

Dartmouth Black Lives

- Ramsey:** Hi, my name is Ariana Ramsey and I am in Hitchcock right now in Hanover, New Hampshire on mass row and I'm doing a zoom interview with James Hutchinson who is in Chicago. Today is October 30th, 2022 and this interview is for the Dartmouth Black lives oral History Project. Okay. Hi James. Thank you so much for joining me today. I really appreciate it. How are you doing?
- Hutchinson:** Good
- Ariana:** So first, we're going to start by talking about your childhood. So can you please state where and when you were born?
- Hutchinson:** I was born on September 22, 1947 in Chicago Illinois. I'm a twin. I have a twin sister Dr. Janice Hutchinson.
- Ramsey:** Can you tell me the names of your parents?
- Hutchinson:** Well, my mother was Dorothy Hutchinson. My father was James Hutchison senior.
- Ramsey:** And what was it like growing up in your town?
- Hutchinson:** We thought we had a good life. When I say we, I mean my sister and I, we grew up in a community in Chicago called Morgan Park and it was an insularly community. First of all, it was all black because we were pre desegregation. It was on the far south side of Chicago. Lorraine Hansberry who was the author of the play Raisin in the Sun also grew up in Morgan Park. There's a reference to Morgan Park in the play where the mother says, I've always dreamed about living in Morgan Park. It was a community that was primarily made up of residents that were either government workers or Pullman Porters, a black community that I guess by today's standards would be considered middle class. It was all fairly homeowners.
- Ramsey:** Nice. And did your parents go to college at the time or no?
- Hutchinson:** My father was born in 1896. The furthest grade he went to was seventh grade in Paducah Kentucky. My father was born on the border between Alabama and Georgia. I think it was West, but they were just hard workers.
- Ramsey:** Okay, awesome. So with your upbringing, did you know that you wanted to go to Dartmouth?
- Hutchinson:** I didn't know what Dartmouth was. I was recruited by Dartmouth in my junior year, primarily to play football. Recruited by some other colleges. Our football team went to Morgan Park High School. Our football team was one of the best in the city. It was a primarily white high school, public high school in Chicago. Matter of fact, where my graduation class was of 400, only 25 were people of color.
- Ramsey:** So, how long did you play football when you were in high school? How many years?
- Hutchinson:** I joined the team in my freshman year, so I played. I didn't play till after the tryouts were completed. And went in to show the coach my report card and based on him looking at my report card which said all A's and I was generally in honors courses, he let me on the football team. I didn't feel like I had the physical prowess but I later developed that.
- Ramsey:** Okay nice. So you got recruited at Dartmouth. Did you guys at the time doing visits on campus and things like that?
- Hutchinson:** No, like I was recruited by Dartmouth and also Brown, as far as the Ivy League schools are concerned. I didn't know what Dartmouth or Brown was. It could have been a junior college. I

had no idea until I was first approached to the Freshman coach at Dartmouth.

Ramsey: Okay. So you had no idea what it looked like or what it was like before you came there?

Hutchinson: That's correct.

Ramsey: Okay.

Hutchinson: My father was 53 years old, when my sister and I were born he was 67 when my sister and I graduated or closer to 70. When my sister and I graduated from high school, my mother went with my sister, who went to Stanford. My father came with me when I entered Dartmouth. My father was a Pullman Porter so we had discounts on various railroads

Ramsey: Okay. Awesome. So you visited Dartmouth and that was the first time you saw it was your freshman year?

Hutchinson: That's correct.

Ramsey: Okay. So what were your first impressions when you got here?

Hutchinson: It was starkly different than Chicago, which is a city. Hanover was approximately 5,000 people or less. So it was a traumatic experience.

Ramsey: What in the culture difference, was there much of a difference as far as culture?

Hutchinson: Well drastically. I was used to going to school where I was in the minority in terms of my high school of being only one of 25 five black students in my class in high school. I was used to going to school with white folks. But I was not used to a community as small as Hanover, New Hampshire.

Ramsey: Right. Do you remember which like dorms you stayed in when you were here?

Hutchinson: During my freshman year, I had a single room in Russell Sage Hall. And during my sophomore year, A gentleman by the name of AB Willacy. AB Willacy, he was class of 1967. He agreed to room with me in mass which at that time, was one of the nicest dorms on campus and ironically, he left the term early. He left after the completion of the winter term. It was a very nice room. Ultimately, one of my classmates Ron Talley asked me if he could room with me and I told him yes. And what I mean by one of the nicest rooms on campus, it had an in room bathroom. We were, I think the room was 112, we were half a block from Thayer Hall on the dining hall just a block from Main Street.

Ramsey: Yeah, that's where I live on Hitchcock on Mass Row, I think it's the best location honestly. So you said AB Willacy is that W-I-L-L-I-S-Y

Hutchinson: W-I-L-L-A-C-Y

Ramsey: I see, okay and Ron Tally, R-O-N-T-A-L-L-Y?

Hutchinson: A-L-L-E-Y, Talley, Ronald Talley.

Ramsey: Okay. Nice.

Hutchinson: AB we used to call Aubrey Barrett, Aubrey A.B. A.B was from Shaker Heights right outside of Cleveland, a suburb of Cleveland. Ron Talley was from New York City.

