

NBA All-Star Technology Summit

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Founder, Qualtrics; Owner, Utah Jazz; Chairman,
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FEATURE PANEL - UTAH'S TECH BOOM: A
CONVERSATION WITH RYAN SMITH

(Applause.)

AHMAD RASHAD: Jeez. Wait, wait. We got to go back
again. Introduce us again. Please.

VOG: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome back
Ahmad Rashad and Bill Murray.

(Applause.)

AHMAD RASHAD: Now we're talking. Liven up the
morning a little bit. We want to welcome you back. We
hope you guys are ready for our first fireside chat. Even
though we don't have a fireside back here, we still call it the
fireside chat. Right?

BILL MURRAY: Yeah, let's just talk about the elephant in
the room if we can. It's this jersey right here and that
photograph right there. This is a baseball team, Salt Lake
Trappers. 1980. And that number, No. 29, is significant.

Today I'm wearing 24 because that jersey is now in the
Baseball Hall of Fame, not because I wore it, but because
that baseball team won 29 games in a row. It's the largest
winning streak in history of professional sport.

(Applause.)

BILL MURRAY: No, come on, let's hear it. Let's hear it.
Yeah.

(Applause.)

BILL MURRAY: That's it. That's all I got. That's all I got.



AHMAD RASHAD: Were you on the team?

BILL MURRAY: I had one at bat. I had one. It was not on
that team, but I batted .500 in the Minors. I'm 1-2.

But I want to say this. You're probably wondering why they
were called the Trappers. You don't associate Salt Lake
with trappers. Our team was so poor we bought it from a
guy who could only afford jerseys that he got from the
Edmonton Trappers. So we were wearing the Edmonton
Trappers uniforms, but now they're the Salt Lake Trappers
and in the Hall of Fame.

I could go on and on.

AHMAD RASHAD: Don't.

BILL MURRAY: But the bar is not yet open.

So let's talk now about a real owner, an actual owner, a
guy who's the founder of Qualtrics. He's our host here in
Utah. He made sure there was pretty snow on the
mountains and all kind of pancakes in all the restaurants.
Mr. Ryan Smith, let's hear it for him, owner of the Utah
Jazz.

(Applause.)

AHMAD RASHAD: And interviewing him will be one of my
favorite journalists and the biggest Minnesota Vikings fan
in the building. Please join me in welcoming CNN's Poppy
Harlow to the stage.

(Applause.)

POPPY HARLOW: Next year. Next year is our year,
right? We were so close. Next year.

Hi, everyone. Thanks for being with us. I had the privilege
of Ryan already being on our show this morning. We got
to anchor -- I got to anchor our morning show from center
court, which I've never done before. So thank you for that.

RYAN SMITH: Pretty sweet, huh?



POPPY HARLOW: It was very sweet. My colleagues were very jealous of this assignment. Well, thank you for being here. We'll get into basketball in a little bit, but we're going to talk about your journey and how you got here.

But, first, 30 years since All-Star was in Utah. And is it true that you still have souvenir Coke bottle from the '93 All-Star Game?

RYAN SMITH: Yeah. So first, Poppy, thanks for being here as well. And all of you, welcome to Utah. How are we feeling? We're excited to host. It was 30 years ago, and I was a kid here growing up. Obviously, couldn't afford getting into the game.

But Jam Session was going on. And as a Junior Jazz player, we got tickets to Jam Session, which is -- Junior Jazz is like the largest, 70,000 kids that play Junior Jazz. And so I was playing Junior Jazz, and we all got to come up with me and my friends.

And it felt like we had an All-Star experience. So the league hasn't really done Jam Session for about 10 years.

POPPY HARLOW: But now they will.

RYAN SMITH: But Jam Session is back. If you get a chance, go over to the Salt Palace. It's a full carnival of basketball. And that's the purpose of it. I was there with my kids last night, and it was incredible.

POPPY HARLOW: All of five of them.

RYAN SMITH: Yeah. And we went around the dinner table last night, and we always do this thing, like worst and best, what was worst, what was your best, and I had three kids say this was the best day of their life.

