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Interview no. 1605

Emma Acosta

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Emma Acosta

Interviewer: Ariana Ornelas

Project: Farah Oral History Project

Location: El Paso, TX

Date of Interview: May 20, 2010

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Transcript No.: 1605

Transcriber / Summary: Alejandra Garcia

Emma Acosta born in El Paso, Texas in 1953 was employed at Farah for the summer program in 1969 and 1970. Acosta's limited family income was the main reason why she sought a job while she attended El Paso High School. Acosta would use half her wages to help support the family and the other half as extra spending money. Her job duties working for Farah originally were to sew a few stitches on children's pants. Acosta became bored with the receptiveness of the work. Her supervisor noticed a decline in the quality of her work, and she was assigned to another repetitive job of removing loose threads off of the pants. Due to her young age at the time, Acosta did not recall the hierarchical structure of the company or managerial styles, but she did remember the fun atmosphere she experienced working at Farah. She explained how music would be played throughout the factory, and how employees were offered unlimited food and beverages during breaks and lunch at no cost to employees. Acosta continued to work for Farah during the summers until she graduated high school in 1971. Acosta went on to earn a bachelor's degree in Business Administration at The University of Texas at El Paso and a master's degree in Business Administration from Webster University. She worked for the city of El Paso, starting as a county clerk, and retired as Director of Environmental Services. In 2010, Acosta served as a city commissioner for the district that included the Gateway Farah plant. Working for Farah, Acosta claims, motivated her to pursue higher education because she knew she did not want to work doing monotonous types of jobs like those offered at Farah.

Length of interview 24 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a