Ramsey: Okay, nice

Hutchinson: And AB again was class of 1967. AB went on to become a lawyer. He went to Howard, he graduated from Howard University law school and Ron Talley became an educator and for

several years after graduation Ron worked with Dartmouth.

Ramsey: Nice

Hutchinson: As well as with the ABC program.

Ramsey: Okay and when talking about social life, so when you first got here, how was the making of friends and meeting people? I know you were on the football team so was that a big part of how you met a lot of other black students or people in general on campus?

Hutchinson: Well lets put it like this, when I came between the sophomore classes, junior classes, and senior classes there were approximately 15 black students among those three classes. My entering class, freshman class, the class of 1969, we had approximately 15 black students. So we kind of doubled the black population of Dartmouth from approximately 15 to 30. I'm talking about students, approximately 30 black students out of a student population of 4,000.

Ramsey: Okay. and how did you guys first start to interact with each other was it natural or you were just like oh I'm like your black, let's be friends?

Hutchinson: There were only, based on my recollection, there were only three black people on the football team. Myself, Robert Bennett and Alex Lowe. I'm sorry as well as maybe one or two upperclassmen. There were very few black athletes of any of any sports at Dartmouth when we were there. When I was entering Dartmouth, it was a combination of seeing and running into students on campus as well as the very few black students that were playing sports.

Ramsey: So as far as other social life things did you guys go to frats, fraternities, and do those types of things for social events?

Hutchinson: Some did. You could become a member of a fraternity once you became a sophomore and that's when if you desired to be in a fraternity that's when rush season began. You can be a guest at a fraternity house during your freshman year. It was I guess a combination of many things including getting rides out of Hanover to either Boston, New York City, Hartford Smith, Mt Holyoke, Etc. You have to recall that at that time, Dartmouth was an all men's college and there was also the closest Junior College that was called Colby Junior, which was an all-female Junior College at that time.

Ramsey: I have heard about that school. A lot of you guys would drive down there, just to meet girls and to be more social because I know there were no women here, especially black women at that. Did you feel like Dartmouth was an inclusive space? I know that's like a obvious question, but how was it and what was it like?

Hutchinson: When you say inclusive space? What do you mean?

Ramsey: Did you feel like you had the opportunity, say if you wanted to interact with white people on campus, would you?

Hutchinson: Yes. It was both inclusive and subclusive. I remember when I got my first haircut at Dartmouth, I went to the barbershop and the barber, his eyes got wide and he said, as he was cutting my hair, he told me, he didn't know how to cut my kind of hair. When I came to Dartmouth there was no fried chicken in the community. There was only one black resident and other than that, that was the postman and his family. I can't recall his name now but there was only one black family that lived in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Ramsey: Okay. So you did feel like the space itself was inclusive, you could talk to whoever you wanted to talk to you but the things you needed as a black person, like the food and other access to Black resources kind of weren't there?

Hutchinson: They were not there. No.

Ramsey: Okay.

Hutchinson: But the College of Vox Clemente and Deserto was clearly operative when it came to at least myself a voice crying out in the wilderness.

Ramsey: Okay well that's good to know

Hutchinson: Anything as far as socially was concerned or culturally you had to leave school. We had to leave the Hanover area,

Ramsey: Right? And it seems like we had to do a lot of the bringing in of that of our own culture onto the campus. I'll get into that in a little bit. So just to reiterate, so you did feel like you could be included, it wasn't as if anyone was actively trying to exclude you?

Hutchinson: No one was actively trying to exclude you and as far as the general population was concerned, there wasn't any type of overt efforts to try to include you either.

Ramsey: Right

Hutchinson: It was almost everyone else, you know, we would get together periodically, informally like in the dining hall or as we ran into each other on campus, or one student would invite another student or group of students to their room. It was all informal at least through my freshman year.

Ramsey: Okay. So as far as bringing your own culture to Dartmouth, I guess that's where like the AM comes in and things like that you guys started. So can you tell me a little bit more about bringing in the culture to Dartmouth?

Hutchinson: Well, during my sophomore year and the discussion started the later part of my freshman year, we started talking about the benefits of developing an association. Because again, with our class, with the class of 69 and we were talking to each other that I think the next year, the class of 70 they were another 15 or 20 black students that came in but we were we were slowly easing toward some type of critical mass as well as consensus on what we as students of color at Dartmouth very much needed in our lives to make it better during our stay at Dartmouth and that's how the notion of Afro-Am came up.

Ramsey: And what year was that for you your freshman or sophomore?

Hutchinson: The discussion began in my freshman year and I'd say that's the spring of my freshman year.

Ramsey: And how did that come about? I'd heard some story about how this one person took the initiative to invite all the black students to some event and then the more you guys got organized you started to come together. How do you remember the experience?

Hutchinson: There was an individual that did raise the issue and there was an informal meeting that was called. I don't remember the specifics. It's been so long but it's like a snowball that started out at the top of the hill rolling down the hill. There was a consensus that we were all in the same situation and we wanted a better student life.

Ramsey: Okay. So how involved were you in the AM?

Hutchinson: I was one of the cofounders of the AM.

Ramsey: And this was in your freshman spring.

