

Interview Subject: Terry Chuang
Interviewer: Khalilah (Lilah) Henderson and Blake Pavri
Project: Dock Stories
Transcriber: Lilah Henderson
Primary Investigator: Jennifer Sweeney Tookes
Others present: N/A
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Place: Brunswick downstairs office

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LH: This is an interview with Terry Chung on February 28 2025 This interview is being conducted in Darien, Georgia, about the dock called Golden island. It is part of a research project and interview collection titled dock stories. The interviewers are Lilah Henderson and

BP: Blake Pavri. So our first question is, if you can tell us about your connection to the dock and this is a very broad question, however you want to answer it.

TC: I used to have a one dock in the city, but right now I have a dock at Thompson. So you're talking about an old dock or a new dock?

BP: Both.

TC: Okay, the new dock right now. We bought this dock about four or five years ago because we need to remove from old dock. So we need to find a new place. So we moved to this new dock, and we bought a new dock, but I think three years ago, I saw to the one gentleman. He lived around there because he has a special relationship with the dock, because his family own, the cluster of the water, the whole piece of land, I think his family own it., so he use to do that to that dock. whatever he want to own this dock, but he want me to sell to him. I say, no, I want to use so we discussed, and later said okay, I sold to you, but you list me, you rent to me back. So because his age is pretty old, he worry if he's not here and he's a new generation, maybe won't, you know, take this property back. I said, okay, I can certify you, which I sold to you, but you need a lease back to me, because I need to use for jellyfish operation.

LH: And then, when was this?

TC: I think this is 2000. I think four years ago I sold it. Yeah, I think I bought this one the property about seven years ago, but I sold it after the three years. I remodeled everything used to be, I can show you the picture is like a like a landfill. [laughter] So I redo everything. So looks a very acceptable, older local resident, very happy about us. Really, they like us, because we make the environment different.

BP: Yeah. How long have you been in the fishing industry?

TC: Since 1999

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BP: What got you into it?

TC: Okay my big one -original, my college major was accounting, but year two, 1981 I came to United States. I went to the graduate school. I got a computer science degree, and I worked for the big company. After the graduated, I went to the Taiwan . I work for big government company for two years, and I immigrated to United States. I work for lucky, lucky here in the lucky, lucky defense company for two years, and I start my own business. I opened restaurant in St Louis for 10 years, and I opened seven restaurant in a 10 year. But 1996 I gave up all the restaurant because it's, the industry is very difficult to operate, because everybody already new immigrant,

come here, they open the restaurant not like McDonald's. They have a restriction two mile away. You can open another one, but Chinese restaurant you can open here, you can open next door and cross street again. So I gave up and I do the summer help my friend to do the summer import-export business. But in 1999 I came over here because I- here is next to the water. So I try to bring some fish and shrimp to the inland St Louis, Missouri. That make sense, because St Louis not next to the water. So the fish, the [old or other] seafood, is very difficult to find over there. They need to import from the different place. So originally, my purpose come here is because my friend has only one dock. That's old dock on the 2054, King George. There's a very old dock and but the seafood business is not easy. So 1999 I came over here. I start working with the seafood business. I find all the shrimp business is going down over catch and overseas, import dumping the market to crash the industry. So the seafood business, special shrimp is very bad. So I work here for three months, and I decide this is not doable business because my family is still in St Louis, and I came over here, far away from home. It's not worth it. But one guy came over and talked to me, say, you want to do the jellyfish, I said jellyfish? Why you can do jellyfish? He's a Japanese and he got a people buyer in Japan ready to buy jellyfish in United States. And they find all the United States jellyfish quality is not too bad. And I told him, I don't know how to do it. He said, it's okay, [laughter] we can try. So that's the reason I stuck here. I originally- I want to go back to St Louis, but because the guy come and I see the jellyfish over here, the fishermen to them is headache, because every time they catch the shrimp and bycatch a lot of jellyfish, the quantity is huge. The shrimp you need a p by hand, the jellyfish is to them, really headache. So to me, I say, okay, and the quantity is huge because of jellyfish is allowed. So to me, the price, I can get a very reasonable price from fishermen, and they will be very happy because they can, they can do the shrimp and they can do the jellyfish. Special jellyfish season is perfectly matched with the shrimp. When season kick off, our jellyfish is gone, so it's a perfect match to them. After the shrimp season, they need to find a temporary work. okay, but you can see the older seafood business recently is declined very fast before I see the allowable I think the $\frac{2}{3}$ of the family in here is related to the seafood right now, not even 1/10 really the whole structure has changed. But 25 years ago, when I came here, yes, the seafood still is one of their major income, the shrimp and fish, especially the shrimp.

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TC: So after I found out someone want to buy the jellyfish. But to the Asian people, especially Chinese, they eat a jellyfish from few 1000 years ago. So it's very healthy seafood. It's, I work with the UGA. They are doing the research, you know, is they call the future super food. But in the China, in Asia, like Japan and China, we eat a jellyfish for long history. We have a lot of experience. So let's, I start 1999 I started jellyfish processing. So that's the reason I jump in this business is very unusual, but it's very you need business. But really, after the- I started the jellyfish business really helped the local special McIntosh Darien. It's a small town. The population is not big. Very few people live here is really help the community. Okay, the fishermen, their family, not only lamb[land], their family, depend on jellyfish. And we hire a lot of people to work to process jellyfish. So really, in that time, the peak time is in the 2024 2013 2024 we produce a lot of jellyfish, and we hire a lot of people. Of course, it's a seasonal we only can hire temporary people, but temporary people will hire a lot in and now more than 100 employees in the small community is less big. So yeah,

LH: Was there any other names besides Golden Island?

