

Interviewer: So if it feels like we've covered any of this, it's fine to maybe go over, return to some of the information. I want to just get maybe like a more comprehensive look at your life and starting maybe a little bit with your background, anything about your parents, how they met, what they did, where you grew up, those kinds of things.

Interviewee: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay. My parents are from [Blackman 00:00:37] Parish, which is about 45 miles from here. My father was raised in Jesuit Bend, and my mother was raised in a little city called Rushville, what you call Naomi now. And she met my daddy at a baseball game. He was kind of like a star player. And so they kind of hit it off, but he was about maybe ... he was five years older than she. And so, it was like initially she was drawn to him, but it was like she didn't really want a man that old. But she gradually ... I guess she couldn't get him out of her mind.

So she moved to New Orleans. He was still in Jesuit Bend, and he would come to visit her in New Orleans, and eventually they got married.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: They got married in 19 ... I have the marriage license. I think they got married in 1938 and I was the first born in 1941. My mother was the house maker, and my father was a landscape gardener. She stayed home throughout the birth of ... I guess rearing of one, two ... four children initially because she had six altogether. But as expenses rose ... because they chose to send us to private school ... the expenses rose and she decided that she was gonna work with my father so she used to work out with my father in the gardens, doing gardens for a living.

Of course, I found [inaudible 00:02:30] appalled that she would do that, but at that time, it wasn't common that a woman could be outside working. She would always do inside work. But she decided that it would be more effective because she got the money that my dad was paying other people to help, that she would get the money. That money would go in the house and so that's what she did.

The housekeeping tours fell on myself and my sister, who's three years younger than I, and so we kind of did the cooking and cleaning and taking care of the rest of the kids. It just became that on Saturdays and Sundays were our protected family time. That's when we got to the table and ate our meals together and just kind of exchanged how our week was going.

I'm one of six kids. There was six girls and one boy.

Speaker 1: What you were saying, that you were the oldest in-

Speaker 2: Oldest of six. Five girls, One boy. We were almost between two and a half to three years older than each other except for my brother. My middle brother and sister, they're about 11 months part. They were very close. I say were because he died early. He died in his twenties and they were like I said, they were 11 months apart, so they were almost like twins. They went everywhere, they did everything together. And as a consequence, she was like a tomboy. She was outdoorsy. And he was very close to my baby sister. She died early but not as early as he, but the impact that his death had on my baby sister was deeply cut. She kind of confided in him for things. When he was gone that part of her life kind of spiraled and I think that was her beginning of drug use. But all that said, we all went to catholic schools until our mother died. I was able to go to catholic element in high school. I was about to finish college and she died. I was 21.

Shortly after that, my dad married a woman who was maybe 5 or 6 years older than I. Yeah, that is busted, she was older than I. That caused an enormous split in the family. As a result of that, we all moved out the house. Out the family house, we were able to live with my aunt, my daddy's sister. We lived there for about three years on and off until we were able to get our own places.

My journey in life is that family was always first, [inaudible 00:02:18]. Our father's will. We could survive if we were all together. I got the house living in, all of my sisters and brothers got out and they all came to my aunts house. I heard that my aunt just decided she could do it for a short period. And she also put my daddy on child support. So, that was helper her as well as us.

Speaker 1: Can I ask, I know you said your mom moved to New Orleans and she was here. Was she living here by herself?

Speaker 2: No. The oldest one was married, and so she took my mother in. Until she got married, and then my mothers younger sisters [inaudible 00:03:09]. They always came to the sister that preceded them, if it was possible. And they would stay for a minute and then they got out on their own or they got married, so that was like a tradition.

Speaker 1: Alright, I was just curious. At the point where you are living in your aunts house, you are how old at this point?

Speaker 2: I was 22 because I've completed college, been at Xavier, working. I got my first job as a teacher and my sister who was [inaudible 00:03:48] to me, she was away at college so she wasn't there as often. She was a Southern in bat village. My main task was to make sure she got finished, so I was the one sending her money to get things ... there was no [inaudible 00:04:10] anything like that. She was working

part-time, and then I would send her what I could to buy her clothing, some food, things of that nature.