Hutchinson: It was. As I indicated the discussion began in the in the spring of my freshman year, but it really took a life onto itself and my sophomore year. That's what I can reflect. We're talking about something that occurred over 50 years ago.

Ramsey: Yeah, I understand that the details are probably hard to remember. So just to be more general, the overall goal of the AM originally was to have a space where you can bring black students together?

Hutchinson: Well yes and not only that, but there was much happening across America in terms of raising the issues of equity and inclusion and the mass desegregation of people of color in America at that time, and so it was both for local concerns in terms of campus concerns and challenges but also, we felt a need to have a better connection with what was going on across America at the time.

Ramsey: Okay, so what type of things did you guys do to try to emphasize it?

Hutchinson: At first, it was recruitment as far as developing a membership base among ourselves, and I don't recall having burning issues about any conditions at Dartmouth that some students of color had at other institutions, we weren't really against one specific issue. But we wanted our voices and concerns heard by body in general. We wanted to advocate and be part of the national discussion and dialogue that was happening at that time. That was the age of not only Doctor Martin Luther King but also the other Black movements that were sprouting up in America and we wanted to be in those discussions.

Ramsey: So, and how did you guys do that? Did you reach out to different clubs and different organizations? Put out newsletters?

Hutchinson: Well ultimately and maybe I'm getting ahead of myself. Ultimately, we were networking with black students and other surrounding colleges.

Ramsey: Okay

Hutchinson: There was a weekend, it was called the soul weekend at Yale that I can recall. We started going into my sophomore year and it kind of brought together the vast majority of black students in the Northeast that were attending a predominantly white college. There would be an annual wide convocation of those type of students in New Haven Connecticut so we were beginning to network and see what other students of color were doing in their respective College environments.

Ramsey: Remember you said about recruitment, I remember you telling me that you took one of your Springs to go and to recruit students. What was that recruitment process like, overall throughout your for years or even the spring term itself?

Hutchinson: Well, I've started recruiting students at the beginning of my junior year and this was after the Wallace incident. The Wallace incident was one of the Watershed events of my Dartmouth career that occurred during 1967, which was toward the end of my sophomore year.

Ramsey: Okay, so let's see. We can go into the Wallace event and then you can tell me about the recruitment process about Wallace?

Hutchinson: Let me say this before the Wallace incident, my primary focus on campus was playing football.

Ramsey: Okay.

Hutchinson: And I was also an officer of the Newman club, which was the Catholic organization at Dartmouth. It was a Catholic Student organization at Dartmouth which was housed at the Aquinas house at the end of Fraternity Row. Aquinas house is the Catholic Church at Dartmouth and the Newman club was a student organization that was associated with it. When I say the student organization, the Catholic Student organization that emanated from the activities at Aquinas house and I was one of the officers so pre-Wallace incident, that was my focus. In addition to the creation of Afro AM Society. It was primarily the initiative of the class of 1969 and 1970.

Ramsey: Okay.

Ramsey: So that was your main focus up from your freshman year to junior year. It was football, the Newman club, and the Afro American society?

Hutchinson: Yeah.

Ramsey: Okay awesome.

Hutchinson: Post Wallace incident. Which was again, in May 1967. The first thing I did was quit the football team, I quit the football team. At the end of my sophomore year because I remember coming back that September beginning of my junior year and the coaches were telling me he said you know, you could be first string of the starters this year. I was a defensive right end but again, I said, no, I want to devote my nonacademic time toward the recruitment of Black students.

Ramsey: Thank you for that.

Hutchinson: And so that's what I did and at that same time. In addition to on the weekends going down to Boston, which included Roxbury, etc I would go to New York City and other parts of the Northeast to talk to prospective students. The other thing I did there was an organization and it really kind of goes back to the Yale soul weekends. It was an organization in New Haven called The Cooperative program for Educational Opportunity CPEO. It was a nonprofit organization that recruited on behalf of approximately I'd say 50 to 75 colleges across America, including the Ivy league, seven sister and many of the the other private colleges that include Stanford, Overlanders, The Wash University like in St. Louis, and the private schools. It recruited students for organizations, I'm talking about students of color for these colleges and I became active with CPEO also during my junior year and I mention that because the CPEOs main supporter was Yale University. Beginning right after my junior year, it transitioned its base from New Haven at Yale as its main supporter to the University of Chicago here in Chicago, Illinois.

University of Chicago being its main supporter and I became the manager of CPEO's. Chicago office and activities during the end of my junior year. That was my summer job and I took off and I became a student of remote learning my senior year at Dartmouth. My experience of being the manager at CPEO and recruiting students was my term long project during the during the fall term of my senior year and one of the staff of five people. We were on the campus of the University of Chicago. One of the things we did was organize the student conference that took place, I think it was in December of my senior year. We had 400 students at an all day Saturday conference. We had Nancy Wilson who came in. She was one of the great stars. I don't know if you've ever heard of Nancy Wilson given your generation, but she was a national star at that time. She came in and was one of the guest speakers. So that was my focus post Wallace incident.

Ramsey: Okay, so before the Wallace incident, like I said, you were in the Newman Club, Afro-Am, and you had quit the football team by this point because you wanted to focus on recruiting. So can you tell me about the Wallace incident. How that led up, what was the Afro-Am Society doing at the time?

