

October 27, 2011

Location: Rhode Island Foundation, One Union Station Providence, RI

Class: Oral History and Community Memory (AMCV 1903 G)

Narrator: William Smith

Interviewer: Araceli Méndez

Araceli Méndez: This is October 27, 2011. It is 4pm. I'm Araceli Méndez and I'm interviewing William Smith at the Rhode Island Foundation in Providence. This interview will take approximately an hour. If you'd like to take a break just let me know.

William Smith: I'm going to have to take a break about 20 minutes to 5pm because I have to run to the post office. I have to take the mail.

Méndez: Okay, and we can also end early. That's okay. I will be transcribing what we will be talking about and I will be able to give you an audio copy and written copy of our conversation for your records.

Smith: Okay, that'd be good.

Méndez: Then I gave you a consent form, which you can look over, and sign at the end.

Smith: Okay.

Méndez: If you have any questions thus far about the project or later, you're welcomed to contact me.

Smith: All right.

Méndez: Or give me a call, I'll give you my contact information once again at the end.

Smith: Okay, sounds good.

Méndez: Tell me, how did you end getting to Gorham?

Smith: I started in 1967. Is this going?

Méndez: Yes, this is.

Smith: I got hired from an ad in the paper. They were advertising jobs in the paper. Somebody told me. At the time, I was working at one place. They said go to this place; it's a great place to work for. It has good benefits. The works. I says okay. I did. I went down there, went through the formalities and got the job.

I started from the ground up, little jobs. Then I graduated to the press, you know press operator, actually making the silverware. I had done piecework. You have to do so many pieces per hour and that dictates what you get paid. I did that for 20 years and then after 20 years, I became a manager in that same department for another 5 years.

Personally, it was a good experience, hard work, and it was a lot of hours put in. Textron... when I first started at Textron did buy the Gorham Company in 1967. And that is all when I started. And so, like I said, they had great benefits. You didn't even have to pay for health benefits; they were free back in the day. Dental, Blue Cross, all the paid holidays... Good vacation time, bonuses at the end of the year, stuff like that.

Méndez: And that continued even after when Textron bought Gorham? Or did those benefits change?

Smith: Yes, eventually, they changed. Gorham... Textron sold Gorham, I believe in the 80's. I don't know the exact year, but Textron eventually sold Gorham. Sold it to Dansk. It is called D-A-N-S-K Corporation and from there they just kind of went to other corporations. The Gorham name still stayed, but in the meantime, all the benefits went out the window. We had to pay for our benefits now. We had to pay for this; we had to pay for that. So, even though it was a union environment, the union would fight for your pay and cost of living and your benefits too, they could only do so much cause the economy dictates, you know, what is out there.

Méndez: And how was... I know when Gorham started there were about 2,000 employees and when they closed it was down to 60. Did you see that? A lot of jobs being cut?

[4:18]

Smith: Oh yes, I was a casualty if you will because when I started... we are talking about factory with noise just a lot of noise. You'd wear earplug, safety gear and what not. You saw it started dwindling when... just little by little, it just started dwindling down and it started... they used to have a foundry. As a matter of fact if I could just... [Looks for a picture within his collection]

This would be a good picture. Here was the front of the building. There are the main offices. Around here there was a foundry they called it. And the foundry made bronze, plaques, statues. As a matter of fact, the water fountain that is in Burnside Park, Gorham made that. The one that is right in the middle and has all the bodies. If you take a look at it when you get a chance, I know there are a lot of people over there. That actual statue... I think it is made of bronze... Gorham made that. So they would make stuff like that for the whole world.

The beginning of the end was foundry actually took a lot of energy and up in the north, energy is expensive. So what happened is that they asked employees to maybe produce a little bit more so that we can keep operations here. That didn't happen. The employees,

they made their quota and they said, "No, I'm not making anymore". So, unfortunately, Gorham shut that part down and they went south. The reason Gorham went south is that it is cheaper labor and cheaper energy cost. So once that started... it started a ball rolling where all the operations through the whole plant. That's what happened.

It finally came to in 1986. In 1985, they sold the company... no I'm sorry...they moved the company to Smithfield. I think that...I thought I might have.... I might have ...[looking for a picture of the Smithfield plant]

Yes, in 1986 we were in Smithfield, smaller building smaller operations. Then eventually, in 1993, that's when myself and a whole bunch of managers...I wouldn't say get fired, but we...what's the word, they said, "Don't take it personal. It's economics". Eliminated, job elimination. That was it and that was 1993.