TC: Yeah, originally we came here, we use the Marco seafood, M-A-R-C-O, Marco seafood. This Marco seafood is first. I came here because this dock 2054 King George. The dock belong

to the San Juan. But my friend, when this the dock and I joined the venture. I'm part of the Marco seafood, the ownership. So I start a business with him together. But I came here to his in St Louis. I came here to directly hand on the business, to do the physical, to involve. But later in the 2000 -02 I buy out his share, so I form the name called Golden Island International. So 2002 from 2002 to now we still call Golden Island International.

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BP: Did you besides being an owner of the dock? Did you have any other roles, like, did you work on a boat or anything like that?

TC: No, I have a seasick. I went out with the boat, shrimp boat went out to the-at lot time. I didn't want to do the- I don't know I will do the jellyfish, because when I came here the first time, we do the shrimp and DC fish. We have three DC fish boat. Do you have an interview with Philip? Philip seafood.

BP: Philip seafood

TC: Not yet, right? He's the only one to do the DC fish. DC fish like a snapper grouper, and we in that time, we have a three DC fish boats and a lot of shrimp boat, I think it's four or five shrimp boat. So our dock is only two dock involved in DC fish too, shrimp and DC fish. So what else? Oh, so I went down, they took me to the ocean. I got seasick so I cannot go out, but, gradually, you know, we want to seafood. Sometimes the boat got a problem. We like the small speed boat, go out, so I getting used to, but I never ride a big boat

LH: Starting slow

[laugh]

TC: I ride a small boat to, you know, give them a surprise [like old pass or whatever?] But I did a few times, and it's very scary, because you go over there in see nothing. You cannot see nothing. So but mostly I involve like I do everything I do, shovel ice, lastime I still-oh, okay, I still 40 something I'm so, still can do it. Now I'm 72 going to 73 I cannot do that. But I involved in everything beside go to fishing. Yeah, I do all of major fish and unloading, everything I do by myself too. Yeah.

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BP: And so what's unique about this dock, if you had to say something, is this different from like any other dock in Darien?

TC: Oh, yes. I think the old dock, I can tell, because I'm very detailed person, I think our dock, we maintain our dock very well, Because the fish industry is actually, is not like a 40-50 years ago. You can make a good money. So people, it's very difficult to maintain the dock very well, because the cost a lot of money when you put a piling in and maintain the dock, to redo the dock once a while. So I we do a lot of improvement for the dock. We do the office, we do the dock, and we put all the concrete at the old dock used to be old durst. So old durst. No only one line concrete for forklift, very small line. But we put a whole dock with the concrete. So I believe we-it's a good neighbor here, good tenant. In that time we lease, and we are a good tenant, and later we took over the property. We become to the and we participate community. The dock, I think 24-23 years ago, they cleaned up the dock level one project, I believe. They cleaned-they took all the dirt out, and then they put a lot of rock to support the [bank], yeah, I think so 20 something years ago, they did one time to clean up all the environment for the dock the project,

LH: Then, can you tell me what the dock has been going through, throughout the years, or before your time?

TC: When I took the old dock, that one, when we came-when I take a, before I in charge of the dock is just like, has been abandoned for a long time. So the activity is very bad. But when I

came out over here, when I decide to stay here for longer, original three months, I want to leave because I think industry is no hope. It's declined too fast, like I say it's over catch and dump the overseas dumping the shrimp business so the fishermen no more cannot make money so, but after we took over and we make much better. And we do the a lot concrete, much clean, you know, it's cleaner than before. So people, a lot of our town, people came to visit us. And when we do the jellyfish, we use a lot like a swimming pool. Okay, in the winter, outside temperature is very cold, but all water is from the well, so the temperature is different. So you can tell the steam is coming. And people ask me, actually that one our jellyfish season is in the winter. Usually it's from the January to April. So in that time the temperature is special, like January, February, temperature is very low. And the swimming pool we have, like a 40 swimming pool, and the bubble the water and the steam come out, and the people. A visitor came over here. He said, what's that? I said, oh, that's our new project. Is a jacuzzi. [laugh]

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TC: A jellyfish. He said, oh, jacuzzi, I think it's nine feet diameter for the pool, and we have a 40 everywhere, and the thing is coming out, and people say, what's that? I said, oh, jacuzzi. So people very funny. So, but all the pool fill up, a lot of jellyfish.

BP: Have you gone stung by a jellyfish before?

TC: No, our jellyfish, no they don't sting. And most people, they don't have allergy, this kind of jellyfish called cannonball jellyfish is not poison. Of course, still very, very few people allergy about that, just like we eat a peanut. Some people just allergy to peanut, but 90% people is fine with the peanut. Our jellyfish is not like overseas. Liquid is poison or whatever no, we don't have a poison, and they don't sting. Some people just got an itch for the allergy, but our jellyfish cannibal is safe, but, jelly fish, this business really is a help the fishermen. So they have and then they make a very fast because of the quantity our new rig, our raker, one day, one boat, they cut under 200,000 pounds. One day, one boat, 200,000 you know, how many jelly fish it's a lot? A lot.