POPPY HARLOW: Really?

RYAN SMITH: And I was like, "Well, you were playing carnival games and you were shooting hoops. Like that's why." So I hope every single kid who goes there feels that same way.

POPPY HARLOW: You are winning. You and Ashley are winning as parents.

RYAN SMITH: We're trying.

POPPY HARLOW: For sure. And maybe you'll see Ryan dunk, because I've also learned this. This is true?

RYAN SMITH: Oh, jeez. Well, no.

POPPY HARLOW: You can dunk?

RYAN SMITH: No, we were playing HORSE, Dwyane and I.

POPPY HARLOW: Oh, Dwyane.

RYAN SMITH: We have a sick, competitive problem. And we're playing JAZZ instead of HORSE. We were playing JAZZ. And like the third letter, he goes and dunks with two hands. And I was like, okay, I'm not -- I threw like three off the back of the rim, so...

POPPY HARLOW: Maybe next time

RYAN SMITH: Yeah, we'll get it.

POPPY HARLOW: Okay, so let's get into the story, because the story of Qualtrics is so, so, so unique. It was actually born of tragedy because you leave school to go home to be with your dad, who's fighting cancer, and then you, your dad Scott, your brother Jared, do what, 21 years ago today?

RYAN SMITH: Yeah, it's been 21 years. I mean, we started a company by accident. My father, and you'll see at the celebrity deal tonight, it's for 5 For The Fight, our cancer research foundation. It's also the jersey patch of the Jazz.

But my father, you get that call that no one knows what to do, and it's the call of "I've got cancer, I've been diagnosed, and it doesn't look good." I think that if you've been in that spot, we all know someone who has, it's a pretty helpless feeling.

So I just dropped out of school. I was just like, hey, look, nothing is more important. I'm going to go work and be with my dad. And my dad was working on this crazy Internet technology, because he's a researcher, to be able to actually gather feedback on the Internet and help people understand the data that they didn't have.

And this is right in the shadow of the dot-com bust in 2002. We're in Provo, Utah. So instead of really fixing up an old car together, we started a tech company. And I caught the vision and the bug. It was a while later, my brother was at Google, and I recruited him back. And it's been a pretty crazy journey for 21 years.

POPPY HARLOW: People didn't believe in you guys. No VC would give you money?

RYAN SMITH: We bootstrapped our company for ten years. So we were in the basement for five years, which



sucked. And then in 2012, like we went out to Silicon Valley. And I remember I didn't know what it was. Like we'd go to Sand Hill Road, we'll go through the show, and no one had been investing in Utah. No one would, like it was like the Peninsula or the Citi, we'll do venture capital.

And here we are in 2012. We show up, and that was the biggest question. I remember sitting in the hotel the night before I was going to present to Sequoia. I was going to present to Michael Moritz, who gave Steve Jobs his first money, Larry and Sergey, and I woke up in the middle of the night because I had a dream that he was going to make me relocate to San Francisco.

POPPY HARLOW: This is a dream you woke up sweating.

RYAN SMITH: I was just like no, this can't happen. The model doesn't work. Everything we're doing doesn't work. It's about Utah, if we wanted to take that next step.

And he came into the meeting. I'll never forget this. He said, "I believe you can do it, and I believe you can do it in Utah." And at the same time, there was a great friend of mine who would take an interest in this Utah thing, Ryan Sweeney, and Ryan Sweeney, on the other side, was saying, "Hey, I believe in Utah."

And those two groups got together in 2012, and they wrote the largest Series A check since 2008 in all of tech, and they did it in Utah.

And if you fast-forward, when the Jazz opportunity came along, like I called Ryan Sweeney again at Accel Partners and said, "Hey, let's do this." And he's like, "I'm in. I'm in on Utah. This is what it is." So it's been an incredible moment to work alongside him.

POPPY HARLOW: You told the "New York Times" in 2017, about being a startup and founder here, specifically, "Founders view their companies like they're building the family business or a farm. They're building them to keep." Why is it different here?

RYAN SMITH: Because when you don't have an off-ramp, you have to build it as if you're going to keep it. And if I'm buying something, I always want to buy something that someone else wants to keep.

