

# UC Santa Cruz

## Oral History Collaborations

### Title

Fred Tejada interviewed by Meleia Simon-Reynolds

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## Fred Tejada interviewed by Meleia Simon-Reynolds

**Speakers:** Fred Tejada, Meleia Simon-Reynolds, Maia Mislang

**Date:** February 11, 2023

### Scope and Contents:

In this interview, originally recorded in person, Fred Tejada speaks with Watsonville is in the Heart team member Meleia Simon-Reynolds. Fred talks about his father, Godofredo "Godo" Tana Tejada, who immigrated from the Philippines to the United States. He discusses how his father worked various jobs in Seattle and California, and he details his father's work as a foreman for the Bracero Program. Fred goes on to explain how his father met his mother, Meady Dalisay Solomeo in the Philippines, and how his parents moved to Watsonville together shortly after marrying. Fred talks about his father's work harvesting strawberry, lettuce, and brussel sprouts, and he discusses his mom's work in the fields during the day and at the pajama factory at night. Fred remembers helping his father in the fields throughout his adolescence, as well as he recalls his family housing many manong while they lived in Watsonville.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 00:03**

So this is Meleia Simon Reynolds. It's February 11, 2023, and I'm here with Fred Tejada in Scotts Valley, California. Um, so, first I'm going to ask you a bit about your father, Godofredo Tana Tejada, who went by Godo, correct?

**Fred Tejada 00:24**

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 00:24**

Okay. Could you tell me when and where he was born?

**Fred Tejada 00:31**

He was born November 8, 1908, in, I think the barrio was called Mantiguib. In Makato, Aklan. I think there was 12 kids total. Six boys, six girls. I've actually been to that. That's where the homestead is.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 00:57**

Oh, really?

**Fred Tejada 00:58**

Yeah. (laughs) So.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 00:59**

When did you go?

**Fred Tejada 01:01**

First time was in '84.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 01:03

Oh, wow. Okay. Um, do you know what his parents or his family did?

**Fred Tejada** 01:09

Farming [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 01:11

What kinds of stuff did they farm? Do you know?

**Fred Tejada** 01:14

It was pretty much rice [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 01:16

Okay, got it. Did your dad work on the farm, you think, before he migrated?

**Fred Tejada** 01:21

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 01:24

Okay. Um, I wanted to ask—I know there's kind of a group of interrelated folks. And you're—so, your dad's mother's last name must have been Tana.

**Fred Tejada** 01:39

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 01:40

And so that is kind of another family who ended up coming over to the United States, correct?

**Fred Tejada** 01:47

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 01:49

Do you know around what time your dad decided to make the trip over to the US?

**Fred Tejada** 01:53

1929.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 01:54

1929.

**Fred Tejada** 01:56

I probably have the exact date. My sister has his, I guess, passport from that time. So it probably has the stamp on there. But I remembered him telling me a story about—there was an eclipse, when he left and I think when it kind of looked at, it was, like, pretty close to just, I think, after the crash.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 02:17

Oh, okay.

**Fred Tejada** 02:18

Right, in '29. So like, I think he's in fall '29.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 02:23

Yeah. Okay.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 02:25

I forget what boat he came on, but— [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 02:28

Was it one of the ones that was named after a president?

**Fred Tejada** 02:32

Oh, yeah. I want to say Cleveland.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 02:34

Oh, okay. They're called, like, the—

**Fred Tejada** 02:37

Presidential line, I believe.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 02:38

—Presidential line. Yeah. Do you know why he decided to come?

**Fred Tejada** 02:43

His intent was to go to school. I think he was, he said that he was going to go to school in Napa. I'm not sure what school or what college he was going to go to. Um, I had an uncle here—I mean, so, all of my uncles are in the Philippines. Well, they're all passed now, but one uncle was living in Seattle. And he did a lot of stuff in his life kind of, was kind of interesting, but we—all I know about him is when I was really young, he passed away. Actually, over in Rose—we called Auntie Rosie—Tabasa's house. So, he's buried in Watsonville cemetery.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 03:33

What was his name? Or his nickname?

**Fred Tejada** 03:38

You know that, yeah that—I'm really bad. I should know that, right? And I know where roughly his, his gravesite is.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 03:48

Oh, Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 03:49

But like, yeah. I'm gonna say Emiliano.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 03:57

So he was in Seattle?

