

Wichita Chamber Business Accelerator

Episode 70

Jessie and Adam Hartke

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Don and Ebony: [00:00:00] Welcome to another exciting edition of WCBA powered, of course, by Evergy. Don't forget to like us, love us, share us. We truly appreciate you checking us out today. We are excited to have the Wave in the house and they're going to tell us about your small business story. It's super exciting. You know, the Wave is one of my favorite places, so welcome.

Oh my gosh. I didn't get kicked out Don on their favorite person who, as I was saying, come Jessie and Adam how are the two of you?



Jessie & Adam Hartke: We're wonderful. It's not 2020 or 2021. So we're having a great day.

Don and Ebony: Yes. 2022 is off to a great start for you, huh?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah. This this is going to be the whole rest of the decade. I'm so excited for it.

Don and Ebony: Yes. Let's speak it into existence.

I love it. So tell us who you are. What do you do?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: We are the Hartke's. we, own Hartke Presents, which is a part of Wave venue. So we are a music venue downtown. We're also partners out at the Cotillion Historic Ballroom that has been in existence since 1960. So what we do is we help bring live music to our community.

We understand that the arts not has not necessarily been at the forefront of everybody's minds throughout our society. Right. And that's what we are hoping to change. We know, that music and arts of all sorts, really help bring about community. And that's what we think is needed right now.

Don and Ebony: I agree, 100%. do either of you sing?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: We do, but you don't want to hear it. We are instrumentalists at our house.

Don and Ebony: Okay.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: the mics off.

Don and Ebony: Well, excellent. I know that. Nevermind. No, no very well, but she can't sing. No, but no one appreciates that. So how long have you been in business?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Gosh, we've been in business, at Wave since 2018. We've been doing this type of work for over 15 years now. So yeah, Hartke Presents. We started officially about what? 10 years ago? 12 years ago.

2009, we act, we met and very soon afterwards began doing shows together. So our relationship is always very, all, all facets of our relationship are intertwined and some people are very curious how we make it work, but for us it's perfect. It's this really beautiful balance of personal and work and just everything is intertwined in our lives and we love it.

Don and Ebony: So 2009 you began Hartke presents. And what does all that, what does that entail?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Well, in 2009, that entailed, First Friday was a music crawl that we produced basically what that was, was a way to get, local original artists into different bars and venues and businesses all over town at, at its height. We would have artists and, you know, 35 businesses around town.

And what that was was the First Friday of every month, we would program with, original music and it was both local and then touring artists, you know, really small touring artists. And then that developed into the job at the Orpheum that I got. and then we'd started doing more shows, bigger shows.

Bigger touring artists. So it's really, we book, we promote, we consult, we do various things and, you know, as part of Hartke Presents, we're also founding members, of D-Tour it's a national conglomerate of, a booking conglomerate that we just started and launched back in January. so that's another facet of Hartke Presents as well. Yes. D-Tour officially launched on March 1st, 2022. If we were very excited to be able to work with a number of our peers that we became very close with over the last two years prior to 2020, the entire life music industry, especially in the independent realm had been very isolated. We're a bunch of hustlers in the best sense of the word. You know, we, we we're, we're a bunch of scrappy individuals who didn't always have a lot of resources, but were very competent at utilizing the resources [00:05:00] we had

available to us. To make, you know, but we were all just going to trying to get to the next show and then the next show, and the next show. And once we hit March of 2020, we were all forced like almost everyone in our society to sit down and figure out what our next steps would be.

We were one of the 20 earliest members of National Independent Venue Association, which launched in April of 2020, quickly grew to over 3000 organizations, Adam. was the co-chair and still is co-chair of the advocacy committee of that organization. it had truly amazing things with that, but after we got through that hellscape of 2020, we always had a saying within NIVA that first we will survive and then we will thrive. So out of that grew out of the friendships we formed within that organization.

Something completely separate, has formed.

and Adam mentioned that it's D-Tour. So it's a number of these people. Again, we had never met prior to 2020, but are now some of the people I find closest in my life. and we book shows across the country. We are trying, we all have the same idea that we need to build community within our individual cities and bring art to our communities.

Don and Ebony: I love that.