Others were in high school, my two younger sisters were still in elementary school. One was close to getting into high school. And that ultimately was at my aunts. We all went to high school. I was working, the others were in high school. Hard to hit that with a job. And so they were ultimately out of my aunts house.

Speaker 1: Tell me a little about your childhood home. What you remember about it and what was the neighborhood like.

Speaker 2: The neighborhood was safe, it was fun. It wasn't a rich neighborhood, but we all felt like family. My mother, she would tell us that we could go take the grocery from our neighbors, but we couldn't take any money. It was the funniest thing because one of the neighbors, all she would give us was like two or three pennies to go across Cleveland Avenue, which was dangerous. But because she thought I was 13, I could go shave the cars and whatever. When I come back and she offered me those three pennies I would say, "Lord have mercy on my back [crosstalk 00:05:39]". Fortunately I'd just take it because if you did they told, they weren't telling on you, but it like people just talk.

One of the things I remember I got punished for was because my next door neighbor, Ms. Christian, she was so lousy. Whenever I would go outside to walk or play, I'd always take my sister and brother. So it was like the musketeers walking down the street, well if I had a boy- boy was interested in me and I was interested in him, then the boy had to walk along with all of us to the [inaudible 00:06:12] where I was staying in. And Ms. Christian saw me walking down the street with one of the boys, it was really platonic, it wasn't anything like love, just friends.

So she told my mom and dad that I was walking down the street with this guy. My mom said, "Who is this?", "This is Jean, it was Jean down the street." And so my mother said, "I knew Jean so that's not a problem" because he would go to church and he was a very nice person. But I stopped talking to Ms. Christian because I said she was ... Ms. Christian told my mother that I was speaking to her, and my mother and daddy ... Oh my gosh. They thought I ran away with them. They couldn't get over it, you don't fan of some people. People are valuable, you could say good morning to a cat or a dog, why can't you say good morning to your neighbor. So I kind of rolled my eyes and I just acted like I knew what they were saying. In my heart I thought that was probably one of the values they had in the country, so I kind of had to conform to that.

The neighborhood was always friendly, always welcoming and had six children on the block and my mother ... they didn't have a lot of money, so people were always giving us stuff. One lady working cafeteria, so she would bring us the leftover food. If we needed some clothes, they would give us some leftover clothes. Because we

had teachers on our block, we had pharmacists, we had people who had some means, so if they saw that was a need then they gave.

We just thought that was how everybody subsisted. We weren't poor, we didn't look at ourselves as being poor, but that we were just a community. You didn't feel like you were less than, because people- they loved you, they did the best that they could. We all played together. We have our spats, but I have never had a fight. I tell people that even today, I've never, ever had a fight. I don't know what a fight is. I imagine that because we all traveled together, all of us, that we were more or less a gang and a 'we' because I even had my [inaudible 00:08:31]. Because we were almost all worshiping together and he called me and one of his servants, he called us the field gang. I never kind of looked at it like that, but I said maybe that's why we never had a fight because when people saw one, they saw everybody.

Then we took on others, when people saw us they wanted us to take their children to school when we'd walk to school. So I'd pick up Sally and her sister and I'd walk a route that would pick up [Nance 00:09:03] and her sister, and her brother. Then walk a little further and pick up [Claudy 00:09:03] and her sister. So by the time we got to school it was like 12 of us, so it was like, anybody that thought they might want to start [inaudible 00:09:13]. Well maybe that's not the people. So we just got along, and at that state it was like a utopia, but it was some place where you felt safe.

I hated to leave that neighborhood when I made 18, we decided ... my dad and my mother purchased a house for us [inaudible 00:09:41]. It was nice but we hated to leave it because it was like home, and [inaudible 00:09:50] Park was unfamiliar, so we grew to love it, but it was like a loss that we had, we moved in '59 and I was just finished high school, and we moved to [inaudible 00:10:04] park. Fortunately, I found some people who were in the same situation that I was. My best friend, she was going to [Zeep 00:10:12] and I was about to go to [Zeep 00:10:13]. She was a year older than I, so we got that bout of friendship. And that made the move easier because we found people who were in pretty much the same situation, that they left their old neighborhood that they really were fond of, and then they had to make new friends and move on.