So from that point on, personally, had nowhere to go because I started when I was a kid and that was all I knew. That's all I knew, how to make silverware. It wasn't a trade job where I could take that and put it somewhere else because manufacturing was going overseas and locally there was no jobs available. What I experienced in 1993, people are experiencing now cause as you see there isn't a lot of jobs around. A lot of unemployment. Fortunately for me, I had a lot of friends that had their own business. They threw me work and I kept busy. It was a great run for me. I loved it. I thought I was going to retire from there, you know because most of the people I knew retired from there.

When I started there, I was 20 years old. The guys, they were 40. I thought they were old. [laughter] You guys are 40! It was a joke about it. They were retired. They started when I was...when they were 20 and they put 20 years into the place.

[8:37]

By the time of unforeseen circumstances, you know, it happened. They lost business because people weren't interested in it anymore. The...it was a new generation. The old generation what they did was when people got married they would get a starter kit of a place setting. Okay, you would say...sterling or stainless steel, whatever you want. Sterling was the main thing. You would get a 5-piece set, spoon, fork, knife; you know that type of thing and that was your started kit when you get married. What happened then was every 3 years, every anniversary you had another place setting and before you knew it you had a whole ...you know dinner set, but nobody does that anymore. Back in the day, everyone eats out. You got McDonalds, fast food...nobody really sits down and has dinner. So little by little all the stuff is not selling so what happens, you have to cut back. Orders don't come in. Now what happens is a lot of machines are not working because there is not enough of demand for it so eventually, little by little we went to a smaller building in Smithfield.

Made a run there from '90...no '86 is where they moved there to...I think it was...[looks for an article from the Providence Journal] I have an article from the paper. I think it was 2002. I saved these. Yes, okay, here it is. This is April 24, 2002. So they stayed in

Smithfield from '86 to 2002. What is that 16 years? It says "Gorham plant...Gorham Manufacturing Company to Shutter Smithfield Plant". And the Kentucky based owner, they went through several owners after Textron.

I can make a copy of this for you. I don't know if this would help you.

Méndez: I've read that article.

Smith: Oh you've read this article?

Méndez: Yes, when Brown Foreman from Louisville, Kentucky was owning the company.

Smith: Exactly because that's what they did. They went through...when Textron sold it to Dansk, they went to Lenox and then Brown Foreman. Everything that pertained to Gorham, I kept through the years. You know, to see what is going on with them. But that's what happened, you know. And actually there was only 60 silversmiths and other workers. It really went down...what does it say...[flipping through newspaper] page 9? I forget how many employees...yeah, well, it is in here somewhere.

They went...here is another article "Off the Table" you know over the years it was loss of shine. Here in '02 again. Here is an article on "Then and Now". See it's funny, I knew this guy. I used to work with this guy [points at man in picture]. I used to work with this guy [points at a different man in a different picture], you know back in the day. I don't know if you have seen this article.

Méndez: No, I have not.

Smith: [looking through another volume from the Providence Journal] They used to have a Quarter Century Club, which I didn't make. I was just a few months short of the Quarter Century Club. Cause I was there for 25 years. It says, "Members of Gorham's Quarter Century Club prepare to hold what could be their last gathering".

But that is what the inside looked like. You can see the windows and their work...they were probably tool makers or you know there were work benches all along the line. So you know, let's see [flipping through newspaper]

That's the part I was telling you about. A bronze foundry. There that's the foundry. What we can see is two guys, what they are doing is actually pouring hot metal into these molds. See how dark and dingy! That took a lot of energy. There is a whole other article here....

Méndez: From this picture in the front, what were the working environments like and safety?

[13: 39]

Smith: Safety wise, I worked there '67. Safety....[pause]...it wasn't that good and OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] formed in 1970. I could be wrong. I know it was in the 70's. And OSHA went around, I think all around...I think all through the United States, I believe. Don't quote me on it ...I know that when OSHA came they had to go revise or revamp, go through all these companies all throughout the state. And cite the companies that were having issues with you know...poor safety features on machine because people were losing their fingers whether it be by their own fault or the machine's fault. And a lot of them didn't have safety guards on the machines and they were dangerous conditions. A lot of chemicals were being used that were cancer causing—eliminate that. Benzene, acetone, all those, they found later in years that were cancer causing. They did eliminate that because OSHA said "You don't do that we will fine you X amount of dollars per day. Per machine. Whatever issues are cited, you know" They went through a lot of other manufacturing throughout the state.

