

The Sacramento Movimiento Chicano and Mexican American Education Oral History Project

**Bea Molina**

Oral History Memoir

Interviewed by Rhonda Rios Kravitz

July 31 2023

Unofficial transcript generated by Panopto captioning services; edited by Savannah Mitchell, California State University Library

[00:00:17]

**Kravitz** Hi, [inaudible]. This interview will be video and audio recorded and will form part of the Sacramento Movimiento Chicano and Mexican American Education Project Oral History, which is archived at the Donald & Beverly Gerth Special Collections & University Archives at CSU Sacramento. Do you agree to this recording?

[00:00:45]

**Bea Molina** I do.

[00:00:45]

**Kravitz** This recording is on August 31st, 2023--

[00:00:51]

**Molina** July.

[00:00:51]

**Kravitz** I mean July 31st.

[00:00:53]

**Molina** Sorry.

[00:00:53]

**Kravitz** No, I am. I am increasing the month yet.

[00:00:56]

**Molina** Yeah, no, no, no, no.

[00:00:56]

**Kravitz** The time of the interview is 9:40, and the location of the interview is Sacramento, California. Can you please state your full name and spell it?

[00:01:07]

**Molina** It's Beatriz Molina, B as in boy, E-A-T-R-I-Z, Molina, M-O-L-I-N-A.

[00:01:11]

**Kravitz** And can you provide your birthdate?

[00:01:13]

**Molina** August 21st, 1950.

[00:01:16,086 --> 00:01:17,836]

**Kravitz** And can you provide the date, too? This one [inaudible] you got it. Where were you born?

[00:01:20]

**Molina** El Paso, Texas.

[00:01:22]

**Kravitz** Where were you raised?

[00:01:23]

**Molina** Santa -- the city of Santa Barbara since I was five years old.

[00:01:27]

**Kravitz** What did your parents do for a living?

[00:01:30]

**Molina** My -- by career, my father was a musician. He was an organist. He had a PhD, but because of big family, he worked in many jobs, but he was a radio announcer. He owned a radio station at one time. He ran his Mexican theater. He was a notary public and did a lot of immigration during the Bracero program, and he worked for the city housing authority, and that's just some of what he did. My mother was a stay home mom for many years, but she was also a licensed court interpreter, because she was trilingual.

[00:02:11]

**Kravitz** And trilingual in what languages?

[00:02:14]

**Molina** Spanish was her first language, obviously, English, and she went to school in Chihuahua, but it was a French school, so she spoke French.

[00:02:22]

**Kravitz** How many brothers and sisters do you have?

[00:02:25]

**Molina** Oops. I'm sorry, I thought I had turned it off.

[00:02:29]

**Unknown** That's all right.

[00:02:31]

[ Music ]

[00:02:37]

**Molina** I did have [inaudible] on there before, and people were looking at me. Now, I'm going to change it back, maybe Sultana [assumed spelling].

[00:02:45]

**Kravitz** Well, that's good too, sometimes [inaudible]--

[00:02:46]

**Molina** Everybody laughs. Everybody laughs with all the music I do.

[00:02:51]

**Kravitz** Well, that's--

[00:02:53]

**Molina** On the side. I thought I set turned off.

[00:02:58]

**Kravitz** It's all right. I started with August 31st.

[00:03:04]

**Molina** Don't kill -- don't take my one month away.

[00:03:07]

**Unknown** It keeps turning back on. That is so weird. Do you want to--

[00:03:12]

**Molina** Here, I could go to settings and turn it off that way.

[00:03:15]

**Unknown** It, like, keeps turning right back on.

[00:03:19]

**Molina** I'm getting a new phone. I may have dropped it too many times.

[00:03:24]

**Unknown** And then which question was it [inaudible]?

[00:03:26]

**Kravitz** How many brothers and sisters.

[00:03:29]

**Unknown** Okay. Well, just ask that.

00:03:31,706 --> 00:03:32,796

**Kravitz** Okay. So, I'll ask it again.

[00:03:32]

**Unknown** Yeah.

[00:03:32]

**Kravitz** Okay.

[00:03:39]

**Molina** Well, I'm going to put it on mute then, but how do I turn it off?

[00:03:44]

**Kravitz** [Inaudible], do you – can you turn the whole phone off?

[00:03:46]

**Molina** I did, but it--

[00:03:48]

**Kravitz** It keeps turning back on?

[00:03:49]

**Molina** It -- there, power off.

[00:03:51]

**Kravitz** Yeah.

[00:03:52]

**Molina** Okay, it's staying off. Here you are.

[00:04:01]

**Kravitz** Okay, we're going to start back like how many brothers and sisters--

[00:04:03]

**Unknown** I mean, go ahead and ask the question [inaudible].

[00:04:06]

**Kravitz** How many brothers and sisters do you have?

[00:04:08]

**Molina** I have three sisters and eight brothers?

[00:04:12]

**Kravitz** What was your primary language growing up?

[00:04:14]

**Molina** For me it was Spanish.

[00:04:16]

**Kravitz** Please describe your experiences as a child and youth in your family and your neighborhood.

[00:04:26]

**Molina** As a youth, we lived in kind of a Latino community. It was a very Catholic Mexicano, a little section of Santa Barbara. That's an interesting question. I hadn't thought about that. I think as a youth my mother had -- kept having kids, and as I had an older sister who passed away, two-year difference, so I ended up becoming the second mother, even at a very, very young age, because there was always a new baby in the house. So, my youth I remember was more taking care of the family or helping my mom, and then my father was very active. So, he would -- as a little -- as a young lady, a young girl, he'd take us to some things, but one thing I do remember is we went to a Mexican soccer. Big -- I'm big into soccer because of my father, and my dad had the mission theater, which was a theater, and that was the only theater we were allowed to go to see Mexican movies, who, by the way, at that time, used to scared me. But so very happy youth, very, I would say, restricted to the family, because we were so big. We went to a Catholic school a block away. So, I was not emerged, like with a total big community in terms of experiences. It was just really very limited and within that family structure for me personally. I know it changed with brothers and sisters but not for me, and for me, as I said before, a lot of my youth was caretaking for my brothers, to be honest. But if you asked me what I did, that's what I did. So, that's what I remember.

[00:06:19]

**Kravitz** Did you or your family experienced any discrimination growing up?

[00:06:26]

**Molina** That's interesting. If I did, initially, I didn't recognize it as discrimination, but I will tell you this, so we went -- my parents are very big into education. You know, my mother was a concert pianist or studied to be. My dad had a PhD. So, it was not a traditional family, you know, Mexico without an education. My dad came -- because of his career, he was brought here. So, our focus in the family was school. So, we went to Bishop High. It was the only Catholic High School in Santa Barbara. I will tell you that I was maybe one of three Latinos. So, that's the first time, and the Catholic school was primarily Latinos. Its' for the poor Mexicans, but then I went to Bishop. So, the first time that I recognized or experienced the differences was definitely in high school,

and it was so challenging that my parents were called into the principal because of me and my sister. And they said because we kept interrupting them and telling them how to say our names and that they had never experienced kids saying, my name is Margarita, it's not Maggie or my name is Beatriz, not Beatrice, that I thought we were getting in trouble, but I guess they were frustrated. So, we were kind of like the new family, and after that, there were 12 that went to that school, and then more Latinos with scholarships got to go to Bishop, but we were kind of like the pioneers for that school with the nuns and the priests. So, did I feel discriminated? No. Did I feel that I was being treated differently as a child? Yes. Did I feel like I belong there? No. I mean, I didn't belong there, but did I -- my parents were so structured and so at that time -- and not so many kids yet provided a lot of support. So, I didn't really -- wasn't traumatized. I didn't feel it as a totally negative experience. You know, we turned it around, like my parents would say, look, you're educating your friends and teachers. You know, they would kind of turn it around for us. So, when you say discriminated, you know, no, but I think yes, but no in terms of how I experienced it and how I perceived it, if that makes sense.

[00:09:09]

**Kravitz** Totally.

[00:09:10]

**Molina** Okay, doesn't make sense to me but.

[00:09:14]

**Kravitz** What are your earliest memories of events that attracted you to the Movimiento?

[00:09:21]

**Molina** That's interesting. My father was a community activist. Everybody in Santa Barbara knew him for everything that he did and how he loved the community and how he helped, and he had nonprofits. He was just so -- we were -- I certainly was exposed to it more than anybody else in my family, I think. One of the events that I have very strong memories to today was the Viva John Kennedy Campaign, and my dad was the co -- one of the co-chairs of Santa Barbara, and I was not even in high school. I was in grammar school, and he took me to the airport, so we could meet John Kennedy when he was running for president. So, that's the first thing that, like, what the heck's going on, right? I was in grammar school. So, then the next big thing for me, again, remember I told you that I felt that I was very sheltered, especially as a Latina, female, you know, a very strict dad. We didn't get to go out. We didn't get to socialize. We didn't do that much of all of that. So, I feel that I was very restricted, and I did fight that by the way. I did try to fight it, but you don't win. You can ask my family. My father was very strong, but when I went to Cal State Northridge, the first group that approached me was MEChA, and that opened up a whole world for me, and I was -- it kind of like -- it opened a whole awareness for me in terms of who I was, what I was doing there. I was in the Music Department. I was told that I was one of only three Latinas that ever got into the Music Department, but they immediately approached me, and I just -- it's so weird. I just kind of jumped into that whole MEChA movement. So, I am a MEChista from Cal State Northridge, and there were several well-known leaders, who even wrote books from Cal State Northridge. Those were my teachers, and I remember having a

number of interesting conversations, and, again, I was not the typical, because I was a music student. I was not a bilingual, you know, I wasn't any of these others. I was strictly in music, and music in an element that Latinas or Latinos really weren't in, I was studying classical music, I played piano, I, you know, again, and I didn't -- did not like -- it was a big challenge for me, not maybe what I really wanted to do, but that's where my talent was at the time, and I was very grateful to have these Latino professors kind of mentor me, who are definitely part of the Chicano movement and to kind of directed me into a whole level of experience that I had never experienced in Santa Barbara. I didn't even have Latino friends in Santa Barbara until I went to Bishop later. We were very insulated kind of, and so at Cal State Northridge, just like this world opened up for me. I hope I didn't go on too much.

[00:12:47]

**Kravitz** No. How did other Mexicans, Mexican Americans, Latinos react to the term Chicana Chicano?

[00:12:57]

**Molina** Okay, let's start with my family. My father hated it. He would not allow us to use that word Chicano. To him, it was a -- remember, he's from Mexico from Morelia and my mom pretty much, and they said that the word Chicano in Mexico was not very complimentary. So, very early on at college, it was Hispanic, which I hated, and then I turned to Latina in order not to get this criticism about the Chicanos, but however, I registered with the first party, you know, it was my first registration. I mean, I did everything, I just, at least for my -- to bring it home, I didn't, because I was going to get a lot of flack, and being the oldest one, the first one to go to college, I mean, it was the first of a lot of experiences for me. So, I sort of had to be careful. I don't think I was rebellious really at that point. I was kind of more focused on these were new worlds for me, the world of music. It started here in Santa Barbara, I'm sorry, I'm here, and then going into Cal State Northridge, and I had to work harder, because these kids that I was with studied music since they were little. I started when I was much older in high school, and so it was very competitive, and then trying to retain and learning about my culture and trying to balance that, it was a very challenging time for me, to be honest. It was a lot of new awareness, a lot of, like, my god, you know, that that was where the LA Walks. I got to go. I mean, there were a lot of things that I witnessed that I didn't even know about, and then all of a sudden, I'm seeing it right then and there. So, that whole slide I did, say I was part of the Chicano movement, I just didn't have that kind of support around me that supported that term. The movement, yes, but not the term.