Hutchinson: The Wallace incident that was not an Afro-Am sponsored event. That's number one.

Ramsey: Yeah.

Hutchinson: That was not on the agenda in terms of the Wallace incident, it grew out of an informal discussion among a few black students. At the time just as background, George Wallace, who was a governor of Alabama on some years earlier had physically blocked the entrance to the University of Alabama to prevent black students from entering. He stood on the steps of the University of Alabama and said, "segregation today, segregation forever" It got to the point where federal troops had to be called in. President Eisenhower had to call in federal troops to

help end the desegregation of the University of Alabama or to provide a safe presence for Black students to attend classes in that community. It was one of the watershed moments of the Civil Rights Movement especially in the late 50s and early 60s. Governor Wallace was running to be a nominee for president leading out to the 1968 presidential election. At that time New Hampshire was the first state in America for the presidential primaries. Today it's Iowa, but at that time it was New Hampshire. So that that was kind of like a backdrop of what was going on when the Dartmouth Student Government Association invited Governor Wallace to speak.

I believe it was May 7 1967. It was the beginning of Green Key weekend and he was invited to speak on a Thursday evening and Green Key weekend started the next day. In the springtime, Green Key weekend was a watershed weekend of that term, much like winter carnival is a watershed activity, a social activity during the winter term at Dartmouth and the venue was Webster Hall. There were some meetings and formal meetings of Black students and again at this time, there were no more than 30 of us on campus. And there were some informal meetings in my room and a few other rooms and **our goal was to do something that would let people across America, especially people of color across America know that the few Black folks at Dartmouth were not complacent. We wanted to signal to the black communities Across America that we were the movement for change. And when I say change, I'm talking about desegregation, economic opportunity etc, as opposed to just kind of a small group of students, happy to be where we were.** That was our goal, to raise the issues and to signal, to Americans, especially Black America that we just weren't happy to be a be students in the Ivy league and have that opportunity. And when I say things took on a life of their own at one point, the rules were constantly changing around that event to the point where, for example, you can only put forth questions in writing to the panel that was going to interact with the Governor's opening remarks. You can only put your comments in writing. As before at the beginning of the activity, there was no protocol as far as the protocol of questions. And so, we were doing things on the fly. The other condition was there was no signage either outside or inside Webster Hall. I think Webster Hall today is called Rauner Hall?

Ramsey: Yeah

Hutchinson: Ironically Rauner, Bruce Rauner is one of the former Governors of Illinois. He was class of think it's 1978 at Dartmouth. The further irony is that my daughter was his capital markets director, Bruce Rauner, and she went on to become the current Governor of Illinois. Capital markets director means that she was responsible for that money in the state of Illinois, as well as managing his 27 billion dollar portfolio. But that's another story.

But the bottom line was given the changing rules. We made signs in out of pillows and bed linens. There used to be I don't know what it is now but there used to be a service called King laundry service. They supplied towels and sheets to its student subscribers. I think it was on a weekly basis. So we made signs like "you killed my brother", "Can you walk on water too?", etc. We just made different signs and if you look at any pictures of us during the Wallace incident, you'll notice that we had on sweaters or coats. We had our signs underneath our coats. We arrived at the venue, I guess about an hour, 45 minutes to an hour earlier. There were about 15 or 19 of us spread throughout the venue. When I say the venue, it was Webster at that time. Webster which is now Rauner Hall. I was one of about five or six people that was in the first four or five rows in the center. As we entered the hall, there were local and national media. And I can remember some of the cameramen were sitting on the floor aiming up at us to make us look bigger than what we were. At the beginning as the event started, we periodically would get up and flash our signs. And again, this was Green Key weekend and some students had already started to begin to get into the holiday mode with they're drinking so they were kind of boisterous.

After about, I guess 15 and 20 minutes of disrupting his speech and periodically flashing signs, there was a general uproar. We decided to leave the hall and look outside because Robert Bennett started talking. There was a crowd that kind of came out with us and ultimately after some discussion, we ultimately decided that we were going to go back in and march around the hall and come back out. All the doors were locked on us, but I guess

through the grace of God, there was one student who from the Baker Library and when I say one student, one white student who was walking from the Baker Library who wanted to enter Webster Hall. The policeman on one of the handles opened the door. He opened the door to let this particular student in and I overpowered the door to the point where it was wide open and that allowed the students from the outside to go back into the hall including myself.