So is D-Tour really like, a collective of booking?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: A cooperative or a collective. So we're all still independent entities, but we're working together. So historically there's been a few larger corporations that have really dominated the live music industry. And that's left a number of us, smaller independence, sort of out of the conversation and due to this, all of these friendships that I mentioned, we had formed and these beautiful networks that had come out of such tragedy.

We are now able to get in on some of those conversations that had, we'd been excluded from previously.

Don and Ebony: That's dope. I love that. And I love the excitement that you bring about the work that you do. I mean, it's just, it's, you know, a beautiful thing to see how music brings people together and how it brings about many different emotions.

And to know that you're in an industry that, brings community together in a beautiful way is just dope in my opinion. Yeah. And so, okay.

We know your, your big venue, the Wave, the indoor outdoor facility, there's been many of events there. You bring a lot of different acts. Right. And, but everyone, a lot of people know you for, you know, the indie music that you bring.

Right. So can you talk to us a little bit about that and how that started and, what your hopes

are?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah, I mean, that's really our roots, you know, we, we started like, I said, you know, way back when working with bands that really, nobody knew about, and,

Don and Ebony: and I apologize. Can you tell us what indie music is? Because maybe listeners don't know.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah. And that's kind of a, vast definition. I would say there's a lot of things that can fall in that indie category, but really what we're looking at when we say indie music is artists. that. May not have representation, or may be virtually unknown to the general public as a whole. So, and by representation, we're referring to like having, an agent or you know, some of the management, somebody who has, you know, their feet firmly planted in the industry who can help make connections. They're doing everything, themselves, you know?

Don and Ebony: An independent artist just doing it all them. Yeah.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah. Yeah. So, yeah. And that's, you know, we, we definitely, especially on our indoor stage, try to work with a lot of indie artists. we also try to program a lot of like the opening spots for larger artists as well when we have that opportunity with you know, some, some indie artists and, you know, just kind of working in that artist development realm is something that you know, we're super passionate about and that's something we'd really like. We're hoping that in the future, we can do even more, you know. As we see Wave become more established within the community, we'd like to use the bandwidth that then gets freed up for us mentally to help these artists. And we have so many amazing artists in our community that don't necessarily have a lot of external resources just because historically, which hasn't had that, you know.

That's not the industry that we're always have been known for. But we would, we are hoping to see that change. We do have a very viable music industry within our community. And so it's just, that's what we want our next phase to be. is showcasing the amazing talent that we do. have. Yeah. And When we talk about a hub, you know, as Wave, it's not just for live shows, but it's also helping artists with resources that they need to progress their career.

Right. So it's multifaceted, it's not just that live show experience, it's, working outside. of those, you know, normal,

Don and Ebony: I

Jessie & Adam Hartke: interactions

Don and Ebony: So if I wanted to take my career to the next level, I would come to you and say, Hey, I need to figure out a way to get my music out here. And then you would come, you know,

guide me on the [00:10:00] right direction.

Or

Jessie & Adam Hartke: That's our goal. Yeah. So right now. we help just advise artists and like help them through with questions they have, whatever. But, what we're hoping to do as next steps is to do just that. Yeah. Like work with local regional national artists that are truly independent, and start really helping them develop and doing exactly what you said.

Don and Ebony: Wow.

That's that's huge. and so it's the two of you, how many employees do you have.

at Wave, we have a core staff of about 10 people, but then as this time of year, we grow quickly exponentially, as we go back out tours, you know, we can have as many as 70. Out there

Don and Ebony: Cause your venue holds what? 300, 500?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: In indoor is 569, outdoors 4,000.

Don and Ebony: Whoo.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yes. so we got to get a lot of booze moving and a lot of people through the doors in a very short amount of time. Yeah. A big sellout show. We have, you know, 70 to a hundred people working typically on staff, full staff on the, on the big outdoor shows. So.

Don and Ebony: How many people did you have work? And when you had this new DJ

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yes. Snoop was here it a hundred people.

Don and Ebony: Yeah.

That was a fun one.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: It was such a wonderful show. Yeah, it was great. We got to bring our kid down to that one. He's a huge Snoop fan and he got to go see, he was sitting backstage, just watching it he saw, And he saw a number of people in our community that he looks up to that were opening. in fact, his DJ. Yes, it was Rudy. And then Carbon was onstage. These

Don and Ebony: DJ carbon

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah. Carbon is his DJ teacher. He knows Rudy. And so just for him to be able to see that was really inspirational for him. And I hope other people in our

community were super inspired to see that. Yeah. People just because we're in Wichita doesn't mean you can't share a stage with people like Snoop.