[00:15:06]

**Kravitz** So, the LA Walks, what year was that, '68?

[00:15:11]

**Molina** No, before that, no, '65. '68 I graduated from high school, so -- no, '68, '68. Yeah, and then there were some walks that they took us in East LA. What were those riots? Excuse me, that was 50 years ago for me. More, yeah. I just got to see things that I never anticipated and wasn't really that conscious about, but I would still remember still really focus on my music. So, I didn't

jump one way, because I had – it was too much for me, and I was trying to get through college financially, because that was a tough road too for me.

[00:16:05]

**Kravitz** Had you heard of the Civil Rights Movement at the time? And if so, what were your thoughts about it, and could you connect any connections to the Movimiento?

[00:16:16]

**Molina** All right. So, when I graduated, when I was graduating from Cal State Northridge, there were some auditions that I decided to go to, and it was -- but no, it was the -- it was with Luis and, my god, I'm going to have a memory lapse, Luis Valdez and the [inaudible]--

[00:16:46]

**Kravitz** [Inaudible]?

[00:16:46]

**Molina** [Inaudible], I didn't -- I applied, because my professors asked me to apply. I would never have done this, and at the time, Danny Valdez came out with an album called La Primavera. So, I went into the studio, and I was the backup voice for Primavera, and then we went on tour, and I just really aged myself. Okay, so remember I told you that I felt I was very not a typical Latina, not raised as a typical. I was raised more Mexicana than a Latina, if you understand. So, I go on tour with these Latino guys. I auditioned to play backup singing and piano, and it was an electric keyboard. It was nothing fancy, and I asked my father permission to go on tour with them. He said yes, which shocked, me shocked me, and I know why he did it. He set me up. So, when I went, we were going to the different colleges, you know, went to sing about the Primavera and the movement. So, all of a sudden now, I'm surrounded by all of these activists that are actually doing and living it, right? And I'm meeting all these people throughout the state. We went to Texas, went to New Mexico. We were mostly in California, and we performed, but we always stayed with the students or we stayed in the bus. We didn't have money. We recorded at AM Studios, which I think because somebody paid for that. So, I became very good friends with Danielle Valdez [assumed spelling], and as you know, they're very active. So, that's where I think I began to see the causes and the Movimiento more than anything else and the civil rights, because all their plays at that time was about civil rights, all of them, even the Lady of Guadalupe, it was all civil rights. Again, I was very challenged being part of this group, because everybody saw me as a kind of more like a whitewash, because I was the only one that had a degree. I was, you know, me, I didn't take drugs, and everybody in the band -- we lost -- one of the first time I experienced, and he was such a wonderful talented bass player who OD'd while we were on the road. And, you know, I -- so I experienced everything, I mean, the drugs, everything, but I was not part of that. So, I was chastised, and so while we toured, I just took off with the students, because the band did not accept me. I couldn't even stay -- sleep in the same room. So, to talk about being discriminated as a female, but because I was not a female from the barrio, and they never let me forget it, and I guess I didn't act like I was. I don't know what that means. It's just what the feedback I used to get. So, I had an opportunity to really learn and see it from the people who were in the middle of the struggles of what they were advocating in

terms of why they were involved, why MEChA this and all of that. So, I was able to witness it and be part of that, and then, of course, our concerts were all about, you know, civil rights, defending, being proud of who you are, defending your culture, becoming more Latina and Latino than -- or more Chicano [inaudible] they didn't use Latina. It's Chicanos. So, I -- it was kind of like right in the middle. They were going to go to London, and I quit, because I could not see myself after four months of traveling, four, five months, I couldn't see myself in that it was a kind of a toxic environment in terms of the band, and then the loss of my good friend, who was Puerto Rican. So, I left and came to Santa Barbara. So, in Santa Barbara of all things, my first job was working at a Latino nonprofit, helping Latinos with alcoholism, nonprofits. So, all of a sudden, now, I am beginning to see what's going on in Santa Barbara. I am seeing the ramifications of the drinking and the families and all of that. Because of that, I was recruited by the state to come to Sacramento, and my first job in Sacramento was the executive director of Mi Casa, the Mexican alcoholism program for men, and I came here. And very quickly, I don't know how this happened, it's like people said, there's something, there's a new woman in town, come and check her out, and all these people came and because of my board, and very quickly, I started getting involved with different local issues, especially for trying to access programs from the families of the people that we had in our facility. That experience right there and being in Sacramento, and then the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement, just for me, I just blossomed in that movement. I just jumped in. I realized that I was capable of doing a lot of things, and so I did, I did. And I had time in my hands, because I knew no one in town, very few people. Plus, the -- my job. At the same time, I just graduated from college, remember? So, I could have been, what, 26, 27. So, I was probably the youngest executive director for that program, and people let me know it or didn't give me the benefit of the doubt as having any kind of special skills or talent. I even had my car broken into. I mean, I had a lot of stuff happen. So okay, so the state decided that they didn't want to lose me after I was there two years, and I think I was getting kind of like, my god, it's too much. And some of the racism that I experienced was from my own community, and it was based on my gender more than anything else. So, they offered me a job with the Commission on Spanish Speaking with Jim Hernandez, and I became the statewide technical project manager. So, from that job, I went with him, and then I was helping all -- a lot of nonprofits that he had contracts with throughout the state, and I audited their books. I helped him. I helped him design the programs, you know? I just -- we just wanted to make sure they were doing the right things, so they didn't lose funding. Again, families who are addicted or experiencing addictions are usually -- I'm not going to profile, but from poor families, underprivileged, and there's a lot of issues, a lot of issues. How do we get food for their kids because the husband is incarcerated? How do we get this [inaudible]? So, while we were designed to help the person with the addiction, in my role, I had to help the whole family unit. So, I had to go see what other services -- why aren't they getting services at that time? Why weren't they getting food stamps? At that time, it was welfare. Why weren't they getting welfare? You know, those kinds of issues. So, I was beginning to see the inequity of services for our community. So, if you asked me what level, especially in Sacramento when I came here, what my activism here was locally was why isn't my community getting the services that they -- not that they deserve, that they need and is theirs? School, food, everything, you know, and it was medical attention. So, that's how I got involved in the Sacramento community. A lot of it was around that with the city and with the state, because here we're in Sacramento, let's access

the state. I can't get the money from the city, let's see how we can access some grants. In that process of civil rights, I started to organize groups, because I can't do it. I couldn't do it alone, and I needed some men too and other women, and I started finding people who wanted to get involved but didn't know how or they didn't feel they had the education. And so, I thought, hey, let's organize, let's organize, and I had another friend who was definitely a great organizer, and so I started MAPA [phonetic], and I started MAPA in the -- here, I mean, the chapter here. I didn't start MAPA, but here the chapter, because we were having so many problems with the schools. And I -- we wanted somebody in the school board, in order to change -- begin to change policy. We started LULAC for the social services component of it, you know, to try to get all that. So, it was civil rights, it was social services, it was education. Little by little, you know, and different people had different desires. So, we were able to start different chapters. I also started the first Comisión Femenil in Santa Barbara, which -- I mean in Sacramento, which unfortunately did not last a long, long time, because there were Latinas, especially kind of middle aged and older Latinas that didn't feel good getting on in the streets fighting for it, but they were great about supporting and fighting for women's rights at that time, and we're just talking in the 70s. So, Comisión Femenil was a great venue, and at that point, they were already mothers or grandmothers. So, education, but it wasn't education, it was this money to send to people, so that would be focusing. So, I went through that whole circle, and it helped, and, of course, you know, we were talking about representation at city council. I know [inaudible] Marcus had run for city council, and then, you know, and then I was being pulled more to the state level. And so, I was doing all this stuff, but then other people came in to be president, you know, to follow me, and I developed a really core group. To this day, I still have a significant core group of those friends who were activists. So, we participated in statewide food. It was a march for food that Jesse Jackson did here in Sacramento. We were very [inaudible]. I mean, there must have been 200 of us, other demonstrations that we had, you know, but this was really kind of a first for some of the people that were working with me because of the age, and then we had a lot of the younger activists, and, you know, I was part of the younger group, but I recognize the need to bring a larger core of people, especially in Sacramento. There were so many problems, and I hear you've got them again in the south, and I mean it was just -- it was all of these things. That's just when La Familia just started, you know, these were the beginnings of these programs. So, you understand that the disparity was huge. It was, and, to me, it was like, how can the capital of the state be that bad, when I worked in LA and it wasn't quite that bad? There were services in LA. I'm not saying poverty wasn't there. I'm not saying discrimination wasn't there, but there were supportive services. So, I don't know how this happened. I just sort of got involved, got involved, and I'd loved it, and I was very good at it. And I think because I was very good at it, they started to push me, and I ended up state president of -- and I became the youngest president of MAPA for the state. I was the second female, because the first one was a judge out of San Francisco. That was a time, and I did that two terms, that was a time where I learned a lot, but I also paid for it a lot. I had a lot of threats from the Mexicanos in LA, because they said how dare that I, you know, I got elected. It's not like I put myself in there. They weren't dealing -- as a Latina, we didn't -- we weren't supposed to have leadership roles. We were supposed to be there doing the work but not the leadership roles, not really 70s and 80s and definitely in the 80s. And so, when I became president, I had the White people who hated me, I had the older money people who hated me. As my role, I was called a radical, and I'm not. I'm