**Fred Tejada** 03:59

Yeah, he was in Seattle. I think he was working as a, he was a draftsman—

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 04:03

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 04:04

—for one of the aircraft company. And then before that, he did all sorts of wild stuff. Apparently, he was a merchantman.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 04:13

Okay, like a merchant marine.

**Fred Tejada** 04:15

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 04:15

I see. So, that was someone that your dad knew, that was living in the United States.

**Fred Tejada** 04:21

Yes. So he was going to come here to go to school. But when he got here, his cousin, Clemente Tana, so he was, I think Uncle Mente was in Stockton at the time. And he told my dad he was really lonely. He wanted somebody to hang with. And so my father joined him. And then they pretty much just, kind of like, did the farm labor thing, follow the seasons.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 04:51

Do you know, like, some of the locations where they migrated to, to work in that early time?

**Fred Tejada** 04:54

Just Stockton and Delano.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 04:56

Okay

**Fred Tejada** 04:56

And probably Salinas. And I say Salinas, because at some point he picked up—bought some property in Salinas.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 05:13

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 05:14

So we had a, we had a house there for a while. We never lived there, we just rented it out.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 05:19

Right, so this would have been around like in the '30s—

**Fred Tejada** 05:22

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 05:22

—that he was migrating with Clemente Tana.

**Fred Tejada** 05:25

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 05:26

Okay. Did he ever tell you any stories of that time in his life?

**Fred Tejada** 05:30

Um, the one story that he kind of, that he always kind of like talked about was when the war broke out. And he tried to enlist. And I guess he went up to San Francisco, and they told him he was too small, that he needed to gain weight. And apparently the recruiter told him that you should drink milk and eat bananas. And up until I don't know how old he was, he pretty religiously ate a banana and glass of milk [laughs]. So that was like his go to snack. But after he came back, he was working. I think he might have been a foreman. And his boss told him, you know, that— told him that he was doing important work, and that he really should, you know, he should just stay here. Right. And then he ended up, like, being a foreman? Because we had that—he would go down to Mexico and get workers—

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 06:43

I see.

**Fred Tejada** 06:43

—and bring them up, you know, Braceros. Because he spoke Spanish. And because of that, he had, you know, they were rationing everything, right? So he had a car with a, I guess, an 'A' sticker, which meant he could get gas at any time. And then, so he was real pop—like this. So this is what he said. I

can't confirm. But he said a lot of the soldiers at Fort Ord were Filipinos, right? So on the weekends, they would have passes, he had a car with gas, you go pick 'em up and then bring them out to wherever, and he would be their chauffeur. So apparently he was like a real [indecipherable].

**Fred Tejada** 06:50

He was, he was, maybe he was taking them out?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 07:27

You know, getting them outside of Fort Ord.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 07:32

Okay. To do some like recreational activities?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 07:36

Cool. Where was—do you know the name of the farm that he was working as a foreman at that time? Or the crop that he was working in?

**Fred Tejada** 07:36

Mmhm.

**Fred Tejada** 07:46

You know? I couldn't even tell you that.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 07:50

Possibly in Salinas?

**Fred Tejada** 07:52

It was probably Salinas.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 07:53

Maybe lettuce?

**Fred Tejada** 07:56

Lettuce, you know, brussel sprouts, there's like all [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 08:01

Right. Oh, that's really interesting that he was going to Mexico to get workers. Do you, do you remember him saying anything specifically about, like, what it was like to go to Mexico and bring workers back?

**Fred Tejada** 08:19

I don't remember him s—if he went all the way to Mexico, but, you know, when we would drive down 101 because three of my sisters? Yeah, three, three of my sister went to UCSB. So when we would drive down, he would like kind of, kind of look out and he would like, you know, talk about things. Right.

So, and he talked about getting workers, but I don't know if he actually went into Mexico. It sounded like he went, you know, pretty close to the border.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 08:57**

Yeah. Okay. Yeah. Do you, do you know, how long, about, he kind of continued that job?

**Fred Tejada 09:05**

No.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:07**

Were you born already when he was doing that or no—

**Fred Tejada 09:09**

Oh, no (laugh).

**Fred Tejada 09:10**

[laugh] Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:10**

—not yet. No, that was really early on.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:13**

Okay. So this was kind of during the war, during the '40s—

**Fred Tejada 09:14**

Yes, during the '40's

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:16**

—I got it. Okay. But his friend, Clemente, or his relative, Clemente, did go to the war, right?

