

MEET MAYOR LINCOLN (PART 1)

In this episode, we talk to Mayor Lincoln about policy regarding youth and youth activities in Stockton. We had so much to talk about in this episode, we had to divide it into two parts! This episode was hosted by Caroleta Washington and Choy Pangthong



First day of recording with Mayor Lincoln! The team was nervous but the ice quickly melted once we got to talking. Listen along on kwdc.fm, or wherever you get your podcasts.

TRANSCRIPT:

Caroleta: What's up, Stockton? You're listening to 209 Talk on 93.5 KWDC Stockton. 209 Talk is a collaboration where local college students sit down with the mayor. The show you're tuned into right now was put together by students and staff enrolled in the broadcasting courses in the Digital Media Department at San Joaquin Delta College. Thank you for listening, and supporting college radio. I'm your girl, Caroleta.

Choy: And this is your boy, Choy!

Caroleta: And we have Mayor Lincoln in the building.

Mayor Lincoln: What's happenin', everyone? Good to be, good to be with you. If I can just get that out this morning.

Choy: You sound just as nervous as I do this morning.

Lincoln: Tell you, it's a little bit intimidating sitting across the table from you guys right now.

Choy: That I think is the mic for some. Yeah. So with the lights and the camera.

Caroleta: I don't think it's us, why would you be nervous with us?

Choy: You were fine, you know, when the cameras weren't rolling and the mics weren't on, but as soon as we say it's time... action!

Caroleta: lights, camera, action!

Choy: I'm not made for this life.

Caroleta: It does it to the best of us.

Lincoln: That's it, all right, cut, bring it back.

Caroleta: So this week, we are going to get to know you, Mayor Lincoln. So how are you? How have you been doing?

Lincoln: I am doing fine, I'm doing good.

Caroleta: Is that a real answer it took you a minute to answer?

Lincoln: It is a real answer. It really is. Yeah. What I've learned in life is, is everything's about perspective, right? Is the glass half empty or is the glass half full? And for me, I try to be very intentional about seeing that glass half full.

Caroleta: That's hard, especially nowadays with gas being \$5 again, almost five.

Choy: My tank is half full, that's all I got, on the drive here. I was looking at my odometer. I was like, man, you have food. I'm good today, right?

Lincoln: Well, I'm going to tell you that my tank is actually full because I filled up yesterday.

Caroleta: Okay.

Choy: See? There you go. Right there. Perspective, perspective. That's all we have.

Caroleta: You go to Costco or Safeway, because those are my two favorite.

Lincoln: It's whichever one I'm closer to and they're my favorite because they're the cheapest.

Caroleta: Right?

Choy: I don't where is the cheapest gas in Stockton right now?

Lincoln: Costco or Safeway? Absolutely.

Caroleta: Especially Costco. If I go to Costco, though, I don't fill up halfway. I have to fill up all the way because I sit in that line for so long, I have to do the whole thing.

Choy: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Lincoln: Because the quality premium of gasoline at a great price. Yeah, that's Costco.

Choy: So you feel so you feel a premium.

Lincoln: They could probably run an ad for that, right?

Caroleta: They're going to hire you, they got you

Choy: But they're big, big bucks. Mayor, if they come with you for some ads, get the big bucks. Are you allowed to do that?

Lincoln: You know, as you're making that comment, I was saying that is thinking, oh, I have to volunteer that type of service.

Caroleta: yeah, volunteer.

Lincoln: I can't. Yeah.

Choy: See, I was I was saying I was like, hold on. Is that something that any political figure you can do? Like, you know, I know like the campaign or like the king, you know, when there's campaigning or campaign season, like there's ads, there's, you know, all of that. Right. But like, as far as like Costco, right. So you wouldn't be able to get paid for like commercial spots or anything.

Lincoln: There are rules that govern all that.

Choy: I didn't see, I didn't know that. Yeah.

Caroleta: So the president is not allowed to own like, a business, right? While they're doing it. Are you allowed?

Lincoln: There are rules that govern all of that at different levels. So there's different rules at different levels. Yes. We'll be here all day if we try.

Choy: Break the code.

Lincoln: At the end of the day, I have to do what's right.

Choy: That's good. Yes, No, I respect that. Yeah. And what's right now for you is the city of Stockton.

Lincoln: Absolutely.

Choy: Yeah.

Lincoln: The city of Stockton. My family, our community are all things that are that are important to me, that are top of mind, top of priority for me.

Caroleta: Can you tell us a little bit about a story that you have in Stockton or about Stockton? So you were born and raised here?

