

## Houston Asian American Archive

### Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

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Interviewee: Violeta Panis

Interviewer: Patricia Wong

Date/Time of Interview: July 27, 2016 at 11:45AM

Transcribed by: Patricia Wong and Chris Johnson

Edited by: Priscilla Li (6/1/2017)

Audio Track Time: 1:24:29

#### Background:

Violeta Panis was born in Agoo, La Union, Philippines. The oldest of six siblings, she lived with her grandmother from age nine through high school. She completed her nursing training in the Philippines and worked for a short time at the Chinese General Hospital in Manila before immigrating to the U.S. at age twenty-four. She came to the U.S. through an agency that placed Filipino nurses in U.S. hospitals, and was placed in Methodist Hospital. The rest of her siblings and her parents eventually moved to Canada. After working in several different units at Methodist for over forty years, she retired. During those forty years, she married her husband, Rolando Panis (also interviewed for this archive), and raised five children, including Christy Poisot (also interviewed for this archive). She now actively participates in church, gardens, and helps take care of her grandchildren.

#### Setting:

The interview centers on the areas of labor and capital to develop a working history around the context of childhood experiences, family life, and daily activities. Much attention is given to her nursing career and experiences soon after immigrating to the U.S.

The interview took place in the office of Dr. Anne Chao in Fondren Library. The interview took a little less than an hour and a half. During the interview, a loud conversation happened in an adjoining room that can sometimes be heard in the background of the recording.

#### Interviewers:

Patricia Wong recently graduated from Rice University at the time of this interview. She majored in English and worked as a HAAA intern from 2015-2016. She is interested in learning more about Asian American identity.

#### Interview Transcript:

##### Key:

PW	Patricia Wong
VP	Violeta Panis
...	Speech trails off; pause
Italics	Emphasis
(?)	Preceding word may not be accurate
Brackets	Actions (laughs, sighs, etc.)

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**PW:** Okay. This is Patricia Wong. I'm here today to interview Violeta Panis for the Houston Asian American Archive oral history project. And today is July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016. We're here at about 11:45. So, if you could go ahead and just state your name and maybe talk about where you were born?

**VP:** Okay, my name is Violeta Panis. Uh, my maiden name is uh Sison—S-I-S-O-N, and, um, I'm from the Philippines. I was born in Agoo La Union. It's a little town.

**PW:** Okay, so, do you want to tell me more about the town, like what was it like? Rural?

**VP:** Uh, it's a beautiful place. Uh. There's like—where we live, it's like, between the mountains. Like, uh, it's on the left side, and then a few miles—the, the beach. There are the beach. And temperature is not like Houston. [laughs]

**PW:** Not like Houston? [laughs]

**VP:** It's like temperate. And uh it's always—it doesn't get too too hot like here—dry heat and it's breezy. It's real nice.

**PW:** Sounds wonderful. So, did you have any siblings, and what are their names?

**VP:** Okay, I have five ... uh children. First daughter—uh, first kid is Christy. And uh Rolando Jr. And Judy Grace, Regina Panis, and, uh, Joseph.

**PW:** Okay, great. What about your siblings?

**VP:** Oh! [PW laughs] Okay, uh we are all six [inaudible] ...um I have. I'm the oldest, and my, uh brother Mark, and our next one is Erlinda, Alegria, Cecilia, and, um, um, Bonnie.

**PW:** Okay. So you're the oldest?

**VP:** Mm-hmm.

**PW:** So, I know that you lived with your grandmother for some time.

**VP:** Mm-hmm.

**PW:** When did that happen?

**VP:** Think I was already ... first, maybe second grade. I was nine years old. Maybe, going on third probably—third grade, and I moved. Um, my—I think it was just her, um, asking my parents that, to—that I stay with her [laughing]. I think that's done before. And uh since my—my mom had another child and, uh, I think, when I was nine, I probably—they had two already after me. And then, uh, that was okay with them that I stayed. And apparently I did not have any problems, so I stayed! [laughs]

**PW:** Did your grandmother live far away from your parents?

**VP:** Um, in the city, they, yeah—it's like eight hours, six to eight hours away. 'Cause I'd go all in the province. It's like—yeah, that's like when you take the bus. Train's longer—yeah, longer train ....

**PW:** So did you get to visit with your siblings often?

**VP:** Like you, I, I you know, maybe during summer vacation or Christmas I'm with them. And then Manila. That's okay. [Laughs]

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**PW:** And all of them were raised at home as well, with your parents?

**VP:** Yes. Well later on, um, no, I wasn't there anymore. They, they would come and stay with my grandparents for a while, but not like me. I stayed there till I graduated high school.

**PW:** Okay, so can you tell me some things about your school, what school was like in the Philippines?

**VP:** From, uh, grade school? [laughs]

**PW:** Yeah, sure, like what language was it conducted in, for example.

**VP:** Oh, okay, um .... Actually, we had the English language. That's only not too long ago that they, uh, reprimanded the Tagalog language, which is, you know, the National one. So our books were in English, so. That made it easier for me, I guess. 'Cause in college, too, all the books, and when I came here, I was able to speak it, but then it's still different [laughs] when you speak with the people who are, who lives here. It was hard to—you had to really listen. It was hard to understand, some people. [Laughs]

**PW:** And you also speak Tagalog and Ilocano?

**VP:** Right.

**PW:** So, how did you learn those two languages?

**VP:** Well, the Ilocano is already our dialect, so that's spoken at home. And the Tagalog, when, uh, like—I think you speak that, speak both of them. Uh well, the Tagalog is mainly because you have friends who are Tagalog and, you know, have to—but I speak the Tagalog better than Ilocano. Because I have to think when I speak dialect. [Laughs]

**PW:** And what did your parents do for a living?

**VP:** Uh, my mom, well, she stayed home for a while. And, uh, when we were all in school, she—there was the ... you call it 'seamstress'? No .... She, sews, um, shirts and stuff. Um, I think she was doing that full-time for a while, even we are ... all in school.

Uh, my dad, um, he was in Bureau of International—it's like an inspector job, all those boats coming in, like that. That's what. But later, somehow, maybe he was laid off. Then he decided that that family goes back to the province, and needed business with tobacco. Um, by buying and selling. And, uh, somehow maybe, even the big family, um, that wasn't helping much. Then he tried starting a restaurant. We were helping [laughing] the restaurant, too. Everybody, my grandmother's involved, my mom. But, prob—probably did not click, so we went back to the city

**PW:** So, uh, I was asking because future historians might be interested to know, like would your family be considered like poor, or well-off, or in-between at the time where you were growing up?