Méndez: Did the union or the employees ever demand safer conditions before OSHA came about?

Smith: I'm not sure. I'm not sure. Cause what the safety stuff they had were I guess at the time in the companies mind...were safe. You know until things started developing...wait a minute people are getting sick from debris and fluid...debris...they had a big debris machine and what that would do is take all the metal parts that had oil on them. It would run through this bath in a basket like this inside and it would clean the oil off these pieces. Blanks they called them. So nobody every really gave it a thought. I guess because you had a job and you didn't want to make any noise. You know what I mean?

Méndez: Yes, and they were probably not used to anything safer?

Smith: Right, right, so I mean they would provide you earplugs because the noise was so tremendous. We had to wear safety toe boots because you could break a toe with the tools we were using. I just started when I was 19...20. I was young so I didn't know anything about machine safety other than that the machines I was running at the time were safe. As long as you run them right, and you are being thought the right way, there wouldn't be a problem. There were still issues with some machines of people having their hands in there and nothing is going to stop that machine from cutting their fingers off. I don't want to sound gross.

Méndez: Oh, no, it's what happened.

Smith: But it is what it is. Oh you know, just stop me...if you want to...you're doing good.

Méndez: Thanks!

Smith: I can go on because I have years of experience.

[17:35]

Méndez: I was wondering. This looks like a very very large building but from reading a few of the Gorham Perspectives, it seemed that there was a community.

Smith: Yes.

Méndez: And people were interested in knowing each other. Could you tell me a little bit about that?

Smith: It was a family. Before....I started there just before Textron bought Gorham and it was a family atmosphere. I don't know if you can see it. [Shows a aerial picture of Gorham] There used to be a train...like an actual train...running through the building as you can see it like the train track running right through there. That back there was the soap division, where they actually made this...they called it the polish. You know the polish for the sterling. So the train actually ran this way and right into there and dropped off supplies, whatever they had to do. You can't see it, but....oh you can see it here. See that little building?

Méndez: Yes, the white one?

Smith: Yes, all right that there was a carriage house, they called it. Right now it is gone. I don't know what happened. I guess it burned down. Some kids, somebody must have burned it down.

This used to be a carriage house when it had horses and carriages. You can't see it but back of this building used to be what they called a casino. I don't have pictures of that. The casino had a working...what do you call it...cook staff. You could get a decent lunch. It was just like a supper. Lunch was that big for just three dollars. They would really pack it on. That was just before Textron took over and you could feel it wasn't a family atmosphere. Then when the big conglomerate, they called it, Textron, all they worried about was numbers. What they did is they started saying get rid of the casino, it is costing us too much money. You don't need to feed all these people for that price; it is costing us too much money. Then they started putting the vending machines. These machines that were awful. Sodas, sandwiches...you know the sandwiches always stunk. You know for a dollar you'd get a sandwich. You don't know how long they had been in there. [laughter]

So that was the beginning. Textron was all about the bottom profit, the bottom line. You know what I mean? It was a massive building as you can see. I felt bad when they didn't save it. They were two years wanted to do condominiums or whatever. Then it was gone and they put a Stop and Shop plaza there.

This is actually is a picture of...I don't know if you want that...[Shows a picture of himself with his crew members]

Méndez: Yes, definitely.

Smith: The original I have. This is the original. I made a copy of it and I'm right there. [laughter]

Méndez: Oh wow!

Smith: I mean you can see me better on this. I'm right there. A lot younger and a lot more hair. This is around 67-68 when I started. I don't have the date on it, but this crew, is all the people that I worked with. This guy here is the main supervisor. The ladies they were secretaries. They would take care of your time cards and stuff like that. Unfortunately, most of these people are dead because they were older when I started. So you were saying about the Gorham Perspective. I do have one. [Shows a copy of the Gorham Perspective from the 1980's]

Méndez: Nice.

Smith: I don't know if you've seen it. I can make a copy of them.

Méndez: Actually, Brown has a collection of them.

Smith: Oh, you do?

Méndez: You got those in the mail or....