very conservative, and I had the older Mexican men who thought they were in power, and I'm talking about LA and Fresno and San Jose. Remember, I'm working in all these communities. So, I had to prove myself. I had to be better than anybody. I had to be not emotional. I had to learn how to do that, and so what I decided to do was to educate these communities in terms of the dialogue about civil rights, not just [inaudible] we hate it, that we're going to fight it, because that's the way it was. So, I started having meetings at the state capitol. I would bring everybody from the state, and they'd go, wow, and so this is where we're going to have our meeting. We're going to conduct ourselves like if we were in the state capitol, and then we would talk about the issues. We just had to change the dialogue and the fight. So remember, MAPA, you may not know, MAPA was created in LA to run the campaign for Congressman Roybal, and it was the first time a Latino ran, right? So, that was the first chapter, and then slowly, the second chapter was Fresno. It slowly went and then Sacramento and San Francisco at the same time, again, each kind of chapter created when we were trying to run candidates, whether it's local or city council or assembly. So, that was the common thread, but the basis of that organization was voter registration and get out to vote. And so, we would go raise money to get -- do voter registration and vote, mostly voter registration, because we didn't have enough money to do the voter education, but what we could, we did. So, they were wonderful times. It was 100% -- my whole life now was purely civil rights. I went to the fields. I went to the jails where they had Latina pregnant women, migrant women in the ground, having babies, the Mexicano migrants being run over by the tractors, and they would get rid of the bodies and give the family 200, and we said, no, no, this is not going to happen. I'm shocked that I never actually got arrested, but many times, many times. So, I would say -- and I grew it to 32 chapters, but, again, not by my popularity, but because people began to see the need to organize in order to support people, and we said run for city -- for school board, now you're ready to run for city council, now you're ready to run for mayor, now you're -- and that was our model, and that's what we tried to do. Now, at that time, the Mexican American Political Association [inaudible], and they were people who were first generation who'd just started their business, and then they were starting to get, you know, better and more part of the community, and then you had the younger -- the next generation. So, there was a lot of differences of how we operate or perceived more conservative, not so conservative. So, we had to figure out how to work together, and really, the elections was kind of our bond, kind of our bond. I did that for eight years. I was still in Sacramento. I was working for the state. I was -- I ended up being an appointee of Jerry Brown for social services. When Brown left, it was Gray Davis. My god, I can't remember, and then it was Deukmejian. At Deukmejian, I was in Department of Mental Health. I was called in by the director, he said, you're too political, you have to stop criticizing the governor, and I said, I'm not criticizing the governor, and I'm not going to stop being political, this is who I am. This is, you know, and I don't remember if I was still state president, I think I must have been. So, I had called Deukmejian, because I had access, because, you know, I was president, right? And I said, hey, your director is, you know, hounding me and, you know, cutting me off and all this stuff, and so he got called. I got called in the next day, and he said, how dare you, how dare you go over my head. I said, but you're the one that started this, I didn't go over your head, you confronted me, you didn't believe me, so I wanted them to tell you. Well, he made my life miserable, so I left the state. Did I have a lot of money? No, and I struggled a lot at that time. So, I started a little company called Imagen, and it was off of 16th Street with another Latino, and

we had, I don't know if you're familiar with the incubator program business model where we got the building. Between all of us, we paid the rent, and we had a central secretarial support. So, we -- I was -- had PR, marketing. We actually had two film studios there, and we did a lot of film and commercials and things like that. So, I started because of my activism, and everybody knew me, and trust me, they all knew me. I had a contract with Bank of America PacBell, I can't remember several, to do their marketing materials for the first time in Spanish and how the message was going to be given, because by law, at that time, the PUC said, no, if you're going to sell these products, you better have them in language. We had to do San Francisco. We ended up with 23 Asian dialects that had to be printed by law, and that was hard finding everybody. So, I did that, and once I was doing that, and that was kind of a struggle, because money came in and out, and people were scared of me. There's no question. If you get to know me, I'm very direct, I'm right to the point, I articulate well, but I'm not aggressive. Although I was accused by the Whites of being very aggressive, because they weren't used to me at that time to see somebody who approached them like that. So, I had a lot of barriers, a lot of barriers. So, Sprint, I had a contract with Sprint, and Sprint offered me a fulltime job. So, I went from not really employed after the state to corporate America, which I ended up with AT&T running some programs. At that point, I sort of had to leave the politics, but now we're talking 20, 25 years later, right? Up to that point, when I left Sacramento, I was very, very involved. I mean, I was with the chamber. I was also a member of the chamber. I was an officer. I was business of the year one year with [inaudible] in my hand. I was family of the year, because I was raising -- I had Mike at the house, Miguel, and I had a young baby, and I had my other brother, another brother for a while. So, I was like, okay, it was kind of cool. So, I would say the 13 years I was in Sacramento, I was extremely active in all the organizations that I told you. I sat on different commissions or committees for the city, again, because I had the capability, and I understood my strength was the communication and not the yelling, but kind of discussing the issue, breaking down the issue, and having a discussion that was more meaningful than aggressive, because that's -- that was, I think, I thought about this for this, that was one of my strengths, and I used it, whether I did it on purpose or not. I actually used that to take me where I took. I'm also a very social person. I tend to bring a lot of people together. I, of course, I never lived alone. I always had 13, 15 people in my house. You know, one person and I, when I first moved here, it was horrible. It was horrible. I had no one, you know? I laugh, I said I used to cook a meal, and I'd have it for five days. You know, it's like, no sabia. I didn't know how to cook for one person. I could cook for 30 or 20, but I could never cook for one. So, I went through all of these changes. So, I think because of my loneliness and all that is how I got so involved initially Tambien here, because I had the time. And I felt it was very rewarding, even though the -- when I got involved on the state level with the really heavy issues, it was very challenging. It was many times scary. I had to hide my son, and I had to move into Sacramento, because I was worried about his life. They broke into my car. IRS audit me I don't know how many times, because people called. I pretty much lost my state job because of people's perception of the type of person I was, which was not true. So, I had, thinking about it, a lot of barriers, but I never thought about it. I didn't allow myself to think about barriers. So, I wouldn't have been doing it or I couldn't have done it or I couldn't have continued. Everything happened, and I let it happen. I didn't analyze totally my role, just what I felt I needed to do, and I have a great passion for my community. I was raised more Mexicana, but language, culture is very critical to me. I'm still very bilingual. I still do

a lot of cultural things. You know, I know a lot about Mexico. I do a lot of reading. My family, we come from a family. I think my family, for the most part, are educators, but we are very culturally sensitive, and we have this awareness of our culture and this appreciation. And I -- when I see these kids and they're losing that, I just, you know, I have to get involved, and so all of this -- I know I'm going in circles, but all of it played a role in terms of that passion that, I think, I had and not realizing that I had [foreign language spoken] not realizing that I had that -- that I could do it. Maybe that's the word, you know? I don't know, I don't know. It was challenging times.

[00:41:27]

**Kravitz** I'm going to stop for just a moment, because we're going to do some more questions here, but were you in the Mexican American Education Project at Sac State?

[00:41:35]

**Molina** No, but I had close friends at the time that were helping. They were activists that I worked very closely with. So, I was aware of the program. I was just never -- I would never even have had time to be honest.

[00:41:53]

**Kravitz** Now, could you -- did your knowledge of cultural issues influence your involvement and participation in Movimiento?

[00:42:01]

**Molina** Absolutely, yes.

[00:42:02]

**Kravitz** Is there anything else you want to add, because you've been very articulate?

[00:42:08]

**Molina** I think, to me, on top of that was making sure that we didn't lose our language or the kids didn't lose the language. On top of just the cultural education, to me, language was a big issue. My father, well, my brother, he's in the middle, but the first six, we weren't allowed to speak English at home, which is very rare, very rare. But when all my brothers came on, my dad had to walk away from that, but in the beginning, we were not allowed, but when I started kindergarten, I couldn't speak English, and I didn't know any English. It was horrible. I remember those two years. I used to run away from school, because I didn't know. I didn't even know where the bathroom was. So, language for me has always been very important, but I think because of my father and my mother, culture, yeah. So, I, to today, those are very important elements, because now we're third, fourth generations, and it's worse. It's, in some areas, it's worse, but it's just something I don't want to see that our community loses.

[00:43:20]

**Kravitz** And you guys did this one, too. But if you want to add, did your involvement change you personally?

[00:43:27]

**Molina** Absolutely. Absolutely.

[00:43:30]

**Kravitz** And what role do you believe that Chicanas played in Movimiento?

[00:43:37]

**Molina** I worked with a lot of men, but I – it was more I felt that the women that came around me were much more impactful and much more powerful, were not as afraid and was able to negotiate at a level where our Latino men at that time, just remember, I have to age myself, at that time, were able to have more impact than the men, and I'm not saying -- I worked with a lot of men, and men were part of my groups, no question, and I support them, but I felt that the Latina had the ability to have much more impact. In my experience, it was the Latinas. The other thing is that one of the things that happened here is that I ended up with two wonderful mentors that were Latinas, a little older than myself. One has already passed away, and remember, I also worked very, very closely with Mario Blero [phonetic], who was part of my circle. So, the thing that I also believed about the role of the Latinas is we are more -- we play more mentor roles to help other Latinas, where the men didn't really mentor me ever. The women did. There was a time when I just became state president that I had to surround myself with some very strong, and they were the women, and there were some men, too, and I'm not saying there weren't, but the ones that I could count on were women. I just feel that women understand playing different roles, being mothers, being wives, being sisters, being daughters, we had to play in this Movimiento, and of all the issues coming up, we had to understand all those different roles. And I think that gave us power, that gave us -- it certainly enlightened us, and it certainly gave us more energy to do what we had to do, and that's evolved, evolved, because when I started, I couldn't even get Latinas to help. You know, it was a struggle, and I got the ones to help, because they had already suffered or had already faced some discrimination and the rest a bit slowly, slowly, and it's still slowly today, but it's slowly, but once they get in, andeale, they're gold.

[00:46:02]

**Kravitz** And you've talked about this too, but if you want to add more, what did you personally initiate or help initiate in the Movimiento, and what were some of the organizations you were involved in?

[00:46:13]

**Molina** Well, I mentioned most of them. I mean, it was LULAC, MAPA, Comisión Femenil. I was at the Hispanic Chamber. I was on -- well, I was on the commission for the women. It wasn't all Latinos, Latino things. I know there's more groups. I was involved with, what was that education group? There was an education organization that I was very heavily involved with. I did a number of groups that either I initiated, or I was very heavily involved in but those, I think, kind of the core group. As I left Sacramento and I went to Santa Barbara, then I came into the -- I'm still very active.

652

00:47:01,376 --> 00:47:08,056

You know, I've served on the EEOC for the  
county, the Commission on the Status of Women,

653

00:47:08,056 --> 00:47:11,476

Status of Women -- Elderly Women Commission.

654

00:47:11,476 --> 00:47:13,586

I mean, it's just a bunch of organizations.

655

00:47:14,016 --> 00:47:19,716

So, I'm not as involved as I was, but I still --  
and I've always been a big proponent of sitting

656

00:47:19,716 --> 00:47:22,316

on boards of directors of nonprofits.

657

00:47:22,706 --> 00:47:27,636

I was one of the founders of La  
Familia, when we started doing the fair

658

00:47:28,546 --> 00:47:32,826

with the [inaudible] News-Press  
of Santa Barbara with --

659

00:47:32,826 --> 00:47:37,996

I would go to the office with the paper  
here, and they would host the meeting.

660

00:47:37,996 --> 00:47:40,796

So, I did a lot of those kinds of things, too.

661

00:47:41,156 --> 00:47:47,616

I did -- I used to also help --  
we used to have the Latino Jazz --

662

00:47:47,676 --> 00:47:50,306

Mexican Jazz Festival, our Lady Guadalupe.

663

00:47:50,306 --> 00:47:51,966

I was one of the founders of that.

664

00:47:51,966 --> 00:47:57,256

I did that and then certainly walked away  
and left it, and as a result of that,

665

00:47:57,256 --> 00:47:59,586

I was the president of Santa  
Barbara Mariachi Festival

666

00:47:59,586 --> 00:48:02,676

for six years, and I've carried it a lot over.

667

00:48:02,676 --> 00:48:05,326

So, I love music.

668

00:48:05,326 --> 00:48:07,086

So, I'm going to do stuff with music.

669

00:48:07,086 --> 00:48:11,536

I love education, so I do with  
education, and that's what I --

670

00:48:11,536 --> 00:48:14,556

my world is today, but what  
I talked about earlier,

671

00:48:14,666 --> 00:48:16,726

that was my world to get into where I am now.