Lincoln: I was born and raised in Stockton.

Caroleta: Can you tell us a story about that?

Lincoln: Some of my fondest memories, especially as a young man, was I would spend my summers with Stockton Parks and Rec at Anderson Park between Anderson Park and Seaford Center. That's actually where I learned how to play basketball and learn how to play basketball competitively. And yeah, I learned a lot. I built a lot of relationships. There is a lot of mentorship that took place for me personally in that season of my life, and it was a very tough time within my family. My parents were split up and, you know, I got a lot of personal direction in that season just by being in those environments.

Choy: So basically, like having the organization and structure right to help you get through. Like, what were you doing? What was going on at home?

Lincoln: That's right. And it was the community. Yeah. That helped me out there. Absolutely. That's why community is so important to me and that's why I love doing what I do. And I really genuinely mean that is because, you know, as a kid, the city's giving back to me a lot. You know, my father kind of, and my family, there's a generation that took from this city. Yeah, right. By making poor choices and decisions. And now I'm in a position to give back to the city as the mayor and, you know, to high school students, I have a 17 year old son and a soon to be 16 year old daughter, junior and sophomore. And now we can continue on a legacy of of giving back to the community as well.

Caroleta: Can you tell me more like what are the poor decisions? Because when you hear poor decisions, it could be multiple things. So what are those poor decisions? Doesn't specifically have to be your dad or anything like that?

Lincoln: Well, I'll just share the decision that directly been result of my family and the impact, and that was substance abuse. It was crime. It was just things of those natures that took from the community right in you know, my dad found himself in a position where he was actually homeless during my teenage some of my teenage years. And that was really, really hard because he was making poor decisions. And he'll tell you that led him to that point. And unfortunately, you know, he or maybe fortunately gets perspectives how you look at it. He was incarcerated for a couple of years and that helped. He'll tell you that helped him get his mind right. He got really rehabilitated. He came back into the community and he spent the next 25 years giving back to at-risk youth. What I tell people is that, you know, all the years I didn't have with my father during my childhood, there's nothing more that I can ask for as a son is that when he got his life right and together he gave to so many at risk youth in our community what he could never give me. And I'm thankful for that because I walk around this town today and I interact with people that come up to me and say, "man, we love your dad, Coach Kevin," because we have the same name. And or they asked me, "Are you are you Kevin Lincoln's, son?" And I'm proud to say yes, right? In a sense, to me, that's one example of many Stockton stories in that's how I feel. I can relate to the people of Stockton because my story's not much different then than theirs now.

Choy: I definitely appreciate you being, you know, vulnerable enough to share that, Right. Because we all have family stories and sometimes, you know, we all we don't want to put that out, right, because it is something that maybe we aren't comfortable with. A lot of folks knowing our stories. Right. Because, you know, it's something that, hey, this is sacred. This is, you know, family, dark, dark secrets, whatever. You know what I mean?

Caroleta: Like being a mayor.

Choy: Yeah. Politics, right? Talking about it. Exactly. And in the political arena, you know, we don't hear a lot of vulnerability coming from politicians, you know, for you and for you to share that, though. You know, I appreciate that because now what it does is it opens up and allows folks to really, like get to know you. And to say like, yo, you know, he's actually one of us. Yeah, he's going through some stuff too. He's been through some struggles and that's relatable to the folks out here in Stockton. You know, you talked about your father being incarcerated and being one of those that took from the community. Right. And now we had this conversation before because I was one of those who took from the community. You know, I took a lot from the community, you know, things that I can't give back. Right. And, you know, here I am. I do have a platform now and able to give back. Right. And I work for a very great organization in Stockton, you know, and we hold workshops in city hall with at-risk kids, you know, and then and like coming out and being released, like it was a whole new thing for me. I have an obligation to give back to my community, you know? And so the story you share with your father, like, I felt that because that's the road I'm on right now, you know. So but we appreciate you sharing.

Lincoln: I know. Absolutely. I always believe everybody has a story and every story is important. And it's critical that we do share our stories because our story gives hope to other people. It paints a picture of opportunity as well. It sends a message that my past doesn't define me in that I can choose to make the right decisions today that's going to help chart what my future looks like tomorrow. We get to make those choices every day and you know, we get to make poor choices and we also get to make positive choices in it. And it's up to us. And that's why it's a priority for me to spend so much time with youth and in our school system to work with the education partnership. My education partners, those school districts, so that we can all do our part to engage and empower and bring hope and opportunity and inspiration to this next generation. Because 10, 15, 20 years from now, one of these kids that I've been meeting with and visiting at these schools is going to be my mayor or physician one day.