And I think there's a mentality in tech sometimes that's like, hey, we're running an NBA competition or we're starting a startup, we're going to get some domain names, swag, and like we have a thing and we're going to get rich or this is how it's going to happen.

And reality is it's like what if you have to keep your

business? What if you have to keep it forever? How are you going to make decisions? What are your non-negotiables? What are your values? And that's a little bit of the mentality because there wasn't many exits. And if you wanted to actually make money in business, it wasn't a VC or funding model, it was like you actually had to make money

And I think that it created a different mentality where, when we rolled into 2012, '13, '14, '15, '16, and we created Silicon Slopes here, like there were these companies that had all the fundamentals that these investors wanted, and you started to see this trend of success breeding success.

And you can go back to the beginning of Silicon Valley, and you'll see like this company did it, and then people branch off, then this company, this company, this company. And that's actually how you create change

POPPY HARLOW: Are you saying this is the next Silicon Valley?

RYAN SMITH: No, because I don't think anything replaces Silicon Valley. And if you look at Silicon Valley and you say, hey, what's made that? So I think first like the talent hub. So if you take Stanford and Cal and those schools out of Silicon Valley and you take the innovation that came out of those with it, you have a challenge.

If I look at Utah, we have 250,000 college kids 40 miles south and 40 miles north. No one talks about that. And those people want to innovate and they want to stay here and they're creative and they're scrappy, and they're not afraid of going alone. Right? And so we have that fundamental base.

People have been coming to people Utah forever. If I just polled the room and said how many of you come here to parks or ski or whatever, it's 7 million people a year coming to Utah. This is not a small market, and we'll talk about that later. Like that's what's coming to Utah

And then you actually look and say, well, what's different? Well, there wasn't infrastructure for people to stay and work here. And that's changed in the last ten years.

POPPY HARLOW: So let's talk about what happened. So you get through 2008/2009 financial crisis. Then you sell to SAP, huge deal, \$8 billion deal. Then you IPO. Bill McDermott, former CEO of SAP, I remember him saying at the time: The legacy players who carried their '90s technology into the 21st century just got clobbered.

This same Bill McDermott who on the call you smile when he's like, "What is Qualtrics?" And so making that name

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and doing it this really unique way of sale and IPO, and you just seem to have done it your way and a different way.

RYAN SMITH: The cool thing about technology is there's no playbook. If you look at our history, it's completely different. We're three days before ringing the bell to go public, after bootstrapping, which means we didn't raise capital, then we raised a lot of capital from the best investors, and then we're getting ready to go public finally, after 16 years.

We're three days before, and Bill McDermott calls. And if you know Bill, he's pretty persuasive.

POPPY HARLOW: He is.

RYAN SMITH: He says, "Ryan, do you want to go public?" The answer was, "No, I don't" -- like I wasn't sitting there saying, hey, when I was a little kid, I want to be a public CEO. He's like, "Why are you going public?"

And it's because we created this category called experience management, we want to take it to the world. And he said, "Hey, what if you went public through SAP? We're the largest software company in Europe. We're here. Like let's go. We'll just go together."

And that's what happened. And so we sat down three days before, pulled all of our employees together. They thought we were making plans on who was going to ring the bell. We were like, "Hey, j/k, we're combining with SAP." And they were like, "What?"

And then it was another moment. It was the largest enterprise software deal in tech of a private company out of Utah. And Bill is sitting there in Utah, and we did everything here, and it was another moment to raise the bar of the art of the possible here.

And then Bill -- John Donahoe went to Nike. Bill took the ServiceNow job. And the new CEO called and said, "Hey." I was like, "What do you want to do?" And they're like, "Well, what do you want to do?" And I was like, "Well, this has such an important part of the fabric here in Silicon Slopes. It's not about money, it's not about contracts, it's about what the next phase of this company is."

And no one could understand why we didn't take that exit and run off the field. Like the whole management team, they couldn't understand.