672

00:48:16,726 --> 00:48:22,526

>> How did these organizations and activities

673

00:48:22,526 --> 00:48:25,776

that you were involved in  
contribute to the Movimiento?

674

00:48:26,346 --> 00:48:28,816

>> So many ways, so many ways.

675

00:48:29,086 --> 00:48:35,026

We got more Latinos hired  
at the police department.

676

00:48:35,286 --> 00:48:38,756

We were able to change the recruitment process.

677

00:48:39,256 --> 00:48:46,216

We had no -- in the 70s, I don't know if you  
could name one Latino, but we got involved

678

00:48:46,426 --> 00:48:51,976

and met with the department, and we were  
able to help organize the recruitment.

679

00:48:52,686 --> 00:48:54,396

We've got a bunch of them hired.

680

00:48:54,396 --> 00:48:55,646

I could even tell you the names.

681

00:48:55,646 --> 00:48:59,336

It's so funny, and we got involved with --

682

00:48:59,536 --> 00:49:04,106

we were able to get more people to  
get involved in the voting process.

683

00:49:04,106 --> 00:49:09,066

So, that's when we helped Grantland,  
I think, to get elected into office.

684

00:49:09,676 --> 00:49:15,676

You know, he wasn't Latino, but he was very  
-- he was really our friend at the time.

685

00:49:16,036 --> 00:49:19,826

Well, I left, so I don't know  
but [foreign language spoken].

686

00:49:20,946 --> 00:49:27,096

But we were able to impact some of the  
Sacramento Unified School District,

687

00:49:27,096 --> 00:49:30,466

their dropout rates, because we were so focused.

688

00:49:30,466 --> 00:49:35,076

Remember, I told you our emphasis was  
getting the parents involved to either be

689

00:49:35,076 --> 00:49:37,406

on the school board or to  
help with the kids at school.

690

00:49:37,406 --> 00:49:45,956

So, we did see not anything to say yay,  
but enough to say we started to trend,

691

00:49:46,016 --> 00:49:51,566

because in the 70s, I think our dropout  
rate was more than 30%, it was high.

692

00:49:51,566 --> 00:49:55,996

Not that it ever got -- it got a lot  
better, but I'm just saying, it was bad.

693

00:49:56,306 --> 00:49:57,306

It was really bad.

694

00:49:57,786 --> 00:50:02,196

So, we got more people hired through the city.

695

00:50:02,196 --> 00:50:04,326

We got people hired onto the boards.

696

00:50:04,646 --> 00:50:06,406

We got more jobs for people.

697

00:50:06,406 --> 00:50:12,446

We got more women into the workforce, not  
daycare jobs, not [foreign language spoken],

698

00:50:12,446 --> 00:50:16,486

because that was typically the  
two jobs that the women did.

699

00:50:16,766 --> 00:50:19,246

I don't support that for Latinas.

700

00:50:19,926 --> 00:50:23,426

They're natural caregivers, but they  
have so much other talents, right?

701

00:50:23,876 --> 00:50:24,896

Let me think.

702

00:50:25,156 --> 00:50:32,696

Some of the other big changes, there were a  
couple of departments that we worked really --

703

00:50:32,876 --> 00:50:41,646

we opened the dialogue and the access for  
services, like then it was called welfare.

704

00:50:41,646 --> 00:50:47,696

I don't think it's called that now, but then  
it was definitely welfare, and we were fighting

705

00:50:47,696 --> 00:50:53,166

for the whole food stamp program.

706

00:50:55,366 --> 00:51:02,456

We were looking for help for the undocumented  
seniors, and that was also another area

707

00:51:02,456 --> 00:51:04,946

that LULAC we got kind of involved with that.

708

00:51:04,946 --> 00:51:06,466

It was the youth and the elderly.

709

00:51:06,916 --> 00:51:14,246

So, I personally saw a lot of things that  
we contributed, but it was like the start

710

00:51:14,246 --> 00:51:16,896

of movements that over time got better.

711

00:51:17,396 --> 00:51:24,186

But it had to start, and I think that we gave  
it a really good push locally, statewide, too,

712

00:51:24,186 --> 00:51:28,826

by the way, because statewide,  
when I was doing MAPA, the vote --

713

00:51:28,826 --> 00:51:31,986

we got more people to vote,  
more people to get involved.

714

00:51:32,126 --> 00:51:33,616

That's always been a problem.

715

00:51:33,616 --> 00:51:38,156

It's never been enough, but before it was

zero, now we were trying to get more people,

716

00:51:38,806 --> 00:51:44,626

and the repercussions of that, like  
in Modesto, in Merced, in Fresno,

717

00:51:44,626 --> 00:51:47,266

we got school board members selected.

718

00:51:47,266 --> 00:51:52,816

In the 80s and the 90s, we  
had in Fresno the first mayor.

719

00:51:53,076 --> 00:51:56,366

We had four city councilmen at one time Latinos.

720

00:51:56,696 --> 00:51:58,356

We had them at McFarland.

721

00:51:58,476 --> 00:52:01,086

All of a sudden, we were  
seeing this representation.

722

00:52:01,316 --> 00:52:06,066

San Jose, we got a female Latina mayor.

723

00:52:06,066 --> 00:52:10,286

I mean, this was all part of that  
voter education, voter registration,

724

00:52:10,286 --> 00:52:14,026

and organizing together to run  
campaigns, get more people involved.

725

00:52:14,306 --> 00:52:17,426

We -- there was such -- it was so neat

726

00:52:17,426 --> 00:52:24,116

to see the advances going throughout  
the state, but we didn't start big.

727

00:52:24,116 --> 00:52:25,766

We didn't want to start on top.

728

00:52:25,766 --> 00:52:27,386

We started from the bottom.

729

00:52:27,836 --> 00:52:33,726

So, when I'm telling you advances, I'm telling  
you school boards mostly and then city council.

730

00:52:34,346 --> 00:52:42,426

LA, LA, as you know, have so many counties,  
so many issues, and at that time in the 70s,

731

00:52:42,426 --> 00:52:49,326

we got Alatorre selected, who was here  
for a long time, Richard Alatorre.

732

00:52:49,556 --> 00:52:54,216

I tried to work with Willie Brown.

733

00:52:54,696 --> 00:53:00,876

That was -- I respect him highly,  
but it was definitely a challenge.

734

00:53:01,946 --> 00:53:07,286

He wanted to control everything,

but a strong advocate for us,

735

00:53:07,286 --> 00:53:12,046

for Latinos at that time was Roberti [phonetic],  
and I don't know if people understood that.

736

00:53:12,436 --> 00:53:14,016

We worked closely with Roberti.

737

00:53:14,016 --> 00:53:17,856

So, all of a sudden, we were getting  
more people onto the assembly level,

738

00:53:18,076 --> 00:53:25,556

which is now where my focus is, but it was the  
result of all of these movements and races,

739

00:53:25,556 --> 00:53:34,486

you know, after -- toward the end of my term,  
we ran Roybal's daughter for Congress, again,

740

00:53:34,736 --> 00:53:36,576

first female I mean at that time.

741

00:53:37,036 --> 00:53:42,846

So, and that was, you know, it's like even  
though she was a Roybal, my god, it's Latina,

742

00:53:43,166 --> 00:53:48,236

who does she think she is, you  
know, stuff like that, right?

743

00:53:48,776 --> 00:53:55,776

So, at least from where I sat, which is  
not typically of everybody, you know,

744

00:53:55,776 --> 00:54:04,536

we were able in the reports, and I worked a  
lot with Cesar Chavez or his organizations.

745

00:54:04,966 --> 00:54:11,376

At the last two years, I worked  
very closely with Sun, and so,

746

00:54:11,706 --> 00:54:14,506

again, we had a different perspective.

747

00:54:15,026 --> 00:54:19,446

We wanted to get more Latino  
professionals and recognize and get them

748

00:54:19,446 --> 00:54:21,116

into boards and get them into that.

749

00:54:21,116 --> 00:54:25,046

So, we were -- and we got criticized for  
that, but it was the right thing to do.

750

00:54:25,246 --> 00:54:27,706

I mean, it was the right thing to do.

751

00:54:27,706 --> 00:54:33,966

So, I saw a change, a slight change.

752

00:54:33,966 --> 00:54:44,126

I saw a direction of growth, and in some areas,  
it just went crazy, and it still is very good,

753

00:54:44,226 --> 00:54:48,076

like San Jose, like Fresno,  
like Modesto, like Merced.

754

00:54:48,406 --> 00:54:50,436

You see a lot of Latino representation.

755

00:54:50,566 --> 00:54:53,356

You see a lot of -- in LA or San Bernardino.

756

00:54:53,616 --> 00:54:58,316

We, you know, San Bernardino Riverside, it's all  
Mexicanos, but it was controlled by ranchers.

757

00:54:58,776 --> 00:55:04,426

All of a sudden, we start to get people  
on the board, Latinos, and to the --

758

00:55:04,426 --> 00:55:07,746

again, we started with the school  
boards, and they just went up.

759

00:55:08,656 --> 00:55:11,216

Today, you'll see we have this representation.

760

00:55:11,676 --> 00:55:19,696

I honestly believe that if I had to do a study,  
I'm going to track it back to the organizations

761

00:55:19,736 --> 00:55:25,996

that got these people organized and run,  
and MAPA played a very critical role in it,

762

00:55:25,996 --> 00:55:29,526

and in some case, MAPA was  
formed just to do those roles.

763

00:55:30,176 --> 00:55:35,176

So, I -- okay, so I'm going to talk  
about one other thing that I saw.

764

00:55:35,636 --> 00:55:38,256

So, we worked with the Blacks.

765

00:55:38,406 --> 00:55:42,516

I worked very closely with Jesse

Jackson, thanks to a girlfriend of mine.

766

00:55:43,126 --> 00:55:48,226

We did the education walks, because  
all of us needed that awareness.

767

00:55:48,456 --> 00:55:53,416

A proud moment in my life is that  
I walked with him, and I took my --

768

00:55:54,416 --> 00:55:58,386

Ray had to have been three years  
old, and Jesse Jackson carried them

769

00:55:58,386 --> 00:56:01,226

through the whole march,  
five miles, on his shoulders.

770

00:56:01,226 --> 00:56:05,516

So, we were saying, the next Latino  
president, you know, it was just very cool.

771

00:56:06,416 --> 00:56:10,306

I did expose my family, too, a little  
bit more than I should have, I think,

772

00:56:10,456 --> 00:56:18,736

but what I would say, one of the things  
that I've actually at that time was so proud

773

00:56:18,736 --> 00:56:26,426

of that now just is so devastating to me  
was that there were a lot of racist people.

774

00:56:27,346 --> 00:56:30,966

But with the Civil Rights  
Movement, people began to hide.

775

00:56:30,996 --> 00:56:36,336

I thought we had eliminated a good  
percentage of the racism, I really did.

776

00:56:37,056 --> 00:56:39,866

I realize today that we didn't get rid of it.

777

00:56:40,116 --> 00:56:42,926

We just made it uncomfortable, so they hid it.