LH: How much would you sell it for?

TC: How much would it sell for? The jellyfish, very funny, contains a lot of water. So after we processing, it's only about 20% left of the weight, so 80% is gone. So we sell the finished product. We sell to the China. We sell about like a \$2 per kg. That mean \$1 per pound, roughly, you know kg, one kg equal 2.2 pound. So you divide by pound, about 90 cents per pound the finished product, roughly, but we need to pay for all the equipment, electricity, overhead, plus the buy from the fishermen price, plus 80% loss the weight, plus the freight to the China, all the like supply, like bucket, everything we have to handle. Actually, the profit is very narrow, but we depend on the quantity. One year we can produce the peak season in 2014 we can produce 80 container 200 container finished product. One container finished product. One container finish product is about 19,000 kg, time 2.2 that means 40,000 pound. 40,000 pound, We need to divide by that's only 25% right? 20% to 25% that mean we need 160,000 pound raw material to fix one container finished product. So if 80 container finished product, how many jellyfish we need to process it? And one thing very sad, and it's no choice, the jellyfish, you will need a separate from the top and the bottom. Have no machine can do it, so we have to use the head to separate. Have you seen the dirty job the program called a dirty job?

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BP: Oh, dirty job. Dirty job. Yeah, I've seen some like parts of it,

TC: They talk about jellyfish,

BP: They do. I forgot about that.

TC: We-you can go to check the YouTube jellyfish with Michael Row. The host is Michael Row, and he spent a few days with the fisherman and with us. We show him how to separate the jellyfish by hand. It's a very cool. He like it, to him is, very in China, this business is very normal, very popular. But in the United States, everybody is thinking about jellyfish. It's like you say, it's a sting, the smelling, but it's very healthy food right now, they realize, before nobody know, they have a bad image. So it's the funny thing is, the people who work here, they even, we process it, but they don't want to touch. They want to try the jellyfish, because, oh, so I make a sweet dish. First one is a carrot and a celery. Celery, it's very crunch, so I let them eat. They recognize they used to eat a roll. So they dip the sauce. Second one is mixed with jellyfish, they cannot tell different. So I say you ate it already. They said, really, I did. Nothing bad. So third one only jellyfish is acceptable. Kim, she did it too. It's not, not too bad. Really. It's actually, it's no taste. All the taste is depending your seasoning. After we process it's no taste, but the people's image. Control your brain and control your appetite, control your everything. If you plan to try everything you don't know, your resolve will come out totally different. It's very unique.

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LH: I kinda wanna try some now.

BP: Yeah, I know. I kinda wanna try some too.

TC: Yeah, right now all the scientists, food scientists, they find out jellyfish is very healthy, not only in United States, in Australia, in England, in Israel. I visit Israel. They invite me go to help them to process jellyfish in Mongolia. Same thing. They invite me over there. Of course, I processing jellyfish in Mexico, Honduras, and Nicaragua. I process it over there, but the country is not lawful country. So I give up American, it's a very sustainable environment. So unlike you know, I keep here, and I don't want to lose this industry. If I quit, I believe this industry will be gone because a lot of environmental regulation to involve. But I'm here because the people resident, they know me, and they know how to they know me, how to deal with local people, treat the worker from local and follow the regulation so I can survive here, but the whole world, I can guarantee you only our product is reached to the regulation is safe. We use the food supply like salt, it's table salt, but overseas. They want to cut the cost they use the industry. So salt material is different, but consumer, they didn't know. And all the country, they don't have a regulation. Only here we have to deal with FDA and Department of Agriculture of Georgia. So actually, we- our product is safe. [laughter] I don't want to say our product here, but back to the dock.

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TC: Let's old dock and a new dock. I bought a new dock about, like I said at the beginning, is seven years ago, and used to be one, it's a very bad condition, dock, I can show you the picture is all the trash on the ground, the resident, the neighbors, so upset, but nothing they can do, because the previous owner is not easy to deal with after we took over. You can n see it's two different totally place, and we work with our next door and before previous owner have a lawsuit with the next door so, but whenever we move in, all our next door is our friend. So we, I work with all the resident over there, and our next door is Philip seafood. They took over. So the previous owner called Andy. Called Andy, something is, I forgot, used to be a one ice plant.

LH: The ice plant

TC: You know that John Wally told you ice plant used to be there, after he shut down, when I moved over, they shut down already, but I have a very good relationship with them. So all the legal issue, I solved the problem, even over there, the same thing over here. I'm not only do the jellyfish our next door..Next lot used to be a railway for the boat repair. We took over because

the owner, previous owner, they got some financial trouble. We took over, and we run the big boat too, and we survived. We survived, the same thing we do the repair thing the boat business, and we survived. But the guy, the developer came over. They bought the original jellyfish dock, Golden Island dock first, later they bought a next door boat repair, boat repair we call a Golden rail. It's one dock too, called a Golden rail dock, R-A-I-L, golden rail, everything I use golden for fun,

BP: Is there a reason why you chose golden? Or just for fun.