**VP:** Mmmm, I think, um, I wouldn't say, 'poor.' Especially with the five, uh the six of us. No, 'cause, uh, with, uh, when I went to college, my grandparents had to help, you know, fund the school, and even in high school because we paid some kind of fee. And there are—well, since I was with them, they were helping pay some of my tuition—tuitions.

**PW:** So, when did you have to decide to become a nurse or specialize in nursing?

**VP:** Okay, well, because I wanted to come to States, and uh that's encouraged anyway through, sort of, people to go abroad. 'Cause you have better opportunities. So, I went. I went for it. For the monies [Both laughs], for, you know, the adventures, too.

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**PW:** Okay, so did you go to nursing college in the Philippines?

**VP:** Uh-huh.

**PW:** Which college did you attend?

**VP:** Uh, well, first you have to take the pre-nursing, which is like, in the MCU. It's—I forgot. It's Manila University. And, uh—and because I want to hurry up to finish, summertime I went to the Dagupan College, which is not—it's not far from Agoo. And then, the school is like Chinese General Hospital. And they have the school of nursing there, and that's where I graduated. But it says here, two-year course, the question, but it took me—it took three years to finish. I think, I did not take the Bachelor's degree. I want to hurry up and come to States. [Laughs]

**PW:** Okay, so, where is the Chinese General Hospital, and is that where you were studying?

**VP:** Yeah, that's in Manila. Yeah. And, uh, I had to stay in the dorm, that time. While we were in the school. But, in the weekend, of course, my uh my parent's house, just take a Jeepney and go home. Help with the chores at home. [Laughs] Or, that's what I—that's when I do my laundry. [Laughs] And eat some, you know, home-cooked meals. [laughs] That's always good. But, most of the time when I'm there, then I'm in charge of doing the cooking, and then the washing, and all that while my parents worked.

**PW:** So, what age were you when you finished and graduated—?

**VP:** —graduated, I graduated, gosh ... maybe twenty-two? I can't remember. Think I was twenty—'cause I came here. I was already twenty-four, and I worked about a year, almost two years after I graduated. So, twenty-two, twenty-three.

**PW:** So, what was it like to work in the hospital, just after you graduated?

**VP:** Over there?

**PW:** Yes.

**VP:** Well, we'd been—as a student, you're already working there. Uh, [laughs], they, they, the—you know, you're actually—for the, uh, clinic experience, you are already working there. So, it's— um, I don't know how to describe it. It's just like, not big change. But if you're the staff, then of course, you—you're responsible. If you're a student, it's a little bit different. Um, working there, okay ... It wasn't hard. I don't know what else to say, how to describe that. [Laughs] Uh... because I was in a charity unit, and a lot of times, I'd work nights, the night shift. There were a lot of, you know, really sick, sick people. That was just hard. That's the night shift. That was a little hard for me—different.

**PW:** So, when did you meet your husband? Was it around that time?

**VP:** Uh, I was already in the third—third year in nursing? Yeah.

**PW:** And, how did you meet?

**VP:** How did we meet?

**PW:** Yes.

**VP:** He was my third cousin. Well—yes, [laughs] he's my third cousin, but then we, we were not close; I didn't even know that he was my third cousin. They live, maybe uh closer to the town, and it's not—maybe not half a

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mile from my house. But, I really—I only met him when I was already in college.

**PW:** So, at what point did you decide to start looking into coming to the U.S.?

**VP:** Um, after I graduated, um, it seemed like my, my mom, or my parents, or even my grandparents wants to, you know, ‘Go ahead and, and go abroad and make some money or something!’ [Laughs] Uh but I wanted to stay for a while and work there, you know, for at least a year. I want to stay ... here. And then, but, I really wanted to come here, too. To the States.

**PW:** So, what was the process like to apply?

**VP:** They have, uh, like, some agency that helps, um, fly. They say, ‘Fly now. Pay later!’ [laughs] So, I went there with a group of the nurse—nurses. And, uh, I dunno how I met the lady. Um, just applied, and, uh and again, that was funded—you know, my grandparents helped pay for all my pocket money, and other preparations where you have to have a fiscal exam and all that to come. Also, they require, um, um, like English proficiency tests, and, uh, this agency was connected to the Methodist Hospital. So, we already have a job when I came. We were assigned to complete work already.

So, when I came, they had the dorms, and uh go to see—is it enough money at that time? [Laughing] I know I wanted to send money already. But, I still had to, you know, find your way around. Where's the stores? Then, I don't know. There was a lot of different things you had to learn when you first came here.

**PW:** So, going back to the agency, you said that the agency itself had a connection with Methodist?

**VP:** Uh-huh.

**PW:** So, did you—were you at all concerned with where you wanted to go in the U.S., or you were happy to come to Houston?

**VP:** Um, when they said Texas—‘You're going to Texas!’ And the mentality of a lot of people, ‘Oh, you're going out to the countryside! Like uh where the Tex—where the cowboys are?!’ I said—I didn't know what to expect. It—you know, it's a big city. It's not as big now. You know, they have all these buildings now. But still, huge for me.

**PW:** And was it common for nurses, maybe from the Chinese General Hospital to use the same agency, or to come to the U.S.?

**VP:** I think it's mainly not just from my school, but different nurses, different colleges. Um, they, um—they just applied to—to get jobs. Because—because I have maybe, very few nurses from my, my school applied at specific agency. And, uh, I've met, you know, different nurses, and they came from different universities. And that was—we were like 21 of us. [Laughs] From different schools.

**PW:** So, you mentioned that you lived in the dorm?

**VP:** Dorm, in school? Mm-hmm.

**PW:** When you came here, to work at Methodist.

**VP:** Oh, and here, too? Yes, they have the [inaudible 2 words] Hall. And, that's—there's, uh, underground, you know, you can visit passages connected to the hospital. And that's, that's okay, too. But it wasn't far. No, the dorm, you can just walk to the—it's better, I think, and less—it's kinda scary, I mean, underground.

**PW:** Do you remember, by any chance, how much it cost to live in the dorm?

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**VP:** Mmm, no. I can't remember.

**PW:** That's fine. [Both laughs] So, what were your first impressions of Houston, or Texas? I know you said you didn't really know what to expect coming here.