And reality was because it's not about the money, it's about the journey. And the journey was we have a chance to create something that's going to spawn all these other

companies here, and we were seeing it, and we were like, it doesn't end like this.

POPPY HARLOW: One of -- and I should clarify what I was saying. What I thought was so fascinating about the journey that I read about is that when you guys, you and Bill, are on this investor call, you're listening in, one of the first questions to Bill is, "How come I've never heard Qualtrics?"

And I think this is the story of being underestimated and yet overperforming and surprising people.

RYAN SMITH: Well, yeah, I think, look, I didn't do one ounce of media for the first ten years. No press release, no interviews. And I believed that once we raised money, like the media was going to come and then everything would tip. Like people would just be calling us.

And I'll never forget like doing like this three-page "Forbes" thread where we came out and we were in "Forbes," on the cover, like Qualtrics, the biggest company you've never heard of, and I was like, "Here it is." Held it up to the employees, like it's all going to get easier from here, and then no one read it.

POPPY HARLOW: Why?

RYAN SMITH: And then like -- I think over like the next ten years I probably was on CNBC 13 times and every magazine and everything there, and we're building this huge brand, we're doing all this brand awareness, we're doing all this marketing.

And I felt like we put on a little bit of a clinic, created Silicon Slopes, did everything there, and then we sell the company. And that night I get on the phone with Bill McDermott, and the first call is like, "Hey, Bill, love the acquisition. What's Qualtrics?" Next call, "Hey, Bill, like way to go." I know his company was on the road, 300 articles on the roadshow. What's Qualtrics?

And I'm like, what the hell has been going on for ten -- and then I realized none of that matters. Like it's about just creating a stable company, and like the rest will take care of itself. And no one is going to know who you are anyways in a hundred years from now. Like who was the best businessperson a hundred years -- I don't know. Like it doesn't matter. What matters --

POPPY HARLOW: It's about what you build, not what --

RYAN SMITH: What you build and the people that you bring along with it. And that was the real impact of this.

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POPPY HARLOW: Let's talk a little bit about how you built it, how you're rebuilding, because one of the things I was struck by is you said one of the hardest disciplines in business and in life -- and this applies to the Jazz, and we'll get there -- is tearing down what you've built to build something better.

We're seeing a lot of activists in your space right now, just in the broader space. You talk about being your own activist and really deciding what are the sacred cows and what aren't.

RYAN SMITH: Yeah, I think we always look at -- I mean, in tech, we're almost all one -- someone having one good idea away from like wiping you out. I mean, you look at like ChatGPT, you look at some of these things, and going through that journey for 21 years, I feel super fortunate that we've disrupted ourselves before it comes to us.

And we've been in situations where it comes to you, and you'd much rather do it from a position of strength, and you actually are comfortable with it. But it's also very easy to tear something down and incredibly difficult to build something back up. So don't cheer the teardown, like the hard --

POPPY HARLOW: Then why do you keep doing it when times are good? You keep reinventing the --

RYAN SMITH: I guess we don't look at it that way. We look at it as like -- I have the sign in my office that just says tune out the noise and play the long game. And I guess we're looking at it a little bit longer and say, you know, like regardless of the times, we have a long-term vision of what we're trying to do, and you've got to play for that.

And if you see Windows coming short or you see possibilities, like I always have this moment in my head where -- and I don't know how true it is, but I heard it, and it's an executive at Coca-Cola who came into a room and had all the employees put their phones in a basket and said, "Hey, we're going to lose our biggest deal," like it was McDonald's or something, "and someone else is taking it over."

POPPY HARLOW: Pretty big one.

RYAN SMITH: Yeah. "We have 24 hours for the pitch. Write everything on the wall that we're going to do." And like the team rallies and does all these new things and everything that we're going to do that they're not doing. And then at the end the person was like, "Actually, just kidding, like, but go do all" --

POPPY HARLOW: J/k.

RYAN SMITH: "Go do all that stuff anyways."

POPPY HARLOW: Should we all do that?

RYAN SMITH: Yeah, and like that's actually the mentality, is like how do you keep doing that. And we've had to develop that muscle along the way to do that. Or if an activist were to come into your business, what are the ten things they're going to tell you? Okay, well, do them now.

