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Socastee Interview, Participant #01, March 26, 2021

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"Flooded Afterlives Project" Interview

Participant ID: 01
Community: Rosewood/Socastee
State: SC

Interviewer: Jonah Collins & Stacy Jackson
Interview date: 03/26/2021
Interview location: Zoom

This protocol for this study was approved by the Coastal Carolina University Institutional Review Board (Approval #2021.102) on March 3, 2021. All subjects gave their informed consent for inclusion before participation in the study.

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Interviewer 1: Passcode: flooding. I made the passcode "flooding".

Interviewer 2: You asshole.

Interviewer 1: I mean, there's no use beating around the bush.

Interviewer 2: Hey here's the interview about your personal experiences! The passcode's flooding.

Interviewer 1: I mean, I tried to make it water but zoom wouldn't let me because it's not eight characters -- oh! She's here! Ready?

Interviewer 2: Oh, she's here?

Interviewer 1: Yup! She's here! Let's do it! Oh wait, I need to -- I'm going to make you co-host first.

Interviewer 2: Cool!

Interviewer 1: You are now co-host... And ready? Here we go!

Interviewer 2: Here we go.

Interviewer 1: Time to -- oh, let me pull up the pictures for...reasons. And now...hey Participant!

Interviewer 2: Hello. Hello.

Interviewer 1: Hi! welcome. You are muted, just so you know.

Participant: Hey. I didn't even need a passcode that time!

Interviewer 1: Oh, great! I don't know why that was.

Participant: Yeah, I don't know but I didn't need the passcode that time it just went right in.

Interviewer 2: I was like "The was eventful"! [referring to the half hour before this interview where the interviewers were trying to figure out why the previous zoom meeting hadn't let participant join]

Interviewer 1: Yeah right!? Yeah.

Participant: Well, hello I'm XXX from Rosewood.

Interviewer 1: Hi XXX from Rosewood! I'm XXX. I use they/them pronouns.

Interviewer 2: Hi I'm XXX, I use she/her and they/them pronouns.

Interviewer 1: Just a reminder, you are being recorded audio and video. Is that cool?

Participant: Yeah.

Interviewer 1: Awesome. To our understanding you were sent a consent form? If not, we have a script that we can read just so you know everything.

Participant: I'm not sure if I got it or not. I'm not sure if I read it already. My mind is all over the place...

Interviewer 1: Yeah! You want me just to read through the script just so we're on the same page, just in case...I don't know... something?

Participant: Sure!

Interviewer 1: Okay! Hello, my name is XXX, from Coastal Carolina University. Dr. Jennifer Mokos is the researcher in charge of this study. We're asking you to participate in a research study about the impacts of repetitive flooding on individuals and communities. If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to participate in an interview about your experiences with flooding. The study will take about an hour unless you consent to the contrary. Your

participation and responses will be kept confidential. Being in this study is optional, and you can tell me if you want to stop participating at any time. You can also choose not to answer any questions. Do you have any questions about the study?

Participant: No, I'm ready to hear what you guys have to say. Ask questions and whatever you need I'm here.

Interviewer 1: All right! Do you have any general questions for us? Anything that you want us to know right off the bat?

Participant: Sure, I'll ask you a question or two. What class are you taking that you're doing this for? I know it's Jennifer, and she's amazing, but what class is it?

Interviewer 1: Agreed.

Interviewer 2: Yeah, so this class is specifically called Water and Women. Which is a subset, this is a class that takes the concept of water and the concept of women and combines them in a way. Especially the influence that women have had on flooding, natural disasters, relief and all that.

Interviewer 1: Yes, it's like a feminist look at the flooding impact.

Participant: And that's a very powerful thing. Water is very powerful, and women are very powerful. So that is extremely strong and powerful.

Interviewer 1: Amen!

Participant: Amazing. And what year of college are you guys in?

Interviewer 1: Pardon?

Participant: What year of college are you in?

Interviewer 1: Oh, I am a sophomore.

Interviewer 2: And I'm a senior

Participant: Awesome congrats guys keep fighting and keep going. Okay let's do this!

Interviewer 1: Let's do this!

Participant: Well, I do have another zoom meeting at 8:30.

Interviewer 1: Okay perfect. We'll make sure to be efficient.

Interviewer 2: Yeah, we could just zoom through.

Participant: Whatever you want I'm ready.

Interviewer 1: Alright, so the first question we have is how many times have you experienced flooding in your home or place of residence.

Participant: Three times. And the last and the most recent was a few weeks ago.

Interviewer 1: Wow!

Interviewer 2: Oh wow.

Interviewer 1: What was that like?

Participant: Every time is different. Every time has been so different. Um, this last time kind of sucked because I'm up in Pennsylvania, so I couldn't get there right when the water was coming in. I ended up getting Covid and my mom ended up getting covid, which is scary. Thank God we're both good and okay. So I didn't get to go down until after the flooding left and I had to dry my house out and it's devastating because I bought my house in 2013. I bought my house to be set up for the rest of my life, you know...meaning mortgage was in my budget, no matter what age I was. Meaning, it was my setup. Um... And when I was there this time, I was just looking outside, and it's because I haven't been there, I haven't lived there in two years since the Florence flooding...it's just...I made a house into a beautiful home and now it's just abandoned property. It's sad and depressing

Interviewer 1: Yeah.

Interviewer 2: Yeah.