**VP:** Mmm, like, um, I don't know. But, uh 'cause I'm associated with a lot of the Filipinos who are already here, too. Um, I don't know. I'm just excited [laughs] to come to be here. Uh, like, uh, in the hospital, um, since, you know, uh I—I've spoken English already, but then, being a nurse, and communicating with the doctors, it's still scary, and hard. [Laughs] Because, you know, when they talk to you, you're not familiar with the accent, or—or general stuff in the medicine in the hospital. But eventually, you know, slowly, you learn. But, I'm afr—I'm ashamed to say when the phone rings, I'd rather not answer it! [Laughs] Might be a doctor giving an order, you know, stuff like that. [PW laughs] But, um, uh, like people in—in Houston .... I don't know. Uh it's just maybe patient care. Uh the relations, but not very few friends outside, because mainly we associated as—start—just, you know, with the Filipino friends here. And they were very nice in hospitals, showing us around, and, uh, you know, places to go and eat and stuff.

**PW:** So, did you know any of these Filipino friends before you got here?

**VP:** No, no, just uh meet them, through other nurses.

**PW:** So, when—

**VP:** Even though our group itself, you know, we don't know each other in the class, but maybe there's a couple of the nurses who came in the same province. And then they would go with them. You know, I found, um, a lady who is uh—became a roommate, and I was in a room with them. And [laughs] a lady that's been here for a long time. And she helped me, too. Made me work with her at night if she needed extra help, uh, during the night.

**PW:** So, what unit were you working in when you first got here?

**VP:** It's, uh—it's like, uh, medical-surgical unit. But mainly surgical. Because uh, I was with—we were taking care of the open-heart surgery then. DeBakey. [Laughs] He was so popular at that time. Yeah.

**PW:** So, oh—what year did you come to the U.S.? You haven't—

**VP:** What year did I come? In '71, 1971, March. And, when I—you know, it's like—it's still cold that time, when I arrive. And when I saw the trees, I said, 'Oh, what happened to the trees? All this—' Uh, uh how do you call this? It's like um they're hanging on the trees, and it's, you know, like winter, no leaves.

**PW:** Icicles? [Laughs]

**VP:** No, no, it's not. It's like uh, in the sea—you describe it like weeds, the—I can't tell. I don't know what you call it. They're just hanging on trees, it's like it reminds you of the scary movies. [Both laugh]. I said, 'Oh, my gosh, why—?' I didn't know how come. 'Their trees are like this?!' [laughs] That was funny, I think. Uh that, that stuck in my mind.

**PW:** So, when did your husband come to the U.S., then?

**VP:** Um, after a year? He wasn't—I wasn't married with him then. He was my boyfr—uh fiancée. He went uh he went to California. Yeah, and he found a job there. But my friend here, says, 'Why, why don't,'—in San Francisco—and my friend here says, he has a job for him. He says, 'Tell him to come over!' And, uh, then, he joined me here.

**PW:** So, when was that?

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**VP:** It was already—he came about '72, February. And, uh, I went—met up with him in like, May that year. And then he came, joined me here, in I think later part of July. We married in August, after my birthday. [Laughs]

**PW:** So, then, where did you guys live together? Where'd you first move?

**VP:** There was uh an apartment not far from the medical center, from where I work. I could walk it, or just, they have a shuttle bus then. Or maybe my friend, I could hitch a ride with her, who lives in an apartment next door. Or, yeah, the bus, or walk, or through my friends, when I'd go to work. Uh, he went to leave, got a car later, [laughs] got to have a car.

**PW:** So, do you remember, like, what was the neighborhood like?

**VP:** At the apartment complex?

**PW:** At the apartment complex.

**VP:** Um, there were a lot of Filipinos, my friends who lived there. And there was a lady from New York across us. Uh, different people, but you don't—you don't see them. I know there's a nice swimming pool. [Both laughs]

**PW:** That's good. So, um, I know you mentioned this before but I don't want to know if you want to say on the record. What were you—like, what was your first pay like when you came to the U.S., and how does that compare to what you were being paid in the Philippines before you came?

**VP:** Oh. Well, the value of the Philippine money is—you know, of course U.S. is much bigger, and because you are able to—even though you don't get paid much, but you're still able to send—send money, or try to, the first couple years. [Laughs] Uh, what was the question again? [Laughs] How do you compare the money? The monies?

**PW:** Yes.

**VP:** Well, if you're spending the money uh in the Philippines—you send the U.S. dollars in the Philippines, then that's good for the people there because, you know, the value's bigger. The first, well, I didn't have much 'cept the dorm and maybe groceries. That was it if you're single. 'Cause you don't wanna go out. [Both laughs] People would take us out, you know. Maybe you don't really pitch in or spend. They just friendly, and feed you, and .... [Laughs] Like that.

**PW:** Mm-hmm. So, you mentioned sending money back home. Was that for your siblings or for your family in general?

**VP:** Yes, yes for my family in general.

**PW:** Okay, so, at that time, when you first came here, were—how many other Filipino nurses were working at Methodist, or in the medical center in general?

**VP:** Hmm, uh probably you can tell, in my unit only, it's—it's, um...I think a majority is uh Philippine. 'Cause I remember three of us—Australian—was she Australian .... Yeah, we have a couple Australian nurses in my unit. But, uh—and, uh, American nurses, but not—I think we out, we outnumber them, I believe, yeah. We have more Filipino, and some Canadian. Yeah. They were recruiting nurses from everywhere it looks like. Especially when they built the medical center, and became bigger, bigger, and popular.

**PW:** So, it sounds like there is a strong, like, community of the Filipino nurses inside and outside of work.

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**VP:** Mm-hmm.

**PW:** Did you find that helpful when you first came?

**VP:** Oh yeah, yeah, very much so. You feel like, at home, because everybody cooks, cooks their you know, their favorite dish, and it's Philippine.

**PW:** So, do you feel like, then, that you experienced any sort of discrimination at the workplace or outside, because—

**VP:** Am I allowed to say that? [Laughs]

**PW:** [Laughs] Yes, if you feel comfortable!

**VP:** Uh, I don't know. Yeah, I—yeah, there's this discrimination. Even at—I believe in the pay too. 'Cause, maybe because they're saying you—you don't speak fluent English like the others. I'm not sure. But, yeah, you feel it.

**PW:** So, I know you mentioned that you started out with Dr. DeBakey in the medical-surgical kind of unit. Did you move to any other units later in your career?