778

00:56:44,146 --> 00:56:49,486

With this last president, name to be  
unknown, that came in, opened that door,

779

00:56:49,756 --> 00:56:56,046

and that comfort level for people to be who they  
really think, but as an activist in that time

780

00:56:56,046 --> 00:56:59,906

and doing all of those years of that  
work, I just thought, my god, you know,

781

00:56:59,906 --> 00:57:04,376

I was treated better, families were  
being treated better, but at the end,

782

00:57:04,376 --> 00:57:06,476

I realize now they didn't change.

783

00:57:06,536 --> 00:57:11,436

We just made it uncomfortable, so that we

didn't feel the repercussion of their anger,

784

00:57:11,436 --> 00:57:14,036

their hatred, and now that's changed.

785

00:57:14,036 --> 00:57:15,156

Now, it's back to that.

786

00:57:15,226 --> 00:57:21,946

So, at one time, I'd tell you that  
was a victory, and now I'd say, well,

787

00:57:22,326 --> 00:57:27,456

maybe it wasn't such a victory, but I'd lived  
with the idea that we had gained so much.

788

00:57:27,916 --> 00:57:33,296

>> You really talked about the social,  
cultural, political issues and looking into,

789

00:57:33,716 --> 00:57:38,476

but how did the changes affect your  
personal relationships with family,

790

00:57:38,826 --> 00:57:40,886

with peers, and significant others?

791

00:57:46,216 --> 00:57:49,526

>> Well, let's start with my family.

792

00:57:50,836 --> 00:57:58,906

I'm not sure I'm the right person to answer that, but my father hated that I was in MAPA.

793

00:57:59,426 --> 00:58:03,486

He understood, and it was his generation, and he felt that I was going to be mistreated.

794

00:58:04,406 --> 00:58:10,046

He did not like my involvement with MAPA, but at the same time, I know he was really proud,

795

00:58:10,046 --> 00:58:14,046

because people would tell me, your father told me you're doing this, and you're doing that,

796

00:58:14,046 --> 00:58:17,876

and you're going to LA and all  
this, okay, but to my face?

797

00:58:18,426 --> 00:58:24,496

No, it was very -- it was not good,  
but I get it, and I understand.

798

00:58:24,496 --> 00:58:26,806

Remember, this is the man  
who hated the word Chicano.

799

00:58:26,806 --> 00:58:28,976

I understood that.

800

00:58:28,976 --> 00:58:32,796

Okay, my brothers and sisters, I don't know,

801

00:58:32,796 --> 00:58:37,256

I don't think I've ever had this  
discussion except with two of my brothers.

802

00:58:37,646 --> 00:58:42,596

I don't know if they understood what

I did and what was I involved in

803

00:58:42,596 --> 00:58:45,776

and what I encountered, and I don't know.

804

00:58:46,066 --> 00:58:49,886

It's such a big family, our

family, and we're very diverse.

805

00:58:50,406 --> 00:58:57,526

There was never a need to

explain that, and I wasn't here --

806

00:58:57,576 --> 00:59:00,646

I wasn't in Santa Barbara very long, very often.

807

00:59:00,646 --> 00:59:01,676

I would go for weekends.

808

00:59:02,636 --> 00:59:07,646

The big thing, though, that happened

is that I had to bring my son who was

809

00:59:07,646 --> 00:59:10,706

at that time five years old,

I think, five or -- five.

810

00:59:10,706 --> 00:59:18,246

I had to get him out of Sacramento for safety

reasons and so that I could travel, and I did.

811

00:59:18,246 --> 00:59:21,626

I was on the road all the time, and I said,

what am I going to do with -- I had a live-in --

812

00:59:21,826 --> 00:59:28,356

I had two girls from Oaxaca, who lived with

me, but, you know, you don't leave your son

813

00:59:28,596 --> 00:59:34,686

for that long, and so he went to Santa

Barbara, and I kind of lost him after that.

814

00:59:34,686 --> 00:59:36,886

My parents weren't going  
to let me have him back.

815

00:59:37,036 --> 00:59:42,856

He's a dear son, but my parents loved  
him dearly, and I'm so glad I was able

816

00:59:42,926 --> 00:59:54,146

to have my dad and mom be around my son, because  
they all benefited, but that meant I lost.

817

00:59:54,276 --> 01:00:01,266

Relationships, they were awful,  
certainly on the personal level.

818

01:00:02,476 --> 01:00:12,906

I made some great friends still to today,  
loyal women that feel and men, too,

819

01:00:12,906 --> 01:00:20,476

feel the same as I did or were very supportive  
or I would support them, because I had ended

820

01:00:20,476 --> 01:00:24,346

up because of Marcel and my other friends,  
we ended up in different, you know,

821

01:00:24,346 --> 01:00:27,396

I even got involved in Parks  
and Rec for Latino families,

822

01:00:27,396 --> 01:00:29,256

because that's the only place we could go play.

823

01:00:29,506 --> 01:00:31,706

I even got involved statewide with that.

824

01:00:32,246 --> 01:00:38,766

So, I was kind of a very broad -- so I had I  
made a lot of allies, I made a lot of friends.

825

01:00:38,826 --> 01:00:47,206

I'm sure, I'm sure I made a lot of enemies,  
some based on differences of our philosophy,

826

01:00:47,606 --> 01:00:53,706

some based on our different approaches, some  
based -- a lot based on gender at the time.

827

01:00:54,596 --> 01:01:05,496

Gender was really -- really worked against  
me in many, many, even a little bit older,

828

01:01:05,736 --> 01:01:09,186

and I always looked younger than I am.

829

01:01:09,676 --> 01:01:12,446

That did not help, did not help.

830

01:01:12,446 --> 01:01:13,626

You look young, you're stupid.

831

01:01:13,806 --> 01:01:15,686

You look young, you don't know  
what you're talking about.

832

01:01:15,686 --> 01:01:17,996

You look young, you have  
not experienced anything,

833

01:01:17,996 --> 01:01:20,346

and I was always having to prove a lot of stuff.

834

01:01:20,526 --> 01:01:27,926

I think that looking back, and I have thought  
about this, is that I made some choices,

835

01:01:27,926 --> 01:01:36,186

and I got so involved that I let  
the rest of my life under the rug.

836

01:01:36,426 --> 01:01:40,856

And so, there are things that I think  
I would have liked to have done better

837

01:01:40,856 --> 01:01:46,586

or maybe build a better family or  
better relationships that I didn't do,

838

01:01:46,696 --> 01:01:49,666

and some of it I couldn't have,  
I would either one or the other.

839

01:01:49,666 --> 01:01:54,056

That's the other bad thing about, at that  
time for me, how many roles can you play,

840

01:01:54,926 --> 01:02:03,396

but I did what I did, and I was very  
happy, even with all the negative stuff.

841

01:02:03,596 --> 01:02:08,036

I felt that I had accomplished  
so much, and I was accomplishing.

842

01:02:08,036 --> 01:02:09,736

So, I think that's what kept me going.

843

01:02:10,346 --> 01:02:12,476

I know -- I learned to be a good speaker.

844

01:02:12,776 --> 01:02:17,626

I'll tell you this, it's going  
to be on film, my goodness.

845

01:02:18,216 --> 01:02:20,866

When I became president,  
people thought I was a lawyer,

846

01:02:20,866 --> 01:02:23,926

and so I just let them think that,  
because then I was able to talk.

847

01:02:23,926 --> 01:02:25,236

I was never a lawyer.

848

01:02:25,236 --> 01:02:27,096

I wanted to be, but I was never a lawyer.

849

01:02:27,576 --> 01:02:36,366

So, as long as I had impact and I felt I --  
and I could see the changes, it was good.

850

01:02:36,736 --> 01:02:41,896

Financially, I put myself in a really  
horrible situation at one point,

851

01:02:41,896 --> 01:02:46,606

but I don't want to tell you  
how deep, but it was like,

852

01:02:46,896 --> 01:02:48,546

you know, people didn't want to hire me.

853

01:02:48,546 --> 01:02:54,966

I -- my brother, thank god, helped me out  
at one point, because if you're an activist,

854

01:02:55,146 --> 01:02:57,856

you're not going to get paid or you're not --

855

01:02:57,856 --> 01:03:00,946

people don't want to see you  
in a business environment.

856

01:03:01,096 --> 01:03:02,626

Nonprofits are scared of you.

857

01:03:03,086 --> 01:03:04,756

It's like, okay, all right.

858

01:03:04,966 --> 01:03:07,326

Again, I did what I had to do or what I did.

859

01:03:08,006 --> 01:03:16,256

I wish I had thought more about career  
kind of thing, but I ended up with AT&T,

860

01:03:16,716 --> 01:03:19,126

and I ended up in a very high level position.

861

01:03:19,546 --> 01:03:22,806

I was hired as a director,  
then I became vice president.

862

01:03:23,786 --> 01:03:25,706

So, I did it.

863

01:03:26,106 --> 01:03:27,366

I got there.

864

01:03:27,366 --> 01:03:35,516

I didn't stay in that environment, except for  
six years, and I'll explain why, but even there,

865

01:03:35,916 --> 01:03:40,306

and now I'm at least 40, I  
was still the youngest officer

866

01:03:40,566 --> 01:03:43,816

and the only Latina of a few females.

867

01:03:43,816 --> 01:03:49,296

AT&T was always men, and it was the time -- I  
was hired, because I had worked with Sprint,

868

01:03:50,316 --> 01:03:52,196

because they wanted to go into the local.

869

01:03:52,386 --> 01:03:56,836

I was with cable company, I'm sorry,  
local phone, and I knew about phone.

870

01:03:57,656 --> 01:03:59,886

So, I didn't -- I was not an engineer.

871

01:03:59,886 --> 01:04:03,346

I didn't know all this, but I  
was hired to be their manager,

872

01:04:03,346 --> 01:04:04,866

and so I had to learn, and I learned.

873

01:04:04,866 --> 01:04:07,926

I'm a good manager, I believe.

874

01:04:07,926 --> 01:04:10,306

I think I direct people very  
well and I communicate.

875

01:04:11,006 --> 01:04:14,246

So, once I was able to do that,  
and that was a very hard job.

876

01:04:14,436 --> 01:04:16,356

I was discriminated a lot.

877

01:04:16,356 --> 01:04:17,336

It was a hard job.

878

01:04:17,336 --> 01:04:22,726

I got to a point where I said I'm not going to  
be acting like the other women who are up here.

879

01:04:22,726 --> 01:04:24,156

I had my door always open.

880

01:04:24,156 --> 01:04:25,266

I was the only one.

881

01:04:25,696 --> 01:04:28,656

The president did not like me, did not.

882

01:04:28,656 --> 01:04:31,906

He made my life very miserable,  
wanted to get rid of me.

883

01:04:31,906 --> 01:04:33,206

He didn't know how to handle.

884

01:04:33,626 --> 01:04:39,656

He didn't know, you know, there were Blacks,  
but there were no Latinos in AT&T at that time.

885

01:04:39,756 --> 01:04:45,976

So, but I did accomplish something,  
but I had a horrible marriage,

886

01:04:46,746 --> 01:04:57,596

and for different personal reasons, I took a  
job offer and moved to the Los Angeles area

887

01:04:57,596 --> 01:05:00,006

to manage a sales department for three counties.