Participant: You work so hard first time you know. You work so hard to save your money to do the right thing with your money, to put yourself in a situation that you think this is your forever home. You're safe, you're good, and then to go through what we go through, and to see how the county, the state, the Federal Government deals with it, it's devastating! It's bad. I'm a citizen. I'm an American citizen, I'm a taxpayer, and we get very little help. We get very little "recognition". It's like "Oh okay, it's what happened, it's no big deal let's move on" and I'm still not in my right life. You know, where I want to be since Florence. I'm in a house in Philadelphia that I rent, that I paid three times the amount in rent than I paid mortgage. Things suck and people don't realize how long, sometimes, it takes. It don't happen overnight that your life goes back to normal and people don't realize that. So spreading awareness is so big. It's such a big thing. I don't know if you know anything about me, but if you search my name, you will find I couldn't even tell you how many news reports. I've been in Council meetings, I have put the injunction and a petition in Horry County, I've done so many things to spread awareness, to talk about this, to help us with the buyout so we can move on from our flooded life. That's not the life you want to live. It's very scary and yet something like...2016 hurricane Matthew after that, when it flooded the first time, you don't think nothin' of it.

I rebuild, I'm like "I'm okay I'm good" and then it happens again! And...I can't live like that you know? You're always worrying about the water and always worrying about if you're going to get flooded out and lose everything again and I can't do that.

Interviewer 2: Mhm. Yeah and the government itself doesn't provide much help, is that correct?

Participant: Yeah. So in 2016 after hurricane Matthew, what happens is or what's been happening in the Rosewood/Socastee area is there's a hurricane... Well the first few times a hurricane comes in, does its thing, and a week later we're getting flooded out. It don't happen during a hurricane and it don't happen right after a hurricane. It can take a week for the water to come down. So the first time around, when I bought my house, my house has never flooded I wasn't in a flood zone, so I didn't have flood insurance. For what? I didn't know about any flooding going on like that. So because I didn't have flood insurance and I lost everything from four foot down in my house, I reached out to the federal government, FEMA, and I got \$17,000 to redo my whole house and that's it. And if you know anything that ain't getting you too far. That might get you...I don't know, a bedroom. Uh, two bedrooms and a bathroom, maybe? Maybe?? I redid my kitchen when I moved in and it cost me \$30,000. So that's just one room! So \$17,000 don't get you far, you know? So that was the help that the Federal Government gave me, \$17,000.

Interviewer 2: Wow.

Interviewer 1: Wow

Interviewer 2: I grew up in South Carolina, so I understand the flooding and the lack of assistance.

Participant: It's bad.

Interviewer 1: You mentioned earlier about organizing get a buyout going, how's that going? What's that process like? When did that start?

Participant: Oh my God. Are you guys...when you do this...are you guys knowing the history? What's going on in the area?

Interviewer 1: We personally are not too well versed. So the way we've set up our little project is that we have a group working on the background research. Here now I'm like-

Participant: Well, and I'm surprised Jennifer didn't tell you, because I'm not just a resident that is just living every day. I have been advocating for Rosewood for, Socastee, since the flood in 2018. So, I have raised my voice a lot. I have a lot- like I said, research my name, put my name in Google. You will find so many interviews on the news and papers. I've done my own meetings, I protested two times, council meetings, I put an injunction in with the courts of Horry County to get some results studies done. I've done so much. So I'm not just your normal resident that's living every day, and you know not really into it.

Interviewer 1: Right. Right. She did mention you're a community organizer, which I should've taken that as a hint to do a little bit of research but yeah.

Participant: I am the founder of Rosewood Strong and it's on Facebook. It is just a group of Socastee people that have flooded or some may not, but they still are interested, or they have family that have and want to be on there. It's a small group because... being in Myrtle Beach you got to realize Myrtle Beach is one of the top growing cities, okay? It's like number one or number two growing cities. It's like number one or two for a tourist area. So there's a lot of coverage, that this is the best place in the whole wide world you know? And they don't...they don't put any time into the smaller communities that are outside of the city. And it's crazy. So... it's been a big fight. It's been a hard fight. But I can tell you the good news is that just a week and a half ago, Socastee got awarded \$13 million for 60 homes to be bought out. And that's what I've been fighting for. 60 homes in Socastee and the money has been awarded -- it hasn't been to us yet. It will take a little time -- But Socastee got it and if you know anything, Conway is going to get it first. Myrtle Beach is going to get money first from the government and the state. And because of my fighting, because of raising my voice, because of all that, it came to Socastee. And Socastee is only living off the County. Myrtle Beach has the city and the County to back them up. Conway has the city and the County to back them up. I, in Socastee, only have the County to back you up so it's very, very hard. There's a lot of competition in getting a buyout, you know? There's a lot of other communities and areas in South Carolina that need money for buyouts for flooding! So it's a big- it's not like, "oh, okay, Socastee needs it here we go" it's a fight! And we got it because of me speaking up and raising awareness and not being quiet. Horry County actually came to me after Florence flood in 2018 -- which was five feet in my house. Five feet of water, okay? And they said, "I will put your House back together for free. We'll put it all the way back together for you, but there's one condition." I said "what's that?" "You have to be quiet." No. I don't want it, I don't want you to do nothing for my house or me and I will not be quiet. So...and I kind of got shunned. And if you know anything about the south, people will shun you out when you're not like them or you don't represent, who they are, and I got shut out but I'm okay with that because I am going to speak up. I have a voice and not that I know all the logistics in the land and everything, but I have a voice and I am here to be heard. I will keep speaking up for the residents in Horry County for, the flood victims, even after I get bought out. This is a fight, and you know, a lot of people...you got to think about it. Some people can't say a word about this because of their job. Maybe they have a high title somewhere, you know what I mean? Like I don't know if you guys know, but in my...I'm in the seventh district and Cam Crawford and Heather Crawford are my representatives. So they haven't- even though, I guess, in a way they're doing stuff but they're not really doing outreaches with the people in the community. They're not really working with us because they have a title, you know? They have to live up to something. So they can't do what I'm doing or they can't be a part of it, or they can't be seen. Some people physically are just not able to fight and use their voice. Some people are scared to do it. Some people don't want to get shunned out. Some people...you know, there's elderly couples. Somebody's got to raise their voice and they found a silly girl coming down the south, and I speak up. And I'm going to keep speaking and for these flood victims because it's horrible.

