them?

Wayne: It's good. At my peak, I owned 4 restaurants-

**Lisa:** *Oh my gosh!*

**Wayne:** Yes, at my peak. But I learned my lesson, and there's also the restaurant... People turn over rates are very high. So if you have your brother and sister, they're more loyal. They stay with you [laughter]. Yes, but there's good and bad. [laughter]

**Lisa:** So were all the four restaurants in this area... Rochester?

**Wayne:** Rochester, they're all [in] Rochester. But now, this is my only one-

**Lisa:** Yeah.

**Wayne:** I went through a difficult [time] [laughter]. First year, we almost gave up because it was so slow-

**Lisa:** Really?

**Wayne:** Yeah, and then [when] we start, being a restaurant owner, we had to find other revenue - like how do we, the restaurant's already here, the kitchen staff... Everybody's here. So we started to do delivery. That is like half of our business. So if the student don't come to us, we go to the student. So delivery does help a lot.

**Lisa:** So I just wanted to ask, what's your favorite part about working here at The Wok?

**Wayne:** I think it's to meet the people. And also, we read an article. Every year, we have competition in the Chinese community-

**Lisa:** Right, yes.

**Wayne:** With the Rice Bowl. And they vote that they eat the chicken, stew chicken with black mushroom. They eat it, they are so happy that they cry. [laughter] It makes them feel like they're home. So I like to make people happy. Home-meal cooking, they miss. Home-meal cooking.

**Lisa:** Yes, that's true.

**Wayne:** And moving here, I see there's more Asian student population at University of Rochester than RIT. That's why we expand our more Chinese menu.

**Lily:** So speaking of your menu, you guys serve different types of Asian cuisine. So how did you decide to do that? And what specific dishes from each cuisine?

**Wayne:** We - uh, pho, we sell a lot. Uh pho noodle is from Vietnam, because I'm born and raised in Vietnam. Chinese, uh, we do a lot of different Chinese. Some are Americanized, some are traditional too. I would like to - because the student population is large and diversity, we like to offer more types of cuisine. Let's say you have a group of friends. One or two doesn't like Chinese, they could still opt for other meals - Vietnamese or Thai or sushi. [laughter] So give them more variety to choose from.

**Matthew:** And coming to Brooks Landing, was it four years ago?

**Wayne:** Yes, it was four years ago.

**Matthew:** Have you noticed any changes in the area over the course of four years?

**Wayne:** It's improving, but slowly. I choose to move from RIT - it's called Park Point - over here, because to cut cost. The rent is like three times as much over there. And there is no community over there, so it's similar - over there, it's RIT and here, it's University of Rochester. Uh, when the summer, when the student left, I thought there's a community here. There's the 19th Ward, that's why I choose this location. Because over there, summer is dead too.

**Lisa:** Right, so it's just students.

**Wayne:** Yeah, just students. There's no community.

**Lisa:** Do you see a lot of 19th Ward community members coming to visit? Or-

**Wayne:** They do, but mostly take-out-

**Lisa:** Wow okay.

**Wayne:** John has bring [community members]. Once a while, he brings group in to introduce the restaurant.

**Lily:** So when John brings the group in, do you see them coming again after that first time?

**Wayne:** Once a while, but like I said, mostly take-out.

**Lily:** The relationship you have with John, so how did that come about? How did you decide to have him bring people over like what was-

**Wayne:** John actually came to us. He's uh retiree. He try to help this whole community up. He came in when we first opened and introduced himself. He's very nice - yeah. There's one event that neighbor walk to the - they walk - all of them don't drive. All of them walk to The Wok. [laughter] So community, it's good.

**Lily:** How often does that happen?

**Wayne:** I think once, one time, yeah. This is the fourth year here, but they did it one time.

**Lily:** I thought it would be like an annual thing.

**Wayne:** They should do more often, or like still they could do the same thing. It takes 5 minutes to walk? Not that far, not that far.

