

Candice: "The following interview was conducted on behalf of the oral history program of the Washington County museum and Century High School. The interviewee is Flori E. and the interviewer is Candice DiNucci. The interview took place at Century High School on May 19th, 2004.

Candice: " Flori, were you and your family born in the United States or did you migrate here from another country?"

Flori: " um, we migrated from another country, from Mexico."

Candice: " do you remember it at all?"

Flori: " uh, I really don't remember, I migrated here when I was just a couple months and, uh I stayed in California for, uh, a fair amount of my life then I came over here in Oregon and that's where I've been all my rest of my life".

Candice: " That's good."

Candice:" um, what was your family situation before migrating to the United States?

Flori: " uh, first of all my father came over here by himself first to check it out and see if there's lots of jobs and stuff and so he came and he did find a job and he send us some money from, send us some money to Mexico, and my mom didn't have a job and we had another, I had another two, two little brothers and we just, I dun no, we just couldn't stay right there in Mexico anymore and uh, so we decided to come over here to the United States.

Candice: " ok, what prompted like was it the job situation that prompted your family to come to the United States, or was it just...?"

Flori: " It was, um, partially because of the job, my parents didn't have enough money and they just wanted us to have a better future than what they had. And so, we just, like they wanted us to be more educated and have uh, you know be more successful.

Candice: " ok, um, I know you can't really remember your trip here because you were only a couple of months old, but did your family ever talk about their trip here, like how it was?

Flori: " well my mom never told me how, like when they crossed the border or anything, but she remembers, she told me a story um, she remembers once that uh, we stayed in this family's house and um, my dad went to another town in California to work, I guess in the fields or something and it was a long trip for him to come, be coming back over here then going over there to the other country so he just stayed

there for a couple of months. But the problem got that the lady that we were living with got really angry that, saying that we were just living there because, ya know we just don't want to pay rent or whatever, and so she kicked us out and she says she remember, we were in the park there all night just like, she said I was crying and my little brothers were crying too because it was really dark and there was like gangster people or whatever around and she just told me that story once but I don't remember anything else."

Candice: "I'm sorry." " , Uh why did you and your family decide to, well your family decide to reside here in Hillsboro and live here?"

Flori: " um, mostly because we had other relatives living here too, and we just, my dad had a stable work, and just, ya know it was more comfortable here than in California it was bigger and over here it's kind of smaller and so."

Candice: " Ok." " How does your family emphasize education? Do they support it?"

Flori: " yeah they, they really support it, ya know. They always telling us " did you do your homework, are you doing ok, do you need help?" Or anything like that, they're always on top of that, they always check the grades and stuff like that, they're strict about it.

Candice: " And do you like them like...?"

Flori: " Um, sometimes I don't really like it that they're always on top of me, ya know I'm responsible and I can take care of myself, but ya know, it's ok that they check on us ya know, but."

Candice: " What are your feelings toward the education system in the Hillsboro school district, do you like, like how do you really feel about it?"

Flori: " for me, since I've been here like, um, all my life, since elementary school I've been going to school and stuff, uh it seems pretty fair to me ya know, but when I see my other relatives come in ya know that just recently came from Mexico they're struggling and they're already putting in English classes and they don't know anything and sometimes they have some helpers but they say that they don't have them that much. It's kind of hard."

Candice: " Describe your first experiences with school in the United States".

Flori: "well, um it was really hard for me to, communicate, I was really shy, I didn't want to participate that much because I didn't know the people, and I just felt embarrassed and just like left out and um I just didn't like it that much.

Candice: " Was there a lot of racism, do you remember?"

Flori: " I think, um, it wasn't really, they never really like said it, but they kinda like showed it. Like just by the way they looked at you or something you know, but they never really said anything bad to you they just, gave you funny looks on something.

Candice: " Ok, how comfortable do you feel with school, is there anything that would make you feel more comfortable?"

Flori: " Right now for me I feel really comfortable at school ya know, I feel ok talking with anybody ya know, I hang around, I'm not that shy anymore, I can just do whatever."

Candice: " And you're graduating soon."

Flori: " yes, that's a good thing."

Candice: " Do you feel that you have the same opportunities as other non- Hispanic students?"

Flori: " Actually I feel I have more opportunities than other people because of the scholarships and all, if you're a Latina or something, ya know. But I feel I have about ya known the same.

Candice: " Ok, um, describe the relationship between fluent English speaking Hispanics and other Hispanics, is there kinda like controversy between them because they're different?"