- Interviewer 2: Oh, of course. Yeah. Especially because, like the road of progress is not paved through complacency. It's paved through speaking out and through those people who are able to. The people who have the ability to speak out, it's all because of them speaking out that change gets made.
- Participant: And here's the thing, since the beginning of me fighting after hurricane Florence, I get a lot of people mad at me because...next to Rosewood is a community called Bridge Creek. Now, when I speak up I'm talking about Horry County. When I speak up I'm talking about Socastee. I'm talking about more than just Rosewood. I know there's so many more flood victims than just Rosewood and I am all for us all coming together. As one we get nowhere. As we come together, we will build mountains. You know what I'm saying? You will go so far and...you know I got Bridge Creek always talking crap-- "why does Rosewood always get this attention?". Well, you know why? Because I'm sitting here speaking up. I'm doing the interviews with the news people. I'm doing the interviews with Coastal Carolina... Awesome college kids. I'm doing that and I'm representing Rosewood. Yes, I represent...I'm a flood victim! I'm representing flooding all over the world! I'm representing flooding in Myrtle Beach, I'm representing flooding in Horry County. I'm representing flooding in Socastee. I'm representing flooding in Rosewood. That's my community. That's where my roots are so it all starts there. And, of course, I'm going to talk about that and people get really mad at it. Do you know many builders that build in Myrtle Beach that live in Myrtle Beach that have seen this story and seen me have bullied me online? Threatened to come and...um, kill me when I protest in front of Conway's courthouse? Like, it's crazy, but I'm a tough cookie. I've been through a lot and I'm gonna keep going. Nobody's going to take me down. Nobody's going to stop me and we need more people to speak up and raise awareness about all kinds of stuff.
- Interviewer 1: You mentioned a little bit in there about people receiving death threats for speaking up. Can you...and you also mentioned Horry County approaching you and trying to shut you down, trying to not spend the money, and not make this happen. Can you talk a little bit more about efforts to silence you and other people who have been raising their voices in protest?
- Participant: A lot of people don't raise their voices. When we did the protest, I didn't have a great outcome, but I still did it. And people are scared. People are really scared to speak up and they think that it ain't gonna work, nobody's going to help you, and that this is the life we live and we're just shit out of luck. This is life, you know? Nobody's gonna help you if you don't say nothing. But on the other hand, you get the bullies saying "you guys, are the ones that are near water. You guys, are the ones- you should have known better. This hasn't been our fault. This isn't the taxpayers' fault it's your fault for buying a house where there's water." Well I'm not exactly at water. I'm like two blocks from water and my house has never flooded. So why...and I'm not in a flood zone. I didn't need flood insurance. So why would I think it's gonna flood, you know what I mean? The intercoastal waterways have been there for years and years. You know? If you read about it you'll hear the county and the state all trying to blame North Carolina for this flooding. You know why? Because it comes from the north. The water comes from the

north. But this water has been coming from the north for hundreds of years! Why now? Why now? Why since 2015? 2015 is when it really all started flooding. In 2015 I had water up about five feet away from my home. It didn't come in, but that was the first time it really went into Rosewood and inland. It don't just happen. There's a lot of things and I'm fighting because the problem is- and a lot of the problem...yes, we have climate change. I'm always...I'm all for climate change. Yes, the water is higher from climate change, I know that. The water is going inland when because it has nowhere else to go. You went from having Myrtle Beach, Horry County, and let's just say Myrtle Beach City because that's a city kind of thing, but Horry County was so much. Miles and miles of forest and trees and wetlands! And then you take it all away, you put dirt on top, and you build on it and you think it's not going to flood out. Do you know one tree takes hundreds, thousands of gallons of water, a day. One tree! One tree!! How many trees- I don't know how long you guys been here or been in Myrtle Beach, but how many places have you drove by and one day it's forest, the next day is nothing, and then the next day there's a whole community there or there's a whole storefront? It's crazy and that's a big problem.

Interviewer 2: Do you think...was one of the huge...uh, do you think...wow, words. Do you think that a huge reason would be because of the rise of tourism and the rise of people wanting to move into Myrtle Beach?

Participant: Well, of course that's a major issue and that's why they're trying to quiet me. Because you got all these families coming from the north, wanting to live at the beach. Myrtle Beach, it's the best place and one of the best beaches in the United States right now. If you look into it, we are at the top! So of course everybody wants to come here. You know? Let me tell you, in 2018, after Florence, there's a community up north and I think it's Bucksport and I think you guys are working with Bucksport too.

