Interview no. 1702

Larisa Veloz

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Recommended Citation
Interview with Larisa Veloz by Yolanda Leyva, 2019, "Interview no. 1702," Institute of Oral History, University of Texas at El Paso.
Dr. Larisa Veloz explains the bi-national Bracero Program which took place from 1942-1964 which invited temporary workers from Mexico. Most of the workers contributed to the agricultural fields but a few worked at factories. The Bracero Program began as a way to alleviate labor loss during the World War II but continued for over twenty years after congress renewed the contracts.

Over 4 million contracts were granted but only to young Mexican men aged from 18-45 years old who had agricultural experience. Individuals went to contracting centers across Mexico and underwent an interview process including physical exams. Once completed, individuals were sent to farms across the country where they stayed from 45 days to 6 months.

Women often times were left to take care of the land and their families in Mexico. Younger women also worked at the processing centers for the Bracer Programs where they typed up contracts and conducted interviews. These inner workings are regarded as a “vital part” of the Bracero Program.

The program came to an end in 1964 due to pressure from the union organization.