**VP:** Yeah. Later, um, uh—I said, there was a—the stroke, post-stroke patients. I stayed there for a few years, not—I didn't stay long because [laughs] it seemed like it's a slow recovery for—for those who are sick, and, it's like, um, you have to have guys, or orderlies to help you. 'Cause they're, you know, weak, weak uh maybe waist down, or maybe half of the body. Then it requires some lifting and stuff, pulling and all that.

Um, I said, 'Oh, I want a unit where I could see my patients recover fast.' [laughs] So, I went to—to the outpatient department. They didn't have it at first, I think. They didn't have that unit. But then when they opened up one, I applied to transfer. And I forgot about it. And Monday, this head nurse says, 'You're gonna still come to the unit—our unit.' Then, I moved again. That one I stayed for the longest. Because you're off the weekend. [PW laughs] And uh, you see your patients. It's a post-surgery, like after surgery. They go to recovery room, and then they come back to the—um like it's all over then. They are prepared to go home. So, you see them out and about after like a minor surgery. It's not a big, big surgery. It's uh it's the outpatient department, so they go home. And, I like that, and I enjoyed that.

**PW:** Great, so how many years approximately would you say you worked in each?

**VP:** Maybe, I'll look at my (?) [VP, PW laugh]...Uh. Maybe, in the medical-surgical unit, or the cardiovascular unit ... It's hard. I can't remember now. But I know when I went to the—the stroke unit, maybe I stayed there a couple years, or three years. Then I went to, um, the outpatient. I can't remember. Sorry.

**PW:** Oh, that's totally fine.

**VP:** But, I stayed in that one. I stayed in medical center for a very good while, too. And, it's been a while; I can't remember. I can remember when—my kids, that one time, I—you know, I said, 'Oh, it's okay. I can be—I can take the charge position.' And then, when your kids are sick, and they call you, and, uh, I—it was hard for me. So I shouldn't have—'Oh, I'll just be a staff nurse.' 'Ca[laughs] use they call you, and if the coverage is, you know, not enough nurses, you have to go work. And, uh, I don't know if you read it, but, it was my fourth child. She was seven months already. Finally, my husband's mom, my mother-in-law, decided that he'd sponsor her to come, since I did too. Go ahead, and come to help out, which was a blessing. A huge blessing. She—she babysat my kids.

**PW:** So, going back to your kids, uh, when did you decide to start having children?

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**VP:** When did I decide?

**PW:** Yeah.

**VP:** It just happened! [Both laugh] I said, I want to have—after marriage, at least wait a year before I would—you know, I would start a family, but then people said, ‘Oh, maybe you are both, uh—can’t bear children.’ And my husband didn’t feel right with that. [Both laugh] So, uh, I got pregnant, the second year? No, right away, actually. [Laughs]

**PW:** So, and, you mentioned that you had—

**VP:** —and then at work, after I have like every two years, my supervisor probably, you know— ‘cause you get pregnant, of course you go, leave, at least two months or three months after. And my supervisor said, ‘Do you even know what’s causing all this?’ [Both laugh] ‘Must be the water,’ somebody would say.

**PW:** So your kids were all two years apart, then, or approximately?

**VP:** Mm-hmm. Except, um, my second and my third has been a little close. And then my mother-in-law says, ‘Hmm.’ [Laughs] ‘We need to do something!’

**PW:** So, how did having your children affect your career then, beside your supervisor making that comment?

**VP:** Oh well, I had—it was, well—at that time, I’m younger, you know. I could go, go, go, go. Winter, rain, you know, I have to bring ‘em to the babysitter before my mother-in-law came. But, um, Christi, you know—there is a pre-school, or a nursery. She would—I would bring her. And there are little old ladies, Filipino ladies, who are really into babysitting, you know, for a fee. You know, bring ‘em to their house. But there’s that lady who would—who they loved. And she mainly helped out.

**PW:** So, when you started having children, did you move to a different area, further from the medical center?

**VP:** Yeah, um, I had to! [laughs] Um, like, we were in this one bedroom apartment. And then we bought a house, a second—a second-hand house. But the owner had a lot of kids, too, and that was like, uh, three or four-bedroom house. Four-bedroom house, yeah. And then, I don’t know. Somehow, we moved to another place after that. But, uh, we went to Sugar Land, maybe in ‘89. That was, uh, at first, my kids were going to Corpus Christi. And then we moved to Sugar Land. Then they have to be in a public school. They didn’t like that! [Laughs]

**PW:** So, why did you decide to move to Sugar Land?

**VP:** A lot of friends are buying houses there, and we saw, it was a nice place. Yeah. It’s not a lot of—it’s not that crowded yet, at that time, too. Yeah. Um, actually, my husband wanted to go to Pearland. That’s still like—that’s not, uh, as improved, or they don’t have any malls. It’s like a farm, farm area at that time, too. But, my kids didn’t want to go there. I don’t know. They don’t want to farm. But look at it now! [PW laughs]

**PW and VP:** So—

**VP:** Big houses and everything.

**PW:** So, what was, like the neighborhood that you moved into in Sugar Land at the time, like, were there a lot of Filipinos or Asians?

**VP:** Yeah, I think, uh, yeah. My neighbor when I left was Philippine, a friend of mine. Then, yep, you’re right. It’s mainly close friends. Yeah. Then, different areas, yeah. Mainly, yeah, Philippine area. [Laughs]

**PW:** And, uh, when you were raising your children, what languages did you speak at home?

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**VP:** My husband and I, um—I would—we were speaking the Tagalog and Ilocano. But then we did not speak—we'd speak to them. When we speak to them, we would talk in English with them. Which is a mistake, I think. We should have, uh—they—they can understand more, but not—they did not learn to speak it. They'll say some few words, bad words, maybe. [Both augh] They understand, but, no—I wish I, you know. Insisted, uh stocking all them, and, yeah.

