

Interviewee: Obed Bello

Interviewer: Alex Evans

Key: O=Obed, A=Alex

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O: When I think about my family, I think about a lot of love and at the same time I think about a lot of struggle and the struggle that my parents went through with raising five children in a different society than the one they were used to and I noticed the urge to succeed in my family, to come out on top and be the best that we can and with that, a lot of love and affection is shown throughout the situations that occur within our life... and... the love that we have for each other is unconditional.

A: your family is like, would you say it's like one of the biggest parts of your life?

O: Yeah I would say that my family is a great part of my life and is a real driving factor in my everyday actions and I always try to represent my family name in the best way that I can. The name Bello, to me, is such a special word and meaning even and it tells a whole story of a lot of pain and a lot of struggle throughout my entire family as far as my uncles and cousins, aunts and uncles...did I say uncles? (Obed laughs)

A: There's even more uncles than just the normal uncles huh?!

O: And my grandparents and my great grandparents have always been there for me, or, my,my grandparents were always there for me and they showed their love for me in more ways than just material.

A: Anything else you want to talk about?

O: Yeah. Um. So when I think about my family I think about the tight-knit relationships that we have with each other and the love that we have is always there even when my family members aren't

there, I can still feel them in my heart. And I know that they always want the best for me because I always want the best for them.

A: Whatever else you got on your mind just go ahead and...let it rip.

O: Ok. So, in Mocitlan, Guerrero, the people who live there aren't concerned with material items, they're concerned with what's going to help them make it through the day and I feel that that idea is always imbedded in my, in my daily life and rituals. I feel that when I visit my hometown and I come back from vacation I feel that I want to drop everything I have and start all over again because of the lifestyle they live in Mochitlan. They plant their own crops, they make their own dairy from their own animals, they harvest the land and I feel that human beings, in general, have lost touch of nature and their surroundings, their environmental surroundings and I feel that we need to get back to that spot and not rely so much on petroleum and oil and just live life normally, like they do in Mochi.

A: So when you think of Mochi, that is something that, that you always take with you wherever you go?

O: Mochitlan will always be in my heart, it's it's running through my veins, it's in my blood and...yeah.

A: Do you want to talk about anything else from before or...?

O: Maybe a little bit.

A: Yeah, like what were you thinking?

O: I would really, I'd really like to see my family from Mochi try to make it and maybe live up here as well and see the different lifestyles that happen throughout the world and not just isolate themselves in one place.

A: Yeah cuz you were telling me you wanted to go live in Mexico later in life right but you like that, that, travel between places like, having different homes?

O: Yeah, being able to go to a different country is like being able to go to a completely different world where the ideals are different and society itself is different and they have different morals and stuff...

A: So if you like, had an American flag and a Mexican flag you'd defiantly associate more with the Mexican flag? I'm just curious...

O: I feel like I associate a little more with the flag, the green white and red more so than the red white and blue although I'm very grateful to be living in a place like the United States, it's wonderful.

A: So what do you think about when um, today politics and the world are pretty shaped by national boundaries and you know, each flag could mean so many different things to so many different people so how do you deal with that, how governments basically want to make distinctions between the borders end here, this is America or the United States and this is the United States of Mexico so how does your world view kind of differ from that kind of world view?

O: Well, that world view that you just explained is really causing a lot of problems as far as immigration policies and you know, people from Mexico trying to enter the United States illegally. There's a real big problem going on with the whole boundary idea where, maybe, instead of having borders we should integrate and I feel like it would relieve a lot of the death rates and a lot of problems that go on with dealing with those kinds of situations.

A: How do you feel personally when you think about having two homes? What does that mean to you being in each home? Are you different in each home?

O: Well, having two homes is really difficult for me because I have to leave my family and my home country and at the same time I have to leave my friends here in the United States when I do go and

visit Mexico and it's really difficult because to maintain relationships with my close relatives at such a distant location it makes it hard keeping up with family ties and close relationships with my relatives. And at the same time it's really nice to see the different geographical images, weather, climates. It's a really drastic change from the tropical weathers and thunderstorms and showers that, that do occur but not here in Oregon very often.

A: When you think about the stuff you love about the United States and living here, what are, you know, when you about Mochi you think of the celebrations and your family and the food and all the good times. When you think about the United States what is it that warms your heart?

O: My favorite thing about the United States is sports and how competitive it is and there's such a big fan base in each category of sport and I love sports...it's one of my favorite things and probably has to do because of the sports that are here in the United States. My favorite sport is "American Football" or just football here in the U.S. But all over the world futbol is soccer. So sports is a really big factor of how I feel about the United States because I'm such a big fan of it. I believe that in different sport the United States has some of the best athletes and it's really cool to watch them.

A: So in your day to day what are some things that you can think about in the U.S. that it's like "man it's great that I get to live here and I get to experience this." Whether or not it's summer time or...some restaurants you like or just whatever.

O: I think I'm really lucky that I have the friends that I do and growing up I made many different friends and had I not moved to the United States maybe I wouldn't be here talking to you today and that's really kind of a shocker when I think about that kind of stuff and I'm really lucky that I got to grow up with some really good people.

A: You had the opportunity to meet people from a whole different culture and way of life.

O: Yeah, and see what their lives are about and see what their families are like.

A: If you had to describe or talk about the journey you and your family have been through, you already touched on it pretty well before, but if just wanted to talk about one more time, what's it's like, what it's been like, being a member of a Latino family within the U.S. and moving back and forth?

O: I always just felt like a normal person here in the United States and the only time I see a difference is when I look in the mirror. I don't look the same as a typical U.S. citizen would and I guess that's not very accurate because, what does a typical U.S. citizen look like you know? It could be anybody. But, like I was saying, it was, it felt like I was pretty much living a normal life and I didn't feel like a visitor at all. I felt like I belonged here and I think that was due to the age that I was when I moved here. I think that had a lot to do with how I felt about the United States. Wait what was the question?

A: Just talking about your experiences being a member of a Latino family in the U.S.

O: Oh yeah... At first when we first moved here, it was difficult to fit in and we had a lot of help from different families you know, with clothing and food and there was a lot of places in the community that were willing to lend a hand to us instead of push us away and neglect us and that was really great to know that we had support within the community to survive.

A: Fin?

O: Fin.