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Joel Benoliel

SUMMARY

Joel Benoliel, a first-generation American from a Sephardic Jewish family, grew up in Seattle surrounded by a tight-knit community that shaped his cultural and religious identity. He pursued law and political science at the University of Washington, co-founded the Sephardic Traditions Foundation, and played a key role in establishing the university's Sephardic studies program. His professional journey—from law to real estate to executive leadership at Costco—culminated in his appointment to the UW Board of Regents, where he championed Jewish and Sephardic academic initiatives.

Joshua Schaier: And we are live now with Joel Benoliel of the UW Board of Regents. Thank you so much for joining us today. We really appreciate it.

Joel Benoliel: Pleasure.

Joshua Schaier: Um, Joel is a prominent member of the Sephardic community. Um, why don't you tell us a little bit about growing up here in Seattle in the Sephardic community? Um, interested particularly in your uncle, Rabbi Solomon Maimon.

Joel Benoliel: Yes. Yeah. So I was born, right after-Well, actually, not after the end, right close to the end of World War II. The war was actually still going on for a few months. I was born in June of 1945, and I was the fourth son. Uh, ultimately I had a baby sister, but there were I was the fourth boy born to my parents, who were both Sephardic and both immigrants. Uh, so I'm a first-generation American. Um, my father was born in England, in Manchester, England, and came through Canada as a young man, ended up in Vancouver, and ultimately in Seattle, where he met my mom. My mother was nine years old when she moved here with her family, the Maymon family from Tekirdag, Turkey. Her father, my grandfather, Rabbi Abraham Maimon, was hired by the local Sephardic community in Seattle in 1924 to move to Seattle from Turkey and take up full-time leadership as a rabbi for the then very fast-growing Sephardic community in Seattle. So they arrived here in 1924. My mother was nine years old. There were eight siblings in the family. The youngest, the baby of that family, was Solomon, who recently reached the age of 100 before passing. Um, he's now been interred in Israel. So he was my uncle. Uh, so I, as I grew up, he became the rabbi in Seattle very shortly after I was born. I think when I was born, he was already back studying in New York, at Yeshiva University. And I think within a few years after my birth, he became the rabbi. So I grew up within walking distance of the Sephardic synagogues or the Orthodox synagogues in a neighborhood that was heavily Jewish, heavily Sephardic. I mentioned that my mother had eight siblings, and only one of them left Seattle for health reasons. And so seven, including my mother, raised families within walking distance of the same synagogue. So you can imagine that I've never actually counted, but certainly more than 21st cousins. Um, all growing up, I mean, you literally couldn't walk two or three blocks without saying, "That's my aunt and uncle's house. That's my aunt and uncle's house." And so when you add that to the broader community that we were connected to socially, and culturally, it was quite an upbringing because, you know, if my mother wasn't home, I just walked three doors down and went to her sister's house, who was my aunt. So, that was the kind of upbringing we had. It was in the Madrona district. I walked every day to school. The Seattle Hebrew Day School, which is now called the Hebrew Academy, was located at 25th and Cherry between Cherry and Columbia, and our home was 31st between Cherry and Columbia. So I had a six-block walk each way. On the way I passed, two kosher butcher shops. Uh, the Brenner's Bakery opened on the corner of what was then called Empire Way and Cherry, and that later became Martin Luther King Boulevard. And, I was there the day that Brenner's opened their new bakery on

that corner on Cherry Street. It was a big deal. Um, so I grew up in that neighborhood. We moved to Seward Park, along with a large number of other families that were migrating south when I was 14. Uh, so my teenage years, um, my two older brothers went to Garfield, and then we moved to the Franklin High District, and the three youngest siblings in our family of five, went to went to Franklin. I've spoken publicly about one aspect of that, growing up. I spoke at the University of Washington at an event, and I mentioned that one of the reasons I am fervently supporting the expansion and preservation of Sephardic culture, the Latino language, etc. When I was growing up, all of the instruction in the local Jewish schools was dominated by the demographically dominant Ashkenazi people. And although we were very welcome, to go to school alongside our Ashkenazi friends. The pronunciation, the customs, and the language were all things that I didn't hear at home. So we're getting ready for my Bar Mitzvah? We really had to learn two different versions of Hebrew. The one that we had at school and the one that I was going to sing in the synagogue, because no one would have used the Ashkenazi pronunciation. And what was interesting in looking back at that, of course, was that I was not cognizant of it at all at the time. I just took it as a matter of-that was fact that I grew up with. But looking back on it now, it's quite remarkable. I think that in 1948, just three years after I was born, the State of Israel was founded. Um, history teaches us that they had a difficult choice to make. They had to unite a brand new country in 1948, in the ravages of World War II and the Holocaust, that unite the people, and the people, as far as Hebrew speaking and Hebrew writing, were using two completely different, types of Hebrew, and they were not entirely recognizable to one another.