**PW:** So, were you...

**VP:** But, but then it was the confusion, because I was using the Ilocano, and my husband would talk—mainly Tagalog, I'd speak the Tagalog. Well, he'd speak to me in Ilocano, and, and—and the mix, you know! And, when they—and like, my daughter is asked to, 'What do—what can you say in your language?' And then they'd say, 'Well, say something!' And that would be, like, my dialect. And they'd say, 'We don't understand that. That's not Tagalog!' [Both laugh] So that was the confusion. Plus, somebody told me, that if they speak in your language, and when it's time to go school, then it would be harder for them, you know, to articulate, or, with the accent, which is, you know. It's okay, if you have the accent! [laughs] But, mainly, I think that's why we did not insist on, uh, them learning it. But, they—when they listen, you can't—seldom... [Laughs] When we're talking about, maybe, you thought they won't understand, but they understand. [Both laugh]

**PW:** So, what Filipino traditions or holidays did you celebrate at home, when they were growing up?

**VP:** Mmm mainly, it's the same that they have here. Mmm, Philippines is like, you know, very Westernized. I think they don't know, like, the—there's the death, and there's like, uh the time of the death of the person. They started in [the Vino], our prayer for the dead. Like, a nine days' prayer. And then, like, there's also a forty-day after death. Then that's—there's a—people get together and pray some more for their soul. That's—I think that's not practiced here. We do that. Um, the birthdays, and the usual—a lot of birthdays. They celebrate in the Philippine tradition.

We didn't really have the holidays in the Philippines; it's different. It's All Souls Day. That's celebrated differently, where you go the graveyard, and they offer prayers, and some of them bring food. And the graveyard. Or, cook some kind of special rice that's a black rice cake uh during that time. That's what we eat and serve. Um, I mean, I was involved in the church life, like uh, uh processions, to honor the Blessed Lady, and uh they were coming with me when feast days are celebrated, but they never, they—they don't wanna come anymore. And mainly, I think that's— it's about the same. That's the only thing I can think of, prayer for the dead. And, uh, I think that's almost the same. The Christmas, and the birthdays are celebrated the same. And the New Year's, we just go—we have friends over, or we go to their place, formalities. That thing that I can think of. I'll tell you later if I remember something different. [laughs]

**PW:** Okay, great. So, did you get to travel with your children back to the Philippines?

**VP:** Uh, when Christy was 2—after 5 years that we been here, we went back. Christy was two years old then. And I think, uh, my—yeah, my second—my son's already—he was just born maybe. He was like four, five months. And we traveled [laughing, PW laughs], and then this little lady in the airport says, 'Oh! You're taking this baby, little bitty baby.' You know, for a long trip. And the doctor gave him, uh, something for the nausea? The baby. [PW laughs] So he just slept through.

And then we went home. And, uh, yep. And, uh, what else? After, maybe Christy was 14 already when we went back after that. But it's, uh, like a pilgrimage. And, of course, visit the family. And, uh, for a long time, after twenty-three—after the—uh, that year, '86. I think we went home '76 and then we went home about, maybe '85, and then after twenty-four years—or twenty-three years. That's the last—that's when I went home again. We went home again. Um, not with the kids though. ...

Uh, I think the last time I went was when my husband's mom passed. A year after she passed. It's like a anniversary prayer—uh, prayer for her, to honor. It's like a anniversary—a one year anniversary. He went home.

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But then the kids did not come. They're all, uh, busy with the school then and ... mainly (?) grown. [Laughs]

**PW:** So, uh, was the first time you went back in '76 when Christy was two?

**VP:** Mm-hmm.

**PW:** So how did you keep in touch with your family over those first five years that you were in the U.S.?

**VT:** Mmm. Like my—my parents, my grand .... It's just through letters. Yeah. Uh, not hardly— not even phone, I guess. I wish we had that [Both laugh]—the Facebook then, or the iPhone. This mainly through corres—corresponding with them. My dad wrote more than my mom. Was busy.

**PW:** And did family come to visit you in the U.S. ever?

**VT:** Mmm. Only when my, um—see, my brother, he went to Canada before me. He was there and then he sponsored my parents, so that's why they were able to go and join them there. And most of them—actually all of them except me is in—in United States, but they're all in Canada, in Saskatchewan. So, um, uh, they visited us—my—my mom and dad came maybe couple times. But mainly, uh, I'm the one visiting them over there, which is easier because [inaudible 1 word] all of them are there. So it's just gonna be, like, maybe my granddaughter goes or—with me and my husband when we visit.

Um, one time when they had a anniversary—wedding anniversary, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, *everybody* went. Uh, on, uh—we drove, like, uh—took us two nights or three nights and .... And, uh, that was a long, long drive [Both laugh] to Canada. I think the first time, actually, we took the bus, and my kid says, 'Never again, mom. Never again.' So when they—we went the second time, then my husband had, uh, the fairly new van, so everybody just [laughs; inaudible 1 word] in there. And, uh ... but then, that was [laughing] some kinda experience. It was good because everybody went to celebrate with my parents. [rustling sound]

**PW:** Great. So, you mentioned that your brother came before you to Canada?

**VT:** Mm-hmm. My—[**PW:** But when did-]

**PW:** Oh.

**VT:** My—my brother, uh, uh Marcelino. Our Mark, they call him Mark. [laughs] Uh, he worked— he worked there, and, uh, was able to get them and later on my other sister. Couple of my sisters went, and then my younger brother came, and then my—I think the last one to come was—to come was the—my fourth sister because she was married already it was harder to—to sponsor. She had mar—she was married and then she had kids. And then ... I think that was the problem.

**PW:** So, what do they—what are their professions?

**VT:** Mmm. My, uh—my sister is an ele—uh, one of my sisters, Elvienne, and, uh, Alegria, uh, is a—what do you call this? Uh, where she would help deliver babies? But that—that's in the Philippines where they—it could be like, uh—it's called *comadrona*, but, um, they—she would deliver babies at homes.

**PW:** Like a midwife?

**VT:** Midwife! [both laugh] Yeah. Uh, but then she worked in—in Canada, uh, taking care of the old folks instead. And she married an engineer. And, uh, my other sister, um—I don't know what Dennis does. I think he does .... Uh, married a Canadian guy. Um, but he works like in a maintenance place, or—or where they make air conditioning—air conditioners. And, uh, my— my brother—oh, it's—he works like in a maintenance, uh—like he would help maintain schools, maintenance. I don't know. I don't think he just had some vocational classes. He took .... And my younger brother had, uh, taken maybe air conditioning, uh, uh, class, too. But, uh,

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he's—he's the one who's jack of all trade. He can fix your house. [laughs] And, uh, my other sister, which is Cecilia, who was—who was married, um, she, uh—when she came to Canada, she helped take care of my, uh, um other sister.

