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Impact Los Alamos Interview Question Set

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Impact Los Alamos Interview Question Set

UNM ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

FAMILY HISTORY

Grandparents

How long has your family lived in New Mexico?

Who are your grandparents?

Are they still alive?

Where did they live?

What did they do for a living?

Parents and Siblings

What is your mother's name?

Do you know when she was born and where?

Is she still alive? When did she die?

What does/did she do?

What is your dad's name?

Do you know when and where he was born?

Is he still alive? When did he die?

What does/did he do for a living?

Where else in New Mexico or outside of the state has your family lived?

Do you have any brothers or sisters?

What are their names and birth dates?

What are their occupations?

Where do they live?

Did your family attend church? If so, what denomination? How often?

(Probe religiosity at home: Any ceremonies? Penitentes? Mayordomo?

Matachines? I Ams?)

When did your family first get a TV?

Who was the first person in your family to work at Los Alamos?

What did they do there?

Did any other members of your family work at Los Alamos?

How did your acquaintances in town feel about them working at Los Alamos?

Interviewee's History

When were you born and where?

What are your earliest memories of your home?

What are some early memories of your community?

How did your family support itself?

Who were your friends? What games or activities did you do?

Where did you go to school?

What memories do you have of school?

Did you participate in any civil defense drills, like duck and cover?

What level of education did you achieve?

What jobs did you do before working at Los Alamos?

Are you married?

What's your husband's/wife's name? When and where was he/she born?

Do you have any children?

What are their names and dates of birth?

If your children have left home, where are they and what are they doing?

Where do you live?

What is it like? Is your community known for anything special?

Where do your friends in your home community work?

How does your salary compare with theirs?

LOS ALAMOS EMPLOYMENT

Job History

What was your first contact with Los Alamos?

Why did you want to work at Los Alamos?

What was your first job there?

Describe all the jobs you have held in Los Alamos.

Work Attitude

How did you feel when you first started to work at Los Alamos?

What was the easiest adjustment to make?

What was the hardest?

Did you have to have a security clearance to do your job?

Have there been any changes in your attitudes about working at Los Alamos over the years? If so, when and why?

How do you get along with the people who live in Los Alamos?

Do you get together with them socially?

Have there been any health conditions in your family that originated from working at Los Alamos?

Are you aware of any environmental problems connected with Los Alamos?

Income

What was your starting salary?

What is your current/was your ending salary?

For Women Interviewees

If you don't mind me asking, how does/did your salary from Los Alamos compare with your husband's?

Has the income from Los Alamos changed your family's life?

How do/did you deal with child care?

Have you ever been sexually harassed at Los Alamos?

Do you know of any racial discrimination on the Hill?

Does your husband help with household jobs?

How do your children feel about Los Alamos?

For Men Interviewees

Does your wife work? If so, what does she do?

If you don't mind my asking, how does your salary compare with your wife's?

Has the income from Los Alamos changed your family's life?

Do you help your wife with household jobs?

Do you know of any racial discrimination at Los Alamos?

For all interviewees: How has your income from Los Alamos affected your community?

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT**Community Adjustment**

What did you do when you were not working at Los Alamos—any farming or livestock raising?

Any arts and crafts or hobbies?

Any volunteer or political organizations?

What do you do to relax?

How has your family reacted to your employment at Los Alamos?

Have there been benefits from Los Alamos for you and your family?

Have there been benefits to your community and northern New Mexico?

Have there been disadvantages from Los Alamos to you and your family?

Have there been disadvantages to your community and northern New Mexico?

How do you make the transition between the different cultures of Los Alamos and your community?

What community do you feel more a part of Los Alamos or where you live?

Future prospects

What do you think is going to happen at Los Alamos in the future?
Are you worried about your own job?¹

1. The following Oral History Program student interns were vital to the development of this question set: Jon Hunner, then a University of New Mexico (UNM) doctoral student in History; Troy Fernandez, a graduate student in Spanish literature; and Mario Lozoya, a senior in cultural studies at UNM. We received the gracious support of Drs. Enrique La Madrid, Helen Lucero, John Rhoades, Robert Himmerich y Valencia, Robert Seidel, Chris Steiner, and Carlos Ramirez. When this question set had been reviewed and edited, it was given to interviewers as part of a package that included a map of the area under study, an information sheet on LANL, and summaries of historical statistics on the individual counties. In addition, we included descriptive chapters on northern New Mexico taken from a dissertation-in-progress and from several monographs on the area. As part of the interview, each interviewee completed a four-page "biographical sketch" and was asked to review a "sample" release form before signing an official copy giving UNM the rights to the interview for research and publication purposes.

While the interviewers were instructed that these questions were the principal areas of investigation, they were encouraged to delve deeper into these subjects or to pursue discussion topics that their particular familiarity (and hopefully, rapport) with the interviewee permitted. This strategy allowed two things to occur. Recently-trained, and relatively unexperienced, interviewers could be more relaxed and conversational in their approach and topics which our research might not have anticipated could emerge in the interviews. The interviewer training varied from intense, one-day workshops, to a semester-long, upper-division course, followed by an internship with the Oral History Program.