TC: No, because easy. Everything golden and I have another one called a golden mountain investment, the owner property, dock business Golden rail, Golden island I picked from the golden Isle, because it's near here. Original, the dock name called Marcos. Marcos seafood. M-A-R-C-O Marco seafood. Marco seafood, Golden rail is two dock. Why not? It's one is for the condo. Golden rail become to the condo. Golden Island become to the hotel.

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BP: So can you tell me about some of the people that you worked with?

TC: They, at the beginning, they're not used to me, because here is a deep South, they're not used to the outsider, not only because I came from Taiwan, but I think I'm Chinese too, because Taiwan and China, China is almost the same. So my [ass] and the fisherman were not used to so we have a lot of misunderstood, but they are their life is totally different with my past experience, because I came from St Louis metropolitans, St Louis, about 3 million people, and here only 2,000 in the city, 11,000 in the whole county, and mostly it's the fishermen. So a lot of, of course I came here. I want decide I want to stay here. So I learned a lot of American culture try to fit in here. But when I came here, still have a little bit different, you know, city to the country. So at the beginning, we have a misunderstood whatever. But I spent the time nice to the people and for after, we get along very well at the beginning, because the original people in charge at the dock, they're not honest. So when I came over here, they don't like me, because they know I come here, but I say that, no, no, no, I'm leaving. You need to be honest. But you can stay here, because originally I don't want to stay here, because no business can do. But after I decide to the jellyfish. So, we need to do the long term so all of these old people we need to replace. So in that time, we have a little bit difficult time, like nobody know us, we are new, and they are old and a fisherman. They have some special hobby, so we're not used to so it will be, confusing, but few months later, one year, two years, getting better and better. Right now, everybody treat me like I'm local person. Really? I vote here, and yeah, everything, they accept me right now. So let's I'm very proud of myself. I can survive here for 25 years.

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BP: This is one of my favorite questions to ask. Will you tell me the funniest memory you have of working at the dock?

TC: Funniest thing at the dock

LH: I'm pretty sure you have more, because of the jacuzzi

BP: The jacuzzi thing is funny

TC: A lot of things are very funny. Let me see

BP: It can be multiple things. Also, you don't have to choose just one,

TC: We let me thinking, one the jacuzzi, another one. I don't know who can say or not. Really funny. Very funny. I think I skipped that one. To you guys, young people, is no problem. But for the public, maybe really, [laughter] it's very funny. Oh, I joke with them. People say jellyfish. How everybody know what you guys doing? Jellyfish? I say we ship to the China or Japan, they say for what? As for eating? He said, really, that can eat to their image? Is No way. I said, hey,

don't forget, China have a 1.4 billion people. Why? Because of the jellyfish, Oh, really. So I joke with that. I say, oh, because we eat jellyfish, and American don't eat so only population is 300 million people, but China have a 1.4 billion people. Something. anything else, a lot of fun things, but I cannot remember. Now. I'm too old age. When I remember, I bring it up later.

LH: Can you tell us, like your best memory that you had, that happened at the dock?

TC: Your best what?

LH: Your best memory

TC: Your best memory? I think the best memory is the jellyfish. We have to processing in this when we unload, we have to processing at the same day, and sometimes we don't have enough people, or we show the people, or the quantity is overwhelming, too large, so we have to work whole night to the like two or three o'clock, midnight. And. A everybody sleep at the office upstairs. We call then lunch room. We sleep there for two hours. And everybody get up and go to continue to to finish our product. let's really, its teamwork, and everybody so tired, and our season is in the winter, so it's very cold too, but everybody make I think that time we have close to the 200,000 pound but we need to finish in a one day, the same day, because if we don't process it, they go to the spoil will go too bad. It's a smelling and you cannot use

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LH: How many workers does it usually take to, like, finish out?

TC: At least we have a two or three group, around 40-50 people. Like one is a separate one is salting. Salting processes, like with pickle, like a wood pickled cucumber, same thing, pickle. Another group is the packing, because the huge jellyfish, a lot of quantity. So we need a ship out too. So we need packing, and we need processing. Sorting is to prevent the jellyfish go bad and the separate is the head and, top and the bottom. We need to separate, because the different way to use different way to process. So it's a three group, about 40-50 people is at least, but sometimes in now, more than our payload. [cough], more than 100 that's a lot. When I go down, I cannot recognize nobody, [laughter] because a lot of new and the old [goal] is because it's a seasonal so the people after the season, we need to say most people too, bye, bye. But they come back every time they come back because of the way we treat the people. And they work hard, but they make the good money for, you know, for their hard work. So it's two way, but for the long run, is another good idea, because the season, no, you cannot keep the good people for for year long. So, but right now I still keep, even we don't have a business, I still keep the few people at the dock and in office too.

BP: When you said that you separate the head from the jellyfish, that there's different processings that you need to do, what's the difference?