When we got back into the hall, Wallace stepped back from the podium and his Alabama police guard came to the forefront of the podium and I don't remember if they drew their guns or put their hands on their guns but they did come out to the front of the podium and the event stopped immediately. Wallace was taken to some undisclosed area. I don't know where he was taken and we didn't march around the event. They halted and put a pause on the event. We came on out. Some of us went back to my room again. My room was very close to Webster Hall me being in Mass Hall. At 112 Mass Hall we got rid of our signs and other paraphernalia. We went back and by the time we went back to in front of Webster Hall there was an attempt to restart his talk. But that notion was out the window and so the next decision he had to make was to exit and just get in his car and leave. But by that time, the students were sufficiently aroused and when I say the students, these were white students cause again, even if you counted, all the black students, that was 30. Not all the Blacks were a part of this so say 20, but there were maybe 100 or 200 students that had been aroused and were shouting against Wallace. When they finally were able to get him into his car, students were rocking the car. The students were rocking his car and they were finally able to forge a path to get him out of town. The report was not only local, it was not only national, it was international. Because again, this was a backdrop of a presidential candidate who had been ran out of Hanover New Hampshire. This activity I've been told was reported in the UK newspapers. What I do know is that in addition to the Hanover papers and the local papers it was also in the New York Times. Both Eric Severide and other names recorded it, including nearby newscasts, it was in the Chicago Tribute, it was in the LA Times, and many others published about the incident that had occurred. There were many alumni from the south that wanted the people that were responsible for the Wallace incident to be expelled. I didn't realize it, but there were such vicious comments that were made that were sent into the school. I know that few months ago they were able to get copies of the letters to the school, as they were addressed to black students in general. It was somewhat of a righteous time at Dartmouth. Now the Wallace incident was a catalyst for many of the positive changes that came about at Dartmouth. I think the administration was shaken to its core given the fact that it became both a national and international story. We had such good people as Woody Lee, as well as some of the other students that we're trying to articulate and eloquently project our concerns and motivations to the administration. Because the administration was just totally bewildered about the events that had unfolded.

Ramsey: So this Wallace event, it made it easier for you guys to kind of initiate things that you wanted to implement on the campus?

Hutchinson: Yes, Bill Mcuren. Both Bill Mcuren and Woody Lee. Bill Mcuren was class of 1969 who went on to become a Rhodes Scholar. He was vice president of I think at the time of the student government association. They were some of the primary spokesman, informal spokesman. They were answering the questions "well how could something like this happen?" And basically, what I'm saying is that **when I look back on what happened that night, it was in my mind, it was an intervention none of us every envisioned** . When I say none of us, I mean the Black students that were part of it and the initiators of this action. We did not envision having the things happen that happened. As far as physically running George Wallace out of town or having students to rock his car etc. When I say rock, I'm talking about shaking his car. We did not envision those kind of things happening, but they happened. The other part is that no one got hurt. **The incident caused the administration to listen to black students seriously. We were able to develop meaningful budgets. For example not so much financially, but having a place a better place. The Shabazz center came about, the Tucker foundation, and in addition to the college developed budgets, specific budgets to recruit more black students and students of color.**

The Black students like myself, we were I guess at least a half a dozen or more Black students that became more proactive in terms of recruitment of more Black students. Instead

of listening to the notion of what we tried and we couldn't find any more black students, we went out ourselves and recruited with the college's support, staff support, as well as financial support. For example, I finished up a term early because during the summers I would take one or two summer classes at like DePaul University in Chicago. I had enough credits to graduate a term early. What would have been my last term at Dartmouth in 1969. I used that time quote on quote as an independent study but I worked in conjunction with the admissions department and I visited over a dozen cities. In the East, I'm sorry, in the East, Midwest, and South. I'm talking about from Jersey City, New Jersey, Newark New Jersey, New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, obviously Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Nashville and Atlanta, maybe of South Carolina, Cincinnati, and others that I might be eluding at the movement. I had an assistant that assisted me and she made up the appointments. Dartmouth gave me a couple of credit cards, a pocket full of money, and I was on the road two or three weeks at the time.

Ramsey: Wow. And how did you find these students?

Hutchinson: I went to the scheduled visits were at high schools. I talked to sophomores and juniors at high schools in those states. And in fact that there were some seniors that have been accepted Dartmouth, I would also arrange to meet with them and their parents. And occasionally I would have dinner with a Dartmouth alum.

Ramsey: Okay. So you did that in your off term?

Hutchinson: Matter of fact, I also did some recruiting in business school in 1971 with my MBA at AMOS Tuck

Ramsey: Oh I see and the Tucker Foundation, is that specifically to recruit back students?

Hutchinson: No. The Tucker Foundation, their mission was to be a catalyst for the different social issues at Dartmouth. It wasn't clearly their mission when it started to recruit black students. And the Tucker Foundation provided some of the monies as well as the staff support in conjunction to recruiting more black students. I don't know if the Tucker Foundation still exists but I'm sure there's a lot on the campus about the Tucker Foundation. They had an office at about a half a block from the center of campus. They were across the street from Cass and Godwin or diagonally across the street from the Hanover Inn. The building on the corner that's closest to the Connecticut River.

Ramsey: Were you also a part of ABC?

Hutchinson: I was a tutor at ABC. The ABC program in Hanover operated in conjunction with private high schools, but the ABC program in Hanover was the first program that operated in conjunction with public high schools which was Hanover High School.

Ramsey: Okay.

Hutchinson: I was a tutor and one of these students was Jessie Spikes who went on to become a Rhodes scholar.

Ramsey: And was that specifically for black students?

Hutchinson: The ABC program stood for a better chance program and was typically specifically for people of color, you'd have to Google it. But yeah, all the ABC students I ever saw were people of color.

Ramsey: Yeah, we collected some information at the Rauner library and we learned a bit about ABC and it is initially for Black students and people of color and I know there are still many ABC programs all over, so that's good. Okay so currently, I know that you're in broadcasting were you interested at Dartmouth? I know Dartmouth at the time did have like a radio station club but were you interested in broadcasting at the time at Dartmouth at all?