Oh, for her to come Canada, she—she—my sister had us—uh, her best friend was very ill. And, um—and she's the one who [indistinguishable] hired her so she would—you know, because of the job, she—was easier for her to come then. But she was the only who came, and, uh, husband and the kids stayed back, which is done a lot, you know, in the Philippines, to help, uh, with the kids, to send them to school. A lot of the mom or dad leave the family to find the other jobs. But anyway, that's how, you know, she finally came. And my—my dad was—when, uh—when—when, uh, my sister's friend died. You know, she was taking care of him, maybe she did not—she had cancer already. She did not last long and—and then to make it so she will have an employment again, my parents the one who said, 'Okay, I'll hire you [both laugh] to take care of us.' But later she worked in hospital, and now, uh, present time, she's working in a college, uh, building, like a—in a housekeeping. Oh! They—she also worked in a hotel [laughing] at one time. But, the family's with her already after maybe 2 years. Think it's easier to sponsor a family in Canada than here. Think I said too much already. [both laugh]

**PW:** No, no. So, uh, do you get a chance to visit your siblings often?

**VP:** Every year I was going, but then, uh, when my mom and dad passed, then I didn't—I didn't go anymore. 'Well, it's your turn to visit *me* in the States,' I told them. [PW laughs] But, uh, they did when my youngest son married, they all came. That was the only time, though. All those times it was just my husband or I would go visit. Um, my mom and dad also help with the babysitting, of course, with my sister who had four kids. My third sister. And, so—so would the other mother-in-law—they helped with the babysitting. Seem like that's—that's the [both laugh]—the—the tra—what do you call it? Tradition. I don't know [inaudible 1 word]. They help out, which is very good. No—no other best people who [laughing] take care of your kids. They're the best ones who will take care. And they don't mind. They love it.

**PW:** So, did you ever—[VP: So-]

**VP:** I'm doing the same thing. [both laugh] I'm done the same thing. Yeah, did I ever babysit?

**PW:** Oh, consider going to Canada is what I was going to ask.

**VP:** Oh, to migrate?

**PW:** Yes.

**VP:** Too cold. It's too cold. [both laugh] I don't how the—my parents, uh, survived! Because they—in the Saskatchewan, I believe that's colder than other—like, if you stay in Vancouver, it's milder I think. But they're in Saskatchewan, and at that time, when they went, it's not a lot of population. My other sister moved to Winnipeg. Uh, that's also cold. [both laugh] But they all got used to it I think. I don't know. What about you? You live in a snow place, snow country. [PW laughs]. They, uh—they survive somehow. People survive [both laugh] and adjust.

They tell me, 'Well, it's not always cold and always snow.' [PW laughs] That's what they say. But, uh, I experienced the cold when I—my dad, uh, was in the hospital then. Uh, 'cause I went, took vacation, stayed with him before he passed. Um, there was the—this day where we were staying—it was closing to—to—to die then. Then, um, we were stay—my other sister stayed with him in the hospital. And somehow, uh, one of the nights, she said, 'Oh, I need to go home.' 'Cause her—her back was—was hurting a lot. And that was—[laughing] she decided to go home like 3 a.m.! And then it was snowing, and it was so cold! That was the first experience I had. I don't know. I don't think I can live here. [both laugh] And even in her room, uh, you know, I couldn't get warm up!

**PW:** Oh, no!

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**VP:** Said, 'I—I gave you an extra blanket and all that!' But, um, when I refused to go there anymore on a December, on a—like—like December, uh those months. 'No, [both laughing] I'm not going to visit you!' And said—she, uh, 'I'll buy you a heater for the bed!' [both laugh] So one time, it was her birthday in November and it was [PW laughs], 'Okay, we'll come.' She even paid for my fare. [PW laughs] just to celebrate with her.

**PW:** So, back on the topic of your grandchildren—I interrupted you.

**VP:** Yeah.

**PW:** Uh, how many grandchildren do you have?

**VP:** I have, uh, four, going on five!

**PW:** Oh! [laughs]

**VP:** Cooking, yeah one's cooking. Yeah, Jacqueline, uh—oh, Heaven's the oldest. She's twenty—twenty—she just turned twenty-two. She's twenty-two. Then Jacqueline, I think she's going on thirteen. And, uh, Remmy (?), uh, I think is already ten. That's Christy's kid. Those are Christy's kids the two. And then uh my other daughter has, uh, two daughters, who's Heaven, who's twenty-two and this other one is ... maybe—can't even remember all the ages! [laughs] I think she's—if Remmy's ten, she's, uh, maybe a year older.

**PW:** Okay, so did you—

**VP:** I might be wrong. [both laugh] And, uh, my youngest son is, uh—they're expecting. Like maybe four months or five months now.

**PW:** So did you [recorder moved] babysit, uh, them a lot when they were younger?

**VP:** Oh, um, Heaven lived with me—[laughs]

**PW:** Oh, wow.

**VP:** While my daughter was with me, uh, before they bought a house, and so I took care—took care mainly with, uh, Heaven. And then with Jacqueline, after work, um, her dad, uh, picks me up—'cause I—I already switched my, uh—before—going back, um, my shift was three to eleven mainly to help, uh, with my husband working in the morning and then I would take the kids, uh, to babysitter before I go to work like in—before 3 o'clock. And then, uh—but then, later on, I—I said, 'That's enough. I need [laughing] to stay with my kids.' So I switched, uh, to morning shift, so I was able to—to take care of Jacqueline after work.

And, uh, after a year I think that's when they decided to—she needs more stimulation. And, uh, expos—you know, she needs to be ex—be more exposed to other kids. So they brought her to a nursery scho—a school nursery. Like, uh, 'cause when, uh—when Christy arrives, like after her work, maybe at three hours, and then they—she sees me sleeping with the baby. [both laugh] Ohhh. It's after work I need to ... probably doze off. That's when, uh, my husband also picks me up then after he's finished with his work. That's just about a year or so I think. I did that with, uh, Jacqueline. And Remmy and Sahara (?), they're very ... Remmy, I did not take care of him. Uh, or Sahara, very few times maybe. Not—not those two.