**Fred Tejada 09:26**

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:26**

Okay. Do you know if he was with any other kind of town mates or relatives around at that time, if people had come?

**Fred Tejada 09:33**

Well, I know that. So Benigno Dumalaog, we were really close with him. And he was like a sergeant in the Army and he ended up being, like, a career soldier so their family kind of went all around the world. And they finally settled in Salinas.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:57**

Okay. Did Mr. Cawaling come yet at that point?



**Fred Tejada** 10:07

I don't recall. I was like listening to the interview.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 10:12

Yeah.

**Fred Tejada** 10:13

Right.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 10:13

Yeah.

**Fred Tejada** 10:15

All I remember about Uncle Encio was that when I was being baptized—so his wife was gonna be my godmother, but she wasn't here in the US at the time of my baptism. Apparently, Uncle Encio was really excited about being godfather [laughs]. So yeah, so I've got pictures of him holding me. I have a godmother, so [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 10:42

Oh, so. So did your dad ever tell you any other stories of his early life in that kind of period? Since he was working?

**Fred Tejada** 10:53

No. He, my brother in law. So, this was, you know, like two thou—two thousand—just after my mom passed away, 2002. He mentioned to my dad. I mean, he mentioned to my brother in law that he got picked up to go into the Japanese incarceration camps [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 11:25

Oh, really?

**Fred Tejada** 11:26

I—you know, he never said anything about that to me. Sol, so I really don't—but when you kind of, I don't know if you could see pictures of him, right. And for also me, I get mistaken for being Japanese all the time. And if they just hear my name, they just go well, that sounds kind of like a weird Japanese name. Right?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 11:43

It kind of does, yeah.

**Fred Tejada** 11:44

You know, Te-ha-da.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 11:47

Yeah.

**Fred Tejada** 11:47

You know, Filipinos pronounced Te-hada.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 11:49

Right. Right. I wonder if it would be possible to locate him. And any other—

**Fred Tejada** 11:57

That's what I was trying to figure out. But, you know, the records at the time are just so.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 12:01

Yeah. I mean, other people who we've talked to from the area have mentioned that they think that their dad may have been, at least, like, taken there. Maybe they didn't have to stay there for that long because they realized they—

**Fred Tejada** 12:15

It was a mistake.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 12:16

—were not.

**Fred Tejada** 12:16

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 12:17

But people have mentioned that. They may—they either heard or they think that that happened. But it's unclear. I imagine it wouldn't be something that people would necessarily want to talk about that much.

**Fred Tejada** 12:29

Yeah. Another goofy, well, there's another goofy story he talked about. He was, I think he was picking strawberries at the time. And it was like around lunchtime. And the Border Patrol was making a raid.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 12:45

Oh, Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 12:46

So all the Mexican workers are running, right? So my dad was there with his cousin—I think, I want to say it was Dominidor Tabol. And he said, Hey, let's let's run to go get lunch. So they started running. And a border patrol agent started running after him.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 13:05

Oh no!

**Fred Tejada** 13:06

Finally caught 'em and looked at their faces and he said, "God damn son of a bitch," and just walked away [laughs]. So yeah, that's, that's the sense of humor my family has.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 13:16

Yeah. Oh, wow. Hmm. Okay, so he was a foreman. Do you know around when he may have first came or started working in the Watsonville or Pajaro Valley area?

**Fred Tejada** 13:30

Um, well, I looked at the census from the fifties because I just, kind of, like, this whole time got me kind of like thinking about things because I have no idea, right? So he's listed in the 1950 census living on Beach Road.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 13:48

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 13:49

And, I see that like, two of his cousins were there with him. So it was like, about—I think there was like six names. I just looked at briefly, and I recognized right off the bat two of the names. So, so I know that, you know, at least 1950 he was living in Watsonville.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 14:08

Okay. In Beach Road, that might have been a place where a couple of men who were working in the fields were living?

**Fred Tejada** 14:15

Yeah, there's, um—When, when I was like really young, like six years old, my dad was working out there, driving a tractor, in the asparagus fields. And he brought me out there. So I would, like, be steering the tractor. So while he'd be, like, kind of running around, you know, pick—they would [knocks on table]. Cut the asparagus, kind of, put them in little piles. And then he would collect them and I just, basically, just held the tractor straight.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 14:48

Okay, oh wow.