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TC: Because the texture between the we call the trunk, the bottom and the top, the texture is different. One is like, umbrella is another one is the shape is different. It's harder. So when we processing the, how we call it, the weight, it's a little bit different, because we want to whole jellyfish cannot be a pickle. It's not, everything has to contact with salt and aluminum sulfate food grade. Everything is food grade. Only our jellyfish is a food grade in whole global other country, even Japan, they don't have a regulation. It's very surprised and very disappointed. But nobody, the consumer, doesn't know. So the processing, yeah, because of the button, we call the button, and the trunk is much harder than the top one. Top is like umbrella. But after the processing, they're very crunch. Before processing is not crunchy at all. It's very funny things

LH: Then when you say you went over to Mexico, and then Honduras was that process also different as well?

TC: Processing mostly is the same, but species different over there is like a very colorful. They have a red, blue, and green, that kind of jellyfish. But everything and the size is very small, but people like our jellyfish more than Central American jellyfish. I can show you the picture.

Provide a picture to you. It is, let me see, I think it's the 2013.

LH: Do they also have a lot of workers over there? Or was it-

TC: Oh, double, triple then here? Because so cheap whole day, \$20 US dollar.

LH: I really want to try one

BP: I would love to try a jellyfish now.

LH: I want to see how, like, what flavors I can get out of especially seasonings

TC: I don't know the Bryan has try or not, but

BP: Bryan said that he's tried it.

TC: He did try, right. I need to show you the overseas jellyfish. 2013. Here, this is

BP: Oh wow, those are colorful.

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TC: This a little jellyfish. And how they do it, you see they call the bunker, the Spanish bunker, small boat. They choose a hand to scoop. Okay, so you how many people you need it? One boat. They can make, like, 10,000 kg, but a lot of hard work.

LH: Does it make you seasick? Does it make you seasick?

TC: No, no, no, I don't. I cannot go out because I'm not a muscle guy, I go over there mess up because people need to take care of me, so I just stay there to watch it. See, it's very funny. This is Nicaragua. I forgot Honduras, but you see we build a temporary, lesser boat, so it's a lot of different, but people still buy it because everything is cheap. The whole days labor is \$20 US dollar in here one hour, and I pay the lady. Sometimes I pay the lady to separate the jellyfish. It's good for me. It's good for them. I pay the quantity, so I can speed up the people, because you slow. It's okay, because before we pay by hour, they're very slow. They go to the restroom, they go to make a phone call. They just like this after I pay back quantity, everybody like this. To me, is worth it. Don't waste any to them, if they can make a \$40-\$50 per hour, if they fast. Really, some lady can make a \$40 - \$50 per hour.

BP: That sounds nice.

TC: So not too many job. It is very difficult. It's very labor intensive, but you work hard, you make a good money the whole day. They can make many \$100 dollar it's better than you just slow. But some slow people, it's naturally slow. They don't mind. I don't mind because I don't lose anything and they happy to make some extra money. Let's win-win situation. Everybody's so happy you don't need to hire the supervisor to do faster at all. A lot of funny things. A lot of, some people have argument, but basics, we had a good time.

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LH: And then, have you seen any changes in the industry, like in the water, the weather, sea life?

TC: I think so. I think, really, I love this naturally, but especially in downtown here. I think because I think we cannot see the dolphin here, but in the Thompson, you still can see dolphin in an hour every day, because the traffic is not like here so heavy and away from. You scare away a lot of nature. Over there morning, you can see the dock. I want to let dock, because the dock is pretty. And after we clean up everything over there is, of course, we use the forklift, but after if we can repaint it, the dock will be very good again. It's very wide, in here is very narrow. But I hope this industry, no, I can, you can tell the boat is now, is fewer than before, because cannot afford too many family to depend on this seafood business. But I tell them one thing we can do, the farm raise, especially in Macintosh, we have a lot of land you can do next to the water, or

you can do the inland, but even you do the inland, you still need some natural a lot of water. I talked to the people few times, already encouraged that I'm too old to do that, but I got all the information to help the dock. Because I move the dock. Honestly, it's not I want to make money. It's the city policy. They want have building, fancy building looks better because the dock is like a jellyfish when you process its mass. But after that, we clean. We always do our job. So we move away, because I try to work with the community. So I moved to the- I bought one particular factory. It's 12.5 acres, but I sold it too because I'm too old. Original. Is 40,000 square feet warehouse and 12.5 acres just on the highway, 251, the one mile to the interstate the 95 but because I slowed down the jellyfish business. So I sold the property to different industry, different people. Yeah, that's original. Really, I want to stay there, to me, so convenient, but follow the city's policy and their plan. So I sold the property for condominium and the hotel. Original, why we buy the boat repair? Because no boat repair around here. So we bought it and maintain it, and then we still, we not make good money, but we survive for the dock repair.

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BP: What hard times have the dock experienced? Was it affected by COVID or something like that?

TC: Yes, of course, the fishermen. The fishermen sometimes they worry. I think everything is slowed down in that time the COVID, so our business is slow down. Special hurricane will affect to the- I don't know the how affect to the shrimp business, but really affect to our jellyfish. The hurricane come. They not directly hit here, but they swing. They just went through by here around us St Simon Island and Tybee Island. So we are being affected too. So that will affect to our jellyfish. Processing because jellyfish, they're hiding, and then they move around. So when they catch they have to the jellyfish get together. So easy to catch. It's a skeleton. Is very it's not efficient. Here's 10-20. One track, 5000 pound. Have you see the video? I can provide some video to you. One track is amazing. Is 5000 pound, huge, and they have a video I can share with you guys. It's very funny, really.