Choy: Yeah he's gonna be like "Mayor, remember that one time?"

Lincoln: I'ma pull up in my electric vehicle, and they're going to work on my electric... whatever it is. That's why what we do, what we do is. Is for the future. Absolutely.

Choy: Oh, most definitely. Most definitely.

Caroleta: What is your administration putting in place for the future, like you saying you're giving back? What are some of those things that your administration is giving back?

Lincoln: One of those things that I've been a huge champion and one of the things I've been a huge champion for and a huge proponent of obviously is use right in youth programing and development opportunities. And one of the things we're rolling out here in the next couple of months is youth workforce development program, summer jobs program directly with City Hall and also with our community partners and community based organizations. So that's significant in the way that we built the program is where it's scalable. It's built to last in. So as long as we can continue to provide funding for it to meet this critical need and create these opportunities for and career pathways, we're going to continue to do that.

Choy: How I want, because I want to ask about like, you know, like the programs and the funding do, right? Like if there's a program that is shown to work, but then funding may be short or cut. How can we assure that programs like that continue to get the funding that is needed to keep thriving and keep helping folks?

Lincoln: We have a lot of great organizations in Stockton. That's what I love about Stockton. There's a lot of great community-based organizations.

Choy: Like over 2000!

Lincoln: Yeah, nonprofit organizations that do great community based work. And so one of the things that we focus on as well is, is that that nonprofit CBO capacity building. Because you're only as healthy and as strong as your organization and would contribute to that is how your organization is structured. We help our nonprofit organizations in partnership with United Way of San Joaquin County, right? So we partner with them and they do the work. United Way is kind of like the Chamber of Commerce for nonprofit organizations. So it's all about capacity building. And then we want to see these build in sustainable funding as well. And we help them with that.

Choy: Yeah, that's cool. I enjoy that. You know, because I also know, there are struggling organizations out there are just barely keeping afloat but they do great work. But to have like resources like that, it just seems like they only have to do just reach out. There's plenty of resources out there for the community.

Lincoln: One of the things that that that I created and stated was Budget Finance and Economic Development Committee. And the purpose of that is to create a space where if the community feels like they have a solution to meet a need right now we've been talking about use that's a space where they can come before the council members pitch their idea and council periodically has discretionary funds that we can allocate to pilot programs like that. And so by creating that space, we're able to create more opportunities because it's not, you know, we want to create programs and opportunities that will meet the needs of the community. So it's not a top down approach, not the city of Stockton. Everybody at the top, quote unquote, is saying here, we're going to do this program. No, it's we want to hear from you, community. What are the needs out there? What are your solutions? What's the cost? And then how can we take the next steps to working together?

Caroleta: Okay. We're going to take a little break right here.

<PSA BREAK>

Caroleta: Okay. We are back. And we were talking about the youth and the organizations and the funding. And one I want to ask is like, what kind of activities or programs is Stockton putting together for the youth?

Lincoln: A perfect example would be this program I'm working with the gentleman from down in Southern California who's from Stockton. Very successful, very connected to pop culture. And he wants to come back in and invest in Stockton and invest in the youth. And so that's an example of me bringing them before our council and allocating funding for them so we can get this pilot program off the ground. So we're talking about use activities, trips, we're talking about focus on social emotional learning and mental health. Those types of issues that are impacting the core of our young people in today's generation and then being able to leverage celebrity and pop culture to inspire them and even create more opportunities. Because that's what happened for him.

Caroleta: Okay. So I have a couple of questions about that. One, with the mental health.

One out of three girls nowadays in high school and young adults are thinking about suicide. Are you going to bring counselors to the schools? Because I'm pretty sure they're not seeking out mental health or seeking out therapy. Is there any way we can bring that into schools?

Lincoln: What we have to do is we have to work collaboratively across the board. So obviously, the schools or if you don't if the public doesn't know schools are a separate government entity than the city of Stockton and there are several different school boards per se.

Lincoln: So I have a good relationship with the County Office of Education. Also, I have good relationship with the district attorney's office as well, because we're talking about mental health that impacts our students. But also we're talking about opioids that impact our students as well. Specifically fentanyl. All right. So I'm working with the DA's office to get some advertisements out there to get information and support out there to our youth and young adults in the community. So we have to be at the same table regarding these critical issues impacting our youth and work together to get that information before them and their families.