Interviewer 1: Yes, we are! That is a community that we are also interviewing.

Participant: Let me tell you. That Community...there was a family that owned that land and the grant it was down in generations, and it became the grandson's. The land and the house, part of it flooded out so he decided he was gonna sell it off. He sold it off. He told the owner, the builder, and the buyer that it flooded. And what did they do? They went and built on it. Put houses, brand new houses, for all the retired people to come to. Within a year, not even a year of them having the house, a brand new house, it flooded, five feet or more. And they didn't do nothing, and nothing, you know. This is the problem, and this is what I'm trying to raise awareness with. There's so many big problems, but this is where the main problem comes from. You knew that land flooded. You know what I mean? And then you're going to go build houses? How are you as a city, as a county, taking care of your people? You're not taking care of your people. You're not making sure they're safe by buying these houses. You're not doing anything to secure people's lives and that's a problem.

Interviewer 1: Absolutely. I am not a...uh, any major related to law, but what would you say is a potential legislation change that could help the situation. What do you see as the ultimate goal of all this campaigning?

Participant: Ultimate goal is to help the flood victims in Myrtle Beach, to help... one another. The major problem is, and I'm just going to use Rosewood. Let's not use the all around but let's use Rosewood. In Horry County there was a little over, I think it was 1500 that have flooded repeatedly in Horry County. And this was after Florence, now it's probably way more than that, but in Horry County... Oh we're trying to talk about Rosewood. This is another major issue that I am working very hard at, now that the buyout is here. And there's different parts of the buyout so it's going to be within the next couple years that more people are getting bought out or houses released. It's a big project, but here's the problem: 2016 was the first flood for me. A lady right across the street from me just bought her house, six months ago, and now she has five feet of water in her house. The lady next door to me just bought her house. When it was flooding, she was in New Jersey signing the papers for her house. She didn't even get to move in and her house was flooded, and she was responsible for this. So what happens? These people don't want to live like this. Everybody's story is different, you know, but a lot of people want to get up and go. And I do, but I'm not going to...the reason I have my house still to this day, as it sits as a shell, is this reason. People don't want to stay, so they get up and sell it to a flipper, right? A flipper buys it, re-does it and sells it. Don't ever tell anybody about the flooding, sells it to a new family, the new families there, they've been in the house two months, six months a year, and they're flooded! And it keeps happening. 130 houses in Socastee have been reflipped a few times, and you have new victims over and over and over. And it's wrong. It's wrong. I want to make all the space that floods repeatedly green space. Bring it back, the space, you know? Let it be nature, because it's not fair for new people, for anybody, to go through this. It's not! And if the county, the state, and the Federal Government are not going to fix the waterway and it's not going to fix the issue, which they told us clearly that they didn't plan on fixing it, it'd cost too much money, then take care of your people that pay taxes in your county, and in your state. Those that are good citizens, or bad, even if they're bad citizens, whoever they are, if they're flooding, take care of that. And, please know that it's not just flooding. It happens with hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, fires, you know? This happens all the time and it's not fair, it's not right. It's not fair for a brand new family to think, "Okay, there was one 'thousand-year flood'" and that's how they make it off to be. "Oh there was one flood, no big deal you'll be good you don't need flood insurance. You don't need it, you're good, you're not in a flood zone". If you know, my area's still not in a flood zone, and let me tell you, some of the people that flooded in my area have flooded 7, 8, 9, 10 times. And these houses keep getting flipped, keep getting flipped, they're not...nobody's coming in and inspecting these houses as the work gets done. There's so many things that are wrong, and crooked, and messed up, and at first, of course, I think it's all Myrtle Beach, it's the county, but as I learn and grow I learned that it's everywhere. It's United States. How can we take care of all these other countries if we're not taking care of us? Makes no sense! We should come first.

Interviewer 2: Oh yeah. And what do you wish that people understood better about your experience with flooding and in general?

Participant: What I want people to understand is it just don't happen and then it's fixed in a day or a week or a month or even a year. Sometimes we deal with these things for years. You know? I've been fighting...my first flood was in 2016. I've been fighting since 2018, it's 2021. I'm still going through it. I'm in the house, I didn't put the pictures up on the walls. I didn't see my home, I didn't get to see my home. I haven't made it my home. I'm not living the way I want to live, I don't want to be in PA. But that was my option, you know? Because I was not putting my house back together knowing it's just going to flood again. I wasn't! I'm not doing that! That don't make sense! I have five babies. I have five animals. I have three dogs: two Great Danes and a Pitbull. They have to be outside. Do you know how much the waters is contaminated? Do you know what is in the water? Sewage, dead bodies, chemicals, could be gas, could be oil tanks getting broken. Things getting broken and then there goes the oils and different things in this water. I have a palm tree that's like 35 years old it's the little sega palm. And it's pretty big but it's little. They're the short ones. But I didn't know, but them things if they're that big, one of the short ones, it's like a 35 year old tree. It's been there that long and the waters killed my tree. Now you're taking a palm tree that's been in the ground for 35 years. And these waters that sat in my yard for two weeks. A few different times a week and a half, two weeks. And it killed a palm tree of 35 years old! So it's telling you that something's not right with the waters. I don't want to live like that. Here's another thing: no matter what you do for these houses that flood over and over you cannot always get the mold out. If there is black mold in your house... and I'm sorry I don't care what anybody says, you can spray for it, you can air your house out, you can do everything you want, and I promise you one day there'll be black mold back in your house. It's from the flooding. It can make you very sick and it can kill you. There's so many different things that need awareness, things that need to be talked about, and things to understand. Like I said, I'm going to keep doing it and... I just hope that people can be more compassionate to others. This is a very cruel world right now, y'all know that, and I am a firm believer in being kind. It takes more out of you to be ugly and more energy to be ugly than it does to just be kind. You know if people will just show a little more care in the world for others and their story...everybody's story is different and everybody goes through different things and it doesn't make one worse than another. This is life and tragedies happen every day. We have to help each other and work with each other. So...