[21:53]

Smith: Yes, you would get those in the mail. I got two of these. This picture was in 1980. At the time *60 Minutes* came in Harry Reasoner. I think he is dead now. They had a story. They wanted to...at the time there was a big silver and gold was going sky rocketing...it was hurting us and these two Texas brothers. They're called Hunt, and they were trying to corner all the market on the silverware. They were trying to buy up all the silverware. Anything silver and it was chocking other companies like ourselves. Once they owned the whole bunch, they were in turn sell it to us at a higher price, but they got in trouble for that. So this is why *60 Minutes* came into our factory. To see what was going on, the operations and I happen to actually make it. Here is the camera. Here is around machine. [Points at a picture of himself in the Gorham Perspective]

Méndez: Wow!

Smith: That is me in the middle with the sideburns and the moustache. [laughter]

It says "Recognize these hands? Bill Smith flatware stamping". But after all this production you see here, they only showed my hands. When they did the thing on TV, "we visited Gorham factory and all these other stuff" and all they showed was my hands feeding the machine. That's where you can see the guy's camera just pointing at my hands. That is why it says "Recognize these hands?"

I've always saved this. This is what? 1980? This is 30..31 years old, this thing is.

Méndez: It's proof that you were on *60 Minutes*.

Smith: Yes, my hands were anyways. Okay...as far as Mashapaug Pond, I don't know much about it because we really didn't...I don't think there was any landscaping where people could go out and have lunch, with picnic tables, that kind of thing because it was in the back of the building. But we used to have one time as you can see right here as you can see here. There used to be. This might be...this is a newer version. [Shows a postcard of the Gorham building] In the newer version there was really all beautiful grass and there were certain spots where the employees could have their lunch, and they made...they got rid of all of this and made it a parking lot, which everyone was upset about.

Méndez: Well, it was beautiful.

Smith: Yes, right, it was beautiful, but they said that the upkeep of taking care of grass feeding it, and all that. I'm not knocking Textron, but Textron did a lot of cutting. The family atmosphere went out the window. You know what I mean?

[24:59]

Méndez: Was the train still running through the whole time you were working?

Smith: No. no, they stopped running when I got there. I don't know when they stopped, but you could still see the tracks. The old timers used to tell me "Oh yea, we used to have the trains come in!" just like I told you.

Here is another picture of me. [Shows a picture of himself feeding the machine from the *60 Minutes* interview] They gave it to me as a personal copy.

I don't know if I got anything else. This is a part of the crew I used to work with. This is a pressroom. You can't see a lot of the presses. That's me there.

Méndez: How many people would usually work in your department?

Smith: I've had seventeen employees in my department. This was...3...6...7...it was like 7 people, but she was the secretary. What the secretary used to do...we would have time cards or when you were on piecework, you had a set of cards...operation cards that you would have to punch on the clock. Then go set up the job. Punch off and punch on. The [inaudible] was called. Now you're not on piecework and your threading machine and any work could be ten pieces to ten thousand pieces. You would just stamp them out or do the operations on them.

Let's see what else I have...some articles.

Méndez: What's this book right here? [Points at blue notebook with "Weekly Time Book" printed at the front]

Smith: This book is an old timer's book. They would write their...[looks at clock] we have good time...they would write their time. It is called Weekly Time Book. Let me tell you how old this is...[looks for date]...I don't know how old this is. Back in the day, the wages per hour were from 25 cents to a dollar an hour. Then it goes back up here up to 2 dollars an hour. So this was a scale that would tell you how much you would make if you worked a quarter of an hour all the way to 60 hours. If you worked 60 hours a week for \$1.05 you would make \$63 dollars. Imagine that. If you worked 60 hours for \$2.00, you would make \$120 dollars. That is for sixty hours! Back in the day, that was a lot of money. They didn't take a lot of taxes back then and things were cheaper.

This was before...when I started working not in the factory, I did make a dollar an hour. A was sixteen when I started working. The person who had this book, you can see. You're not running out of tape are you?

Méndez: No I'm not.

Smith: Alright, The best I can guess is 1950. I don't know who. I can't make out the name. but he or she was just writing down what they did for the day like operations. It was like their own little...you know what I mean, record. This here I got...I actually bought... when Gorham in Providence was moving out. They got rid of all their wooden...desks, file boxes, file cabinets. They didn't want to take any wood to Smithfield. Everything was going to be all metal. They made one room, one gigantic room and they put all these wooden desks, secretary desks. You know with the nice tops and drawers on the side and drawers on this side. They were selling them for \$10. The stipulation is that you were going to haul that away.

I managed to get one. Some of the stuff was in there. Like this was there. [Points to the Weekly Time Book.] Some of the stuff I saved.