888

01:05:00,296 --> 01:05:02,836

So, that's how I ended up leaving this area,

889

01:05:03,666 --> 01:05:11,126

and they closed my operation nationwide  
a year, year and a half later.

890

01:05:11,576 --> 01:05:18,716

So, they wanted to move me to Houston or to Boca Raton, and as soon as I got off the plane

891

01:05:18,716 --> 01:05:22,426

in Florida, I said, hell no, I'm not -- I'm sorry, I shouldn't have said it that way.

892

01:05:22,426 --> 01:05:23,836

I'm not -- I couldn't even breathe.

893

01:05:24,186 --> 01:05:30,246

I'm not -- I'm not -- so I took the job offer, and I moved to Santa Barbara.

894

01:05:31,476 --> 01:05:33,246

Okay, so what happens that year?

895

01:05:33,246 --> 01:05:34,176

My dad had a stroke.

896

01:05:35,456 --> 01:05:46,806

So, it was meant for me to go home, and then

consequently, my dad passed away sometime,

897

01:05:46,916 --> 01:05:51,976

probably within the year, maybe a year  
or two, and by then, half my brothers

898

01:05:51,976 --> 01:05:55,146

and sisters were gone, because nobody  
could afford to be in Santa Barbara,

899

01:05:55,606 --> 01:05:57,286

and I ended up taking care of my mom.

900

01:05:57,286 --> 01:05:58,226

So, I moved home.

901

01:05:58,276 --> 01:06:02,766

I actually moved home with my  
younger son to take care of my mom,

902

01:06:02,766 --> 01:06:06,636

and so I was not -- I moved to a new town again.

903

01:06:06,636 --> 01:06:07,546

It's kind of a new town.

904

01:06:07,546 --> 01:06:13,066

I hadn't been there for 23 years or  
more, and so I got involved very quickly

905

01:06:13,066 --> 01:06:14,826

in Santa Barbara because of my dad's name.

906

01:06:14,986 --> 01:06:19,376

I mean, people opened the door, because there's  
a Molina, there's a Molina, we got to get her,

907

01:06:19,376 --> 01:06:24,286

and because a lot of people had heard all the  
stuff that I've done, because I've traveled

908

01:06:24,286 --> 01:06:26,956

through Santa Barbara and all that.

909

01:06:27,716 --> 01:06:38,196

So, I ended up becoming a caretaker, and my mom, unfortunately, had Alzheimer's, didn't know me.

910

01:06:38,196 --> 01:06:46,136

She knew her sons, but she didn't know her daughters, typical Latina, but she got to bed.

911

01:06:46,136 --> 01:06:50,646

And so, my brother and I were at the house and took care of her,

912

01:06:50,686 --> 01:06:52,066

because she wanted to die at home.

913

01:06:52,716 --> 01:06:54,566

We went through that whole process.

914

01:06:55,106 --> 01:07:05,456

So, my life just went -- totally changed, and it's never been the same now, so.

915

01:07:06,146 --> 01:07:11,376

>> These last questions are specifically

about how the Movimiento affected your career,

916

01:07:11,376 --> 01:07:15,056

and you've been so, I think,  
articulate and speaking to that--

917

01:07:15,236 --> 01:07:17,826

>> I mean it's helped, and  
it's hurt, no question.

918

01:07:17,826 --> 01:07:19,806

It hurt me at the state.

919

01:07:20,326 --> 01:07:24,776

I think I still have return rights,  
but it was very uncomfortable.

920

01:07:25,876 --> 01:07:32,806

I did get the job with AT&T,  
but it wasn't because of AT&T.

921

01:07:32,806 --> 01:07:37,456

It was really because of

PacBell that I got that job.

922

01:07:37,456 --> 01:07:41,416

They just didn't want me to help the other  
companies, because that's what I used

923

01:07:41,416 --> 01:07:42,976

to do when I was working for myself.

924

01:07:48,436 --> 01:07:49,736

I don't know.

925

01:07:49,736 --> 01:07:52,446

So, let's go back to the beginning.

926

01:07:53,606 --> 01:07:55,226

My degree is in music.

927

01:07:56,216 --> 01:07:59,546

It wasn't in community policy  
or anything like this.

928

01:07:59,546 --> 01:08:00,666

It was in music.

929

01:08:00,666 --> 01:08:03,796

I was a singer, and I was a pianist.

930

01:08:03,876 --> 01:08:05,976

Okay, so did I do anything with that?

931

01:08:13,336 --> 01:08:16,846

Did I go back to get a teaching  
credential maybe to teach music?

932

01:08:17,406 --> 01:08:20,466

No, because I was too busy  
doing this other stuff.

933

01:08:20,536 --> 01:08:22,716

So, I went to a whole nother world.

934

01:08:23,086 --> 01:08:25,956

I just jumped from one to the  
other, leaving this one behind,

935

01:08:26,346 --> 01:08:29,056

but music is a part of you, you know?

936

01:08:29,056 --> 01:08:31,466

It doesn't totally go away.

937

01:08:33,276 --> 01:08:37,616

So, the -- what I did certainly  
took it away from that.

938

01:08:38,456 --> 01:08:42,566

There was no way to balance that,  
except when I was with the [inaudible].

939

01:08:42,946 --> 01:08:49,786

You know, that's interesting.

940

01:08:50,016 --> 01:08:52,586

I -- would I have done things differently?

941

01:08:52,916 --> 01:08:55,916

Some, definitely some.

942

01:08:56,656 --> 01:08:58,226

Would I have been smarter?

943

01:08:58,606 --> 01:09:01,386

I had the best of the best around me.

944

01:09:01,556 --> 01:09:10,236

I had the talent and the skills of women like  
Marcella Flores, like Esther Ellipak [phonetic].

945

01:09:10,236 --> 01:09:12,286

There was Marty Mercado.

946

01:09:12,466 --> 01:09:16,116

These were all the leaders during  
that time that Jerry Brown brought in,

947

01:09:16,116 --> 01:09:22,036

and they were either directors or programs,  
and they were activists from their communities.

948

01:09:22,036 --> 01:09:24,336

Marcella was the Sheriff in San Jose.

949

01:09:24,776 --> 01:09:28,126

I mean, they're just different,  
and then Mario, Mario loved us.

950

01:09:28,206 --> 01:09:33,696

Mario loved my clique and helped us, and,  
of course, at the end, we had to help him

951

01:09:33,696 --> 01:09:39,246

and help him a lot, and then he  
made some crazy decisions that, god,

952

01:09:39,246 --> 01:09:41,826

you know, we're all human, whatever.

953

01:09:41,956 --> 01:09:45,976

I've learned not to judge,  
because I have seen so much.

954

01:09:46,056 --> 01:09:47,386

I can't judge.

955

01:09:47,386 --> 01:09:48,156

I can't judge.

956

01:09:48,646 --> 01:09:51,246

I can have opinions, though.

957

01:09:53,036 --> 01:10:02,346

So, would I have walked away from this, if I was  
to tell you, are the friendships that I made,

958

01:10:03,066 --> 01:10:07,726

people that have died throughout  
the state, not just here but --

959

01:10:07,836 --> 01:10:12,256

and I still have a core group of women here  
that, when are you coming back [inaudible],

960

01:10:12,916 --> 01:10:17,776

we need you, and I said, I'm not going

to come back to get involved again.

961

01:10:18,956 --> 01:10:28,606

It's just -- that's very special and precious,  
because I do have a, como se llama, network,

962

01:10:29,486 --> 01:10:33,706

not just in Sacramento, but all over  
the state, and that's so special.

963

01:10:33,706 --> 01:10:35,606

I mean, how many people have that?

964

01:10:36,556 --> 01:10:37,146

I don't know.

965

01:10:37,146 --> 01:10:40,206

>> I'm going to build on that  
last statement, because, you know,

966

01:10:40,206 --> 01:10:42,856

many of the Movimiento activists have passed on.

967

01:10:43,146 --> 01:10:44,796

>> My gosh, so many.

968

01:10:45,086 --> 01:10:50,516

>> Can you identify an individual or  
individuals that you feel had an impact

969

01:10:50,616 --> 01:10:52,976

on the Movimiento and explain  
their significance?

970

01:11:02,896 --> 01:11:04,000

>> Well.

971

01:11:05,046 --> 01:11:09,126

Obviously, Mario Blero is one for me.

972

01:11:09,126 --> 01:11:14,576

I don't agree with everything he did, but the  
significance of who he was and what he tried

973

01:11:14,576 --> 01:11:18,336

to do and what he did here, I feel  
he's never even gotten credit for.

974

01:11:19,196 --> 01:11:24,926

And, you know, may or may not know,  
he brought the most talented Latinos

975

01:11:25,776 --> 01:11:33,596

who had doctorate degrees unknown from  
Texas and from California to Jerry Brown,

976

01:11:33,766 --> 01:11:36,926

and it was the first time that all  
of a sudden, these high level people,

977

01:11:37,486 --> 01:11:44,276

and they were good people, they were really good  
people, and that had a big significant impact

978

01:11:44,416 --> 01:11:49,266

on me and on our peers, good and bad, of course.

979

01:11:49,966 --> 01:11:56,396

But he changed a lot of things that  
happened here in California in terms

980

01:11:56,396 --> 01:11:59,646  
of the movement here in Sacramento.

981

01:12:00,076 --> 01:12:04,766  
I mean, people -- I could -- at that time,

982

01:12:04,766 --> 01:12:07,146  
the only people who had PhDs  
were the people [inaudible].

983

01:12:07,146 --> 01:12:11,236  
There were no local PhD Latinos, you know?

984

01:12:11,236 --> 01:12:16,006  
It's not -- it was like, but now all of  
a sudden, there was interest to do that.

985

01:12:16,826 --> 01:12:20,566  
Okay, there are some people  
that have passed away, I mean,

986

01:12:20,566 --> 01:12:25,396

I know a lot of people don't know her,  
but she did so much was Marcella Flores.

987

01:12:25,886 --> 01:12:29,046

She was from San Jose, and she lived  
here and died here in Sacramento.

988

01:12:29,476 --> 01:12:31,016

She died as a hearing officer.

989

01:12:32,056 --> 01:12:38,236

She was an abused female in San Jose,  
almost died, put herself in a shelter,

990

01:12:38,776 --> 01:12:42,166

then became a sheriff, and  
then just went up the ranks,

991

01:12:42,306 --> 01:12:45,176

ended up in Sacramento with Jerry Brown tambien.

992

01:12:45,976 --> 01:12:53,686

And she had a heart, she loved to party,  
loved it dearly, but she did so many things.

993

01:12:53,716 --> 01:13:00,036

She did a lot for Latinos in the  
federal system, because she --

994

01:13:00,036 --> 01:13:04,226

that was her law enforcement background, and  
then she did a lot for the Comisión Femenil.

995

01:13:04,226 --> 01:13:07,386

She did a lot of stuff.

996

01:13:07,386 --> 01:13:11,376

There's a woman -- there are so  
many people, I can't even think

997

01:13:11,376 --> 01:13:14,346

of all their names, so many losses.

998

01:13:14,776 --> 01:13:24,476

Cesar Chavez did not agree  
totally with what I was doing.