Joshua Schaier: Mhm.

Joel Benoliel: So, they reached a compromise, and they said, we're going to use the Middle Eastern traditional Sephardic pronunciation. So what we know today is that Israeli pronunciation came from a Sephardic experience. And we're going to use the script for writing a cursive type of writing in Hebrew. We're going to use the Ashkenazi script. Now, my grandparents grew up with a Sephardic script, and that would be completely unintelligible to me today and to the Ashkenazi people from Europe. They had never seen it before, didn't know it existed. So it's remarkable to me, looking back, that in my formative years, which was in the first decade after the founding of the State of Israel, and that compromise having been reached, that it was not adopted in America to some extent. It's been adopted, in Jewish institutions across the country in recent decades. I think you see more and more Hebrew instruction now using Israeli pronunciation, which is Sephardic pronunciation, in the instruction. But then it was not. So, just as an aside, what I adapted to and all of my Sephardic friends adapted to was the idea that when we went to synagogue, we were listening to a different Hebrew, with a different pronunciation. I've spoken to some of my cousins who didn't find it that remarkable. And they just it was water off a duck's back to me. It's irksome. And, it motivates me. It motivates me that, in a way, it was discriminatory because we were by far in the minority, so that's that. I publicly explained my strong support for the Sephardic studies program at the University of Washington and other activities that I've been involved in as a volunteer and as a philanthropist, promoting, preserving, and expanding Sephardic culture. And that's part of it because it was not the mode at the time that I was raised. So that's just an aside. So I went to Franklin High School, and then when I turned 16, we were a family of very modest means, a working-class family with five children. And, it was clear from watching my older brothers that if I wanted a car, I was going to have to buy it myself, which meant that I had to get a job. So, although I had turned out for football and made the team at Franklin, I had to quit because I had to get an after-school job, and that meant I couldn't attend football practice anymore. So the day that I turned 16, I got my driver's license. And I went to my uncle's kosher butcher's shop on Cherry Street, White Kosher Market. And I asked my uncle, I heard that there was an opening for a part-time after-school job that involved delivering packages for the meat market. One of my cousins had had the job before that, and he was going back to college. So he said I was a little short guy, and he looked over the counter, and he said, "Joel, are you, do you have your license? Are you 16?" I said, "Yes, I just turned 16." So, fortunately, I got the job. There was no nepotism involved there with my mother's older brother. And, so I worked there for four years, the last two years of high school and the first two years of college. And the importance of that is that I learned a lot about the Jewish community because I had to know where everybody lived. I delivered to dozens and dozens of different homes and apartments all over North Seattle, South Seattle. Um, so to this day, I can drive through the Central Area and point out family names. This is a family that lived there, this is the family that lived there, and I've been helping a little bit on the tour of the Sephardic neighborhoods by identifying some of that information. So that was interesting. So I graduated from college with a degree in political science at the University of Washington in 1967. And we recently had our 50th reunion. It wasn't much of a reunion, but, 2017, we had our 50th, and I coined a phrase that actually was adopted by my class. I call us the class of bookends. Bookends because we came to campus in 1963, having just graduated from high school and two months into our first quarter of our freshman year, John Kennedy was assassinated. Very, very popular president, particularly among we younger people. And that cast a pall over us and shook our confidence in the country that we were planning to go be a part of. And then four years later, when we graduated in 1967, it was at the height of the build-up for the Vietnam War. So here we had these bookends of current events that we had. No control over the deeply affected our lives. Many of our class got drafted into the Army or volunteered for the Army, many went to war and never came back. And so it affected us. That was those were the two watershed moments in our college career, 1963 to 1967. That affected us. So I graduated from the University of Washington. My plan was all along to go to law school. Uh, that's really what I'd always imagined I would do. And, I applied to the University of Washington, as did many of my classmates and friends. And, I got put on a wait list, and I was really offended by that because I thought, you know,