Don and Ebony: That was a beautiful moment. And, Rudy brought in, like he had a thousand people on stage with him, so that's what I love about his shows.

He brings in everyone and gives them all a chance to shine collaboratively

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Rudy is an amazing artist and overall Human

Don and Ebony: Yeah, I agree.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Amazing person.

Don and Ebony: Excellent. this is just great to see you folks. Well, I haven't met you before Jessie but, I know adam from back in the day, I mean, and Everyg has always had a partnership with the folks that Adam worked with, whether it's the Orpheum or River Festival, or I think we got a pavilion down at Naftzger park program, Park, right?

You can't escape. You said you folks were in instrumentalists and so that means you play an instrument, right?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yes,

Don and Ebony: Just making sure. Well, you know, I was doing that for Southeast high schools, but that's okay. But, what instruments do you play?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: I am actually a classically trained flutist. I, guess so I played the flute, so I did that.

I went into the realm of music education for a few years. I played piano as well. but it it's a lot more fun to just go work at a venue and do some shows. So I was very lucky that I transitioned out of the world of education in 2019. It was great timing.

Don and Ebony: Did you grow up here in Wichita?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: I'm I'm from the suburbs. I'm from Hesston. Yeah, Yup.

Don and Ebony: Tornado, I remember that

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah. March is not my favorite month. It was actually the Hesston tornado happened on March 13th. with it's also the same day? That Wave shut down. So I am not a big fan of that.

Don and Ebony: We're done with that, Adam. Yeah. did you grow up here?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: I grew up here. Yeah.

Don and Ebony: What high school?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: I went to North.

That's okay. I have some friends from Southeast though, so at cool,

actually Northwest is, but we're not going to talk about that right now. Help me understand. When did you, I mean, what was the aha moment that we're going to do this and we're going to have the wave cotillion too. I mean, I know all of those came at a different time but is, was that always the goal to grow this where it's so, it's multi-cam have multi divisions, if you will.

I wouldn't say I had, like, a, we had a plan for it.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: I would say we had a plan. I have a very clear memory. We had an office in the farmer and bankers building. and I have a very clear memory when we were doing First Friday of sitting there and looking at the Orpheum and saying, okay, so I'm doing the education thing. I can get money there. How are you? Where can you go work? It was like, we were like, you could work at the Orpheum or you could work at River Fest or the Cotillion. Those are the options on our community.

And that was probably 2010, 2011.

And [00:15:00] so then Adam went out and worked two of the places and then we bought the third and then, we just, you know, why not continue to grow? Yeah. But you know, I moved back. I had a, somewhat of a defining moment, Probably what, mid two thousands.

When I moved back to Wichita, I was up in Kansas City, I was working as a community organizer with Acorn. and, I was working in the Kansas City area and then I had the opportunity. They basically were shutting down the Kansas City office of Acorn, but they wanted me to. Then was basically a promotion where I would become what they called an Acorn Aviator, where you'd fly around the country and set up organizing campaigns all over the country.

But at that point I had started getting more involved in the music scene in Kansas City and and was really enjoying that and the thought of never having a solid place and moving around constantly to do this wasn't that appealing to me. So I kind of just gave that up and moved back to Wichita and opened a small recording studio sold everything I had.

And it wasn't a nice facility. but It got the job done. And, but that's where I met like Rudy and like, all these people like started working with all these local musicians and one of the first

conversations I had with Rudy, I remember he couldn't get gigs anywhere. He was like, I, I, You know, I can't get gigs. They, They want to hire a cover band. You know, they wanna hire somebody that's going to play Brown Eyed Girl or whatever a million times. And like, but I can't get a gig playing my original music. And that's where, like the idea of First Friday came in Final Friday was already in existence and that was a big art crawl or, you know, thousands of people go out and buy art, but there was nothing for music. And so we felt a music community was being completely overlooked. And so there were a few pockets of places that, you know, original musicians could get gigs, but it was really hard. And so, we started, I mean, that's kinda how we got into the doing shows stuff. I'd done stuff in the past, up in Lawrence and, Kansas City as well, but that was really it.