My mother died in '62 and so that made us have to find another place because, like I said, home wasn't our house anymore, we had to move out. My daddy moved in his wife and her two children, so that wasn't an easy pitch. So ultimately, I left, the others left.

Speaker 1: Do you remember, I know you said you all went to private schools-

Speaker 2: Until my mom's death.

Speaker 1: Right, do you remember liking school?

Speaker 2: Oh we loved school, all of us. We valued education, mainly because our parents said. My daddy and mother both finished in 8th grade. But out of necessity they went to work because it was rural community that they were in. And so my mother went to- she worked in shrimp factory. I guess my daddy must have been doing gardening out there because that's all that's listed on his [inaudible 00:11:38] that I found. They wanted us to have the best education.

First, in hindsight, I kind of think that they wanted us ... they wanted a buff of segregation because we were not segregated in catholic schools as much as students were in public schools because our church ... it was a catholic church that we did all of our major events in, but we never had the memory of sitting in the back of a church being discriminated in church. In our schools we got first help ... books were new books. We didn't get second-hand books. We had people who cared about us, they honestly cared about us, so we didn't have to feel the brunt of your color making a difference or anything like that. We went school, we just studied.

Speaker 1: Were you at Xavier at a time when there was any protesting or anything happening?

Speaker 2: When I was at Xavier the biggest thing was that they just banned [inaudible 00:12:46] at fraternities. I think it was because they were [inaudible 00:12:52], although subtle. I think there were like color, light skin against dark skin, that kind of thing. I think that's when they banned [inaudible 00:13:05] in fraternities because of that. That's the only thing I remember. There was neighborhood things that were going on right after I finished. There were community group sit-ins and things of that sort. But I didn't participate because my personal life was enough evil and I was trying to keep my sisters and brothers functioning, so I really didn't take time to do that. My sister did because she was like away at Southern and [inaudible 00:13:37]. So she was in another climate, so she could do some of the stuff.

So, no I never personally did it, but we used to have fun on street cars because we would take the signs off the- you know, the color signs and throw them out the window. We'd catch the bus at our bus stop and we would go to where white people work because they expected all the prep students to get on at Magazine and [inaudible 00:14:07]. But then we walked up where there were some other whites, more whites because we were all black. And so we would get on the bus and we'd take all the seats, so they all got on. We'd head to the front, so we could take the [inaudible 00:14:26] of the bus. That was probably as much as we could do.

Speaker 1: Alright. What did you study when you were at Xavier?

Speaker 2: Elementary education. I always wanted to be a teacher. As a matter of fact, two of the kids on the block when I was younger. I was patterning myself after Ms. Shirley Green. Shirley was a teacher, plus her brother was a vocalist. I guess he must have been a music teacher. And they all conducted themselves a certain way. I went to, and I patterned myself that I wanted to be Shirley Green. She was just impeccably

dressed, she knew a lot and yet she related to people. Her mother was the one who would always bring us food, because she was a cafeteria manager, and so she would bring us food from the school that she was managing the cafeteria. If we needed anything, socks or whatever, she really would get it. Her brother would get what we needed. Not that they felt sorry, but because they thought it would be [inaudible 00:15:37]. And they did.

Speaker 1: You finished school?

Speaker 2: Yes. I've gone to catholic schools all the way through college and my masters was from a catholic college in [inaudible 00:15:59]. I picked catholic education for my own safety, from second grade all through to graduate. I did some other graduate studies at UNO and I went to University of San Diego, got some teaching as a master teacher. I had 4 interns and we all went through a specific training together, a few courses in San Diego. I have 30 plus hours in graduate [inaudible 00:16:45]. I've also been instituting for Black Catholic Xavier. I have a certification there as a catechist. And I was three fourths of the way finished with masters with theology, but Katrina came and I lost my pre thesis work because it was on computer and the computer was compromised, so I never went back.

Speaker 1: Alright, so when and how did you meet your husband.

Speaker 2: It was funny. I made up my mind that I was going to graduate school and I want to do reading, I want to be reading specialist. And my good girlfriend and I, every Friday night we had fun, like Friday, Saturday and then we come in early Saturday so we could go to church Sunday. We would go to church and then we go to the pub after church, and then Monday we were back at work. So I haven't made up my mind to go to graduate school. I said, "Well, Nancy we are just going to have as much fun as we can." and so we did.