here I am, a born and bred Seattleite, Washingtonian, graduate of the University of Washington, why wouldn't they just automatically accept me? And went to see a dean about it at the law school, and he said, "Well, you know, your grades are pretty good. Um, your score on the LSAT is pretty good, but it's just slightly below what would make you an automatic acceptance." So his advice was to take the exam again, and he said, if you get a certain number of points higher, we'll throw out the first one. And I guess for the first time in my young life, at the age of 22 I took offense for no good reason at that whole episode. And I said," I'm going to look to go somewhere else." Okay. So the next nearest place that I had an interest in, interest in accepted me right away. And that was Willamette University, a private university in Salem, Oregon. They had just moved into a brand new law school building just outside the campus that was right across the street from the Oregon Supreme Court. And one of the things that they touted as a benefit was having the library accessible right across the street from campus, the library of the Supreme Court of Oregon. So I moved to Salem, Oregon, and did my first year in law school at Willamette. So the significance of this, another life-shattering event or events over which I had no control. I came home in December, having completed my first semester, and two things happened. One is that I got a draft notice. The government at that time, under Lyndon Johnson as president, decided that it didn't have enough people in the draft pool. So they took away student deferments for law students who had not entered their second year. So that means that my entire class, first-year law students all over the country, were suddenly reclassified and were compelled to take a draft physical and get ready to go serve. While I was contemplating that and deciding what the heck I was going to do because I was staunchly anti-war, I had been a campus activist against the war. I wasn't going to go to Vietnam no matter what. But in the midst of that, while I was visiting at home in Seattle, my father took ill suddenly and went into the hospital, and died of a massive heart attack at the age of 62. So I was confronted with a very difficult choice: whether to go back to school and leave my mother at home by herself. All my siblings had married and moved out, and I was still single. So I went to see that same dean that I had been upset with at the University of Washington Law School. And I said, Look, my circumstances have changed. Is there any way that a person can transfer? And he discouraged me. He said it isn't done. It's very, very rare. Um, you'd have to be in the top 5% of your class after the first year to be considered to come back to the University of Washington, to shorten the long story. That's exactly what I did. I applied myself in a way that I had never done before. I came back with my transcript. I was in the top 5% and transferred to the University of Washington. Fast forward many, many years to 2014, I believe I was honored at a dinner as the Distinguished Alum of the Year for the University of Washington Law School. And I told the story about how I had been rejected from the University of Washington Law School before later being accepted as a transfer student. So I'm now one of their distinguished alumni, and I've got a plaque and a trophy, and a whole bunch of stuff. But the first time around, they didn't want me. So I kind of used that as motivation for the rest of my life. I don't know if you want to ask me any questions. I've been going on a monologue for a long time here, and I could give you my post-law school career pretty quickly. But let me just stop there and see if you guys want to ask any questions.

Joshua Schaier: Um, well, you covered your early life pretty thoroughly. Um, let's talk a little bit about the Sephardic Traditions Foundation. Um, can you give us some? Well, first, can you give us a rough overview of what that is for, you know?

Joel Benoliel: Yes. So I mentioned earlier that in the Maimon and extended Maimon family, I had a lot of first cousins living in Seattle. One of them was the Cantor Hasan Isaac Azose, who had been serving the Congregation, Ezra Bessaroth, for many, many years. And he had been working for decades on a project near and dear to his heart that involved producing prayer books for the Sephardic community that adhered to the traditions that were brought over from the Mediterranean to Seattle, Turkey, the Isle of Rhodes, and the Balkans. And it was a particular not radically different, but different in some respects from the books that had been available in the United States. And it was one of his life's missions to produce a set of books for use here and around the world for Ottoman Sephardic communities. Um, he contacted me one day and said there had been a huge breakthrough in that some software had been developed by a company called DavkaWriter, where for the first time, he could convert his keyboard into a Hebrew keyboard, before he was hunting and pecking one letter at a time, and now he could typeset. And he thought that would dramatically accelerate his project. Which it did. He asked me to become a partner in the project with him, which meant that he would do all the work and I would write some checks. So we later started a foundation that until recently has been run just by the two of us, called the Sephardic Traditions Foundation. And the reason we did that was that when we published in, I believe, the year 2000 or 2002, perhaps the first of what later became five, a set of five prayer books covering the whole year with the High Holidays and the festivals and the daily and Sabbath. Um, we needed to create a charitable vehicle that would enable the two Sephardic synagogues to buy the books. We said we would produce the books, but we had to go out to the community and get donors, in addition to myself, to publish this and create enough volumes to satisfy the needs of the synagogues. So we created the Sephardic Traditions Foundation, simply to act as a 501 C3 into which donations could be placed, and then that money would be used for the cost of publishing and the cost of distributing. It was a big success. Um, I was given the honor of naming the first book, and I named it in memory of my father. So it's called Yosef. His name was Joseph. And the second volume, as well, for the festival was named Rafael. My mother's name was Rachel. So the first two volumes, I had the honor of receiving in exchange for the support that I had given to Échezeaux. Um, and as I say, that has now gone on, and we have customers who have bought that book all over the world, from South Africa, all over the United States, Canada, Seattle, Portland, Baltimore area, Atlanta. So that's been absolutely a huge success. And it was codified in and preserved, um, a tradition that had been passed down from