And so I think that's a way to keep reinventing. Because one of the hardest problems, especially as you get bigger -- we're now 6,000 employees at Qualtrics -- like how do you stay nimble? How do you stay disruptive? How do you continue that when you're competing against someone who's smaller?

POPPY HARLOW: But how do you do that as a founder? Because one of the -- what can be a downside to being a founder running a company is everything is your darling and you can't see it the way an outside set of eyes can see it. How do you cross that hurdle?

RYAN SMITH: Yeah, it can be a problem. Like the amount of crazy founders that run around like in the world --

POPPY HARLOW: You said it, not me.

RYAN SMITH: Yeah, it's a full brand. I think it really comes down to who you surround yourself with and who the people are around you and if they will tell you the truth.

POPPY HARLOW: Do you have people who tell you no?

RYAN SMITH: Have you ever met Danny?

POPPY HARLOW: No, but go on.

RYAN SMITH: So, I mean, I want to be around people that tell the truth. I think even going into the Jazz with Danny and Justin and what we're doing, and not only that but on the ownership group side, everything that we're doing, like that is first and foremost. And then the idea is we're going together.

POPPY HARLOW: How did you apply -- so let's move on to the Jazz now. How did you apply that theory of how you do business, tearing something down when times are good to rebuild for the long game, to the Jazz? Because you made a number of trades, All-Star trades that at the time were panned as unpopular, but now look.

RYAN SMITH: Well, I think we're still in the teardown

mode a little bit more than like we are at, hey, we've arrived at something. We've got a long way to go.

When I took over, and Adam straight up told me, "We don't want you to come in and be what the NBA is already. Come in and bring that experience or what you have to the league," and if every --

POPPY HARLOW: I think he said, "Don't leave at the door everything that brought you here."

RYAN SMITH: Yeah. And I've had to keep reminding myself like, whoa, this is weird. Why? Why do we do this? Why is the --

POPPY HARLOW: Can you give me an example?

RYAN SMITH: I mean, I'll give you two. Like our Jazz -- our old Utah Jazz logo. The note is insane. I love the Jazz note. Like it's right there. I think that's one of the most iconic things. Everyone knows what it is. And if I look at the Utah Jazz logo, I was like why do we have that?

And like the closest thing is I bottomed out all the way where it's got the Utah and the Jazz was for bumper stickers. And like I think there's a lot of sacred cows of why we do things, but there's really not a really good reason. I was like, well, we kind of don't have bumper stickers --

POPPY HARLOW: Just because we did.

RYAN SMITH: Yeah, just because we did. And it's tradition and like this is it. And you've got to be really careful about what is and what isn't. And you're going to mess up a little bit.

I think the other thing is org hierarchy. Like I love the NBA; I hate the hierarchy and the way everything is structured. So Danny came in as CEO, what's that role, like it is what it is.

But it's not about -- like we got rid of titles a long time ago in tech. So like how do we do it and how are we going to operate together.

So I think my biggest thing is like that relationship between CEO, between GM, between coach, and myself, and like how can that be so that if we decide something, we're in it together. We're going to win or lose together.

And like that's the way it is. We're not going to look back. Because the NBA is like -- there's a lot of revisionist history. Of course, you're not going to get it all right.

So I think the key is you're working with people you trust

that you're all telling the truth, and you're in it together. And then you got to be able to live with that. You've got to be able to live with the decisions. We own the decisions. You're in the room. Like you're there.

So for me, those are principles that came from the same thing we did at Qualtrics. We came in, we changed the whole -- we had to decide we're selling to SAP. We had to decide together we're spinning it out. And there's no looking back. We are literally burning the boat.

POPPY HARLOW: How do you know -- one of the things I understand that Adam also told you is basically what a rare opportunity it is to get your own team, right, get your team you love, get the team you used to sneak into Jazz games, right, and to get --

RYAN SMITH: Not always. I had tickets sometimes.