Flori: " Majorly {" big time"}, yeah there is, just between me and my cousin, she's not that fluent, and because I am fluent she's always telling, she's like " oh it's just because your better and you're so good", and I'm like " I'm sorry, I'm trying to help you", but she just keeps telling me " oh you're so good, you can't even help me " or something and I'm like, I'm sorry I have homework too, you know? There's lots of pressure. "

Candice: " That's understandable". Do you face racism or stereotyping in or out of school? If so how do you feel about it?"

Flori: " I don't think I face any of those because you know I hang around with different people you know, not just Mexicans or Americans, I hang around with Indian people and all that stuff and I just feel really diverse in getting to know everybody. I feel good.

Candice: "All ethnicities."

Flori: "Yeah, yeah."

Candice: "That's good, um, do you think HSD provides enough support to Hispanic students?"

Flori: "um, I think that they are supporting them, I guess it's up to the students to um, to take a step and you know keep doing, the support is there it's just, it depends on the students, and sometimes the students just wish that you know, everything can be handed to them, but it's not that way they need to do some effort."

Candice: "What programs do you think have had the most beneficial impact on the Hispanic students, in any schools?"

Flori: "Some programs?"

Candice: "ESL, stuff like that."

Flori: "yeah I guess ESL is good, ya know they teach 'em English and grammar and all that stuff, I really don't remember all the programs since I'm not in ESL or any of that since my elementary school, I don't remember any of it."

Candice: "Ok, what do you want to see changed about, like ESL for instance because you can't remember any of the other programs?"

Flori: "I guess what I want to be changed is, for, to have um, the Hispanics get more motivated to do and step up, and do things. Not always be depending on somebody else to always helping them, but to do and step up and take action and motivate them."

Candice: "Ok, in your experience have you received adequate support from teachers and staff?"

Flori: "Yes, I, for me majorly. Since you know my freshman year here I have received tons of help from like um teachers and I tell them I need help and I'm not that good, and they understand you know, and they're willing to help me and I remember staying after school and talking to some teachers and they always help me and you know I definitely see support from teachers here."

Candice: "Do you feel any drive to succeed in High school, because you are a senior now and your getting ready to graduate, so are you more motivated now than ever to really get to that point?"

Flori: " yeah, since my freshman year I've always said that I'm gonna graduate and I'm not going to let anything stop me and I motivated myself and I kept going and even though it was hard I got over those things and I went through and I'm just, me, my family, and my friends supporting me with the help of my teachers and stuff it's just."

Candice: " In what ways do you feel language or cultural barriers have affected your schooling?"

Flori: " I guess cultural barriers; I dunno it's just a, there is those things with um, other Hispanics that just recently came from Mexico, and I guess they see me like, uh, they see me like I'm rejecting their culture or something because I'm always hanging out with Americans, are always speaking English and doing all this, they say that I'm not spending enough time with them or I don't like the culture's or something, I don't know, there's just conflict going on and it's just sad having conflicts between your own people."

Candice: " Are you, or were you involved in ESL, and if so what manner were you really involved?"

Flori: " I was in my elementary school, I remember reading English books, going on the computer, and playing games to learn English, and all that stuff. I really learned a lot from there but recently I heard from like my cousins that go to elementary school there saying that their teaching them Spanish now, and their not teaching them English because now they need to know Spanish first then English or something, but I don't know why their doing that, but that's what I've been hearing."

Candice: "Have you participated in any other programs directed to help Hispanics?"

Flori: " I don't think, there's this migrant program I guess that helps migrant families to get training or find jobs, or if you're in problems where to go, and just where to go for support or something if you're struggling with something."

Candice: " Have there been any other significant people in your life or time periods in your life, like during school that have really helped you out and motivated you?"

Flori: " yeah, my elementary school winter bridge, I had a teacher, her name was miss. Crawford and I got to be in her class for 5th and 6th grade, and once I was going to go to middle school we had a little talk and she's like " don't let other stuff or other people put you down, you can do it, and I trust in you, and I'm here if you ever need any help, I know your parents can help you but you know there's other teachers that can help you to, but if there's any reason they can't help you or something I'm here and I can help you in English or Math or anything I can help

you”, she just really motivated me to keep going and I knew I had support from her and just knowing that somebody believed in me just motivated me to keep going and since that time I just kept going.”

Candice: “ Ok, thank you for doing this interview with me.”

Flori: “Ok, thank you.”