**PW:** All right. So, going back to *your* children then, uh, what are they doing now?

**VP:** Uh, well Christy is with Shell. And she's very active with the—I think is involved with this and with Ms. Chao. And, uh, she worked on congressional medals, uh, for the World War—World—World War II veterans, and she got—she got it approved. I think they still waiting for Senate to approve it or something. And, uh, uh, some other stuff. She's doing a lot. She's always going, going. But she—she mainly work with Shell. And she's

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said, 'Oh, I might lose my job because of the economy now.' [both laugh]

And, um, my son works in, uh—a, uh—like a op—op—eye clinic. And, uh, my—Joey's into computer, my youngest. So is Judy, she's with Halliburton. Some kind of administrative work she does. And, uh, my youngest daughter, uh, who lived in New York for seven—she tried to—she loved New York she said she tried to live there. She stayed there for seven years, and I finally convinced her to come back. [both laugh]. She says, 'Oh, yeah, I think I will because I cannot, uh, tolerate another winter here.' [PW laughs] So, but right now, she's, uh, helping her friend. Uh, have you heard of the Fat Cat, uh—Fat Cat Creamery?

**PW:** No.

**VP:** [overlapping] It's an ice cream .... It's a new thing. They—they use, uh, organic stuff and .... Well, it's supposed to be healthy ice cream. And I think they're doing good. And, uh, she'll—she wants another job sometime 'cause this—her friend just started this business and— 'Do you even get insurance from that?' [PW laughs] She said, 'No.' So she'll—she—she wants a job that would offer all this kind of coverage. But she finished, uh, journalism. She was writing for some company, I think, in New York for a while. And some, uh, uh—she did not stay—different—she tried different work over there. But, uh, her boyfriend is a cook, and, uh, says a shoe—shoe—sous chef. [laughs]

**PW:** [laughs] Oh, yeah.

**VP:** And, uh, when he—they moved back *here*, you know, he already has, uh, a job waiting. I mean, it was easy for him to find a job...anything else? [both laugh]

**PW:** Yes. So, um, actually, I never asked you, uh, what does your husband do?

**VP:** Oh, he worked with Steve—uh, Stewart Stevenson. Uh, which—he was an inspector there for awhile and—and, uh, then the wiring—they have diesel —like a diesel mechanic stuff. Then GE bought them—bought the company. Um...he should—he should know the years. I—I don't remember [both laugh] when they switched to GE. But, it was a good company for him, yeah. GE's, uh, pretty good, but he likes Stewart Stevenson better [both laugh] 'cause they— they, uh—they treat their—like in Christmas they have all these nice, uh, family programs, and uh... then, uh ... um, profit sharing, he says. But that wasn't done with GE. [both laugh] Like—the—maybe because of the cut—cutbacks later on that happened. But he enjoyed Stewart Stevenson.

**PW:** All right. So going back to your career, um, why did you decide to retire?

**VP:** I was tired! [both laugh] I was—what? Twenty-four going on twenty-five when I started. Uh, and my—my husband retired before me. He was, uh ... what year did he retire? Uh, 'cause 2011 I think he retired. He was sixty-six then. And then, uh—'Oh, I worked thirty-seven years,' he was saying. So, 'I'm tired too. [both laugh] It's time to retire.' So—so, um—and I said—I mean, it's not even my mind that I would retired, and—and then, uh, thirty-seven! I'm already working forty [PW laughs] forty-two or forty-one that time. And—and you're retiring ahead of me! I'm—I'm gonna retire too.' [PW laughs]

But, you—you know, when he retired, I was still working. And actually, he says, 'It seem like I haven't really retired' because he's the one who would bring me to work and pick—pick me up. That. [both laugh] So he had to wake up, like, um—my work—uh, I was starting at 10 at one time, and then, when we moved to another building in, uh, Meth—in the outpatient department, um, they required early patients. Real early. So, I started instead of 6 a.m., they switch us to 5:30. So, he said, 'I'm still waking up the same time [laughing] as when—when I was working,' he says. So, that's what happened. When he retired, I wanna retire, too. [PW laughs] Plus, you know, I'm—I'm—they got all this, uh, new stuff, and computer, and—and— and when we start—when I—I believe when I started nursing, it's still not as complicated, but as you go on, then they required for you to do more and .... Like, uh—like, uh, you became like a doctor. [laughs] Like, uh, getting all the—all the information and the histories and all that, which is—we do it then, but not as, uh, detailed, uh. And you have

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more responsibility then. Like—like if you're medicine—medic—medicine nurse, if you're assigned to, you know, giving out medicine, you concentrate on that. But then, this one—as nursing developed, then it's the whole thing. The whole—uh, how—how do you say that? Taking care of a patient's not just because you're just giving them medicine. You have to deal with their emotional and everything, the families basically. [both laugh] Deal with all sorts of, you know, the whole being, whole person. And you have—you have more new—new technology and machines to learn and stuff. You have to keep up. I mean, that's required anyway. Every year, you have to go for, uh, seminars and stuff, which is, you know—which is good. You didn't ask me where it was [laughs] but now nevermind.

**PW:** Oh, okay. [VP laughs] You can go ahead and say if you want to.

**VP:** Uh, I forgot already I think, uh ... Oh, when my—when I took the boards, I was still not married. And then, I had to go the second time because of that one—it's the psychology. I failed. And so—but then, I—you know, by the grace of God I—[both laugh]—I passed, but then that's when, uh, Christy was born too. I said, 'Oh, now I'm an RN.' It's just timely because that's when they up my—my salary. [laughs]

**PW:** [overlapping] Oh, I see. Right. So—

**VP:** God is good.

**PW:** [laughs] Yes.

**VP:** [overlapping; inaudible]

**PW:** So now that you're retired, uh what do you do? [**VP:** What am I doing?]

**PW:** Yeah.

**VP:** [laughs] Well, me—I always wanted to be, uh, active in church. [recorder moved] Yeah, plus, you know, um, I like, uh, attending the Bible study and the catechism, and learning all that. Uh, plus, uh you know, I—I'm involved in like, uh, the ministry and the, uh, giving the Communion. And, uh, at one time I was going with some ladies to bring Communion to the sick and—at their house. But, you know, maybe few months I did that. Um, it's mainly church. Uh, hel—helping in the church. Like, uh, couple days ago, my—the dire—the assistant director in the church came to me, and that they were needing help to get the church ready, you know, for—before the Mass. And, uh, I was very happy to do that.

