**Interviewer: Yuchen Zhao**

**Interviewee: Jenna Koch**

**Date of Interview: 06/29/2024**

**Location: Despensa De La Paz-Friedens Food Pantry**

**Event: Despensa De La Paz-Friedens Food Pantry**

**List of Acronyms: JK: Jenna Koch, IN: Interviewer**

**File: Jenna Koch\_6.29.2024.wav**

IN: OK, thanks. So may I have your name first?

JK: Jenna Koch.

IN: Nice to meet you. My name is Yuchen. OK, so we can start with the easy question. What did you have for breakfast?

JK: I had a Kind Bar in my car. It was a little bit sad.

IN: No, but it will at least give you some energy.

JK: I know, I know. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

IN: Nice. So here we have this scale here. And so if you are thinking about the voting system and the voting process. Like if 10 is like very trust and 0 is very distrust, where would you put your viewpoint on the scale?

JK: Yeah. Probably like around an eight 8:00-ish, yeah.

IN: So could you tell us why do you choose this point and if there's any like stories that like you have with voting?

JK: Well, I think voting in general, it's very secure. I mean, I have done some research into like the requirements for voting and stuff, and I honestly feel that sometimes there's too many barriers to voting, like people who are convicted of a felony, you know, that some people can't vote and. I don't really understand. You know why there have to be certain like. I don't know if you know what I mean. Like if someone broke a law and they feel that law is unjust, they can't vote to repeal that law. You know what I mean? So it just doesn't really make sense to me. So I think a lot of my, the only distrust from the voting system is more so just the way that the system prevents people from being able to access voting and the way that it also is very hard for people to actually get out and vote, and it can be kind of confusing like we have wonderful organizations like the League of Women Voters, which are right over there. But sorry, yeah, there's just, I think that's where my distrust comes to is more the way that the system's set up and not so much like I think that voting is very secure. And I wouldn't say that any results are ever, you know, like fudged or, you know, made to be something else. So.

IN: Do you have any personal experiences when it comes to voting?

I think that my personal experience with voting has been very. Like I voted in 2020 and it can be just kind of confusing because I am technically an Illinois resident, but I live here and have been living here for the past four years. And I also, hey, what's? This. They're interviewing people about voting. So I don't know if you can vote yet though. But someday, right? It's like never mind. He's like, that's boring. No, you also can you can stop him recording as well. Now, I just wanted to get a quick clip. Yeah, but thank you. What was I gonna say before?

Yes. So I'm an Illinois resident, so which it could just be kind of confusing. And I also like. I don't know. I have ADHD and so it's like, really freaking hard for me to feel motivated to, like, go to the DMV. I mean, for anyone it is so like, it's not unique to me, but like especially just tasks like that are really challenging to like schedule and find time to do and like mental energy to like, dedicate to do that to go get like a new ID or whatever. So that's why I can feel kind of challenging thing to just like get the resources to be able to vote, and then I also feel very disconnected from the news cycle. So I feel like I don't have all the information that I need, and that's like I've purposefully disconnected from myself from that. But I'm still trying to find a match between like, you know, oh, feeling overwhelmed by the news and then, like, getting the information that I need from, like, an unbiased source.

IN: Also like an accessibility issue.

JK: Right, for sure for sure. And I think for me, it's like just the one piece of it is just like finding the time to like make access. Get all my stuff in order, but for other people it can be so much harder where I have a car. So that's like it makes it so much easier for me. So many people in the city don't have a car. It's like it's just interesting seeing my own the way that like my one kind of like, you know, disability impacts the way that I vote when there's people who have like 20 different things intersecting. That makes it impossible for them to find the time or the energy or whatever to vote. So yeah, that's true, yeah.

IN: And where do you think people should be or where is the ideal position on the scale?