Caroleta: Is there any way we can like not criminalize opioids? Because I don't look at it as a criminal aspect. I look at it as somebody saying they need help without saying it.

Lincoln: And there's a strong argument that you just made. Right. But then there is a criminal aspect of it, too, for the people who are selling those opioids. And that's not correct. And that's unacceptable. And it's educating our students and letting them know that you have an outlet, you have people, you have a support system that you could reach out to a number that you can contact if you feel like you need some assistance or here's information I will educate you on, on this particular subject and empower you to make the right decision when you're faced with making one.

Caroleta: How are you guys going about getting that information out there? Because I know when I was in high school when that information came to me on my desk, I was like, okay.

Lincoln: We'll get it out there. Through strategic marketing campaigns in working with the school districts in meeting the different demographics: young people, older people on the platforms that they're out on it comes to social media.

Caroleta: And then also about Jason, or I'm not going to say his name, but the guy you're working with.

Choy: See, she a snitch, I'm like you see?

Caroleta: I know who it is.

Lincoln: The specific program is I Am Ready, And it is Jason Lee right through Hollywood Unlocked in his Hollywood Cares Foundation is the person that's trying to bring this to the city of Stockton.

Caroleta: See, I wasn't going to put his name because I'm going to ask: do you look at people's backgrounds and do you think that bringing these people in is a good idea after you look at their background.

Lincoln: I believe in second chances. That's not directly towards Jason, but I'm just saying in general, I believe in second chances. Every time I go to school and engage a young person, I say, don't be afraid of failure. Don't let your past mistakes dictate what your future could look like. Learn from those mistakes. The key is just not to make those mistakes over and over again. Now, at the same time, when the city looks to partner with somebody, there's a whole vetting process that that person in that organization has to go through. And with a lot of checks and balances. And that's a very transparent process with that organization because we want to make sure that we're providing the best service to the community.

Caroleta: Right.

Choy: I think also to like what you were saying about, like, you know, the vetting process and just looking at background and just, you know, if we as a society just continue to just based judgment off of somebody's background. Right. And that hinders growth, demand and productivity.

Caroleta: Well, I'm just thinking about cancel culture. You know, a lot of people counsel and then be like, oh, wow, you're working with him. Oh, wow. So as long as you're saying that you vetted him or vetted anyone, not just him, I don't mean just him, but like, vetted them or like people have second chances. I just asking that aspect because I know people would be asking like, do you see what people say or whatever? That's all I'm asking.

Lincoln: People talk about. People talk about me all the time and they don't even know me. But how I respond to that is what makes the difference, right? You see, because at the heart of it, I want to I want a relationship or a rapport with you because I'm in it to best represent this city the best I can in the work with everybody. So you may prejudge me because you may think or we have political, different political ideologies, but I see past that. I'm probably going to be one of the most apolitical politicians that that are out there. Right. I could work with anybody. As long as you're willing to work with me, it may not go 100% your way. It may not go 100% my way. But at the end of the day, we're going to be able to have this conversation, hash out what we feel is a good agreement, you know, and suitable for the community and then move forward and walk away from that conversation knowing that we heard each other out. Does that make sense?

Choy: Yeah, most definitely.

Caroleta: The conversation needs to be had, especially in the city of Stockton. They should be teaching in high school how to talk to people because I feel like coming out of high school. I know for a lot of people it was just like, you know, you fight because someone says something. But like, I feel like there needs to be a class that tells, you know, this is how you communicate with people. Think, communicate. Even in college, communicating with people is difficult. And I think people need to be taught how to communicate.

Lincoln: Everything rides on effective communication. Bottom line, whatever you're dealing with, no matter what setting it rides on how well and how effective we communicate. And when I talk to students and I actually I just did a seminar Leadership, Effective Leadership and Team building seminar with Delta College last week and I said, when you think about effective communication and leadership and team building, the acronym I use is ACT, Act as energy, as an individual, be accessible, A, B, community, communicative, and be teachable. It's important.

Caroleta: Teachable is very important because a lot of people think that they know everything you do.

Lincoln: If you could focus in and commit to personal development, lifetime personal development in those three areas, you'll be fact, you'll be an effective communicator, you'll be effective leader, you'll be effective team the team builder anywhere you go in whatever field.

Choy: The learning is, the learning don't, doesn't stop.

Caroleta: Learning never stops. I learned that. Oh my gosh, learning never stops, especially in our area. However, like all technical, everything changes every 5 minutes. Mics will be different.

Choy: Oh, yeah, Yeah.