POPPY HARLOW: Okay, sometimes. But to get to do that. But that has to also be -- whenever I think of anything that has to do with my beloved Minnesota, Vikings included, it's like I don't want to screw it up because it's like home. Right? So also with that comes this huge responsibility to get it right for everyone here.

RYAN SMITH: First of all, I know, like, what it's like to be a fan. I mean, I'll give you an example. With this All-Star Game, we were the jersey patch sponsor. We put up money for this All-Star Game three or four years ago, because Millers were the ones that brought, and that was like we were like, okay, we're in.

So I come from that side of the table. And I think that's important. But it's not lost on me how crazy it is to grow up playing Junior Jazz. And then like Adam said, no one gets their own team.

And there is responsibility, but I also -- you know, it wasn't necessarily -- I had talked to Danny a bunch along the way, and about the league, and it became more contagious. And I figured out I want to be part of the NBA. I play hoops in the mornings. Like this is it.

And we were looking at other opportunities, and my wife just like at the very end is like, "We're not doing that. We're Jazz fans."

POPPY HARLOW: I love this story because you were looking at the Timberwolves.

RYAN SMITH: I'm not going to say that, you did.

POPPY HARLOW: Okay, I'm saying this, and he's not correcting me. And Ashley --



RYAN SMITH: Great organization.

POPPY HARLOW: I agree -- puts her foot down, and you listen.

RYAN SMITH: Well, it's rare to be part of the league. That's not lost on me. I talked to a lot of people. I know how hard it is, and timing has to line up, and we were down the road.

And Ash just said like -- I mean, she said one night, she's like, "What about our Jazz tickets?" I said, "What do you mean about the Jazz tickets?" She's like, "Are you going to be able to go to the Jazz games?" I'm like, "No." Like that's how this is going to go. "What about the kids?" "Well, no."

I was like, "Well" -- and you know. You know when -- like it doesn't happen very often, but like the next three days were not like -- we weren't communicating at our best.

(Laughter.)

RYAN SMITH: And I'm like, all right, something is off here.

And then I went to Gail Miller. This was in February. I went to Gail Miller, and I said, "Gail, is there any chance we could just be a part of a little bit of it?" We want to put more skin in the game here.

And it was no. And I said fine. She said, "Hey, for 35 years, it's been our family." They were splitting games between here and Vegas. And it was kind of like, all right, like, "We'll be the best damn fans that you've ever had and sponsors, and we are here for anything you need."

And that was our moment where we said we're all in on the Jazz. And then to get a call from her in July. And what's crazy is we decided to spin Qualtrics out in July, and it was going to be a six-month process. And I had decided a week before that I wasn't going to be the CEO. I was just going to be crazy founder and chairman. And my -- Zig, our CEO, was going to take over.

And I didn't know why. I just wasn't feeling. Like we were going to go at it together, but I wasn't going to be the public CEO. And then a week later to get this call and say, "Hey, are you still interested?" And I was like, "Whoa. Yeah. Are you kidding me?"

And said, "Well, are you still interested in thinking about this?" And I was like, "Getting a little piece of that?" And she's like, "No, the whole" -- they were like, "No, the whole thing." And I was like, "Well, what do you need?" And they

said, "Well, just make us an offer."

And I didn't know what to do. And so I just grabbed the Forbes form and the valuation and said, "How's this?" We'll figure it out. And it was legitimately like, "Yeah, like we're going to do that." It wasn't a bid process. It wasn't anything. It was almost like, "We've been watching you and Ash, and you need to keep it here."

POPPY HARLOW: Be a steward.

RYAN SMITH: And be a steward of this. And she said the word "steward." And I didn't really know what it meant until we took over. But they've done such an incredible job here, and we're just using the time to try to take it to the next level.

POPPY HARLOW: So I remember in -- I think it was the first press conference that you did, you also made a lot of headlines for saying that this franchise would be actively antiracist. Right?

It's February, Black History Month. You guys take that further. You talk about Black Experience Month. Why did you say that, and what do you think the role is a very public-facing organization to fight racism?

RYAN SMITH: It's a very similar thing that we had done at Qualtrics. And we've seen the impact of what happens when you're active about something. And the keyword is active. Which means we're intentional and we're -- for us, at least.