And then, yeah, then we started working on First Friday and, you know, then I think through it all, we just learned what the next step was. We, It wasn't a grand plan. It was like, this is the next step, you know, this is a feasible step, and I'm going to take that step.

Been grateful for, the different pathways that have opened up in front of us. And, just taking all the opportunities.

Don and Ebony: Yeah. Excellent. And you got some great partners at the Wave, right?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah. yeah.

Don and Ebony: Can you name them?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah, so we got five partners. We have, Dave Berg, Dave Wells, Jerry Jones, Pat Dough, and then we have a silent partner that doesn't like to be talked about.

Don and Ebony: Excellent. Excellent. Yeah. Dave Wells, I'm surprised you mentioned his name, but that's okay.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Right?

Don and Ebony: Dave is good people.

We go way back as well. So how, how, how are you ramping back up after COVID? I mean, you've been excited about it. I mean, two year hiatus, for lack of a better word, but let me back up on that. What did you do during COVID?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: We did all sorts of things I had mentioned before we, we're one of the early members of NIVA, National Independent Venue Association, and that dominated our entire thought process for well over a year. We were very lucky to find other humans in the same boat with similar thought processes. Yeah. As soon as COVID hit, like, we knew that it was a serious situation and, you know, in March we thought we were going to reopen in April

and April it's May. And then by the time May hit, we were like, it might be a while.

And so we started organizing and that's what we did. And that's what NIVA was, it was, as, as a group of people that got together and organized. and then the, the initial purpose was to try to figure out how to survive, how all these independent businesses all over the country will survive the pandemic.

With, you know, there was mandated shutdowns everywhere. Right. and so, you know, we quickly came to the conclusion that we needed pandemic relief. The paycheck protection stuff wasn't working because we didn't have payroll. We didn't have, we weren't open and we had all of the bills we had. All of our mortgages and all of our utilities and everything.

And so we started trying to figure you know, what bills were in the works. And we hired a lobbying firm akin Gump out in DC and then it was, what? June, July, well, first we, we started getting like letter sign of like how important, you know, these venues were to artists.

And it was huge. Artists It was like Willie Nelson and Outcast, and like Jerry Seinfeld and like all these like big artists where like he's, you have to save these venues. Cause this is where we all grew up in and this is how we got our starts. But then we got a letter to Congress as well, that was signed by, oh gosh. 160 members of Congress, again, bipartisan saying how important the venues, where each community. And we were very unique. in the [00:20:00] fact, I believe Kansas was the only state that had all of its representatives and senators sign.

Don and Ebony: Go, Kansas.

Wow.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: So and every, yeah, people were very surprised to hear that in the middle of the Midwest, and Kansas, we had such amazing. support from our electeds and.

and I know that, oh,

Jessie & Adam Hartke: that music. Yeah. Music is a universal language. It doesn't People think that, you know, if you're in these big primary markets like New York city or Chicago or LA, that's where you go to see shows, but that's not true. You know, in all of our small communities, music is important.

Our venues are a place for community gathering.

Don and Ebony: Excellent. And I know this was a tough time during, during your, last two years. And I appreciate you sharing that with our listeners. And, but how, how do you, how do you reconcile that? You're, you're trying to take care of everybody else and, and yourself. I mean, w what were you thinking or what were you thought process at that time?

You didn't know how long this was going to last and what was going on.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: I mean, luckily, we had a, so with the advocacy committee, which I was intimately involved with, we had a group. of about 30, 40 people that met three times, four times a week and sometimes more, but we all kind of confided in each other and shared our stories, shared our worries or our thoughts, and tried to create solutions on how we were going to get out of the mess we were in, you know?

and yeah, it was a, it was a extremely terrifying situation, you know? I mean, we all leveraged. I mean, when you start a business, you're typically extremely leveraged on everything. And across the country, everybody was, you know, it was traumatic, it was scary, but we had a good support group. And I think, you know, without that, a lot of us would have had a hard time.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: But I mean, even within that support group, you know, it was people's mental health was a big concern. I mean, there was people within our industry that were committing suicide and, you know, turning to alcohol and drugs and you know, all kinds of stuff to just try to, cause they couldn't do anything. And we lost a lot of venues and some people throughout it all.