LH: I think that'd be nice that. And then the pictures that you just showed us from the

TC: Overseas, right? Yeah, I can show you. And let me see I oh, here, actually is here.

[TC showing BP, LH pictures]

[0:55:59](#)

LH: That a big net

TC: That's a lot -

BP: That's a lot of jellyfish

TC: One drag. That's the year 2000. Yeah, that's the year 2000. That's a lot of. How come I?

Yeah one drag, totally,

LH: Wow, and yall had to separate all of that?

TC: Yes, that's only 5000 pounds. I say the 100,000 pounds a day. This 20 [ton??] of these, one by one. [laughter] that's a lot of work, right?

LH: Y'all wouldn't get done to like, was it two, three in the morning?

TC: Sometimes? Yes, a lot of time, a lot of time. And the people work hard and a lot of time, a lot of people, they cannot go to the midnight they go home. So only small group, they want to stay. But we have special a lot of women do the separate the men, very funny. Even you can make a \$40-\$50 per hour, but they don't want to do the separation. They want to do the, you know, like we pay them, more than minimum wage. We pay them, because it's very heavy and very labor intensive. They don't want to make a \$40 for the separation. They can make a good but they say this for the girl [laughter] he got all set to use the shovel and make less money. But,

mostly is we let a girl go home early because some is a mother, so they need to go home already. And the man, some young men, they can stay very late. But another good thing is, every time when we work, they have to bring their own lunch, but the dinner I always pay for nobody does here, really, I can say that until now. If we walk over six o'clock, I pay for everybody's lunch. So it's another funny thing is when we order the McDonald. [cough]

0:58:54

TC: I said I need a 200 I need a 100 cheeseburger. I need a 100 double burger, double whatever. Are you kidding? So they won't believe because, but later they say, oh, the guys order the big so we order the all kind of burger, pizza, sometimes Chinese food. We Kentucky Fried Chicken. We buy the all people know us, but not now. This is about 2000 something now, five, six years ago, 2019 we got a problem for exporting, because it's a government. A trade war. So we affect to us very bad. So right now, actually, I don't make money. I lose money every year. The reason I want to keep this business alive because I worry if I'm gone, nobody will- this business will be gone, because if you want to start new jellyfish business, it's very difficult to start again. One is the government regulation. Second is the residential if they not cooperate with you. They have a one very bad experience in South Carolina, because some Chinese, they see I make money, very sustainable. So the competition is coming. So they went to the South Carolina. They got everything local people government against them, so the project was fair. So let's say I worry I want to I put a lot of money from my pocket to keep this company alive, because I want this business. I still have a hope. I will always the UGA for the college you heard about that. They will come very soon. Next few, two weeks later, they will do the big batch, about two or 300,000 pounds. So I will cooperate with them. So beside that, we have nothing to do really, but I want to keep [more] with them, and I will do the like our new project is ready to eat, [phone rings] because after you pickle the jellyfish is very salty. To keep the jellyfish to last longer, they won't go back. But this processing is very difficult. You need overnight or many hour to dissolve. But if we do the all this kind of work, and the people just open, just like you eat a ramen noodle, open, and all the seasonings next to you, you just and you mix, even we don't need hot water. We just mix whatever you like. You can eat that time. You can I can give you I don't need a processing. I can give you right away. You can try right away. You don't need to wait for it to dissolve. But dissolve [fax machine noise]. Need to take about 10 hours, 12 hour sometime, most of these over overnight, so many hours, it's not convenient. So that's our next project, to do the ready to eat and UGA do the [already or all the] research experiment already. So we are ready to go.

1:03:18

BP: Is the ready to eat stuff, is that going to be available to Americans?

TC: Yes, my first target is market is America, because I'm very proud. Is not FDA approved. It's FDA InSpec, and plus the Department of Agriculture, Georgia Department of Agriculture inspect every year, every season. We still, even we don't have a business, we don't have activity, they still come to inspect. We want to keep the business going. That's our goal. So far our, yeah,

LH: I feel like we're really good with college campuses, like, ready to eat.

TC: Actually, it's really, it's healthy. Actually, one thing people I work with, one professor from the Florida State Tallahassee. You can do the research on the internet. It's good for arthritis. And I visit her school. She showed me the slides they do the testing on the mice. Cure the arthritis from jellyfish. It's very unique. So jellyfish is superfood, no cup, no correction, no fat. What you expect? It's lot of collagen good for your cosmetic, and we call arthritis. A lot of good things, no bad thing. I only can convince two, [laughter] 300 million people in United States, but later, who

knows? I give one example. 30 years ago, when I just came to United States, I worked for Lucky Martin. Lucky Martin in California, and our co-workers are American, but we have a few Chinese, Chinese New Year. We go to the celebrate Chinese New Year, Lunar New Year and we order the we think it's the best food for them, but they very hesitate to eat. What is the sea cucumber? [laughter] what's that? Another the whole fish. Whole fish, with the eye. That's the best fish. How can I eat? He was watching me. [laughter]

[1:06:18](#)

LH: The eye is the best part.