**Fred Tejada** 14:51

So, yeah. And I, I think that was the camp that he was living at before. Because we would go and visit there, every once in a while, and kind of like, visit the, some of them, the single, older men that were there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 15:06

Right. So, do you think he was living there, kind of, up until he met your mother?

**Fred Tejada** 15:15

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:16**

Yeah, okay.

**Fred Tejada 15:17**

Most likely.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:18**

Okay. Um, I think I'm gonna pause that, then, and ask you a little bit about your mom.

**Fred Tejada 15:25**

Okay.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:25**

So your mom's name is Meady. Is that short for something?

**Fred Tejada 15:28**

No, it's—

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:29**

Just Meady.

**Fred Tejada 15:30**

—M-E-A-D-Y, and then you know people can call her Meddy,

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:33**

okay, Dalisay—

**Fred Tejada 15:34**

Dalisay. Dalisay.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:36**

—Solomeo? Okay. I kind of recognize the Dalisay name, too, from people we've worked with, I can't recall it right now. But, so where was she born?

**Fred Tejada 15:48**

She was born in Altavas, Aklan.

**Fred Tejada 15:53**

That's fairly close to where your dad was?

**Fred Tejada 15:57**

Not really [laughs]. I think that it was a matchmaker.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 16:03

Oh, okay.

**Fred Tejada** 16:05

But, it was set up. They actually met in Manila.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 16:10

Can you—do you know, kind of, the specifics on how they ended up meeting?

**Fred Tejada** 16:18

Well, this is from what I heard from my cousin, who unfortunately passed away from COVID. So he told me that when—so he had, when he immigrated over here, his first trip back to the Philippines was in '54.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 16:37

Okay, your dad?

**Fred Tejada** 16:39

Yeah. And my aunts decided that he needed to have a wife.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 16:45

Uh huh.

**Fred Tejada** 16:46

So, and again—and this is, kind of, also, kind of, forming from another cousin here. So actually, this is going to be Liz's first cousin.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 16:58

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 17:00

Her name's Pat. I think, Moore is now her name. But, Cesar.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 17:07

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 17:10

So there is this one family in Makato that apparently, they're kind of big. And when I say big, apparently the, the guy was kind of a womanizer, and had all sorts of kids, like all over the place. And I think their last name is Mobu.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 17:27

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 17:27

Or Mobu or Mobol. But apparently, there's one woman who's kind of like a matchmaker.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 17:32

Right.

**Fred Tejada** 17:33

And so she's originally set my dad up with this woman, who was my aunt's sister in law. But apparently, she had a boyfriend at the time. So, kind of, passed on my dad. And then, so my mom was, was like as the second person [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 17:54

Right, okay. Okay. Did, what did your mom's family do?

**Fred Tejada** 18:04

As far as I know, I think it was also farming.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 18:08

Okay. Do you, do you know if—anything about, like, your mom's early life? Did she tell you any stories about it like in the Philippines?

**Fred Tejada** 18:20

Not especially, just. Hiding when the, you know, fighter planes are flying overhead. I think the Japanese being pretty cruel. That's about it.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 18:36

Did she have any particular things that she said about World War Two that stick in your mind?

**Fred Tejada** 18:42

No.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 18:46

So, so she would have, kind of, been living in that area throughout World War Two, and, kind of, she was still there. And then your dad came after the war, and that's when they got set up. Do you know anything about their wedding day?

**Fred Tejada** 19:07

Yeah, that we had pictures [laughs]. And I can't seem to find them anywhere. And it was in, in Manila. I believe that—so, Auntie Rosie Tabasa, her brother Juan Dionicio, he was an ambassador. So I want to say that there's like, you know, at his, at my dad's wedding that there is like, you know, there's a picture showing, like, somebody there and I think it was Uncle Juaning.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 19:46

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 19:48

But, but they, yeah, they were. He was—obviously, Auntie Rosie and Uncle Juaning were from Aklan. They weren't from the same town, I don't think. Because, you know, everything was kind of all spread out. But I know that, you know, like, the high school was in the provincial capital. And I think that's where everybody went there for, for school. And I think that's how they met. Because when I last saw Auntie Rosie, that's when she moved back to the Philippines. She was living just outside of the provincial capital.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 20:28

Okay. So your mom and, and her knew each other?