And so, but you know, we had this focus of like, how are we going to get through this? And that's when we, you know, is like July of 2020 that we came up with the idea of just creating our own bill and called the Save Our Stages Act. And we did, and we wrote it, with our, lobbying group with akin Gump. and created a a bill that we then were able to rally behind.

we had over 3 million emails sent to members of Congress, supporting this bill from across the country. We had tons of artists. We had tons of co-signers and eventually in December of 2020, through and we got \$16 billion to the live music industry, but, well, to independent venues, but it also went to like the museums and zoos, like Sedgwick County Zoo and Botanica, art museum like they all got funding, but it truly saved the industry. And I think without that thing to rally around and to focus on, it would have been a whole different story. I mean, so many venues wouldn't have made it, like we would have lost so many of these like cultural hubs all over the country. that would have just been gone and people would have lost their houses and Everything associated with it. Yeah. That's all we can. Do, you know, when your backs up against the wall, you just got to move forward.

Don and Ebony: Yeah, that sound really tough. So thank you for sharing that. Well, before we hear from our sponsors, I have we've, we've been dispelling some myths here, and I know Jessie, you said you're a flutist. Can you please just, you know, for our listening audience, a lot of times they only think that, flute players can only sound like birds and classical music.

But could you tell them that we do so much more? No.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: I'm no longer a flutist. I'm not the best defender. There are some

amazing bird sound stuff, Peter, and the Wolf.

Don and Ebony: Well, on that note, we are definitely going to go to break and hear a word from our sponsor and we'll be right back.[00:25:00]

Welcome back everyone. We are here with the Hartke's, Adam and Jessie. Welcome back. Yeah. I mean, your story is just so fascinating. I'm just sitting here in awe, like.

And you guys have done a lot or the past two years or since 2009 for a number of years. so, you know, we just got done talking about how you, the things you were doing during COVID and now you've made it out of COVID and you've repositioned yourself, right?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yes. What does it look like for the future? I know you you've been featured in like Rolling Stone and other, you know, major works.

Billboard. We had an article in Billboard.

Don and Ebony: yeah,

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Either we had, or we will have coming out, it's going to be on the print edition. That will be in the print edition of Billboard in the very near future. The date has moved a few times. But, yeah, we're, we're so excited every, four, as dark as those moments were over the last two years, you know, it's, it's darkest, right, right before the dawn, Right. The colloquialism holds true. we've, we've come out of this horrible experience.

with a lot of beauty, we, we, our entire industry, I really think is in a much better position than we were two years ago. There's there's still going to be a lot of growing pains ahead of us, but we are a much more. Interconnected network at this point, Right. And we're all stronger together.

Nope. Nobody's at their strongest standing alone. And that that's been the biggest lesson over the two years, it's not, not only that we need to stand together, but having those options available. to us. Yeah. We've always been motivated by adversity and we saw a lot of that in the last two years. And so, Yeah, we're we, we saw where we were weak and we have ideas on how we can become stronger, you know, given the fact that we have a giant network across the nation now to, to support each other, and to. to collaborate with, and to really build with that's positioned us way better than we were prior to the pandemic, honestly.

And it's, you know, it's, it's, It's kind of a silver lining of everything that happened in our industry and like, you know, the, the, the fear and everything that, you know, we faced, we are now seeing a little bit of the other side of that. And you know, this unification and and also this

kind of deep comradery that birthed out of that because when you go through that experience with other people then you share that experience together, and then you have that moving

forward and you have this trust with them and this like comraderie with them.

That you didn't have necessarily before that. And so it's, it's really kind of a beautiful thing that came out of this really hard time. you know? and we're, I think just on the various. beginning stages of of that journey and, a lot of what we're doing is directly a direct result of everything. that happened. You know.

Don and Ebony: I think that's rich.

And I, I mean, that's, that is a great story. And because you do oftentimes hear, of stories where people don't make it out of those dark times. Right. But then when you hear something refreshing like this, that you, you know, made it through and you, did it collaboratively and you did something that helped people nationally.

I mean, that's huge. That's huge. So. I want to ask this of you, what can we do in the Wichita community to help you?

Jessie & Adam Hartke: I mean, I think just making music more, a part of your lives and talking to other people about it, you know, I mean, I think that's something that I think we have a hard time recognizing within the Wichita community is that music goes beyond just, you know, going to a live show or listening to something on the radio or on Spotify or whatever.