Interviewer 1: A demonstration of exactly that point, is a phrase I often hear. "Drowning in 30 feet of water is just as bad as drowning in 10". Which is a little bit I guess on the nose for this topic. Um...so-

Participant: We had two issues in Rosewood. I had a lady that died from the floodwaters in Rosewood, and another guy that got hurt. Here's my problem- let's talk. So hurricane Matthew was a named storm. Hurricane Florence was a named storm. It was considered a natural disaster. The flooding that happened just a few weeks ago was not considered a natural disaster, so there was no help whatsoever, okay? Now in some spots, the water was maybe a couple inches. In other parts maybe it was...I haven't looked I don't know

because I wasn't there to see it- but maybe let's say three feet. Okay, this time if you're in your house and it's flooded or the streets are flooded, no cop, no ambulance, no fire company will come in them waters to help you, to save you, to protect you. Nothing. you are beat. And that's wrong. There's some old folks that had an inch or two of water in their house and trust me I don't care if it's an inch or 10 feet, water is water, and it does the same thing. And they had to live in our house. Now if you know anything, electric and water don't mix. But they had no other choice. So now...the county are putting these families in danger, over and over again. There's so much to think about that can happen...that happens. One of the ladies in 2018...through that flood...she fell. She got hurt, she went to the hospital, and she never came home. She's dead. And like I said there's a lot of places in the United States...in the world where there's floodwater. Flash flood water, where it just comes in real fast and...we don't deal with that, right now, thank you Lord, but it doesn't matter. That was a life that... didn't need to go. A lot of people have no money when their house floods or when their community is flooded out, to go get a hotel. All these people have been flooded out so many times they've used all their savings, they used every dollar they could, to rebuild and rebuild and they have nothing when the water comes up. They have nowhere to go. The county has no place for them. "Oh we're gonna open up a shelter". They open it up on a Friday, that's already five days after the water's been in people's house. And then, because the water's out on Sunday, you close it. Do you think, because the water is not in the house, they can move back in? No! It takes time and they have nowhere to go. So having a shelter to...I always say, one of the hotels should have a contract. Horry County, Myrtle Beach, should have a contract with one of the hotels. If there's flooding, you have space for these flood victims until you get them all to safe grounds and do something to...take care of the situation. You should have something set up for flood victims. And they don't. So there's just so many...so much to it, you know what I mean. And... it's crazy.

Interviewer 1: Yeah absolutely. You've talked a lot about this pattern of repeat victimization of people. Whether through being unable to move out and just being flooded over and over again, or through flipping the house and bringing in new victims to the same area. Is there, in your experience, a certain demographic that is disproportionately affected by this or targeted by the house flippers or targeted by...not targeted, but just disproportionately affected demographics?

Participant: I can tell you, if you look it up in the state of South Carolina, it is a law that if you're selling a house, you have to disclose anything that's happened to that house. So, the real estate people, they're not...but it's a law. I don't know how they're getting passed on this. I can tell you how the flippers get passed on it...but the real estate people that take on these houses, they sell real estate. They have to disclose the information and a lot of times they don't. The flippers get over on it because they buy the house. They're just an average Joe that have a small business or whatever, flipping houses. So they're an average Joe flipping a house. In the time of them owning that house it didn't flood, so therefore when they sell the House, "No, when I owned it it didn't flood". And that's how they're getting away with it.

Interviewer 1: So they don't have to share, because it wasn't currently flooded while they owned it?

Participant: Right, they don't have to share because it wasn't currently flooded while they owned it.

Interviewer 1: I see.

Participant: Which is nuts. If you're selling a house, you should disclose everything. People say the buyer should know. Hey, I'm here to say that was my first house I bought and I just knew...my house never flooded. I knew I wasn't in a flood zone, I didn't need flood insurance so I thought I was good. I didn't know all the details, so I do think buyers should do a little research. But when you're new to buying a home it's a lot! You're not thinking about everything! And people in Socastee, not all but a lot, are average people. They're not made of money. I mean, some will say we're low class, I feel I'm middle class, but whatever we are, we're not them that have all this money. And... so it's really hard. I just had a lady move in the House behind me on Rosewood drive six months ago. She's just lost her house. She also has cancer. She bought this house for her, her husband, and two little kids, because she's about to be dying! She's got stage four cancer. And they just bought this house, and she thought her family was set for the rest of their life because she wasn't going to be here much longer, and now... they're in this situation. It's effed up to the fullest.

Interviewer 1: Yeah. Absolutely.

Interviewer 2: Yeah. So what can be done to better support these flood survivors? That's not just... because what I noticed a lot, I personally noticed from a lot of stories that I've read is the help that floods- that flood victims get is from the community itself. And so...

Participant: Say that again. "The help that flood victims get from the Community"?