TC: The eye is the best part, so this is the culture, right? And in [lot time or that time], that's 1985 and the sushi is not popular in the coast, maybe New York, Los Angeles, 76 was very popular. But the sushi right now everywhere 30 years ago, it's not like this. Sushi is raw fish, some with a raw fish too [tsutsumi], But now all the major airport, you go to look 100% there for one sushi restaurant over there, but you go to the Brunswick, we three or four. So the time is change. So I believe one day people will accept the jellyfish, because people have a bad image about smelling and the sting. But if I don't tell them that's a jellyfish, they will say, oh, very good. Oh, for example, in one video from the YouTube, one restaurant in the Houston Japanese restaurant, let's serve the jellyfish and the rice. They call the jellyfish sushi. One piece. They say \$7 the return customer never ends. So who knows it will be for \$7 people still eat it. Sorry. I'm a salesman, I'm patient on this project, really, my kids original you, but the end they say, oh, they like he said, this pay my tuition? All the tuitions from jelly fish to pay for them. And I bring my kids to here after my son is 12 years old. He and my wife didn't come. He and his sister, I think it's eight years old. They go to the airport, they get the pass. And I'm picking them up at the airport too. So they from the very young, like originally, very young. They come here to play. But after my son is 13-14, I push them to do the jellyfish you work too, and already hate it. But I said, okay, if you don't want to do it, you go to the outside to pick up the trash the street. I said, whole street. You and your sister go to pick up the trash. But after that, I called the city hall. I said they did a picking up the trash, so City Hall give him one certificate, like a community service. Oh, he's so happy. Go to school, see I got a reward. So a lot of memory here, and a lot of girl beside the Kim before. We have a sweet girl at the office in the big time, we have a sweet girl. Everybody have a good relationship with me. They went out is one is a week, mostly is they live by themselves, they have their own business, whatever. But we still keep in touch. So we have a good relationship, mostly. But. Of course, 100% okay, nobody, 100% and 90% is very good already.

[1:10:09](#)

LH: Did you- we touched on it a little bit, but did you have any financial struggles?

TC: Course, always have a- we have a financial struggle, always. But luckily, we just, I'm Christian, says, God we we went through all the hurdle time because the jellyfish come in, we need to pay the fishermen right away. And, like one day, 100,000 pounds, or 120,000 pounds a day. There's a lot of cash flow, and we need about, let me see, two weeks three weeks to finish the product. Again, ready to ship out, and we need to take more than one month to two months to ship to the destination, to China port. So it's really struggle. So a lot of time, I need to beg people to my family to loan the money, but gradually will pay off. But when we processing, the money is really very tight, because all the labor one week, our payload, 40 to \$60,000 a week, that's a lot. It's a small for small company. it's only for labor not included by the fishermen. Pay the fishermen, plus the supply. Like salt, oh, we order the salt three truckload a week, truckload, that's a lot of salt, a lot. The financial was, and, but we went through that and we tried the SBA

loan. We try to a lot of things. This is very difficult to get, until I have, we own the property. You can use the property for collateral to to loan the money.

[1:12:38](#)

LH: And then how much did you said you had to pay the fishermen for?

TC: Seven cents in that time. Right now, we need to pay 12 cents per pound raw material when they suck machine suck to the our vat container. We pay them at the beginning, we wait, but later we just make a mark. The container to one level is 1000 we both check, double check, triple check. So everybody use the roughly, you know, the measure use I measure to make sure, or to really reach this level, is 1000 pounds. So, yeah, it's original seven cents. I think it's two years ago we started paid 12 cents. Yeah, that's this a lot. And they make money. They catch good catch one year. They can buy the one big boat, so older before they have a small boat for shrimp. They don't need a big boat, but all the big boat because they bought, because can hold a lot of jellyfish. But jellyfish is going down. See, the people, they don't have actual income, actually, I hope someone can, the young people can, generation can come over to take over. It's really not, not affect to the shrimp catching. It's like, I say, it's the season. It's a perfect match. A lot of shrimpers after the shrimp season. What you can do, go to find a temporary work, but jellyfish, you can for few months. You don't have idle time. You don't have a gap for your income, and I pay them very reasonable when we start. For sure, a lot of people want to only the problem is a season people want to work with us, but I cannot afford full time- only full time, most is part time. But this industry is, I think, all of the East Coast from North Carolina to Florida. Most people, they know one crazy Chinese doing the jellyfish. Maybe they don't never see me, but they heard about all one crazy everybody's crazy guy. But I'm here 25 years- 26 from 1999 to now. I'm still here.

[1:15:26](#)

BP: So in your opinion, what do the docks of Georgia need to do in the future to be successful?

TC: I certainly need, my that's my personal opinion. They need to find a new way to survive. Not only survive, they can make a big farm raised. Because all the farm raised, they need a dock to help. So actually, I suggest so your project is from the NOAA, right?

BP: Yes.