It's, It's a way for communities to truly kind of come together around something and, and to, to create a bond. And also recognizing that there's a whole entire workforce behind that music community, you know, and, and recognize that. you know, those music workers and the people that are bringing the shows to the masses, you know, and it's everybody from the bookers to the concessionaires, to the box office people and the security and the production staff and all those folks, it's not often looked upon as a career where are, where are located, but it truly is, and can be a viable career option. And especially younger kids, I know when I was going to North, in high school, I was super interested in music, but there was no pathway for me at all. there was nothing I could do that would lead me in a direction of something that was sustainable and truly, the only reason I went into this world was [00:30:00] because I had an uncle that was in the, in the music industry and I saw what he was doing. He didn't live here. He lived in Dallas and then LA and Nashville and all over, but I saw that he's made a living in the music and there's, so there is some way to do it. I don't know how, but that was also like, that was always in the back of my head.

So I think the more conversations we can have as a community of how do we, especially help kids that are wanting to have an interest in this, how do we help them blossom into something that could be Sustainable and keep them in Wichita and build a music industry within Wichita that's supportive of people's goals and aspirations. That's a long-winded answer.

Don and Ebony: No, that's no, that's, I think that's that's spot on, right? Because no one knows

or, you know, until you really explained it, what this pathway could look like. We know that music is an industry and that the, it is a business and you have to have all of these different things happen in order for us to see the end result of, you know, the live music or whatever it is.

Going to see. So thank you for explaining that. Do you, are, do you foresee yourself, as we were talking about pathways, doing internships for people in high school or

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah. We just had a meeting this morning with, folks from World Cafe Live Preservation Hall, that have mean, you can take that because you were, I was late to the meeting.

I'm sorry. My dear friends. I

Don and Ebony: the truth comes out,

Jessie & Adam Hartke: We're still figuring out how to do these meetings like outside of the house.

I know you will have to put travel time in and we forgot about that. No, no. we are very excited about the idea of creating more community outreach, especially in the realm of education moving forward. As Adam mentioned, It's very easy to see the artist on stage, but we so often overlook all of the different career pathways that lie behind that to get that one, or maybe the five people on stage. So as Adam mentioned, we are very lucky to have relationship with, with people in Philadelphia, like Adam said, with World Cafe Life or Preservation Hall in New Orleans that have already created very sustainable, just mind-blowingly amazing educational programs with their venues. And so we're discussing with them, what can we do in Wichita to not parallel because our communities are all different right? We don't want to do exactly what they're doing there because we are not Philadelphia, We are not New Orleans, but what can we do in Wichita to you know, maybe give another idea, put, plant an idea in some kid's brain that that is a viable option, or even if that's not an career opportunity for them just that it, that it exists, That music is an integral part of a society, which I think has been forgotten.

Yeah. I mean, as kids in Wichita's schools, like our, our main thing was a field trip to go see the symphony or whatever. And I think that's important. But as Pam from Pres Hall is like, she was like, you know, kids are told not to clap or when to clap or whatever. And when they go to these venues, they just are engulfed in music and like, they just have a blast and they see that, oh, they can do this as a job or this, or they can be a musician, and like there's musicians there that are mentors as well, that like helped develop kids.

So like there there's a whole new world that is really exciting, especially for kids that, you know, it's, it's a little more modern, it's a little more accessible. It's a little more realistic for a lot of kids. And so. they've seen huge, like, you know, huge growth within their communities because of the programs that they have.

And it's something that we we definitely think is necessary here. It's it's beyond like something we want to do. It's something we have to do to further progress the culture. you know?

Don and Ebony: I love that, Don. Excellent. Just one more question. I believe you shared what you went through before the pandemic. Shared that two years of, I don't know what you want to call it.

and, but you, during that time, you've course corrected to find out, like you said, where you were weak and how you can make us stronger afterwards. Now we're in afterwards without being proprietary. What the next five years look like for you guys? What's going on. If what you can tell,

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Sure. I think the best way to word it would be helping to grow our community.

We want to do things that benefit. The overall holistic being of Wichita or Kansas. however you want to look at it. we have a number of initiatives in the work, but what's driving each one of them is that, we're just, saying. and I know I mentioned this earlier with wave, but something that troubles us is how fractured we are.