And nothing was greater, a greater moment than when our employee base and our team, instead of Black History Month, wanted to use Black Experience Month.

And where this plays out is we kicked it off last week with ten of our Black employees talking to the whole company, with Dwyane Wade moderating the panel, of their Black experience. And it was incredible. It was absolutely incredible.

And experiences like the business that we're in at Qualtrics and doing that and saying, hey, how do we improve everyone's experience in the organization, from the player to the coach, all the way down, but like this in particular has been something that we're absolutely focused on.

I mean, one of the things we wanted to do is we want to remind everyone that this is what we stand for. And we wanted to do it all year long. And we came up with this idea that for every win we're doing a scholarship, a four-year scholarship for an underrepresented minority.

And the first two years -- we had to kind of pull it back this year because we need to digest, but we went to every single university in Utah, and we said, "We're paying for everything, and we need you to allow these kids to have a path to get in."

And we have 130 scholars so far. And I would challenge every single --

(Applause.)

RYAN SMITH: And I would challenge every single organization and community here to do the same thing. Because it all starts with education. And if you have moments here, or you want to, like you've got to meet these scholars because they are incredible kids. And they just needed help.

And what we saw were interesting things. We saw that kids who might have been thinking about college weren't reaching as high as they could. Think about that. They were going to a community college, but they didn't realize they could get into the U. And Taylor Randall of the university said, "We'll take them all. We'll take them all."

And then this summer, our sponsors gave internships to almost every kid. And so you start to see that going, and then community. Like Intermountain Healthcare is like, "We'll hire anyone who graduates in the healthcare field." Like whatever it is. Like, "We'll hire any of those scholars."

And so we're watching this movement, and it's like little by little. It's very similar to how the tech ecosystem grew. We're starting to see the movement. It's only been two years.

But more than that, it's a reminder every game, every day of being active. And so -- and it's the best thing. I mean, we tried to, okay, what's the next -- it's like we haven't quite found anything that helps us focus as much as that and reminds us daily, not just in February.

POPPY HARLOW: Yeah. I bet there's a lot of people in this room who can hire, by the way, those scholars.

RYAN SMITH: I think there's a lot of possible scholarships --

POPPY HARLOW: So it's an onus on all of us.

RYAN SMITH: -- out there in the league. And we have a third-party group called 10,000 Degrees out of the Bay Area that does all the processing, and it is incredible.

POPPY HARLOW: I don't think there's any better place to

end than that, other than who's going to win tonight? Your team?

RYAN SMITH: Whoa.

POPPY HARLOW: Or Dwyane Wade's team?

RYAN SMITH: So he's been like in the gym like a lot. Like a lot. And if this was a golf tournament, I'd get like four strokes. Like why am I shooting 25 shots against Dwyane Wade?

POPPY HARLOW: Good question.

RYAN SMITH: But if I catch a heater, that's a lot of pressure on him. So I'm going to go first tonight on our personal 3-point. We're shooting for cancer. And then we've got an incredible Celebrity Game going on. But lastly, first of all, thank you all for coming to Utah. Like we're so excited.

(Applause.)

RYAN SMITH: This state has changed probably more than any over the last ten years with the growth. And explore, go have fun. Like it's not that cold outside, but the mountains are -- I mean, there's seven ski resorts within 25 minutes away from here. And come back often. We've got the \$3 billion investment from Delta on the new airport.

POPPY HARLOW: Oh, yeah, it's going to be Delta Center?

RYAN SMITH: Yeah. Anybody remember "The Last Dance"? It wasn't the last dance. Like the Delta Center is coming back.

POPPY HARLOW: Yeah, that's great. Ryan, thank you. Congratulations on all of it. Thanks, everyone.

(Applause.)

BILL MURRAY: I think we all owe Poppy and Ryan an incredible debt.

(Applause.)

BILL MURRAY: And the best way to repay them, to thank them is to take a very short break so we can all get one more run down the mountain at the end of the day. Okay? We'll see you all back here in five minutes. Thanks so much.

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 . . . when all is said, we're done.®