TC: When NOAA came here few months ago, they want to give me the \$250 or whatever. I reject, because I tell them the two, I say that you come here. Just make a only the one guy is doing the clam. I think the farm raised clam, Mr. McIntosh, he attempt and he gives you some opinion, but I gave them. I said, I don't need your money. It's not come here to say, your project or whatever is good. But to me, I really suggest we need a focus on the farm raised. Because right now, all the salmon, mostly now is farm raised in the West Coast, but we can do a lot. We can do all the like a black sea bass, or the grouper who can farm raise to try Taiwan, split Taiwan. This is very mature, this industry, because ocean is the fun. Ocean is the nature is going the resource is going down, but demand is still very high. People want to consume. How we can solve this problem farm raise. It's good for local but I don't have too much connection or power the money, because I'm too old. I have all the information.

[1:17:50](#)

TC: We can start from very small scale, very small. 50,000 you can start business. Then the government can have a loan. If they can do the loan to the fishermen. They can live, but they can start very small business. I got a black sea bass [older]. We need to buy fingering the baby. It's one industrial one Universities in North Carolina. I support an [older leogram]. I write an older letter, contact with them originally, I want to buy myself too many things going on. I'm getting

old. I don't want to put a risk. But actually, it's no risk lesser [sex] already. You just copy them to do it. If you can farm raise black sea bass, you can raise all the DC fish, not all, mostly like a grouper, all kind of grouper. You can do it because China, and not only China, Thailand, all the Asian countries, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, is a very popular but the United States still. But in here, we got a resource here, because when you farm raise you will not only use the you need some original water. They call it by something.

1:19:33

TC: We need to get some original water from water from the river or ocean to bring to the your facility too if not too far from the dock lesser requirement, so convenient. So that's the reason I want buy the big, huge factory, 12.5 acre. But I want to- my wife want me to retire. She want me to travel everywhere, but I'm still crazy. So, but let's really my because the dock is so pretty and people can if can live with whatever their father, their grandpa used to do. Why not? It's a lot of opportunity farm raise you can you don't need, like a me 12.5 acre. You can do at your backyard, just one small recycle system. That's it. And then you got an older supply. They can but it special to me, if you are federal, no as a federal, but so you go to the every state. but if me, I will suggest that Georgia State, they can start this for the county they don't have, they don't have an interesting to put this kind of effort and money to. But the whole United States, let's the trend, I tell you, special you can see I talk about this. It's 10 years ago. I have a plan already for farm raise more than 10 years ago. I contacted one college, one university in North Carolina, more than 10 years ago, about 15 years ago. So I have the concept, it's 15 years ago. I got all of the information, and I visit China. I visit Taiwan. I got all of I can bring all the technician come over here to help people to do it, but someone is to be a leader to promote this business that will change all the East Coast. That's my personal, I speak out when the meeting at the telephone company, I said, few months ago, half years ago, yeah, I tell them, I attend The meeting. I like Noah, but Noah I see.

1:22:27

BP: Do you want me to cut this part out?

TC: Yes, anything else?

LH: If you had, well, you kind of answered that but, if you have more money, if we give you the check right now to invest in the docks, what would you spend it?

TC: First, I won't buy the dock. If you give me the money, I buy the dock. I start doing the farm raise. Give me the money because my wife doesn't want me to use my retired money to [myself see] the future, because I'm too old, really, and my son, my daughter, cannot. They don't want to. They have a sustainable life. They don't want to come this way. Whatever. I need to put the effort. But with my experience, will be very easy to do it, and it won't cost too much money to do the farm fraise. I have an estimate. I got an older diagram to figure out how much money. Of course, now it's different. Everything goes up, but won't be too much different. Maybe it's double. That's it. But still, it's a small scale to do, it's not we do [something drops] the huge to make good money. No, try to survive first. And you can expand first is try to survive. When I do the jellyfish, I'm not thinking I want to be rich. I just want to survive. I can pay off my son's tuition. I can pay off my wife's grocery or my house payment. That's my job. But if you're doing good, you can buy the property. You can do that. And actually, when one dock. I have a good reputation. One dick looking for me to buy the dock already around here, they want me to buy. They asked me to have an interesting or not lease or buy. But to me, I don't want this, because I got one dock I can do first, and the second is I wanna, if I buy, I want to farm raise, it's only few, tanks, few swimming pool, like this kind of swimming pool, maybe six or 12, because

everything we need a line up. What one line? If? Because they need a recycle system, they die. I have another chance, another so totally, two small system to handle the oxygen, everything but we need near to the water in the overseas. Mostly they lead to the farm raise is to do it in the bank, in the water, just like we do the oyster farm raise. But my farm raise don't need the water in the land, but neither to the to the water. So you can use the what kind of water, the sea water, to the system. It's doable. A lot of success. Simple, they make, even they make a good money on there already. So is this 100% doable? Less of the weight can help that whole east coast, totally different lifestyle. We farm raise, the high end fish like a grouper, whatever.

BP: One of our last questions that we have for you is, is there anything that we didn't ask that you wanted to talk to us about? [laughter]

TC: No, if it was something I call Brian and a pass the message so we got a connection.

LH: Did you by chance think of a funny story that you might want to tell us? A funny memory, or funny story that you

TC: When I remember? Sorry.

BP: Well, thank you so much for this was a fantastic interview.

TC: Sorry, a lot. I forgot a lot of things, really my age we call a short term memory trouble, but yeah, sometimes just come out, but sometimes just cannot catch but I'm still okay. I tested myself all the time

BP: Thank you so much.

[1:27:28](#)

Ends interview.