Um, like, I said, we may be in the garden at the front of the house. And—and, uh, when my husband goes fishing, I go too [both laugh] and help, uh, with his garden in the backyard, and, uh, just—just, uh, meeting friends. And, uh, I was al—I'm also in the, uh—the Carmelite, uh—I don't know if you heard how Carmelite community, we're—it's like mainly, uh, at the, uh—you, um—it's involved in the meditation, prayer, things like that. But, it's a community, so we—we meet every month, and, uh, if you're involved in teaching, you teach the—the people who have come joined later. What else? [laughs]

**PW:** So, which church do you attend?

**VP:** Um, our church is Notre Dame, but the church next to my house is St. Thomas Aquinas, which is like—in three minutes I'm there. [PW laughs] So, um ... yeah, just the—also in one is the—well, my friend already passed, she was the leader. The—there was a Holy Rosary Crusade also. I was involved where we bring, um, Blessed Mother statue to the houses before and—and pray the rosary with the people. But, um, I'm not as, uh—well, she passed and—and I was not able to joint them actively anymore. And there's another confraternity I join in. But, it's mainly prayer and—and fundraising sometimes in the—in the church to help, uh, pay for our church [both laugh] because they built a new one.

**PW:** Oh!

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**VP:** Mainly—oh! There's a club, the Ilocano club, uh, we signed into, uh, 'cause they help out the Filipino seminarians. They send money to the seminarians. I think we have, like, five priests—priests-to-be, that, uh, they're funding. And, uh, think that's it. What else? [PW laughs]

**PW:** Uh, let me look actually. [laughs; shuffles papers]

**VP:** The Holy Rosary Crusade, the confra—confraternity, and then the—oh I added Christy's, uh, Filipino American [papers rustling], uh ... what is this again? The Filipino American—[**PW:** National Historical Society.] National—yeah, that's right. Historical Society. But, uh, she drags us along to—she, like—we went to San Antonio, when they had this meeting with the veterans. And we met the—few of them still alive [laughs] from World War—World War II. It was interesting. Couple times, and—and—I—I could have gone in Philadelphia with her. The whole family was going, so [indistinguishable]. [laughs]

**PW:** Okay, great. Well [papers rustling] Maybe I'll move on to some of my other questions then. Uh, how has Houston changed since you first got here?

**VP:** It boomed a lot. Uh, a lot of the—uh, the space [laughs] here in front of my dorm, that was just like a space. Oh, maybe there's a little restaurant where I remember [indistinguishable] to go there. Um but now it's all—all modernized and all this buildings, like, uh—um, it's more crowded, more different, uh, people. Different people from all over the world are here [both laugh], which is good. I enjoy it. You can go taste different kind of food ... different countries. Uh, I don't know what else you're looking for. Um ... aside from the traffic [both laugh], it's more traffic. Uh...I think, uh...I don't know. It's about the same, except the crowd. It's more crowded, more people. I mean the traffic and everything. If it's the weather, it—it seemed like it gotten more hot [both laugh] than before.

**PW:** Well, how would you say that the Filipino community has changed?

**VP:** Uh, okay. When—when we probably first came, it's not a lot of them—not a lot of Filipino people yet. And they were probably more, uh, close—closely knit because, uh, if they have, uh— and they were more involved like in—in the programs. They said, 'Oh, we used to dance our— our national dance, or, um ....' Seemed like they were closer. But because of—there are more people, maybe certain group, um, would, uh, have their own club. And then, they have their own kind—uh, community. Um, it's still—you find it, uh—like, different people are divided. [laughs]

**PW:** Mm-hmm.

**VP:** They want to go with their own—same provinces, you know, same town. Then they have their own .... But, they're still—you know, they still ... in church it's, you know—you—it seem like they're more—they get together and .... But, I don't know. Somehow, peoples wants to have their own groups. [laughs] They were—they were closer before when there're few people—few Filipinos. Maybe it's harder to get, uh—everybody's busy; everybody's working.

**PW:** Hmm. [laughs] Okay, so I guess, what would you say has been your greatest accomplishment so far?

**VP:** Mmm. My—nothing special, except I had my family. The—uh, I have five kids. [both laugh] That's all. Plus, I worked in the best, uh, medical center, where you could, you know .... I had all these experiences because it's also an international hospital. You get to take care of different people from all over the world. [laughs] That's a good experience. Although, I didn't get to be in a unit where they have the—the—the VIPS. Where they—they have a room—I think like \$400 room a day. [both laugh] Like, the king from—

**PW:** Oh. [laughs]

**VP:** I didn't get to take care of them. [both laugh] But, uh, it was a good, uh—good place to work.

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**PW:** Oh, well, speaking of nursing again, uh, do you think that being a Filipino nurse and having your training in the Philippines, uh, benefitted your career here or hindered it?

**VP:** Well, uh, the school in the Philippines, uh, it—it helped because it's—you know, the machines they have, uh, maybe—it's about the same. All the—although maybe in the OR—in the OR, they might not be as modern as what they have here. But, you're able to speak the language. That's very important. [both laugh] Um ... um, course, we—we learned a lot more here and—because you have like the orientation and the hands-on where you worked. During those times, you're—you're al—you're already exposed to the workplace. Um, anything else? [both laugh] No, I can't think of any.

**PW:** Yeah, sure, just, uh one final question. Uh, what advice would you give to someone who's listening to this recording, maybe in the future, like, fifty years from now?

**VP:** Fifty years from now? [PW nods] I can't, uh .... Like, uh, general advice?

**PW:** General advice, yes.

**VP:** Not just in nursing.

**PW:** No. [laughs]

**VP:** Uh ... I'd rather go here than like, uh .... I can't complain. [laughs] Um ... uh, this is a good place to be, in, uh, you know—in Houston because I did not live anywhere else [laughs]. I'm in Sugar Land, but, uh ... it's a good place to be. For me, I know I had a good job. Um, it's—I don't know how safe it is fifty years from now [laughs], but, uh, like it's getting scary just to go out your house. [laughs] Even in your house, you're not safe. [PW laughs] Even in the computer. [both laugh]

I don't what to say the advice. I mean, like, uh, for adventure? Yeah, you come just— just, uh, if you wanna learn a lot—then it's really up to who the person. Just be brave to—to s—do you need to do, what you wanna do. [laughs] Or if you have a dream, then just—just, uh, start [laughing] working on it! Not just, uh, say that, 'Oh, I'm gonna—I wanna do this. Sometimes I do that. I wanna learn to dance and then I haven't enrolled in,' [laughs] That's all I can say about, you know .... This is a good place, and I was just blessed to be here.

**PW:** All right. Great! Well, thank you! I think that wraps it up!

**VP:** Okay! Thank you. I hope I did okay.

**Note:** After the interview, Mrs. Panis requested that the following be added with regard to her advice for future listeners: 'I'd like to add if possible, that in addition to our own efforts to make our dreams materialize that we trust in God's love and providence.'