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Interview no. 1689

Rebeca Pimentel

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Rebeca Pimentel

Interviewer: Yolanda Chávez Leyva

Project: Voices from the Border Project

Location: Café Mayapan in El Paso, TX

Date of Interview: July 29, 2016

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Transcript No.: 1689

Transcriber/Summary: /Ana Urías

Summary of Interview: Rebeca was born in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico. Her family would move between Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico and Las Nieves, Durango, Mexico and eventually crossed into El Paso, Texas. Her father left them when she was four years old and went to El Monte, California. She has three younger siblings. When she was nine years old, they moved to El Paso where her mother worked as a waitress. Rebeca started going to seventh grade at Guillen Middle School when she was fifteen years old. She did not have any schooling before and had only been in the third grade in Juárez. She went to Bowie High School for ninth and tenth grade and attended “El Quintero” to learn English. She eventually did learn how to understand the language. Once she turned eighteen, she began working as a packer in the Farm Fresh Factory near Pellicano Street for about three years. She got married in 1984. When she was living with her mother, she would care for her siblings and could not go to school. In 1982, her mother married Bernando Villegas who acquired the paperwork to live legally in the United States. She talks about her experience in El Quintero and recalls that even though she had not gone to first or second grade, she was able to learn. After her packing job, she worked as a dishwasher. In 1998, she began working as a caretaker and in the afternoons would work as a dishwasher. Her two children, Sharon and Peter are 32 and 23 years old, respectively. Her motivation is her children. She attended Community College to study Child Development but she prefers working with older people. She has been a caretaker for seventeen years. She recalls going to the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Monastery on Cotton and Magoffin streets often when she was younger. Her advice to young people and children is to study and to prepare so that one day they can be successful in life. Her daughter graduated from Rose of Sharon Christian Academy and her son from El Paso Academy. She feels that it is beautiful to suffer and struggle because that is when you are able to appreciate and value life. Her mother was originally from Las Nieves, Durango and Rebeca took care of her when she got sick and until she passed. Her mother’s name was Joaquina Villegas.

Length of interview 26 minutes

Length of Transcript N/A