She had met a guy who was a saints team, Bruce, and I wasn't really looking for anybody because as I said I had gotten accepted to graduate school as a fellow. And the new guy went in at Michigan state. And this guy we went to Masons, Masons was a lounge at the time. And we had the best fun, I don't know what we were laughing at, probably just laughing because we thought we were cute.

In Los this guy, he and his friend, they started talking to us ... we never went home with anybody. I really got to tell you that, we had the best fun in the world, but we never went home with anybody. We didn't go home with them and they didn't go home with us because I was living with my aunt at the time. He came up and he approached me, was going to buy me a drink. He was going to buy all of us a drink, but Nancy, I don't know why she wasn't drinking. She had a drink though, maybe he did. Anyways, he bought the drinks, and his friend who was with him could not engage in Nancy because she just had just met this guy. So she told him she was already involved with somebody, she wasn't interested.

He sat down and we started talking. I thought he was handsome, but he was thoroughly engaging, he was going to find out about me, who I was, what I did, how my family was, family, brothers and sisters and that type of stuff. I kind of liked that approach because lots of men ask you, are you working, do you have a job. Well he didn't go there, he just kind of wanted to know who I was. I gave him my number and we started talking. And then in the meantime my sister and I moved out of my aunts house because we got our own apartment together. By that time my sister graduated and so we had gotten together in our apartment.

It was near Christmas then, and I decided we were going to have a Christmas party in our new house. And so I bought this big gallon of a scotch, and I didn't know that when you had a party all day long that you didn't drink when everybody came through the door. So, we were coming after church, I took a drink. More people came, took another drink. So around 5 o'clock, my head was like spinning, spinning. I was just completely out of it. I was [inaudible 00:20:52]. Later on he came, so when she saw him she said, "Your girl is out, she can't come to the dude and you can't come in". So I said, "Well that's the end of that". Then he came the next day, and he said [inaudible 00:21:14]. He took a good, good inches. I really didn't want to see him because I was kind of embarrassed because I have never been that drunk, and I will still never, ever be that drunk again.

He was a country boy, so he would go through the country. I guess they were raising watermelons, fruits and stuff like that. Every time he came he had a big basket of fruit, veggies and stuff like that. He said, "Once you get better, eat the right food, do the right thing" That kind of got to me and I liked him. So I had to tell him, "Now look, I can't entertain any notions of getting married or staying with anybody because I was going to graduate school". I met him in may, and I told him, "In August, I'm out of here because I've already signed the papers and everything to go away." And he said, "We can still make it work". I said, "What's your proposition?" So he said, "Lets get engaged", so we got engaged and we got married before I left to go to graduate school. Three months, May, June, July and August. Three months. And that when I got married, the week before I was to leave for graduate school we got married.

Speaker 1: Did he go with you?

Speaker 2: He stayed here because he had his own house. He calls it an apartment, but it was half of a single, of a double rod.

Speaker 1: So you spent the first year of your marriage apart?

Speaker 2: Apart. I came home every month because I said it was a fellowship, so I got sabbatical leave and I got fellowship paid. So I had sufficient funds, of course I was also taking care of my younger siblings as well, but I was able to come home every month. So we made it work.

Speaker 1: Alright, so when did kids come along?

Speaker 2: My kids came along ... I was married in '68. I was in school to say to '69. And our first baby was born in '70. [Jeffry 00:23:28] was born in '70. And then Jay Micheal was born in '75.

Speaker 1: So you stayed in school while-

Speaker 2: I finished.

Speaker 1: Oh you finished?

Speaker 2: I finished, as a matter of fact he came up for my graduation. He was there when I did my presentation for my masters. I presented the thesis and conclusion and all of the other stuff we had to do. So he was there and he was there when I marched. Initially I wanted to really- because we had brothers in Chicago and I really, really wanted to go to Chicago and stay there. We sought to visit his brother, his brother was nice, but not as [inaudible 00:24:12]. I later understood why because they were born close together and they have always been rivals. I kind of liked Chicago, I had some friends who had graduated with me from Xavier who went Chicago, so I felt they could make it there. But he was adamant he didn't want to stay. So I just came back.

Speaker 1: What was he doing at the time?