Hutchinson: No.

Ramsey: Okay

Hutchinson: The problem never entered my mind when I was in college. When I graduated with my MBA from Amos tuck school at Dartmouth. First of all at that time there was a 3-2 program where you could do three years undergrad and two years at AMOS tuck. Since I was undecided about my future career, I did not take advantage of the 3-2 program. I was four years undergrad and two years at AMOS tuck so I lived in Hanover for six years, not 5 years. When I was in my senior year, it was the winter term of my senior year, I went down to the Tuck school and met with the Dean, his name was John Hennessy at the time. I shared with him that I would like to have a job in the business atmosphere in Chicago for the upcoming summer. He got on the phone and subsequently contacted three Chicago alumni, two were vice presidents at bank and one was Dave McLaughlin who was the president of Champion. Mr. McLaughlin went on to become the president of Dartmouth. After that, he was a chairman of the American Red Cross. He died while he was the chairman of the American Red Cross. During my spring break, I went to see all three gentlemen. The two vice presidents, one was at Harris Bank from the First National Bank of Chicago, which is now known as Chase. The gentleman that I went to see at Harris Bank, he walked me upstairs to an accounting firm called Peat Marwick Mitchell & Company, which is now known as KPMG. He introduced me to Charles Davison who was a Dartmouth alum who is the partner in charge of that office. He offered me a summer position as an assistant auditor. I had never had a course in accounting in my life.

What happened was, the day after I graduated from Dartmouth, I was to start two-week course in Washington, D.C. at the Institute that was near the Watergate Hotel. There was a monsoon rain the day of my graduation. Matter of fact, Nelson Rockefeller, who went on to become Vice President of the United States was the guest speaker and the whole graduation ceremony had to be moved back to the early evening into the gymnasium. I did not get out of Hanover until late that Sunday night. Again, it was big rains. I got down to New York City driving till about 2:00 a.m. that morning and got some sleep. I didn't get to Washington D.C driving until about 6:00 p.m. that Monday which meant I missed a whole day of class. When I came in that Monday night and met with the school officials, they shook their heads. They did know that the weather had been bad because it had been bad in Washington, D.C also but they said Friday at 12 noon we're giving at test. Here from this moment, which is Monday night until 12 noon on Friday, like three and a half days from now, I had to learn a semester worth of accounting and at 12 noon, they were going to give a test. So I learned a semester worth of accounting in three and a half days, I got something like an 86.

Ramsey: Wow

Hutchinson: And the next week, it was a semester worth of auditing, but there was not going to be a test on the auditing. I lived at the Watergate and this is the same Watergate that people know in conjunction with former President Nixon with the break-in at the democratic headquarters. I worked there for two weeks right after my June 19, 1969 graduation. Then I drove from there to Chicago during that summer with Peat Marwick. They started me out and working on some worldwide billings, audits with Borg Warner. I did an audit with Schwinn Bicycle Company. Schwinn bicycle started here in Chicago, but the most interesting part of that summer was that I was sent out to Joliet State Prison for two weeks on an inventory observation.

The prisoners made furniture and other things for the state. I had to have lunch with the guards and if I had to eat the food that I ate with the guards, I would probably be a hundred pounds lighter. I had to be in prison by 8:00 and Joliet is about 30 miles and if I did not get out by 4:30, I would have to spend the night in prison. So I would say I always got out at 3:30. The most depressing part of that that experience was when you go in, one door opens and before you can go to the next door, the door that you just went through has to be locked up. And it was like going into hell. And after I guess about a week I asked one of the guards, I said, well, Joe Blow who's working with me seems like a nice guy how long has he been

here? He said, 18 years. I said for what? He said, murder. That gave me an unintentional viewpoint of the Criminal Justice System and let's just leave it like that.

The important part is that it taught me accounting. That Summer, I became familiar with accounting and finance and auditing. Matter of fact, during my vacation periods or at least some of them during the springtime and another summer I worked for Smith Bachelor and Rug which was a Norwich Vermont accounting firm, sometimes during my vacation period one Christmas. I would come back and work with Peat Marwick so it allowed me to develop a source of income. Now the summer between my first and second year of MBA school, I worked with First National Bank in Chicago. I wanted to get banking experience and ultimately after I graduated, I went with First National in Chicago. Ironically the chairman of the First National Bank in Chicago at that time was a Dartmouth Alum and I made an offer and became a full-fledged officer of that institution about two years after I joined. I ultimately became Executive Vice President of one of the black owned banks in Chicago.

The bank was interested in broadcasting, and he invited me into his group to buy a radio station whose license was being challenged in Gary, Indiana. We ultimately worked out an arrangement to buy that station. The FCC was suing that station WLTH for certain improprieties as part of its license renewal and they decided not to renew the license of that station. The Mayor of Gary came before the FCC at the last administrative hearing and indicated that turning that station dark would represent a hardship to the Northwestern region of Indiana, especially since it was going through trials with the steel industry at the time. This weighs into the importance of voting. Benjamin Hooks, he was the reverend, and he was the first black person that was selected by former President Carter at the FCC. At the last hearing of that meeting was FCC chairman Wiley and he indicated that he saw no reason why this station should not be turned dark. Generally, when a station turns dark there's a process where companies can bid and apply for that frequency. It usually takes five to seven years to award a frequency to another group. Chairman Wiley said I'm in favor of pulling the license. Chairman Hooks said, we've just heard from the Mayor of Gary that it would be hard to get them to the people of the region and that's the law. Hooks said well that's why we're commissioned. The decision was based upon not only the law but the prevailing conditions of the time.