grandfather to grandson orally. Um, literally, when I grew up, we were using the book published in New York by Rabbi de Sola Pool at the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, who tried to publish a book that would be of use to Sephardic communities all over the country with an English translation. But in the process, there was a lot of material that was commonly used in our synagogues that was omitted, or things that were in there. We didn't say. And so there were there were people running the services who knew and maintained the tradition that was brought over from the old country. But if you're sitting in the audience using the De Sola Pool book, you're missing something, and you've turned it, It's not in the same order, and they used to say, turn now to this page and then turn back to that page, and it was very frustrating. So now we have a book that for the last 20 years has been a straight-through page one to page 500, whatever it is. And there's no jumping around, and it's all laid out and the instructions are clear, and there's so much material in there about our customs and the origins, and it's Ike's life's work, a tremendous contribution. And I played a support role that I'm very, very happy to have played.

Joshua Schaier: Sounds like something that you should definitely be proud of.

Joel Benoliel: Yes.

Joshua Schaier: Um, okay. Uh, why don't we talk about the UW Sephardic studies founder's circle?

Joel Benoliel: When I read in what was then the print edition of the Jewish Transcript in Seattle years ago, probably eight years ago, that the University of Washington Jewish Studies program had just hired a Sephardic man to come here and teach specifically to start a Sephardic studies program. And it listed his name and said that he was finishing up his doctorate at Stanford. At that time, I was just so elated and excited. It struck a chord with me. And I immediately went to my computer and went to the Stanford history department and found the gentleman. And I got his email address off the Stanford website, and I wrote to him and introduced myself. And I said, I've just read that you're coming to Seattle to start this program, and I'm absolutely thrilled, and I'm very anxious to meet you. And as a result, we set a date. The first time he came to Seattle was to do a little house hunting. We met for dinner, and it's been a very close, supportive relationship ever since. I think Devin has been here now, probably in his eighth year, and he has been a single-handed, tremendous uplift to the whole community, really to the whole world, with what he's accomplished. And so it was only natural that since we don't have an endowment to support his needs and his programs that a group of people in the community who feel, to a greater or lesser extent, as enthusiastic as I do would get together and make a pledge to support the programs and do it with a multiyear annual contribution. So that became known, this group of small group of families that made that pledge became known as the Founding Circle or Founder's Circle. And once again, it's a little bit of putting your money where your mouth is. So, as I got to know Devin, I found out that his story was somewhat similar to mine in that his great-grandfather was also a rabbi in the old country. He was a rabbi in Salonika in Greece, part of the Ottoman Empire as well. And the same year, 1924, my grandfather came to serve the Sephardic community in Seattle. Devin's great-grandfather, Rabbi Nahr, was hired and came to a small Sephardic community in New Jersey. So I thought that was pretty cool that we had this in common in the year 1924. Years later, Devin called me excitedly and said, I've done some further research and I've actually obtained the ships' manifests, which are available online for both the Mimon family coming from Turkey and the Nar family coming from Greece. And do you know that they left on different ships on the same day in 1924? So, a remarkable coincidence brought us even closer together. But for the most part, it's because I admire his work, his research, his writing, and his community leadership. One of the few people of his generation who knows how to read and write in that Sephardic script that I mentioned to you. That was the everyday cursive of our grandparents, right? And he's keeping it alive.

Joshua Schaier: Very interesting. All right.