Speaker 2: He was plumber's assistant, he wasn't a plumber but he worked for ... What was the name of the company he worked for. So he was a plumber's assistant. He never could get his license, I don't know if it was part- I knew it was some segregation, that they weren't granting licenses to blacks, so he had to work off of somebody else's- A white man's license. Then eventually he settled into what he was doing and then he got a good job and a deal as a developer. And that was making good money.

Then in the process I learned that he was an alcoholic, he did drink too much alcohol. And maybe that was the reason why he wasn't going to [inaudible 00:25:32]. I thought he couldn't go. I didn't know if I said it, I found it out when my brother came. We were moving into our present house, the house I still live in and my brother found all these little vodka bottles hidden in the bushes, hidden in the cupboard that was up high. And he was moving, my brother said, "What are all these bottles, What's this stuff?" He said, "Somebody is drinking a lot". I said, "Well, it's not me" and so we thought about it had to be my husband because we had no children, I didn't have any visitors, anything like that.

And so that was the demise of our marriage. Not right then, but I would say, we moved ... Jeffry had been born in '70 and we moved in '73. So I imagined that had been going on for a while because I wasn't here, so I couldn't [inaudible 00:26:26].



It was in our own house, I confronted him and told him that he had to stop. And I think he did stop somewhere because he had some health issues that were more associated with drinking. So I think that stopped him for a minute.

Then he got really scared because it was affecting his blood pressure. And he was having episodes because he had blood pressure that was spiked that, it would go up. And then one day somebody called me to tell me he had passed out on Carlton and right at the Shell station across from Xavier, but it wasn't Shell at the time. I think it was [inaudible 00:27:03]. And I had to go and get him from that spot because they didn't know what to do because he was a veteran they got him to bedrolls. I think that kind of scared him for a minute. But that episode was just like the [inaudible 00:27:23]. I rode the camel's back. I told him that I was going to have to divorce him because I didn't want to raise my kids with that. And that was around '75 because Jay Michael was just born. Jay was born in November and I think I started divorce proceedings probably when Jay was about two years old.

Speaker 1: Was that a decision you felt supported in by your siblings and your family?

Speaker 2: I did because they didn't really, really like ... Sisters are funny, they don't like whenever ... I just witnessed that because the other sister got married about a month ago, but siblings who are close don't really like it if they affect the relationships, so they didn't all of them didn't like him. Some did, some didn't. So they were happy. I'll tell you who did support it, my dad who I was estranged from. I just called him out of desperation and said, "I need to come home because I have these two children" and I said, "Daddy, you have to make room for [inaudible 00:28:36] because I can't do the household and do everything else and raise my children" and at that point they were in [inaudible 00:28:42] school. So he said, "No problem."

He was still married. When I got home, he had put his wife out and so we automatically moved in. As I said, we made it work and their marriage was already kind of shaky because she was so much younger than he, they weren't really compatible when I think about it. When he got married I was about 22 or 23 and by the time I got unmarried she must have been about, early 30s. And I was in probably near a little later 20s. It really didn't work so she was gone. I ended up good friends with her. She lives with Pepsi-Cola and she comes here to visit me and I do the same, I visit her.

Speaker 1: Okay, so how long did you stay with your dad before then being able to set up your own home?

Speaker 2: Well I had my own home, I had the house when we had bought this house, but I thought maybe he would keep it. I would say we were apart, we were divorced five years. And then after that I decided because it was another guy who wanted me to marry him. He was older, and I couldn't see that, so I decided I would go back and resume housekeeping in my own home. And I didn't know, but my husband and I

got remarried. [inaudible 00:30:42]. And that worked, he was better. He was older and wiser and so was I. He helped me to raise the kids at their latter part of their teenage year. Jeffery was about 18 and Jay was 13. So he was there for those critical pieces, especially for Jeffery. And on set with Jay's, but Jay took his death more- he was more deeply affected than Jeffery was because Jeffery was at the inn and he was in college, Jay was just in 8th grade and that was kind of [inaudible 00:31:23] for him.

We did go to counseling to see what we could do to get him in a better place, so that's it. And my husband died in '89.

Speaker 1: 89, okay. Since then, any grandkids or has the family grown and expanded?