About 30 days later, the chairman wanted to do a favor for broadcasting somewhere in the East and said, if you want to do a favor over there, you got to do a favor over here in Gary. So the FCC on May the 11th 1977 and the reason why I remember that date is because it also coincides with the birth of my first child, Kelly. The FCC ruled that it would renew the license of this particular station, WLTH with the understanding that it would sell to our group within 60 days. Because at that time, an owner could not sell himself or herself out of trouble. If the FCC initiated action or investigated then things could be taken away from you. You just couldn't sell the station under those circumstances because the FCC would not approve the new owner. So that's how I got to broadcasting. It was not anything that was pre-planned or a lifetime dream. It's where it's where opportunity met preparation and hard work.

Ramsey: What does WLTH stand for?

Hutchinson: WLTH, those are the call letters. It's an AM station and it still comes on in Washington and Gary Indiana. We went on over a 20-year period, we owned 8 radio stations in five states. But more importantly, our situation at WLTH as far as the litigation of FCC, it was FCC versus North broadcasting. That was a legal proceeding against the radio station, against the alleged violations of the radio station. That case became the legal precedent for the FCC's adoption of the distress sale policy that led to more people being able to buy radio stations. Or put it another way, when we bought WLTH, there were less than 25, there were between 20 and 30 black owned radio stations in America. And as a result of the adoption of the distress sale policy, if circumstances were such, the station could be sold to another group and especially a group that had minority representation. As a result, over a 20-year period there were maybe 125 black owned radio stations during that period. I went on to become the chairman of the National Association of black owned broadcasting. The Wall Street Journal did an article on page one with picture article on me on September 23, 1987, and the reason why I remember

that date is because the day before, September 22 is my birthday.

Ramsey: Wow. So when did WYLD come in?

Hutchinson: We bought WYLD in March of 1980 and closed on WLTH I think it was June, 30 1977. I was the youngest member of our ownership group by at least 17 years so partners kind of turned to me because I was younger than the next person. I was from 17 to 35 years younger than my partners. They all turned to me and said, you learn the business, because one of my partners was a former Mayor of Gary. Another one with CBS and then ultimately an ABC news reporter and anchor here in Chicago. For three years I worked 50 to 60 hours a week at the bank because I was head of the loan department and I worked 20 to 25 hours a week at the radio station which was 35 miles away from the bank. So I did all of this for no pay, just learning the business, the broadcasting business.

When we bought WLTH AM and FM in New Orleans in 1980, I got out of the banking business to be in the broadcasting business fulltime because we bought WLTH for 190 thousand dollars. And again, that brought out the importance of banking with black owned banks. No white banks would loan us the money. Even though in our group we had a bank president and a former mayor, it didn't make any difference. No white banks would loan us any money to buy that station. It was Seaway Bank of Chicago, a black owned bank that loaned us the money to buy our first radio station. So what I'm saying is, voting was important because if there had been no Ben Hooks that was appointed by President Carter we probably would have never gotten into the broadcast business. Secondly, doing business with black-owned institutions was important because that's where we got our first loan from. Our New Orleans station. Our FM was 100,000 watts, our AM was 10,000 Watts and its purchase price was 2.25 million dollars. Walter Heller loaned us the money to buy those at a high interest rate. After about three years at FM, we were the number one FM in the region.

Ramsey: Do you think those Banks didn't loan to you because it was black owned and they didn't want to support black owned radio stations?

Hutchinson: During that period of time, white banks generally weren't lending to black businesses, especially startups.

Ramsey: Right

Hutchinson: Even though we had the collateral. I don't know if you've ever heard of Johnson Ultra Sheen, Afro Sheen, Etc. George Johnson, who's about 96 years old, still tells a story of the fact that in the mid-1950s, he went in to get a loan to start his business, his hair care manufacturing business. He was trying to get I think was two hundred or two hundred fifty and they turned him down for that. They turned him down and then he went back to a different bank and said that he was a loan of \$200 - \$250 to take a vacation. So the bank loaned him money to take a vacation but not to start a business.

Ramsey: Wow, do you think that's still prevalent today?

Hutchinson: Yes. There's probably more in the light of recent events including Trayvon Martin, Etc. There's more outreach, more efforts but still having access to capital is still one of the barriers of being a black businessperson.

Ramsey: Right, I agree

Hutchinson: To get what you really need to function.

Ramsey: Right and it seems like the best way to do that is to reach out to other black banks and black firms who are willing to support other black-owned businesses, and other black people who are willing to support.

Hutchinson: Yeah and now you have with the rise of the internet, you now have access to crowdfunding which makes it less challenging.

Ramsey: I agree. So, what are your current impressions of Dartmouth now? I don't know the last time you've been here, but are there any things that you noticed over time that are interesting or anything like that?