[Shows a pamphlet promoting the Gorham exhibit in the RISD museum] This was in RISD in 1984...1983. Now I remember I went there a few years back and see this actual piece. This is a beautiful piece.

Méndez: Very intricate.

Smith: You've seen it?

Méndez: No, I have not.

Smith: Whenever you get a chance, go to RISD. They do have it. It is...let me see if there is another picture of it...oh they don't. I wish they had the...I think it's made out of ivy, silver...doesn't say, but this is a beautiful piecework. I figured...I think it is on the second floor.

[30:10]

Méndez: Did you start collecting all...like newsletters and pictures, after? Or during your time at Gorham?

Smith: During. Like stuff like this, I did.

This is an advertisement. I can give you this. What this is... I don't know what year it was, but "This is a mark of quality craftsmanship by Jacob Hurd". Now Hurd is a car dealer back in the day. I mean look at that car. Buick on Reservoir Avenue. It was a postcard to this person F. R. Woodward on 333 Adelaide Avenue. What it is, is an advertisement of handwork, quality of a car and quality of what Gorham does.

When I found them, I just saved them. You can have this. Like I said, for years, I collected them.

Méndez: The people you worked with live in the neighborhood? You didn't live in the neighborhood?

Smith: I did.

Méndez: You did?

Smith: I lived all around the neighborhood if you will. When I started there...I want to say I lived in Althea Street in Providence. I used to walk to work because it wasn't that far. I used to walk. Well, I started when I was 19 and I did have a car, but the car would break down. I had these old cars that in the mornings would break down so I would walk to work. I stayed within the vicinity of Providence. I lived in Providence all my life. Right now, I live in Cranston. But between, I didn't go too far. Most of the people who worked there, did the same thing. They would either live in Warwick or Johnston or you know.

Méndez: Close enough?

Smith: Yes.

Méndez: May I ask what that blue slip is?

Smith: This is actually a handbook for Gorham, *Your job at Gorham*. I don't know what year this is was made, but this was helpful information about your job. It goes through the introduction and the table contents, being a new employee, what the rules, the do's and don'ts. 'Cause it was a highly secured place. For several reasons, it was silverware. You even had to have a background check. You couldn't just get hired off the street. You know my cousin could come in here, but your cousin could have a problem. He might have gotten arrested. You had to have security checks. We had time cards because everything was piecework. You know...stuff like that. [Looking through the handbook

and reading the contents.]Pay Day...Quitting Time...Errors in Pay. It was just an employee handbook.

[33:58]

Méndez: So with Errors in Pay, was that why people had their own way of tracking?

Smith: Yes, you had to because people made mistakes. You were on piecework. That was your paycheck. It wasn't like today. I don't even think anybody does piecework anymore because there's no factories, but when you get a job, you get paid by the hour. Boom! Call it done. This was your bible, if you will. People had record books. I did it myself because I would...you would get paid by the amount of work you were doing. It had to be quality work too. It wasn't like you were just throwing stuff in cause if you didn't do quality. You would get reprimanded for that and then written up or whatever. So you would be more conscious about it. You got to give a quality piece, no matter what you made, because that is the Gorham name.

You had to because of human error. You were counting on that money because let's say, I did all this work for 40 hours and every job that I did. You had to almost be a mathematician. [laughter] You worked hard and you didn't want to get ripped off. Even though it wasn't intentional, you still...people made errors. Now what happens, if you go complain, you have to go back with the boss through all the time cards. Go through them with the boss. Because sometimes say you had a job with 25 hundred pieces and you turned in 25 hundred but the clerk made a mistake and only gave you 2,000 pieces. You're short 500 pieces. Five hundred pieces equals x amount of dollars on your paycheck. So when you see it, you say "Wait a minute, I should have at least an amount of \$50 on my paycheck". It's not there. Why? Well what you can do is go back at least 40 hours with all the jobs that you did and just go through it. That's why they had that there so everyone got paid their deductions.

It was all the rules. You know what I mean? Safety. Here they're talking about safety. Here is a whole thing about Safety. They don't want you running up and down the stairs. [laughter]

Méndez: [laughter] You would think it would be obvious.

Smith: [laughter] Yeah, it was like "What? Are we in school?" You know what I mean? We are at a work place.

Safe Guards, Equipment...I don't know how old this book is, but they did provide it. Once OSHA came...before OSHA came...well I should take that back. I won't say that it was totally, you know, neglectful kind of thing. There were safety plans in tow, if you will, but OSHA came in and made them step up more. There is a lot of infractions here and the company did comply. They had to or they would be fined a lot of money.