Speaker 2: Oh my gosh, yes. My prayers have been answered. My mother never saw any of my grandchildren, so my daddy got to see my sister's son who was older than mine, she got, 1, 2, 3, 4 grandchildren got to see. He didn't get to see Olivia who is with me today. And Jay, my youngest son, he didn't get to see his three kids. I have six grandchildren, so six of them ... three, four. Four grandkids. I'm just thrilled.

Speaker 1: You mentioned traveling a little bit within the United States, but have you done any traveling abroad?

Speaker 2: Oh yeah, last year I was in Paris, my son treated me. And my granddaughter, we went to Paris for 10 days. I've done Ghana, probably 15 years ago, I went with a church group to Ghana. We stayed for about 2 weeks there. My last real [inaudible 00:33:02] Hawaii. I think those were the outside places I've been to.

Speaker 1: What was Ghana like?

Speaker 2: Ghana was lovely, I enjoyed it. Its kind contrary to what people think I hear so many rumors about it [inaudible 00:33:25]. Couldn't get into it, but they are not going to welcome you and I got to agree with [inaudible 00:33:31] because they don't think much of American blacks. We got there, we got the best welcome. People just wanted friendly ... They called me Mama, and I thought that was a high compliment because I don't call everybody Mama, but the people who I do call Mama are people that are dear, dear.

We got to see the high clip where slaves were put on ships, I forget what they call it, the wall of no return, or the hall of no return. Well anyway, it was probably the most sacred place I have ever been to because you could still feel the spirit of ancestors who were dragged from the continent and were unwillingly to these slave ships and it was very moving to all of us. As a matter of fact, many of us cried.

We found people who were much like us. There are only customs with just like ours. They cook their greens, they cook their veggies like we do. They love candied yams, they love green leaves, fish ... I was surprised to see men on the corner. They were

all on the corner like our men, but the men seemed to congregate like our men do on the corner and kind of talk, I guess they are solving the world's problems when they have respect there. I like that. The women were very independent and very, to me they were very strong women. They were not as engaging in many instances as the men, but I think they have social lives and we like that. More or less, kind of in the background, not so much ... I don't know how it is now, but this was maybe about 15 years ago, 10 or 15 years ago.

They were resourceful, I saw them making dew with venom because we went to Accra, which is the capital of Ghana, but we also went through another local town called [inaudible 00:35:40]. And the children went to school in a one little house with a dirt floor. But you have never seen children so disciplined. Teacher came out to talk to us and I kind of looked to see if the kids were thoroughly engaged in whatever the teacher told them to do. So it was positive, as a matter of fact, going back that one of my to-do lists. I loved it.

Speaker 1: The only other question I have is really more of a geographic and more specifically what areas of the city had you lived in and what areas have you taught in?

Speaker 2: Because of Katrina I was moved from New Orleans to Maryland. My oldest son lives in Silver Spring and just moved to Silver Spring in June or July of 2005 because he got a promotion ... He was in fair housing here and then he got to do national fair housing in Silver Springs, and then my girlfriend who- well that's another story, but she lives in Baltimore. She has a house midway to block and her parents big house on the other end of the block. And so, they would rest until we got there. And my son didn't have housing [inaudible 00:37:05] immediately, but Vanessa because she had access to two houses, we got to stay part of our stay in her house and another part because it was seven of us that journeyed further along to Maryland.

She was at that time, the director of human resources in and around the county in Maryland. [inaudible 00:37:31] is, I would say, 45 minutes from Baltimore and so being in personnel, she asked me ... I got there maybe a Thursday and she asked me Friday that I want to work, I'm saying, "No". I'm a victim I just came from Katrina, I don't want to work. Plus when I retire, I retired in '98. So this was 2005 all I was doing was some consulting and some other work. I wasn't ready to work. She said, "We could get you a reading job, I can get you in Monday" said Vanessa. She mentioned the pay. I said, "Okay". So I taught in and around the county part for years as a reading specialist at two elementary schools: Jessica Elementary and [inaudible 00:38:25] elementary. That's where I taught at.