Hutchinson: I think people commented to me about the fact that there seems to be a much stronger alumni presence. There has been a stronger alumni presence at Dartmouth than many colleges and especially through BADA.

Ramsey: Yes.

Hutchinson: What to me is somewhat distressing is that I don't know if present Dartmouth students have a full appreciation of the sacrifices that many of the earlier Black Dartmouth students had to do for Dartmouth to evolve to where it is today. Many of the challenges that could exist today still existed 30, 40 years ago in terms of challenges of faculty recruitment, of faculty advancement, sensitizing white faculty about the importance of, not only black faculty, but the black life in terms of the black students experiences before they came to Dartmouth.

When I was at Dartmouth, there was no bridge program. That's one of the things that that shortly a year or two after I graduated that started up. I think students have the Black alumni that they can better utilize in terms of potential summer employment, or projects, or just career advice because there are four thousand or more. To me, that's a base, a resource base. You have to look at what you have because when I was a student at Dartmouth and I was thinking about employment, I said well let me go down to talk to the Dean of the Dartmouth business school. To me that was a resource and there were very few Black alumni when I was like a Sophomore or junior at Dartmouth. There were probably less than 100 black alumni going back to I think 1853. So it's not like I could just pick up the phone and tap that base because it just didn't exist but today is it does exist.

Ramsey: What can you say that your experience at Dartmouth taught you overall if anything?

Hutchinson: Persistence. Also there's a there's a motto that says, there are many roads you can take but how do you get there? And that's what Dartmouth kind of taught me how to be resourceful.

Ramsey: And any life advice in general outside of Dartmouth, I guess it can be inside of Dartmouth, but something that you would like students to know that now at this time. Something that they should like keep in mind or anything like that.

Hutchinson: Well in some regard, some of the old advantages in terms of voting, in terms of networking, also career education. That's one of the things that I was always so involved in. In addition to our broadcast business, we also owned two-dollar rental cars, I think one in Burlington and one in Cleveland. We were in both in downtown New Orleans and in downtown Cleveland. For a few years, we also owned the Savannah Cardinals, a minor league baseball team in Savannah Georgia. So I was always running between our various businesses and then take full advantage of keeping the books in terms of my profession and now with the internet of course it's easier.

The other thing that I learned not too late but later on was balance. In terms of having a balanced life and doing something I enjoyed ideally on a daily basis. Especially when I was banking as well as broadcasting, I rarely took a vacation. I was working 80 hours a week, generally six to seven days a week and wasn't with my family partly because my life was out of balance. Once I got it in balance, I think that helped to get me up to the age that I am now. Now last month, I celebrated my 75th birthday with my sister. I probably wouldn't have 20 years ago. I remember, there's two things I remember that an elderly gentleman who were very successful in business told me. One is Mr. Rhodes who owned Rhodes funeral home. It's a funeral home that started up in like the 1880s and still exists in New Orleans. Mr. Rhodes would lead by example and he used to do something pleasurable on a daily basis. No

matter what was going on in his business, his funeral home business, he would do something pleasurable. He would go to the racetrack, he would do something pleasurable on a daily basis.

Number two, we had a customer in New Orleans who owned part of a furniture store and his name was Mr. Love and he liked to be in commercials on TV and radio. One day, I stopped by his store. In one of his stores, he used to wear a 10-gallon hat with a long cigar and we were talking about some of the challenges of the day, and he set back and took a long puff on his cig and he said, "young man, happening has no wheels, you have to make it happen, you can't rely on anybody else, you have to make it happen and find a solution and not continue as part of the problem". So those are things that I try to subscribe to on a daily basis. I had lots of time with my family, I've got three grandsons. I just came back from Houston last week watching my grandkids play soccer and watching them play touch football. I picked up my five-year-old grandson here in Chicago two days a week from school taking him to some of his tennis lessons, taking him to some of his social skills classes, or just doing something with him and so that's what I try to do now.

Ramsey: Nice. Okay. And last question to wrap it up, why do you think it's important for black students to attend Dartmouth?

Hutchinson: First of all, going to a college is almost like trying to select a glove, it has to fit. Not everybody is cut out to go to a Dartmouth and not everybody's cut out to go to college. It depends on the individual in terms of their seeing something in the vast offerings at Dartmouth. I think Dartmouth was one of the early leaders with the KIT system. There used to be computers across campus, which in the 1960s was revolutionary. Dartmouth has generally been open to change and willing to take on new challenges through the decades. One thing that I always urge students to look at is a college's graduation rate and Dartmouth is above 95% as well as the Alumni network. My first two or three jobs were through the assistance of Dartmouth Alum and I still tap Dartmouth Alum today at age 75. I ask questions about something or need x, y, z and vice versa. I can always ask a Dartmouth Alum to give me some advice or steer me in the right direction, and I think overall that's been invaluable as well as the experience.

Ramsey: Awesome. Well thank you so much James. I really appreciate this interview. That's everything that I have. I have a lot of information. This exhibit is going to be basically all about you and your experience at Dartmouth. I'll let you know when it's finished. Thank you so much again. I really appreciate it

Hutchinson: Thank you for taking the time.