999

01:13:24,756 --> 01:13:28,866

I mean, I love the man dearly,  
but he was just barely coming

1000

01:13:28,866 --> 01:13:31,626

into awareness about Latina activism.

1001

01:13:31,776 --> 01:13:34,366

That's where he and, you know,  
who was fighting all the time.

1002

01:13:35,156 --> 01:13:39,546

So, when I became president, it was  
like, I knew he didn't trust me.

1003

01:13:39,606 --> 01:13:44,676

I had to have the guys be the intermediate  
around me, but that doesn't mean

1004

01:13:44,676 --> 01:13:48,666

that he didn't impact how I  
thought and how I looked at things,

1005

01:13:48,946 --> 01:13:51,096

and I saw the struggles that he did.

1006

01:13:51,096 --> 01:13:58,666

So, I have, and I thought it was a major loss  
when he passed away, definitely a major loss.

1007

01:13:58,776 --> 01:14:01,996

There are so many people.

1008

01:14:01,996 --> 01:14:04,306

I think I could be going on forever.

1009

01:14:05,176 --> 01:14:10,756

You know, Cruz Reynoso, I don't  
know if people ever got to know him.

1010

01:14:10,756 --> 01:14:14,296

I was one of the fortunate that

got to know him at a younger age,

1011

01:14:14,946 --> 01:14:19,956

and the type of man he was,  
he should have been a priest.

1012

01:14:20,876 --> 01:14:27,876

That's the kind of spirit that he had.

1013

01:14:27,876 --> 01:14:29,126

I felt lucky.

1014

01:14:29,816 --> 01:14:32,986

I felt blessed to even be able to talk to him.

1015

01:14:33,366 --> 01:14:34,726

That's how I felt.

1016

01:14:34,726 --> 01:14:42,086

He was very intimidating to me that way, that  
he had such a strong aura of spiritualism,

1017

01:14:43,016 --> 01:14:48,016

you know, even as a judge that you sort  
of -- people who have that sensitivity,

1018

01:14:48,386 --> 01:14:52,356

it's like, my god, you just are at awe.

1019

01:14:52,496 --> 01:14:56,776

He had a lot to -- he impacted me a lot.

1020

01:14:56,776 --> 01:14:57,976

[Inaudible] it was a man, another man.

1021

01:15:06,156 --> 01:15:07,606

I know there's more women.

1022

01:15:08,676 --> 01:15:09,856

There's lot more women.

1023

01:15:10,056 --> 01:15:15,046

I'm trying to think of her name.

1024

01:15:15,046 --> 01:15:20,386

She was out of Los Angeles, but I  
sort of had women all over the state,

1025

01:15:20,386 --> 01:15:23,936

[inaudible] from Fresno, she  
started Comisión Femenil in Fresno.

1026

01:15:24,496 --> 01:15:28,536

She -- we became friends through MAPA, and  
then she helped us start the chapter here.

1027

01:15:28,536 --> 01:15:29,966

We used to go all over the state.

1028

01:15:30,076 --> 01:15:33,256

There was another lady named  
Josie Mena [phonetic].

1029

01:15:33,546 --> 01:15:38,836

I know these are names from -- I  
don't -- they're both barely alive.

1030

01:15:38,836 --> 01:15:40,236

They're 90-some years old.

1031

01:15:40,756 --> 01:15:43,306

Josie Mena also was very involved.

1032

01:15:43,306 --> 01:15:45,686

She was a Latina that was  
involved in businesses,

1033

01:15:45,686 --> 01:15:48,346

helping create businesses all over the state.

1034

01:15:49,036 --> 01:15:51,766

What is her name?

1035

01:15:51,766 --> 01:15:54,366

She was a judge in San Francisco.

1036

01:15:54,786 --> 01:16:01,926

Nobody's going to know her name,  
first Latina judge in that area.

1037

01:16:02,506 --> 01:16:03,396

She was amazing.

1038

01:16:04,016 --> 01:16:09,566

She was -- she reminded me of --  
she'd either have a cigar or boots,

1039

01:16:09,566 --> 01:16:12,676

and she was just like that, you know?

1040

01:16:12,676 --> 01:16:14,566

But she was amazing, amazing.

1041

01:16:14,826 --> 01:16:17,286

I feel awful that I can't think  
of her name, but, you know,

1042

01:16:17,286 --> 01:16:20,636

that's one thing I'm having trouble with now.

1043

01:16:21,206 --> 01:16:25,226

There were a number of people

that influenced me a lot.

1044

01:16:25,526 --> 01:16:34,336

My father, I would say he was one of my  
most major -- my father had so many kids,

1045

01:16:35,216 --> 01:16:41,216

so many kids, and he still had time to help the  
community and that actually sometimes I used

1046

01:16:41,216 --> 01:16:44,616

to think when we were little, that he cared  
about the community more than he cared

1047

01:16:44,616 --> 01:16:46,646

about us, because that was his passion.

1048

01:16:46,836 --> 01:16:51,516

He did all these interesting things,  
all of these interesting things.

1049

01:16:51,666 --> 01:16:56,526

He would take a priest to the Braceros camps,

so that they could have church or mass.

1050

01:16:56,966 --> 01:17:01,946

He did little things, but that  
people really appreciated,

1051

01:17:01,946 --> 01:17:06,196

and my dad and I used to fight a lot.

1052

01:17:06,926 --> 01:17:10,856

We fought a lot over music, because  
my dad used me to the max for music.

1053

01:17:10,856 --> 01:17:16,256

Every time there's a funeral or wedding, I  
had to go sing, and we would always argue,

1054

01:17:16,256 --> 01:17:20,076

and I know everybody used to say, my god, you  
guys argue, but then we were like this, right?

1055

01:17:20,946 --> 01:17:23,526

But his love for the community was something

1056

01:17:23,526 --> 01:17:27,216

that I think that's where

I got it from, I think.

1057

01:17:27,216 --> 01:17:29,506

I don't know, but I think so.

1058

01:17:29,506 --> 01:17:30,146

I think so.

1059

01:17:30,816 --> 01:17:32,876

So, I'm sorry I can't come up with more names--

1060

01:17:32,876 --> 01:17:33,386

>> No, that's--

1061

01:17:33,386 --> 01:17:36,066

>> But there are so many I could write a book.

1062

01:17:36,066 --> 01:17:40,296

I could write a book about all

the people that influenced me.

1063

01:17:40,586 --> 01:17:46,486

I think I have somebody almost  
in every city, almost, yeah.

1064

01:17:47,216 --> 01:17:54,356

>> Well, as you look back at your experiences  
in the Movimiento, are there any issues

1065

01:17:54,356 --> 01:17:59,996

that were left unresolved, and what do you  
see as the current or future challenges

1066

01:18:00,076 --> 01:18:02,166

for the Chicana [inaudible] community?

1067

01:18:02,386 --> 01:18:09,036

>> I don't think all issues  
were resolved totally, no.

1068

01:18:09,036 --> 01:18:10,066

I don't believe that.

1069

01:18:10,626 --> 01:18:12,546

I think we've made great advances.

1070

01:18:12,546 --> 01:18:18,526

I mean, we have more professional Latinos,  
we have more professional teachers,

1071

01:18:18,526 --> 01:18:23,426

professors in education than we've  
ever had than what I ever experienced.

1072

01:18:23,426 --> 01:18:29,266

I mean, I was blessed that I had two huge  
Latino professors at Cal State Northridge

1073

01:18:29,266 --> 01:18:34,806

and a third female, but that's because I went  
to Northridge or no, if I had gone to East LA,

1074

01:18:34,806 --> 01:18:37,826

the same thing, but if I had  
gone to use UCSB at the time, no.

1075

01:18:38,906 --> 01:18:42,566

Eventually, they came in, but so that part,

1076

01:18:42,866 --> 01:18:47,826

it's wonderful to see how many more  
educators have come out of the system,

1077

01:18:47,826 --> 01:18:50,646

but there are so many more that  
still need to be [inaudible].

1078

01:18:51,646 --> 01:18:55,476

There are still so many kids  
that are struggling and now more

1079

01:18:55,476 --> 01:18:57,576

because of COVID, I think, a lot more.

1080

01:18:57,986 --> 01:18:59,496

So, that's not a resolved issue.

1081

01:19:00,316 --> 01:19:02,076

We have more Latino professionals.

1082

01:19:02,076 --> 01:19:07,396

We have more Latino businessowners than  
we ever have had, and I say Latino,

1083

01:19:07,396 --> 01:19:10,626

because some of them are still  
migrant people, who started businesses

1084

01:19:10,626 --> 01:19:13,106

and don't have papers, but  
they have their businesses.

1085

01:19:13,106 --> 01:19:15,786

We have the second generation,  
and we have the third generation.

1086

01:19:16,396 --> 01:19:19,996

So, and we have people who have  
entered all the fields of work.

1087

01:19:20,886 --> 01:19:24,626

Is it appropriate to the  
population that we represent?

1088

01:19:24,626 --> 01:19:28,616

No, not at all, but there  
is some representation.

1089

01:19:28,966 --> 01:19:32,916

So, that's still a battle, I think,  
that still needs to be addressed.

1090

01:19:32,916 --> 01:19:36,936

I think that while there's  
more women in the workforce,

1091

01:19:36,936 --> 01:19:40,366

we're still getting underpaid in most cases.

1092

01:19:40,366 --> 01:19:46,486

We've still not been able to get that  
high level position, because we're female,

1093

01:19:46,666 --> 01:19:50,846

that still exists, and I know, because  
I worked as an employment specialist

1094

01:19:51,096 --> 01:19:55,626

for the last eight years for this county  
of Santa Barbara, trying to get people

1095

01:19:55,626 --> 01:20:03,276

into high level positions, but we have  
more women that at least are now competing

1096

01:20:03,276 --> 01:20:08,156

for those position that before  
couldn't even compete.

1097

01:20:08,156 --> 01:20:15,546

Services, I'm sorry to say if I don't know  
Sacramento right now, but if I compare it to LA,

1098

01:20:15,546 --> 01:20:19,696

there are so many people  
who still needs services,

1099

01:20:19,916 --> 01:20:21,976

who still need help, who still need food.

1100

01:20:22,256 --> 01:20:27,236

Now, of course, I come from an area  
that the cost of living is so high.

1101

01:20:27,236 --> 01:20:30,636

I don't know how poor Mexican  
families make it there.

1102

01:20:30,746 --> 01:20:31,556

I don't know.

1103

01:20:31,556 --> 01:20:33,476

I'm trying to figure it out.

1104

01:20:33,636 --> 01:20:38,856

I don't know, and that's why you have  
three or four families in an apartment.

1105

01:20:39,076 --> 01:20:42,546

That's why you have three generations  
of families living together,

1106

01:20:42,546 --> 01:20:46,016

because they can't go on their own.

1107

01:20:46,546 --> 01:20:51,856

So, housing is still a big  
issue for Latinos in the state.

1108

01:20:51,856 --> 01:20:56,816

I know in LA, I know in Santa Barbara, I  
know in San Jose, I'm assuming in Sacramento,

1109

01:20:57,196 --> 01:21:00,766

but just with I know of the  
other cities, give me a break.

1110

01:21:01,196 --> 01:21:03,556

San Francisco, who can live in San Francisco?

