

Phisarys Sidemion interviewing Aubierge Dah-Hounnon
October 19, 2019
Bronx NY
White Plain Road, NY

Phisarys Sidemion: My name is Phisarys Sidemion and I'm interviewing Aubierge Dah-Hounnon in Barnes ave on October 19 at 5:30 pm. Did you give me permission to record this oral history.

Aubierge Dah-Hounnon: oui

PS: Where do you grow up?

AD: I grew up in Benin (Cotonou in West Africa)

PS: Describe your favorite food when growing up

AD: Favorite food when growing up is all African food when growing up even though there are so many African foods.

PS: Which one was your favorite

AD: Corn dough plus chicken legs

PS: Why was this food important to you?

AD: It wasn't that important it's just that my mother makes the most and I love pepper and also because this dish is also accompanied by pepper and I love it.

PS: Does food remind you of someone you know?

AD: Yes it does. It reminds me of my stepmother since she knows the period when certain fish are out and buys them. She also teaches me what kind of fish you can find in a certain season.

PS: Do you have a souvenir concerning the preparation of your favorite food with an elder?

AD: Oh yes, many souvenirs because in Africa you need to know how to cook and since you were little you always in the kitchen and cook with everyone to cook.

PS: What is actually your favorite food?

AD: My favorite food remains the same.

PS: Is there a significance beyond the food itself?

AD: Just that when I was little I eat the tomato sauce with plenty of oil and because now I'm a nurse I know what the specific amount of oil to use and not to use when making the food myself and my family.

PS: If you were to choose a celebrity to eat with who will it be and what will you eat with them and why?

AD: I will choose Steven Seagal because I really appreciate him and his movie when I was little and dream of seeing him and if I had money, he would be my husband and but unfortunately it was a dream.

PS: What would you eat with him?

AD: Because I appreciate him and want him to be happy, I would let him choose the food he wanted.

PS: Is there a food that you would only eat during an event?

AD: No, I can eat everything, but not cake since we only make them for an event.

PS: Who in your life makes the best food.

AD: I wouldn't know how to say it, but I would say my mom since that's what we all say. Everyone in my family makes the best food since they all learned it since they were little.

PS: What does eating well mean to you?

AD: Eating well is to have a healthy diet. When I said healthy is to have the right amount of calories in the food you eat.

PS: Did you have a favorite restaurant?

AD: My favorite restaurant is in African since that's where I come from it's called Tan-Gaya.

PS: Did you have food that you shouldn't eat and the reason why you shouldn't eat them?

PS: In general no but in Africa, we have...restricted food. To protect the life of my daughter and husband I shouldn't eat the sea crabs and many other things that I forget the name.

PS: If you could go anywhere in the world to try new food, where would you go and why?

AD: I would go to Canada because it's my passion if you have a passion there is no why. I just have to be there to be happy. Once I'm there I would then try out all food and picked my favorite.

PS: For you what is the most important meal of the day?

AD: I eat really badly so I can't tell what the important meal for the day is. But in general, the most important meal of the day is breakfast because during the day you spend a lot of energy and need breakfast to hold you up during the day.

PS: Tell me a history of someone you have a good time with when eating.

AD: Always with my sister. We go out to eat new food if we find a new restaurant, we try the food and have a good time together.

PS: When was the first time you cook and what did you cook

AD: This memory went far back I believe that it was corn dough and I cook it so badly. I believe that I was in middle school at the time.

PS: What rule to follow to have a healthy life?

AD: For a healthy life, you need to eat healthy food which contains the necessary calorie to be healthy it also has to do with the age of the person. A two-year-old kid can't eat the same food as a fifty-year-old person.

PS: In New York you can see that everyone gains weight and are obese, but it seems like you totally fine and good looking. Why do you think that's the case?

AD: As a human, we all love eating, but many people overreact and don't think about the long-term consequences of what they doing. We all know that the food is good, but we should not exaggerate when eating. That is what I think the problem is.

PS: What is your opinion of people that eat fast food all the time.

AD: For those who eat fast food restaurant it is bad because the restaurant doesn't really care about what they're giving to the people or the people's diet. They cook the same food for everyone. Most of the fast-food people eat is the reason for cardiovascular, heart attack, and many more.

fPS: You have the chance to experience a lot of food from everywhere in the world. What was your favorite, and which one would you like to learn how to cook?

AD: Well that's true I have experienced many foods but not that many, but I would like to learn more about food from France since food security is high and the food rules are respected.

PS: Is there any question that I didn't ask that you would like to add?

AD: You have basically answered every question, but the only thing I would like to add is this quote that said: "The food we eat is our medicine." If we know how to eat we will be in good health and won't be laying down in hospital that much. We must respect the food we eat. We should know what to eat and not just eat because everyone does.

PS: For the last question have you ever been hungry to the point that you were starving and have nothing to eat?

AD: Yes, I have. After my mom got kicked out of the house, without even a penny. I sometimes go to school without eating, come back without knowing what to eat, just drink water and go back to school, but still go to school and do well so we can get out of poverty.

PS: Thank you for the interview. Did you give me permission to share this interview with my teacher and classmates?

AD: Yes, with pleasure.