I don't think I've taught at any place else, but I've taught in almost every level here in the city because as reading specialist you can go as low as first grade and you can go up to college. So I've don't that range of teaching. I did agile professor at Xavier, not Xavier, [Jillburt 00:38:51] and [Suno 00:38:53]. And then as a teacher advocate I was teaching teachers how to teach growth, I would say at elementary school and college and senior high school. Working with stewardess at Xavier and [inaudible

00:39:13]. One was an academics methods courses, and then at Dillard I was teaching reader reading.

My experiences with kids from almost from birth to college, through college.

Speaker 1: And when did you all get an opportunity to move back after Katrina?

Speaker 2: I moved back in ... I stayed in 2005 to 2010, I moved back closer to the school here of 2010. And I didn't have the money to rebuild because I bought a condo in Silver Spring. The housing market went upside down, so I wasn't able to recapture the money that I put into the condo. I sold it at a loss. So when I came back, I had maybe 10 thousand dollars and I also had 30 thousand dollars voucher to say that I could elevate the house, but 10 thousand would have been enough to renovate it. So lo and behold my neighbor who didn't leave, she stayed here, she told me about a grant called a blighted area grant. So I was able to get 95 thousand dollars and I was able to put the house back together and elevate it.

Speaker 1: And that was the house that you lived in pre-Katrina with your husband? Okay.

Speaker 2: I've lived there since '73.

Speaker 1: Okay, great. Where are you the cities done?

Speaker 2: Carlton to Block holm, Block holm Costco's.

Speaker 1: Well, I think that is all I need right now. If I think of anything else, I will let you know. And then the only other thing I've been asking have been more specific to [inaudible 00:41:13] the elders and say just a little bit about what made you want to take the class.

Speaker 2: Okay, family. As I said, family is a real big value for me. And my family because we had family reunions every five years. And we did some research, but it was like very primer, I know that my grandfather, he came to marry my mother from the plantation, alliance plantation. I know that they came through North or South Carolina, that's where they entered America through that area and came south. But I didn't know any of the particulars, so when I thought about this with the elders, I wanted to speak part of me that was always curious about and that really has been quite resourceful then.

And then I want to pass that legacy on to my granddaughter and my grandchildren, the justice for that was when I lived with white family, she was German. And I would look at her family tree and I would look at it and I said, I don't even have that, I don't own that. So it was always In the back of my mind, how do I get to this. What do I need to do it. And so [inaudible 00:42:43] elders came just at that time when I really wanted to make it real, just the thought.

Speaker 1: Great, well would you want to participate in another semester if you end up doing it again?

Speaker 2: Definitely.

Speaker 1: Okay, was there anything that you didn't enjoy?

Speaker 2: This is petty, but the lunches ... I don't like stuff on, I like just a plain sandwich. I like the pita bread, but I don't like whatever the sauce is that they put in it. I don't like the sauce, I just like the lettuce and the meat and nothing else. I loved the water, I loved everything else. I love the fact that we do get lunch, but that's about the only I would have changed. And if we could get to the main library because I think I'm not as [inaudible 00:43:40] as those resources. If I need to be, I find that if I want to go back any further I need to be able to access records [inaudible 00:43:49]. And I'm not familiar with that yet. I got exposed to it, but if we can get to that just to be able to access that information from that certificates and those other, what you call primary resources, I would like to read that.

Speaker 1: Okay, I guess this is a variation of the question I already asked, but is there anything we could do better next time?

Speaker 2: I think, first of all, your personality is such that, you've let us feel comfortable. Those that can write well and those that can't do it very well, there's support there, for people that need help. I like the fact that ... there was one little guy that we really get a lot from, I don't know his name, but I'd maybe look at that, scrutinize your help a little more better because he was like ... I had to ask him, "Are you sleepy? What's wrong with you?" I had to really ask him because he didn't seem to be into it.

Now that other little lady from the class, she's excellent. Maybe look at your support personality a little better. That has opened up the library more in my eyesight because I didn't realize how much the library changed. I had the idea of the stacks, when I was at Xavier we had the stacks, and we had the microfiche and film. It makes it a more up to date relevant resource.

I like the pace because everybody can proceed at their own pace. And I like the guidance, I like the field trips, the field trips that we had.

I think that's about it, I like everything that we did, we got enough to support us and yet we could move on into other areas if we felt [inaudible 00:46:16].

That's about it.

Speaker 1: Well if you think-