Safety shoes were provided. Actually, they were provided at a minimum cost for all men in foundry and maintenance. The company would contribute one dollar towards the

purchase price. [laughter] So I know this book is old, but they would only give you a dollar. You go and bought a pair of shoes for \$10. They only give you a dollar back. It's funny. I haven't read this in a while. We actually had a medical and first aid. We actually did have an onsite nurse because there were injuries, unfortunately. Whether they were human error or ... they were serious and ambulance would come and take you to the hospital.

Telephone Messages...Physical Exams...They were all required for new employees...Let me see what else is in here. Smoking rules... I never smoked. They could actually smoke in your desk only, back in the day. Today, you can't even smoke in the building. They have a whole thing about smoking. You can't smoke through the plant, obviously. You know people could start a fire.

Disciplinary Rules... Stealing...[inaudible] Destruction. That kinda of thing. I mean any place. You get caught stealing here, you're off.

Then this other____. The Gate. There was a security guy at the gate cause it was...you were dealing with silver. Didn't want people, you know...we actually had to go through metal detectors every time you left the building.

Security men would be posted at doors. It was pretty...security was vital. Must be in practice...make sure...You really weren't allowed to roam throughout the whole building. If you worked in one area, you stayed in that area. It says here "Interdepartment Travel". No employee is to go to another department without knowledge or consent from their foreman or their department foreman. You couldn't because...it was just I guess a security reason.

Méndez: Does that mean they would check your ID in every building, or was it just if they caught you, you were in serious trouble?

Smith: Yeah you had to wear your badge. The badge I showed you. This was the actual badge. [Shows his employee badge from 1968] I took it off. This was inside a clip. That was my department I worked in and that was my employee number. You'd get in trouble if you didn't wear your badge. That is how strict they were.

There were all these things that you had to comply. Let me see what else...

[41:12]

Méndez: What is this "Educational System Profile"?

Smith: Well even back then. Okay, "In order to encourage employees to further their academic training, we encourage personal advancement. Promote higher degree or performance in their work." They would pay part of your education. That's what they did.

Like say you were going for a tradesman, because there were certain jobs that were you know for toolmakers... they called them. I was just a press operator. My job was not a trade job. I was a pieceworker, but there were other jobs, in that factory that were highly skilled and you had to go to school for that. And seeing that it was job related, they would pay a portion of that. You know, if you go outside of the plant and you said you wanted to further your education. That would be helpful for you, in the long run. Now you got a trade, you could take that anywhere back in the day. You could leave Gorham and say, "You know this company here that has similar work. You could probably go there and get more money." That was a good feature.

So they give you the qualifications. You must work there at least one year, you know that kind of thing. The class, all classes, should be an aide to the employee in the performance of their work at Gorham. So there it is right there.

"The class, classes, should be taken in an accepted school approved by the company." So the company would have to approve this. Well Brian College... or back in the day... or whatever, I forget what other schools there were out there for that particular work.

Suggestion plan. I really don't know what year this is. This is supplement page. Gate Control. Yeah you had to have special stickers for your car, motorcycle, whatever. It had to be just like an inspection sticker.

So any other questions?

Méndez: That's it.

Smith: Am I talking too much for you?

Méndez: No, not at all.

Smith: I mean, I hope I'm helpful to you.

Méndez: I wish we could talk more! Maybe once we have a museum, you can stop by and we can talk more then.

Smith: I would love to. Really, I would really would love to. I have passion about it because even though the end results I had to go through, it wasn't pretty. That was my life and I was supposed to retire from there. It did hurt. What happened in 1992, I bought a house. First time buyer...owner, I was on my way. I only have one daughter. She needed braces. I had bills. In 1993, six months later, I lost my job. I did not see it coming. I didn't know what to do. That was my life. I mean I survived. I got a good wife. She was very supportive. She was a stay at home mom. She didn't really have to work. I made enough money. I made pretty good money there and we were comfortable. It wasn't like I was getting rich, but it was a good paying job. We didn't have a Plan B. So long story short, my wife was like okay. She is smart enough so she went back to school a couple of times. Because things had gotten away. She eventually became a nurse. That

helped out and then I came here. I've been here ten years. I had other jobs in the mean time.

Méndez: Thank you so much.

Smith: No problem. I mean if you ever want to do this again. Like say you had another question, maybe I missed something or I don't know.

[End of Transcription, 45:21]