Interviewer 2: Yeah...a lot from what I noticed, from all the stories I've read and also from my own personal experience, living in Beuford, South Carolina and the low country where we have endured flooding and we have been hit by hurricanes. We've had our whole downtown area flooded a couple times. And help that's received is from the community itself, from the people who live there, people like you and things like that. Where people volunteer, people bring their boats and people go out and they help others. So...but that's not enough. There has to be this help from the Federal Government...like there has to be this money. What can be done to better support these flood survivors?

Interviewer 1: Take your time!

Participant: Can you hear me?

Interviewer 1: Yeah.

Interviewer 2: Yeah.

Participant: Sorry, I was having a phone call coming in. I'm sorry, finish what you were saying.

Interviewer 2: Oh that was pretty much the gist of it. What can better support the flood survivors?

Participant: You know, there's a lot of nonprofit agencies. Red Cross is an example. They help. I think we have to find some nonprofit agencies to be around when flooding happens to help support. I will say there's a lot of amazing people in your area that you don't know about. You got the good and you got the bad. And there is...what are they called...nonprofit. It's one neighbor to another. And after Florence they...every day they were either bringing us food or giving us canned goods or, toiletries, or having a Christmas event for the kids, or- and they did so much for the Community. Yes, they helped Rosewood so much, but they were right up front. Right on Socastee High School right behind the taco bell, but right there were our people. Other people can come. They were never just secluded they always said anybody in Socastee can come. But there's so many great people that just want to help. They have a big heart and just want to help. And, you're right. A lot of the help comes from the community and it's amazing. There is a lot of help out there. But there's certain things that they can't provide for us because it's out of their means and I totally understand. They can help me with a meal, or they could help me with a pair of socks, but they don't have the means to get me a place to live for two years and pay for it. You know what I mean? They don't have the means. They might be able to, if someone's really struggling, to get them in for a hotel for a night but you know they don't have a means. They're not huge, they're not the big nonprofit, they're just little people and, just wanting to help their community. And they're amazing but there needs to be more. There needs to be more when there's flooding. Just because it's not as big as a natural disaster doesn't mean it's not a natural disaster. So in South Carolina there has to be- and don't quote me on this, maybe research it if you decide to talk about it- I think it's \$7 million worth of damage in Horry County to consider it a natural disaster. Now I don't know how they get them numbers. I don't know how they figure it out? Like it's flooded, if it's a natural disaster or not, but they do, and a lot of the flooding that's going on isn't natural disasters, so we have no help back there. The only people that will help is the little people in the community that just want to give and help and do anything they can. You know there's not a lot of big help. Red Cross wasn't out just two weeks ago, when it flooded. And I know there's other places too I just can't think of them all. But...there's got to be programs there's gotta be- and it's gotta come from the government. The government's gotta support it. The government's got to fund it to help these people because it's not fair! Why? Why? I didn't ask for this. And it's one thing, like I said, I do believe part of it is climate change, absolutely. But I don't think, with just climate change, I would have been wiped out, already three times.

Interviewer 2: Mm hmm.

Participant: I don't think I would. There's so much more and the County needs to recognize their mistakes. I don't know if you guys know about injunctions. So...what I did way back, probably like six months or a year after Florence...I got a petition together. And you can find reports on this and interviews on this. I got a petition together online, and I had a couple thousand people sign it. What it was saying was- there's probably like 30 pages of this petition- but, in brief, what it's saying is that we wanted to stop all building in Myrtle

Beach until, not forever, just for the moment, so Horry County can do some studies to figure out the flooding. Now, we asked for council meetings, we asked for interviews with the news, and we said it out loud and the county wasn't doing nothin'. So we decided to get an injunction and what an injunction- and I don't know all of it- but what an injunction is, is...I don't know how you even say it, but I'm kind of stopping the county. So... I go to the courthouse, and I file for an injunction, and what I'm asking the judge is to stop the building in Horry County so these studies can be done. So we put that in. Of course, it takes months before you get a court date. When we got our court date we found out that we didn't do the process right. We were supposed to serve the councilmen with the paperwork and we didn't serve them. I don't know how many is on the board. 9, 10 councilmen? We didn't serve them each. So we couldn't go on with the process right that day. But, because we were serious and because we're fighting, Horry County did get them studies done for us by the court date. So, sometimes you have to do things...and I had a lot of backlash on that. I had people that I'm good friends with that were yelling and screaming at me, like, "I work in the construction field in South Carolina or Myrtle Beach and you're trying to take that away from me?" "I need my job, what do you want me to be, homeless?" And it wasn't about that. It wasn't trying to stop their job completely. I just wanted Horry County to take action and figure out why it keeps flooding. You know there's a lot of crooked things in Horry County and I don't know if you know but in Myrtle Beach, if you have money you'll be good. If you don't have money to back you up, you ain't shit.

Interviewer 1: Right.

Participant: So.

Interviewer 1: Which can-

Participant: What was that?

Interviewer 1: Oh, I was just backing up your point with an illustration. On the one extreme end of the scale, if you are homeless, then like that is...I've done a lot of work with Amanda Masterpaul, and raising awareness around issues surrounding homelessness and home insecurity in Myrtle Beach specifically, and it is a terrible, terrible situation. It's just there to really illustrate the fact that money is equated with importance in Horry County. Which is an incredibly frustrating thing.