Joshua Schaier: So why don't we talk now about your time with the Board of Regents? Um, tell us some stuff about that.

Joel Benoliel: In 1992, after having practiced law and then having been a lawyer for a real estate development company, which was the Benaroya Company and then became a partner in a real estate development company where I worked for a number of years. I ended up going to become an in-house Lawyer and real estate development person at Costco, and on our Board of Directors at Costco. There were three individuals among a group of maybe nine, but three who were remarkable because all three of them were serving on our board and at the same time were serving as regents at the University of Washington. And they were Governor Dan Evans, after whom the Evans School of Public Policy is named. Bill Gates Senior, after whom Gates Hall at the University of Washington Law School is named. And Jeff Brotman, who was our chairman and founder at Costco, and one who had recruited me to come to Costco. And for some years, I observed the three of them interacting together and talking about the University of Washington business with such joy. So happy to be volunteering at that level. And over the years, I had already become more involved with the university. I was on the Dean's Advisory Board at the committee at Law School committee. And, um. This preceded, of course, the connection with Devin and the Jewish Studies program. But without realizing it, what was happening was that I was forming in my mind as I was watching these three impressive, prominent individuals in the community. I was saying, boy, if I could ever aspire to volunteering at the University of Washington at that level, because it was a huge job.

Um, very, very intense and deep, a six-year commitment. Um, most of them re-upped and did it for longer than six years. Um, I think, uh, Bill Gates served for 15 and Jeff for 12. So, anyway, it was in the back of my mind that after those three had served and retired from the board. Um, when Jay Inslee was running for governor for the first time, I was a volunteer on his campaign. He had been my congressman. He had served in Congress in the district where I lived. I've gotten to know, by the way, he's a graduate of Willamette Law School. So we had some, uh, he was a few years behind me, but we had some things in common to talk about. And I mentioned to him that if there was ever an opportunity to fill an opening on the Board of Regents, which is a gubernatorial appointment, that I'd like to be considered. And he made no promise, made no commitment. And in fact, when he became governor, the first two opportunities that he had to fill vacancies, it wasn't me. So, honestly, I kind of thought it wasn't going to happen, but then six years ago he called me. My wife and I were vacationing in Hawaii, and he found me on my cell phone, and he said, "Would you like to be on the Board of Regents?" And, of course, I almost drove off the road. I was so thrilled. Um, the answer was yes. So I've now been I'm now in my sixth year of a six-year appointment. Uh, last year I served as chair of the board. That's, 's on a rotational basis. Uh, people serve as chairs of the various committees, and then they work their way up as vice chair of the board and then chair. So last year was my turn to be the chair, and now I'm the immediate past chair. And it's been one of the great joys of my life. Um, oddly enough, my wife is a graduate of Seattle University, and she's a trustee for their university, which is the equivalent of a regent. So as far as I know, we're the first married couple to simultaneously serve on those two boards. And last week we had our monthly Regents meeting, and she was in one room in our house. I'm in the room where I'm sitting now. We both had all-day meetings for our universities, and we laughed. And it's become a job. You know, I retired from Costco in 2014, and within a year, I was getting ready to go on the Board of Regents. So, in addition to that, I served for 11 years on the board of trustees for Seattle Children's Hospital. And, um, they have a 12-year term limit, and I had to resign one year early because, taking over the chair of the Board of Regents, it presented some conflicts of interest on a theoretical level that I couldn't serve simultaneously on both boards. So, I only served 11 of my 12 years at Children's, but those from a volunteer point of view are the two very significant deep commitments that I've made. Um, people probably on the outside looking in, probably don't fully appreciate the commitment level, the time, the energy, the depth of commitment for either of those boards. And I was doing two of them at the same time. So when people said, "How are you enjoying your retirement?" Um, I could only laugh because I was much busier than I'd ever been in the last few years, in my professional career. Um, so now this year, 2021. We are next month going to be celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary. My wife, Maureen, and I. And in the fall, I'll be celebrating, God willing, 50 years of graduating from law school and passing the bar exam. So, a lot of milestones ahead in 2021. And I'm hoping one of them, an additional milestone, will be walking around without a mask, which I think we're all pretty tired of.

Joshua Schaier: Yeah, I guess we are a little. So, what would you like to see? Um, UW is doing more of to support the Jewish community in Seattle?