**Matthew:** And what is your relationship with the other businesses in Brooks Landing, since there are quite a few small businesses?

**Wayne:** Since I joined the meeting, I been, uh D&L - I met him. But good relations with Dana. Yeah, we talk. Yeah eventually, we're going to do an act together to help cut the cost down for advertising. But hopefully the student would help us do advertising.

**Lisa:** Of course.

**Wayne:** Word of mouth.

**Matthew:** And speaking of the cost of advertising, as an entrepreneur, have you encountered any challenges when first opening your restaurant and maintaining it?

**Wayne:** Yes, and nowadays a lot of people go on media but like media is very expensive. Like I did Yelp, cost over \$2,500 - that's a lot. I would rather give more food to the student than give it to Yelp.

**Matthew:** And speaking of the students, what is your relationship like with the University of Rochester?

**Wayne:** It's, this a lot like group fundraising. But I had to a third party too. And I'm trying, is there a way for a small business owner to not use the party? BEcause every time you use a party, they took a big chunk of the money. Like delivery service, GrubHub takes 20%.

**Lily:** Wow that's a lot.

**Wayne:** And for Groupwise, they take money too. Off the bat, they take \$39 if you do any business or not-

**Lisa:** *Oh my gosh.*

**Wayne:** To get connected with the student.

**Lily:** So doing Tapingo, is also...

**Wayne:** Tapingo, I think is like 8% or 10. I forgot, I think 10%. They're all different, but every time there's a third party involved, they take a chunk of - yes, as a small business owner, you got to keep the cost down. You cannot go online and directly order food from The Wok yet. But we already have a website. We were trying to get online ordering through us, so we save cost. Uh, if you go to Grubhub, Grubhub takes 20%. If you go to Rice Bowl, that's like 10%. There's different company takes different. Just Grubhub, every year, every month, last month I paid \$3,500 to Grubhub. That's how much they took from getting orders online. So if I would have our own website, then I would save that money already.

**Lisa:** So I guess, talking a little bit more about the future for The Wok, what kind of relationship do you want to see with the University of Rochester students or with the community over there? And how do you want it to work out, because you mentioned before that Dana - you guys are working on like advertising?

**Wayne:** Hopefully, I've been web talk, I spoke with him couple times to make good advertising. Trying to do on my own is \$2,500 so we spread it out.

**Lisa:** And you guys also have a stage too.

**Wayne:** Yes, Trebellius used it once, but it's open so I thought the student would know this place and they could use it. Yeah, and uh working with the student, hopefully in the future, we have better relations with the student and they uh a way for us to contact.

**Lisa:** It would be nice if there were like a liaison, someone who is kind of connected.

**Wayne:** Especially at orientation. I think - I learned that maybe I should put myself more at the beginning. There was one student who lived in the dormitory. He's a senior, he came and take-out and he say he graduating. He didn't know that we were here. [laughter] I was surprised.

**Lisa:** So what kind of event, like would you want to see for orientation? Or like what kind of event would you want to have to bring more awareness?

**Wayne:** After orientation, I think I mentioned maybe a couple weeks later, that they feel comfortable. They know the area. Maybe do a scavenger hunt.

**Lisa:** Yes, we heard that idea.

**Wayne:** I got that idea a long time ago. Maybe 10 years ago. I was driving downtown. I have not seen that many people downtown before. It was - you cannot even drive - it was all over the place. But the prize money was a diamond, a \$10,000 diamond. [laughter]

**Lisa:** [*gasp*] What!

**Wayne:** It was like - everybody's downtown. But it was a big jewelry store. It was the store's.

**Lisa & Lily:** Oh.

**Wayne:** They hid one diamond somewhere and people were going crazy. I thought we could brought that idea over here. And it's fun. It's college kids. I know you would be here for \$10,000. [laughter]

**Lisa:** I would run over here for a \$10,000 diamond.

**Wayne:** Then I got that idea stuck in my head and maybe we could use similar, maybe a smaller scale.

**Lisa:** Yeah, a smaller scale, not a \$10,000 diamond.

**Wayne:** But it has to be attractive. Maybe the community certificate that they could use anywhere they want.

**Lisa:** There's a lot of places that I think The Wok can go and expand. I think it's the matter of connection and um, I think yeah your idea of orientation and reaching out to freshmen, first year, the parents... because I think Monica, one of our other team members was saying that um, you know when parents are there too like it kind of brings the whole family out to the community, so I think that's a real possibility.

