

Juan Gutiérrez interviewed by Hansel Gómez
May 15, 2020
Fordham Rd., Bronx NY

Hansel Gómez - My name is Hansel Gómez and I'm interviewing Juan Gutiérrez Fordham Road, on May 15, 2020 do you give me permission to record this Oral history?

Juan Gutiérrez - Yes

HG- Ok, where did you grow up?

JG-I grow up in the Dominican Republic in Santiago

HG- Why did you leave your country of origin?

JG- I left my country for the reason my parents said that here in the United States there are more opportunities to be successful in life.

HG-Now that you had been living in NY for a long time what do you think that you told me about your parents said that there are better opportunities in NY than in your original country?

JG-Yes, they were right in the United States I had a lot of opportunities such as free story and a better life

HG- what do you miss about your country of origin?

JG- I miss my family and the way I used to live.

HG- what don't you miss about your country of origin?

JG- Things that I don't miss is that when I was there, I used to see a lot of violence.

HG- What did your friends and family say when you told them you were leaving?

JG- When I was coming here that only person that knew it was my family was feeling sad because they knew I was going to leave for a long time.

HG- What were your expectations of the United States?

JG-My expectations were to live in a country with better opportunities and that I was always going to play with the snow.

HG- So you realize that you were going to play with snow all the time.

JG-As I see how there are different seasons, summer the winter I thought before I came here that it was going to snow always.

HG-When you talk about better opportunities you are talking about education and a better future?

JG-As I said opportunity could be school for example in my country there's not a lot of people that get to be professional because they don't have the support but here the United States offers you a lot of opportunities like go to school and go to college for free.

HG- Oh okay thank you, when and with who did you to NYC?

JG- I came with my two brothers and my father and the time was 2013.

HG- What this question is trying to say is how did you adjust to a new language?

JG-It was difficult at first. I saw people saying things that I did not even know what it means.

HG-You found it was a hard time, and easy time?

JG-it was hard because before I came here I used to have a cousin who was here for a long time but she was never in the house so I didn't get time to speak to her so when I was in the street and people told me something I didn't know what to say.

HG- So you are saying that the language was difficult?

JG- it was difficult at first because I did not know anything.

HG- What new opportunity were available for you when you come to NYC?

JG- Opportunity to have a better education.

HG-Were there any opportunities that were denied to you because you are an immigrant?

JG- Nothing has been denied to me yet because I am an immigrant.

HG- Do you think in the future they might deny you from a job and not accept you because you are an immigrant?

JG- Maybe because we don't know I just said yes because I don't know what's going to happen in the future.

HG- Where have you lived in NYC and why?

JG- I had lived in the Bronx because in here I got all my family that I know

HG- So you have all your family living in NYC?

JG- Yeah especially in the Bronx.

HG- What was the hardest part about moving to NYC?

JG- That hardest part about moving to NYC was living without my grandparents.

HG- Did you leave your grandparents behind?

JG- Yes, I used to live with them since I was little.

HG- How has your neighborhood changed since you got over there?

JG- Since I arrived it has stayed the same, always quiet.

HG-Is there anything about immigration like now that you moved from the Dominican Republic to the United States, what do you think about it, was it an easy or hard process?

JG- it was a hard process it lasts 10 years to bring me here in the US.

HG- So you saying it's a hard process what things could be changed in the immigration system?

JG-Things that they should change. It's a hard process because we need to bring a person from a country to another thing that should be changed. It cannot take a lot of time.

HG-What do you think about many immigrants coming from other countries to the United States? Do you think that's right? I think that's biased because some people come here looking for that American Dream but when they get here it doesn't work for them.

HG-Now that you have been living in NYC for a long time and you got better opportunities and better education about what you think about going to DR or stay in the United States.

JG-As I see right now, I could go to my country, but for a little vacation because I see here there is a lot of education and I could achieve my dreams.

HG-What do you think about the immigration going on in DR with the Haiti people. Do you think they should let the Haitian people immigrate?

JG-As I see there's immigration everywhere people looking for a place to stay and opportunity to work, but I see in the history before the Haitian people want to take over the Dominican Republic and you could immigrate, but no to take the country because before there was a lot of Haitians killed because Trujillo didn't like them to take over.

HG-You are saying immigration should be allowed, but only to work.

JG-Yes that's right everyone can immigrate look at me I came to the United States, I just came here to have a better opportunity.

HG-What do you think now with the Dominican Republic and the United States not only with the Dominican Republic but with countries around the world?

JG-I disagree with President Donald Trump because as I see in history this country has been built by immigrants.

HG-What similarities do you find between your country and NYC?

JG-There are not much of similarities because here we have light 24 hours in my country for a few hours.

HG-So since you don't have similar things, what else is different between those two places?

JG-The transportation is not the same for example in my country you could find a car that takes you to a place but not exactly where in my country a car takes you around the place and you have to walk.

HG-What fear as an immigrant do you have?

JG- I am afraid of something I didn't know was against the law and got sent back to my country.

HG-So you mean something that could be legal in DR and illegal in NYC?

JG-Yes as I see for example there is a lot of difference that there's a law that in my country is okay, but here there's no permit.

HG-From your country of origin tell me about people who did something important or historical to your country?

JG-There were three people who did something historical. Their names were Duarte Sanchez and Mella. They made Dominican to be independent from another country.

HG-Is there something that I have not asked you or told you that you want to tell me about this interview?

JG-So you did not ask me how hard it was living my family behind there everything I called them I was crying because I was missing them it was one hardest thing that happened to me.

HG-Knowing that was one of the hardest things for you in life but you knew you were going to move to another country with better opportunities. Was it worth it?

JG- it was worth it, but before I was thinking about that I was thinking about never going to see them again.

HG- Oh, that is another topic to talk about what do you think about those immigrants who come here and cannot go back to the country?

JG-I mean that is a choice you made for example you came here with a Visa and you do not want to go back, it's a decision you take.

HG- This interview has finished, and it was done to Juan Gutiérrez from Hansel Gómez May 15, 2020.