Participant: Yeah, it is. Because you know what? I know money makes the world go round, and I know we need money to survive, but money isn't everything. And just because you don't have money don't make you not a successful person, a smart person, an intelligent person. It doesn't mean that. I mean, I don't have a lot of money, but I have a big heart, I speak up and I do things I believe in. I'm a kind person, I'm not a criminal, and I'm...I'm a good citizen. But I'm nobody because I don't have a lot of money and my house is only worth \$130,000. So who am I? I'm nobody.

Interviewer 2: Yeah.

Participant: But I'm somebody in Myrtle Beach, and I'm somebody in Horry County. So please know that. Please look up my name, please find all the stories, and before you guys put out your reports, or whatever you have to do, please gather it because there's so much information.

Interviewer 1: Absolutely. Absolutely

Participant: And if you have any questions or need me at any time or anything, reach out. I'm right here. Reach out. I'll answer anything I can and help you with anything I can. Also on my Facebook, if you look me up on Facebook, I have albums: Hurricane Matthew flooding, Hurricane Florence flooding, flooding 2019, 2021. So if you want to look and use anything you're more than welcome.

Interviewer 1: Thank you so much.

Interviewer 2: Uh, just a couple more questions, I know you have a thing at...we have a little under 10 minutes left.

Interviewer 1: Right.

Participant: Okay

Interviewer 2: More questions. One of the-

Participant: Wait I'll try and make them shorter answers.

Interviewer 2: First of the last couple is, what is your vision for the future?

Participant: To make...to make the...let me think. To help the people that are struggling...to make this world a little more aware. Okay, you might be aware, there was flooding in Myrtle Beach but you're not aware that I'm still dealing with it two and a half years later. To bring awareness to the problem...and not only that my house flooded, but all the things that come into it that I've just talked about with you guys. I've said so many things that place with this...disaster...so there's a lot. I just want us to spread the word, and speak up, and help the citizens. We are humans, we are citizens, we deserve better. You know? We deserve better.

Interviewer 2: Oh yeah. And-

Interviewer 1: Not really related to that, if I may Stacy real quick.

Interviewer 2: Oh go ahead.

Interviewer 1: Earlier, you mentioned how, because this latest flood, a couple weeks ago, wasn't a named storm, there was zero help. And in our class studies we've learned a lot about kind of the, stigma surrounding unnamed storms and the levels of storms and the fact

that flooding has shifted from being viewed as an act of God to being viewed as almost the fault of the people who get flooded. So kind of related to that vision for the future, what do you think are some steps that need to happen to erase this stigma.

Participant: Awareness. Speaking up about it, talking about it, raising my voice about it, you know? Not stopping because somebody bullies me, not stopping because the County wants me to shut up, not stopping because someone's not liking what I'm saying. Keep doing it, keep fighting, and keep raising awareness.

Interviewer 1: Awesome.

Participant: I've actually found a flood advocate online, on Facebook, and she is now the biggest flood survivor group in the United State, and it's called Higher Ground. And she's actually helped me so much to do this buyout. And you hear so many different stories all over the United States. So, as I say, in the beginning, I thought it was just me and Myrtle Beach. It's everywhere and we need to speak up. We need to bring awareness to all natural disasters. There's so many things, I can tell you, not even natural disasters. Diseases, homelessness, overdosing...sexuality, I mean I could go on and on, for things that need awareness. But we need more people to speak up and we need to spread awareness.

Interviewer 2: Mm hmm. Yeah! One of the final questions before the basic "anything else you wanna tell us"...I think what my personal last main question is who should we talk to next after this interview is done? Like who are other people that we should contact and talk to about this?

Participant: Like I said, definitely look into all the stuff that I told you to research on me. Umm...I think you should talk to Cam Crawford. He's my representative, he's my councilman for district seven. um...

Interviewer 1: Can you spell that out for us real quick?

Participant: C-a-r-w-o...e-r? A-r ?

Interviewer 1: How about you write in the chat...

Participant: I think it's C-r-a-w-f-o-r-d. He's a councilman for district seven so you can-

Interviewer 1: Yeah.

Participant: He's everywhere. I would definitely talk to him. Ummm...he is my councilman for Socastee. He is the councilman. I'll tell you a huge person to talk to with the buyouts. Umm...shoot. She works for Horry County, her name is Courtney, and she actually is writing the grant for the buyout. She has been a huge support on us and been really, really helpful. She's actually writing the buyout to get the buyout...like, she does that part. So she is the main person that's got to get all the information for the buyout and from the people. You don't just get money and that's it. You have to go through a

process. And I think that's important to look at, because with flooding comes buyouts and with Socastee and Rosewood there's a buyout coming. I think that's a major thing that you guys should look into. So her name is Courtney. Courtney F, and I don't know the last name. I'm going to get it for you and get back to you on that. But maybe try and reach out to her and ask her about the buyout program and...there is another person. There's another person that I started this with, and that is co-founder with Rosewood Strong and her name's Terri Jean, she lives in Rosewood. She's another person, if you want to talk to her. She'll give you a lot of information about the land and years and years. She's so knowledgeable about the buyout process and, and she has so much knowledge. She's...I'm the voice, she's the brains kind of thing.

Interviewer 2: Yeah

Participant: Everybody, you know, is strong in one area. So you put all them different areas together of people, and you are powerful and the two of us have gone so far with this.

Interviewer 2: I love that.

Participant: If it wasn't for us, you would have never heard Socastee is getting a buyout. You would have never heard of that, if it wasn't for all the stuff that I did.