**Wayne:** Orientation, I think it's very important for us to get the freshmen in first. Get them in here first!

**Lisa:** *Wayne!* [laughter]

**Wayne:** We have good food!

**Lisa:** Yeah that makes sense. So for orientation, would you be willing to go over there and do samples? Like how, what do you see for that?

**Wayne:** Maybe coupon.

**Lisa:** Is there something that you would want students to know about The Wok or yourself?-

**Wayne:** Just-

**Lisa:** Just any last words, I guess.

**Wayne:** If they know us here, then I know they would at least try once. Try a different culture food. They might love it. And try to get the connection with the student, that's what we're trying to do.

**TRANSITION** [music plays]

### **WRAP UP**

**Lisa:** Yeah, so guys, what did you guys learn from this project?

**Lily:** Yeah, I think during my first two years here, I felt I couldn't do much in Rochester because I didn't have a car, but there is actually so much you can learn and do *just* in the surrounding neighborhood. As Maria emphasized, I hope wherever we find ourselves in the future, that we will venture out and engage with our community and our neighbors.

**Matthew:** I know especially coming here as a first-year student, just right off the bat with this course I got to go to the Memorial Art Gallery, the CDCR, the Brooks Landing area and meet with local business owners and community leaders and expand my view of the Rochester community and immerse myself in it, where I know not every freshmen has that opportunity, so I hope moving forward as people listen to this podcast, they speak to us about the class and the project, they learn to explore the area more and involve themselves more in Rochester.

**Lisa:** Well, that sounds great and I feel like I have nothing else to add to that. [laughter] But yeah, no, 'cause I took a community-engaged course last semester as well. And it's funny, 'cause yeah, I'm a senior and I think it's so hard as Lily mentioned to get off campus when you don't have a car. But working with you know, community leaders throughout the area, it makes you realize there's so much— you can make an impact with just making these small steps. So it was really nice, I think, to meet people *literally* across the bridge, right.

**Lily:** Yeah, 'cause sometimes I think sometimes campus can feel like a bubble.

**Lisa:** Yes, yeah, exactly.

**Lily:** And I want to encourage students to go out into the neighborhood more.

**Lisa:** Right. And definitely join the class! [laughter] And just in general, yeah, hopefully this encourages students to engage with the community a little bit more. But yeah, it was great.

**TRANSITION** [music plays]

**Lisa:** We encourage our listeners to visit The Wok and D&L Groceries. You can eat their delicious food and get to know Wayne, Dolores, and Linford!

Visit The Wok at 912 Genesee St and their website at <http://eatatwok.us/>.

**Matthew:** You can also visit D&L Groceries at 1005 Genesee St and check out their website at <http://dlgroceries.com/>.

You can also learn more about the CDCR and Maria's work at <http://www.rrcdc.org>.

**Lily:** And visit our class website at <http://swang.digitalscholar.rochester.edu/urban/> to learn more about the course, ongoing research and to view our projects.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the making of this podcast:

**Matthew:** Thank you to Maria Furgiuele (fur-jew-ellie) of Community Design Center Rochester.

**Lisa:** Dolores and Linford Hamilton of D&L Groceries.

**Lily:** Wayne Luong of The Wok.

**Matthew:** John DeMott and Don Hanks of the 19th Ward Community Association.

**Lisa:** Professor Stella Wang as well as our fellow students in the class.

**Lily:** And finally, to all our listeners tuning into "Across the Bridge," thank you!