JK: Well, I think it all kind of depends. I wish, you know, that the system was trustworthy enough. And you know what? Not for people to feel like it's a ton. But I don't think it's necessarily always the systems fault as well because. Excuse me. if there's folks who already are having a hard time voting. I could imagine someone. I don't know. That's like just struggling to vote and they feel like it's almost rigged against them to not be able to. And then maybe you, you know, you're online and you're not getting news from, like, the most trustworthy sources. But also you don't really know that, because nobody taught you that, you know, maybe you're an older adult or you just didn't go to a school where there was media literacy. So you have no idea. And someone who you trust. That you look up to or find compelling is saying you know the election was rigged. Whatever. Whatever. It's like in a sense. I don't blame folks who believe that, because it's so hard to discern things and it's so easy to, like, be manipulated when it feels like a system is already against you. So I wish that it could be out of 10. It's just, yeah, it's both like a personal responsibility in some sense of the word, but. I also believe it's very much like a system wide thing to make it easier, and to make it feel more user friendly, and to make sure folks are getting like the education that they need to be able to discern like what's true and what’s not.

IN: Yeah. So maybe we have already covered a little bit, but what do you think people can do to improve their trust?

JK: People, like what individuals can do?

JK: In general, so I think system wide, obviously that's like a really big question, but for individuals, I would say obviously like looking in organizations, like what you all do looking in to organizations that you can participate, like the League of Women Voters. They get involved in, just like table, places get people registered. And then also reach out to folks in your life. So like if you have any older adults in your life just saying like, hey, are you voting like, do you need a ride to go vote or folks who are maybe younger and haven't before say, like, oh, are you registered?, like, just talking about it with your friends and family, and talking about the issues pertaining to voting in a way that's like. Offers, you know, nuance and non judgment. So you can say like hey, you know I. I don't know, I think. From what I've heard from my family, like voting used to be very private thing, where like you actually wouldn't know what your like, friends and family who they voted for or like your colleague. And now obviously it's way more out in the open, which I think is both a good thing, but also it can create a lot of divisiveness. So no matter, I guess, who someone is voting for, just to support them along that path and say like, OK. You know, we might not like agree on this certain thing, but I want to talk about it with you. I want to maybe help you see my point of view so. Yeah, just creating more dialogue and openness, especially in places where, like if you disagree with a family member or something, just saying like, you know, let's go together and like, let's, I don't know, listen to a podcast on the way about this particular issue. Like, maybe that's a very me thing to say. But like, yeah, just do something that creates and fosters community around these issues instead of creating divisiveness.

IN: That's really nice. Yeah. And for the last part, we have a little bit of a challenge. Do you want to do that? Yeah. OK. Thanks. So we have this teach kids how to vote challenge. Yeah. So you can see here are the kids from the UWM Children Center. Just imagine you are in front of them and then you need to explain to them why the importance of voting, and how do you vote? Could you explain to them using their language?

JK: OK, OK. For a child, I would say that voting is about using your voice to make a change in your community. I'm not sure if that would get across them. I work with kids, so I'm like, trying to think of how to explain this to them. I would say it's like, if I would maybe relate if there was like a situation that came up earlier in the day, I'd say like you know when you are with your parents, and they wanna take you to a restaurant, but you don't go to that restaurant. You go to a different one. You could vote on that. And if you and your siblings wanted to go and there's three of you, and there's two of your parents, the three of you would win against them and then you would get to go to the restaurant that you want to go to. So that's what it's about. That's kind of how I would explain it. Just a situation that they could relate to and feel like, OK, I understand that and then explain, you know, but it would be a much wider issue. So something. Like you know, if money is going to schools or if it's going somewhere else, you would want to be able to vote on that for if you have kids, just if you know there's children in your community. If you think about yourself at this age, you know, what would you want money and your, you know, government to put resources towards and more teachers or, you know, more TVs in the classroom or something. I that's such a dated thing to say. They all have TV's now. But you know that sort of thing. Yeah.

IN: That's really good. Yeah. How about the procedure to vote?

JK: Procedure, I would say they all probably know how to use the Internet, so it'd be like you get online, you check if you, you know, go to that certain website and you check if you're registered to vote. If you're not, you can do that online. If for whatever reason, you're unable to, what you would do is checking where your polling places are. You can go in person and ask someone and they can help you.

IN: Great. Thanks so much. Yeah.