Right. We are. So for a number of reasons, we're so acclimated to sitting in our house and looking at our screens. And then the last two years compounded that. So drastically. There's not been a lot of, PO I mean, there were a lot of positive benefits to staying home for awhile, but there's not a lot of positive benefits to our individual mental health, to our society's growth to stay in that mindset. And so what we are hoping to do with a number of things, we just, we want to make this [00:35:00] a better place for everyone. Yeah. We're also working, you know, beyond the local, I think in the next five years we're going to, we're really putting our minds. How do we reimagine the entire music industry and its interactions.

and that's everything from artists to venues to promoters, to just the industry as a whole it's. I mean, the music as the music industry, as it exists now is based on exploitation It's based on this, this old system that doesn't work and only benefits a very few people.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: It doesn't, it's not, it's not a good system for most of the people involved. And that's why we're seeing the decline of independence, independent venues, independent artists, and all that, and a bigger eyes on a more centralized thing, but there's also another like wave coming to fill in that, that void of what's being left behind, you know?

And so I think that that's, that's something that we're, we're going to put a lot of attention to, and that I think we'll see a shift in the overall industry as a whole, more of a, de-centralization more of a empowering, more of a. an a sharing of knowledge. That's one thing that is hoarded in the music industry is knowledge.

And so people use that to explain people. They say, we know how to do this, and if you want to have this knowledge, you're going to have to sign this contract that's really bad for you, and then we're going to keep most of the money that's made off of your craft. and, and that translates to especially the tertiary markets, like Wichita as well.

So, that knowledge and those, that power dynamic is being hoarded within LA and New York and Nashville. And it's, it's getting to a point where something different has to happen. It's not sustainable the way the industry is set up currently. It does benefit a few, but anytime, you know, you get things too top heavy, it's not sustainable. And so we are very excited that we are at a moment. It's again, it's one of those silver linings of the pandemic. I think it really shows a lot of those weaknesses and it, but it also shows a path how to make it more, more sustainable.

Yeah. We started on weaknesses, but we also saw the weaknesses of the music industry as a whole and like wha what is as is hurting and what is helping.

And like our focus is to look at what's helping.

Don and Ebony: I think that's dope. That's a great story. you know, and it shows that you've always been for the people and not for the community. You'll work with acorn, you'll work with the music industry. I mean, so thank you for all that you do to help us be better and make this place a better place. Don. Excellent.

That was deep. Well, you got to deal with Ebony for a long time. So now that we're going to have some fun little word association, I give you one word you, or both of you can give one word back. It's not wrong. Cause it's y'all's word. Okay. You ready? Okay. Leader.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Jessie

Don and Ebony: Awwwww.

No sound effects. Gee. success.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Light, which doesn't necessarily make sense, but that's where I went.

Don and Ebony: College

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Depends.

Don and Ebony: no, that was the laugh was, there's gotta be a story there, but what's the one word.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Unnecessary. Depends. different. Depends on what Yeah, Yeah.

Don and Ebony: Yeah, Exactly. Entrepreneur.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Fun. Yeah.

Don and Ebony: Hero,

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Commonality.

Don and Ebony: Vacation.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Necessary.

Don and Ebony: Fun

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Every day.

Don and Ebony: Nice. Family.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Integral. Yeah.

Don and Ebony: The Chamber.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Awesome.

Don and Ebony: Wichita

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Awesome.

Don and Ebony: Failure.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Necessary. Part of it. Three words, but

Don and Ebony: This ought to be fun. And you got to tell the truth and we want to hear from both of you, beverage.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: The way I paid pay the the bills.

Don and Ebony: Water.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Well, no, that's beverage how I pay the bills. You're venue owner.

Don and Ebony: Oh, nice.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Yeah.

Don and Ebony: Very good. We truly, truly appreciate you telling your story. This was really, really cool. And it's good to see you again, he all grown up now that bass in his voice.

Well, thank you both for being here. It was a lovely conversation.

Jessie & Adam Hartke: Thank you for having us.

Don and Ebony: Absolutely. Well friends we're at the end of our segment. If [00:40:00] you would please like this and share it with all your friends, share it with someone who you think would find value in learning this information and hearing their story till next time.