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Interview no. 1550

Aida B. Torres

Tula B. Sanchez

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Aida B. Torres and Tula B. Sánchez

Interviewer: Homero Salinas Vera

Project: Bracero Oral History Project

Location: Edinburg, Texas

Date of Interview: May 1, 2003

Terms of Use: Unrestricted

Transcript No.: 1550

Transcriber: Myrna Avalos

Aida Bareda Torres was born on July 31, 1934, and her sister, Tula Bareda Sánchez, was born on December 1, 1935; they were both born in Mission, Texas; their father worked as a local doctor, and coincidentally delivered Aida; during the 1950s, both girls began working as typists, during the summers, at a bracero processing center in Hidalgo, Texas. Aida and Tula recall their time working as typists at a bracero processing center in Hidalgo, Texas, during the 1950s; they initially learned about the job through word of mouth; upon being hired, they were contracted with the federal government, and given government classifications; although there were different shifts because the center was open twenty-four hours a day, they worked the morning shift, which lasted eight hours; the girls were allowed to take breaks, and they often brought a sack lunch; the braceros were brought into the center, which was a huge warehouse, and they were taken into holding rooms; they were then brought into a big hall and grouped according to where they came from so that they could stand in line and wait for their information to be taken at the screening station where the girls worked; the braceros would hand a paper to the girls, and they would ask basic biographical questions and type out the answers; the girls would then hand the paper back to the workers so they could take it to the next station; oftentimes, the girls would get bored of asking the same questions, and they would ask about the men's scars or wives to break the monotony; although the girls never saw much of what happened beyond their station, they had heard about the braceros being fumigated; the girls also mention that their uncle had a store downtown, which was often frequented by braceros; later in the interview, Tula mentions Jesse Trevino.

Length of interview 24 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a