1111

01:21:04,016 --> 01:21:14,046

This, you know, if you're a minority, it's

worse, but, you know, I just want more equity

1112

01:21:14,046 --> 01:21:20,016

on the basic skill, the basic level of  
services and lifestyle, just the basic.

1113

01:21:20,066 --> 01:21:25,266

Let's not talk about making 100,000, let's  
talk about just being able to make enough

1114

01:21:25,266 --> 01:21:31,286

to live comfortably, feed your family, educate  
your family, and I don't think we're there.

1115

01:21:31,786 --> 01:21:38,126

I think there's families that have popped  
up, but as a community of the whole, no,

1116

01:21:38,606 --> 01:21:49,016

and with the undocumented, it's like we have  
to help them, but my family's generation,

1117

01:21:49,016 --> 01:21:53,116

my parents' generation have  
evolved over time, right?

1118

01:21:53,116 --> 01:21:55,796

And they've become -- I don't  
care about citizenship,

1119

01:21:55,796 --> 01:21:59,246

but they've become community  
members, business members.

1120

01:21:59,246 --> 01:22:01,776

They have involved themselves in the community.

1121

01:22:02,156 --> 01:22:09,846

It's much harder now for this, at least in Santa  
Barbara, for the undocumented community to phase

1122

01:22:09,846 --> 01:22:17,236

into this, and we have to probably do much  
more than we have ever done, be more creative.

1123

01:22:17,476 --> 01:22:20,616

The homeless situation is now  
killing our community, I believe.

1124

01:22:21,226 --> 01:22:23,006

I see it at Santa Barbara.

1125

01:22:23,006 --> 01:22:26,836

From COVID on, I had never seen so  
many homeless Latinos, now I see them.

1126

01:22:27,156 --> 01:22:34,476

So, as we addressed a lot of problems,  
we didn't solve all the problems,

1127

01:22:34,736 --> 01:22:41,516

but we started a movement, and in some areas,  
that movement has expanded, has bloomed,

1128

01:22:41,666 --> 01:22:45,086

and in other areas, it's  
dormant, and in other areas,

1129

01:22:45,086 --> 01:22:48,786

it's gone backwards, and  
that's how I perceive it.

1130

01:22:49,426 --> 01:22:56,716

But I at this point, when people ask me, I go,  
let's talk about our basic needs for everyone.

1131

01:22:57,006 --> 01:23:03,216

Let's try to create a more equal and  
more equal, not total equal system,

1132

01:23:03,216 --> 01:23:09,556

but a system that is more equal to  
different populations, but particularly,

1133

01:23:09,926 --> 01:23:13,856

I always say it's not that I don't care  
about the Blacks or the Asians, I do,

1134

01:23:14,706 --> 01:23:19,596

but it's that this is my community,  
and if I don't advocate for them,

1135

01:23:19,596 --> 01:23:21,226

who's going to advocate for them?

1136

01:23:23,296 --> 01:23:26,626

>> Do you see yourself as being  
bold in meeting these challenges?

1137

01:23:26,736 --> 01:23:29,716

>> Some, not to the degree that I have been, no.

1138

01:23:29,716 --> 01:23:36,396

I don't think that -- I'm not  
sure how much energy I have.

1139

01:23:36,396 --> 01:23:42,396

I do have a lot of energy, but not to  
the degree that I have spent before.

1140

01:23:42,946 --> 01:23:49,466

I also realize at this point of my life,  
it takes money, at my age, and I'm retired.

1141

01:23:49,796 --> 01:23:56,476

I had to take out my pension to help my  
parents when my dad died and my mom was sick.

1142

01:23:56,536 --> 01:24:04,066

So, I'm comfortable, but that  
doesn't mean I have money to --

1143

01:24:04,126 --> 01:24:06,026

when I was [inaudible] to travel all over.

1144

01:24:06,026 --> 01:24:06,926

I mean, I had to pay for it.

1145

01:24:06,926 --> 01:24:09,046

Nobody paid me, you know, stuff like that.

1146

01:24:09,046 --> 01:24:19,986

So, I don't have the financial support to do  
some of that, some of those things, however,

1147

01:24:19,986 --> 01:24:23,336

there are some areas that I would  
like to get very heavily involved.

1148

01:24:24,136 --> 01:24:29,026

One of them, not because I am,  
but I want to help Latino seniors.

1149

01:24:29,136 --> 01:24:33,956

I'm just devastated by what's going  
on right now and the treatment,

1150

01:24:33,956 --> 01:24:41,496

and I've been very involved locally, and I  
do, you know, I want to get on a state board.

1151

01:24:41,496 --> 01:24:43,526

I have to -- policies have to change.

1152

01:24:43,876 --> 01:24:53,056

I started taking classes to learn about how  
policies have negatively impacted seniors

1153

01:24:53,296 --> 01:24:55,816

and especially seniors with limited resources.

1154

01:24:56,696 --> 01:25:00,436

So, that is one area that I  
really want to get involved,

1155

01:25:00,436 --> 01:25:02,696

because there's not enough  
people talking about that.

1156

01:25:02,956 --> 01:25:06,296

There really isn't, not for Latino families.

1157

01:25:06,296 --> 01:25:10,866

We have Latino three generation  
families in an apartment,

1158

01:25:11,486 --> 01:25:15,216

but is the elderly getting  
the medical attention or care?

1159

01:25:15,346 --> 01:25:18,016

No. Are they getting any nutritional support?

1160

01:25:18,116 --> 01:25:20,576

No. And are they dying?

1161

01:25:20,806 --> 01:25:22,796

Of course.

1162

01:25:22,796 --> 01:25:26,406

And by the time they see a doctor,  
it's -- they're so sick or so old.

1163

01:25:26,406 --> 01:25:29,306

It's just so sad, so, so sad.

1164

01:25:29,916 --> 01:25:34,976

So, that is one area that I actually  
will -- I'm looking on the right venue.

1165

01:25:34,976 --> 01:25:42,186

The other thing that I am really good at  
and I have been is that I've been great

1166

01:25:42,186 --> 01:25:46,316

in finding jobs for people and how to

prepare people for jobs and what kind

1167

01:25:46,316 --> 01:25:50,916

of courses should they take, because we're not  
-- we can't afford to go back off to school,

1168

01:25:50,916 --> 01:25:54,416

but there are courses that will  
guarantee you access into a job.

1169

01:25:54,616 --> 01:25:55,916

That's what I did for the last year.

1170

01:25:56,006 --> 01:26:01,316

I operated those kinds of programs,  
both for Santa Maria and Santa Barbara,

1171

01:26:01,316 --> 01:26:04,676

and it's a big county when  
you look at all the cities.

1172

01:26:05,076 --> 01:26:08,906

I would like to continue to do

that, because I have seen --

1173

01:26:09,566 --> 01:26:12,396

I've been so blessed that I've  
seen people who have benefited

1174

01:26:12,396 --> 01:26:14,996

from my help, and they have the jobs.

1175

01:26:14,996 --> 01:26:20,276

That's all I need, and I know I can do that,  
and I just have to figure out how to do it

1176

01:26:20,276 --> 01:26:23,056

where it's not stressful and it's not 40 hours.

1177

01:26:23,626 --> 01:26:27,286

So, those kind of the two areas, and  
I'm going to go back to music somewhere.

1178

01:26:27,546 --> 01:26:28,956

I'm going to go back to music somewhere.

1179

01:26:28,956 --> 01:26:30,786

I want to start doing that.

1180

01:26:30,786 --> 01:26:34,046

I got to cut my nails, so

I can start playing piano,

1181

01:26:34,046 --> 01:26:40,266

but that's a part of that I have denied

myself, and I knew when I retired,

1182

01:26:40,266 --> 01:26:45,816

I've only been retired a couple months, that

that was one of the things I was going to do.

1183

01:26:45,856 --> 01:26:52,386

And my last project is I'm going to write a book

about my father, because my father started --

1184

01:26:52,596 --> 01:26:57,656

he was the first of many things in Santa

Barbara, but he started an organization

1185

01:26:57,856 --> 01:27:03,166

that died that's called [inaudible] Union  
Civica, and this was in the 50s and 60s,

1186

01:27:03,716 --> 01:27:07,836

and he did this -- the [inaudible] and the  
[inaudible], and he did the Cinco de Mayo,

1187

01:27:07,836 --> 01:27:12,416

not the commercial Cinco de  
Mayo, I mean the Cinco de Mayo.

1188

01:27:12,936 --> 01:27:17,226

He did these events, and he used  
to throw dances for the kids.

1189

01:27:17,226 --> 01:27:23,596

He did a lot of stuff, and people have  
forgotten, and I'm going around asking the kids

1190

01:27:23,596 --> 01:27:26,956

of these -- the people that helped my  
dad for pitchers, and I want to do kind

1191

01:27:26,956 --> 01:27:30,546

of a pitcher, kind of a not an intense book.

1192

01:27:30,546 --> 01:27:37,376

I wanted to make it a little bit more like

I remember this, this is what happened,

1193

01:27:37,376 --> 01:27:40,916

this is what I, you know, kind of,

because I don't think I'm a writer.

1194

01:27:41,216 --> 01:27:41,866

But we'll see.

1195

01:27:41,866 --> 01:27:45,736

We'll see, but I have always, in the

back of my mind, I wanted to write a book

1196

01:27:46,056 --> 01:27:51,196

about his contributions and his compadres,

because okay, so there's 12 of us.

1197

01:27:51,456 --> 01:27:56,166

Well, there's 12 compadres, and  
it's so funny, the 12 compadres,

1198

01:27:56,166 --> 01:27:58,086

they were all involved in the community.

1199

01:27:58,506 --> 01:28:00,276

They all did -- they went on to this and that.

1200

01:28:00,486 --> 01:28:05,296

So, I have a lot of resources to be  
able to start getting their story out,

1201

01:28:05,296 --> 01:28:09,916

and I would love to do that, and it's, to  
me, it's a critical part of the development

1202

01:28:09,916 --> 01:28:16,746

of Santa Barbara, and it's also a critical  
part of who we are in the family, you know?

1203

01:28:17,436 --> 01:28:18,516

We didn't have a lot.

1204

01:28:19,376 --> 01:28:20,636

Everybody thought we did.

1205

01:28:20,716 --> 01:28:27,876

We didn't have a lot, but we had each other, and we've had our challenges,

1206

01:28:28,586 --> 01:28:33,366

and we have challenges, but we're a very close family, so.

1207

01:28:33,366 --> 01:28:38,656

>> I really want to thank you for your participation in this recorded interview,

1208

01:28:39,046 --> 01:28:43,026

and it will significantly contribute.

1209

01:28:43,026 --> 01:28:43,176

>> Right,

1210

01:28:43,276 --> 01:28:47,076

>> To document, preserve, and  
really archive our oral histories,

1211

01:28:47,446 --> 01:28:53,026

and that's why I think future generations  
will have an opportunity to hear

1212

01:28:53,026 --> 01:28:56,926

and view your story, and  
that is, like, so critical.

1213

01:28:57,026 --> 01:28:57,886

So, thank you.

1214

01:28:57,886 --> 01:28:58,116

>> Thank you.

1215

01:28:58,116 --> 01:28:58,426

Thank you.