Lincoln: This is, you know, culture is constantly evolving. Yeah, society is constantly evolving. Technology is can't see, evolving and changing. And. And we have to be adaptable. We have to be able to adapt.

Choy: Okay, I'm talking about adaptability and we've been talking about a lot of, you know, like the youth programs and we talk about a whole lot of I want to bring is full back circle and how you have been able to adapt, you know, growing and growing up in Stockton, we're being there's you know, we it's no secret that Stockton has a high crime rate, you know, but the people here are so proud.

Choy: Right. You know, of being from Stockton. And how have you been able to adapt, you know, within the community to be where you're at now?

Lincoln: It's all about engagement. It's all about staying engaged, staying out, visible, present, being accessible. Is that first, you know, part of that acronym, ACT is accessible. I try to make myself accessible. I know what drives me helps people wake up in the morning and keep me going is the fact that I know how good the city has been to me and my family for multiple generations. My grandfather immigrated here from Mexico on my mother's side when he was 16 years old. He established a career and stopped in at a local cannery. He retired the same year. He retired at 62 years old. Back in the day, he got his citizenship that same year, bought his first house. Right. I mean, so this city has been really, really good to me. And just to be able to be in a position as mayor, to give back to the city, it's humbling and it's emotional at times because my heart is in it. I tell people the city of Stockton is getting the best years of my life because I'm only 42.

Choy: Literally, You know, I'm looking at you right now. You don't have any gray hair right this time.

Caroleta: Remember Obama? He was clean. And all of a sudden when he was out, his all gray hair, he looked like he smoked a pack of cigarettes a day.

Choy: There you are. You ready for his life, man? You're ready for the gray hairs. Let's go.

Lincoln: Let's go to grow up.

Choy: Right. Oh, that's funny. But that's all real, though, right? And so being from Stockton and being, you know, raised here, born here, what are some changes that you've seen from your childhood to now and, you know, maybe some of the things where you're like, okay, I've seen things where maybe this has worked as in my childhood but maybe it's outdated nowadays.

Caroleta: Especially with technology. And like a lot of people when they would go to school, they go to school and they leave school when we were youth back in the day, school would be over. None of the bullying. Now there's bullying on the phone. Like you're literally going home with the bullies in your pocket. So yeah, I'm just adding that.

Lincoln: Well, and that's definitely another area like we were talking about mental health and opioids. Bullying is another one of those campaigns as well for kids. But technology, the biggest change, the biggest change from my generation to today is.

Choy: Is Google.

Lincoln: It's the Internet, it's Google, it's all the social media platforms, the Instagrams, the Facebooks. Right. The TikToks. And what's unique about it is each generation or each demographic they gravitate to a different type of platform. So you got a lot of students and a lot of kids on Tik Tok and YouTube, a lot of maybe Gen Zs or the younger generation millennials on Instagram, like the older generation.

Choy: Boomers, Boomers.

Lincoln: They're on Facebook for sure. So like for me today, I have to be intentional about adapting to that and meeting people where they're at with information and being accessible on those different platforms as well, and doing it in a manner that connects with them on those platforms.

Caroleta: Is difficult because like in the audience, usually those all those different audience and, you're a mayor, so you have to get to all those different audience. Is that difficult to do that?

Choy: And there's always going to be critics who don't like on, on every level, right?

Caroleta: So yeah, especially kids, because they'd be listening to their parents and they wanted to type it out.

Lincoln: Well, the key is making people part of the process. So it's not just a one way communication or a one way post or interaction or engagement on those platforms. It's two ways because our meeting, you were there where you're at and I'm involved and you're making you a part of that as well. So if I'm at a school and following my school visits, we roll up a highlight reel or a reel for TikTok. The kids love it and they share it because they're a part of it. They see themselves in it and it's a real authentic experience. And that's what it's all about. And because those are platforms where you can also build community. And if we want a healthier Stockton, we have to have healthier communities and that's virtually the social media and physically in our neighborhoods.

Caroleta: It's already been 30 minutes, but we have so much more to get into. So make sure you guys come back in for a part two.

Choy: Part two.

Lincoln: Part two.

Outro: 209 Talk has been a production of KWDC 93.5 LPFM, Delta College Radio. This program is made possible by listeners like you. Programing is produced by the students, staff and faculty of San Joaquin Delta College's Digital Media Department. It is supported by the Delta College, Department of Arts, Humanities and Multimedia, the Career Technical, Education and Workforce Development Office and the State of California. This is a collaboration with the City of Stockton Mayor's office. Thank you for listening.