Interviewer 1: Which is really awesome--

Participant: Because we are nobody. Nobody sees just a small little town in Horry County. We are not...so...that's huge.

Interviewer 2: Yeah.

Interviewer 1: Which is really awesome. At the very beginning- first, congratulations, yes! And it's really awesome to contrast that at the beginning, where you're talking about the power of flooding, the kind of the theme of the class: water and women. Two extremely powerful forces and when you get multiple people together that's a power that can overcome flooding, which is very inspirational. Not to devalue the tragedy that people go through, but, it is very, very inspiring and motivating to see that there is a way forward.

Participant: Yes absolutely. So, I hope I helped you guys, I hope you got a lot of information.

Interviewer 2: Yeah.

Interviewer 1: Yeah.

Participant: If you need anything, please reach out. Um, I will text Jen... unless one of you finds me on Facebook and then message me, or I'll text Jen that name, Courtney F.

Interviewer 1: Okay. I actually did a little bit...I did a little bit of researching...is it Courtney Frappaolo?

Participant: Yeah, that's her. Yeah. Okay, you got her. She's the one that's doing all the buyout situation and writes the grants to get the money to Myrtle Beach, Socastee, Horry County. So this is a huge project for her. Also, the buyout...there's two buyouts going on. There's this FEMA buyout and there this other buyout. The buyout that I've worked so hard for is a mitigation buyout. There has never been a mitigation buyout in Horry County. This is the first time. And this buyout is a little different than other buyouts. It gives you...it's going to give me moving expense. It's going to give me low income expense...extra...there's a lot of...you don't have to... you didn't have to be the owner of your house through Florence. As long as your house went through it, your house is eligible. And a lot of the other buyouts, you have to be the owner when it flooded in Florence. And, if you're not the owner of that house when it went through Florence you can't get help. So this buyout is expanded to help so many more people than a regular buyout. Um, and like I said I go on forever with you guys with information. But, definitely look into the different buyouts. A mitigation buyout is so different and that's what we got granted and that's what we're getting so it's freaking awesome and it's the first time again in Myrtle Beach, Horry County. So there's just a lot of good things, but if you guys ever want to chat or want to know anything or got a question reach out. I'm always here.

Interviewer 1: Thank you so much.

Interviewer 2: Thank you so much.

Participant: Thank you, thank you. You guys are awesome, and yeah!

Interviewer 2: Thank you and have fun at your next meeting.

Interviewer 1: Yes.

Participant: Yeah. There's another thing I advocate for. I advocate for disease called endometriosis and it's in women and one out of every ten women have this disease. So I advocate for that online too. We had a big event today to spread awareness and now I'm about to have a zoom meeting with everybody that went, so...

Interviewer 1: Nice! Nice.

Participant: Find me on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram...uhh TikTok. I'm in all of them and come follow me and...don't be a stranger.

Interviewer 1: Alright, absolutely! Thank you so much for listening and I hope you have a wonderful night.

Interviewer 2: Have a wonderful night!

Participant: You too. Thank you. Good luck guys!

Interviewer 1: Thank you, you too! Bye!

Participant: I hope I gave you all the information you need or a lot. I hope you guys got plenty of information.

Interviewer 1: That was lovely. It's gonna be awesome and yeah. That's great.

Participant: If you do a video or anything...can you share with me?

Interviewer 1: Absolutely, yeah!

Participant: Can you send it to me?

Interviewer 1: Absolutely, I'll make sure the link makes it your way!

Participant: I want to see!

Interviewer 1: 100%, yeah. Absolutely, I'll make sure that happens!

Participant: Have a great weekend. Good luck. Bye guys

Interviewer 1: Bye

Interviewer 2: Bye.

Interviewer 2: We did that!

Interviewer 1: Yes!

Interviewer 1: I was so scared she was waiting for me to end the meeting. Cause I know you and I were like "Okay debrief time. Debrief time".

Interviewer 2: Oh my God. We did that. I'm excited for us.

Interviewer 1: Alright couple of highlights, I wrote them down but make sure: look XXX up, that's kind of a note for the background researchers, she really wants us to look her up. Umm, interview Cam Crawford. It sounded like she was saying Crawford but just getting the letters wrong. Um...

Interviewer 2: That's what I was thinking too, but honestly that's an easy look. I'm going to leave.

Interviewer 1: Trying...oh wait, I need to take off the blur. I'm trying to get the. Um...

Interviewer 2: I don't need this hat anymore.

Interviewer 1: Ha, nice. Trying to get the blur off, so I can show the- there we go- the way I wrote it. Cam Crawford, Courtney Frappaolo...how do you say that? "Fra-pow-low" something like that. And yeah! That's for the background team. Search XXX, Cam Crawford, Courtney Frappaolo, and anything else?

Interviewer 2: Um, that's it. That's all I got.

Interviewer 1: Right. She was so passionate. That was awesome.

Interviewer 2: That was great. Oh, god, my back is not feeling great

Interviewer 1: Absolutely. No I completely understand. Well, good job and we did it! We have...I mean if you want...Dr. Mokos, we have a half hour of us filming in a meeting trying to get XXX in. We had to get-make this meeting and it's just a half hour sitcom.

Interviewer 2: Mm hmm.

Interviewer 1: But anyway, I'll upload this as soon as we're done. And...

Interviewer 2: Right, yeah. I'll you see around!

Interviewer 1: See ya around! Have a good night.

Interviewer 2: See ya! Bye.

Interviewer 1: Bye.