Joel Benoliel: You know it. Let me make one. Uh, first let me go back and make one other comment about Puerto Ricans.

Joshua Schaier: Mhm.

Joel Benoliel: Um, since we're recording this for history and posterity, I think it's an opportunity to say something. Well, discriminatory practices against Jewish people have been part of life in the United States from its inception. The first Jewish man who became a regent at the University of Washington was in 1933, the same year that Hitler came to power in Germany. A governor in Washington appointed a Jewish merchant by the name of Shemanski to the Board of Regents of the University of Washington. So when I was appointed, I was just another in a very long line of distinguished Jewish people being, uh, regents at the University of Washington, a very proud tradition, with, I've mentioned, Jeff Brotman. There was Stan Baird. There's Sam Strom and Jerry Greenstein, and many, many more. So what was remarkable, however, is that I was the first Sephardic man ever to be appointed, and certainly the first to ever be chair of the Board of Regents. So I'm proud of that distinction. And I guess that ought to be part of the historical record. When you ask what more the university can be doing. I think first we should look at the positive side. We have a very well-supported, robust Jewish studies program, both in general Jewish studies and in Sephardic Studies and in Israel Studies as well. As a result of the tremendous gift that was made to the University by Rebecca Benaroya to create an Israel Studies program. So you have really a three-legged stool with very strong support from the community and from the university. The dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, who is retiring this year. He's in his last year, um. Was at one time the head of Jewish studies at the University of Washington early in his career, although not Jewish himself, Bob Stacey has been a tremendous supporter of Jewish studies in his role as dean of Arts and Sciences. It's been a great college-level support. Uh, you know, there's never enough money for the programs that they would like to have. They would love to have a huge endowment and the ability to bring exciting new teaching to the university, lectures, and annual events. I'm sure you can dream big and think of things that were not done, but I'd like to look at it in a positive way that this is a university with a long, very positive tradition. Listen, supported by a strong family. Um, obviously, because the name of the Jewish Studies program bears the name, but also many, many other members of the community serving both as donors and as advisory board members. So, so now we have something that I'm not sure many universities have with a robust program in Jewish Studies, Sephardic Studies, and Israel

Studies, all in one place. So, I'm very proud of it.

Joshua Schaier: That sounds like something worthy of being proud of. Um, okay. Was there anything else that? Is there anything that you'd particularly like to talk about here?

Joel Benoliel: I think we may have covered it.

Joshua Schaier: I guess. Um, I think I'm pretty satisfied with what we've got. Um, okay.

Joel Benoliel: Well, Max, are you still listening?

Max: Hello? Yes, I am. Very interesting.

Joel Benoliel: I have to ask you, um, whether Fey is your grandmother.

Max: She is, yes.

Joel Benoliel: I recognized the name, I kind of put that together.

Max: Yeah, I kind of. Yeah. Are you talking about, um, all those people on the various boards? I recognize a lot of those names for sure. From talking to my grandparents. Yeah.

Joel Benoliel: And your grandparents and parents have been staunch supporters of, uh, everything Jewish in Seattle, so.

Max: Absolutely.

Joel Benoliel: I didn't want to omit their names, but I don't think that your grandfather ever served on the Board of Regents.

Joshua Schaier: You know, I was trying to think about that, but I can't, I don't know, off the top of my head.

Joel Benoliel: I think that somebody asked me about that, and we looked at the list. Um, if you go to the Board of Regents website, there's a line there you can click that goes back to the 1800s and lists every regent that ever served. And I went through the list, and I think I found that maybe there had been 12 or 13 Jewish people who had previously served as regents previous to me. And couldn't always be 100% sure based on the names, but I don't think your dad did. I mean, your grandfather did everything that person could possibly do in this community, but I remember going to an event where he was being honored, and he talked about having retired, and now he was doing his best to give away his grandchildren's inheritance. So that would have been you. He was talking about the day that he was honored. But anyway, I just wanted to say hi and recognize your name.

Max: Thank you. Yeah.

Joshua Schaier: Thank you so much for participating in this interview. I really, really appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to help us out here.

Joel Benoliel: Not quite as busy as it used to be with Covid. We're home, staring at our computer. But it's been fun for me. And let me just say that if going over the material there, other questions or things that pop up that we didn't cover, certainly feel free to contact me and we can spend some time filling that in.

Joshua Schaier: Absolutely. Okay, well, I'm going to stop recording now.