**Fred Tejada** 20:31

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 20:32

Both went as young women?

**Fred Tejada** 20:34

No.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 20:34

No. Okay, when they got to Watsonville they knew each other.

**Fred Tejada** 20:38

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 20:38

All right, got it. Did your mom have other folks in her family, or other women in her family, that had come to the U.S.?

**Fred Tejada** 20:46

No, she was the only one it came to over to the U.S..

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 20:48

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 20:49

And then, when—eventually we got my uncle over here. And then we got my grandfather over here, but he only lasted like a couple years, he really didn't like it, so we sent him back.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 21:04

I see, okay. So after your parents met and got married, did your mom and dad come back to the United States together right away? Or was there kind of a period—

**Fred Tejada 21:17**

No, it looks like they came like right away. Cause, I think we kind of, like, did the math. So probably when she was on the boat, she was pregnant with me (laughs). Because she talked about being seasick the whole time. Just having a miserable time. So, yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:37**

So they, they came back in '55?

**Fred Tejada 21:40**

'55, yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:41**

All right. Do you know anything else about the boat trip other than her feeling sick?

**Fred Tejada 21:49**

That it went through Japan.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:51**

Okay.

**Fred Tejada 21:53**

And, yeah. Hawai'i.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:59**

I interviewed Auntie Lita. And she talked a lot about the boat trip. About going to Japan and Hawai'i. She said the boat even went to Australia. I was like, Woah, that's weird. And she talked about, like, going off the boat in Japan and stuff. It's, it's, um, kind of a longer experience than you think. I feel like nowadays you don't realize how long it took them to come. Do you know where they, they landed?

**Fred Tejada 22:38**

Couldn't tell you if it was Seattle, or if it was San Francisco.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 22:42**

Did they head to Watsonville kind of immediately once they arrived? Do you know—

**Fred Tejada 22:46**

I believe so.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 22:47**

Okay. So you said she was probably pregnant with you at that point coming in. Do you know, where did they live right—kind of right away, when they got to Watsonville.



**Fred Tejada** 22:58

I'm pretty sure that they were living in Casserly Road.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 23:02

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 23:04

And the reason I say this is because—so I told you, my, my dad's property in Salinas. So, my dad wanted to check on it. And the doctor said that I wasn't going to be coming out. So they went over to Salinas, and then that's how I ended up being born Salinas.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 23:22

Okay. Okay. I see. Casserly road. Were there other people kind of in your extended family or friend group living—

**Fred Tejada** 23:33

Yeah, the Tana's were, like, living across the way there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 23:36

Okay. The Tana's. What were they doing? Were they were they sharecropping at that point, strawberries or?

**Fred Tejada** 23:45

I would imagine that we were. Because when we were, we talked to—I remember the Yoshida's, I want to say, that we were farming for them. I'm sure that, that my parents were kinda, like, butchering the names because they would say "Yup-sedo." So.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 24:11

Mmhm, Yoshida. And then, I think that other people may have mentioned that on Casserly Road there was strawberry sharecropping going on for a Japanese-American farmer. Okay. Okay. Um, do you know about, like, how long they might have been living there? How long they might have been working in strawberries?

**Fred Tejada** 24:35

Probably lived there until, up into my, I think when Annette, just after Annette was born. So that would have been like '62.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 24:46

Okay, so a while.

**Fred Tejada** 24:47

Yeah, and then we, that's when we moved to Poultry Lane. And that's, to this day, we have that property, so.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 24:55

What was the road name for that one? The road name? Poultry Lane?

**Fred Tejada** 24:59

Poultry Lane.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 25:00

Poultry.

**Fred Tejada** 25:01

Yeah, like a chicken.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 25:02

Like a chicken. Okay, got it. Got it. Um, could you describe a little bit about what the house was like on Casserly Road?

**Fred Tejada** 25:10

It was like a tiny little place. It had one bathroom. No shower. Kind of like, so there's a living room and a kitchen. You know, almost want to say it's probably about—yeah, the first floor of this condo was probably about the, about that size. Yeah, 363 C, Casserly Road. So.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 25:53

What did it look like outside, in the neighborhood?

**Fred Tejada** 25:59

Outside there was, like, a couple—so there was that little house. It was a little white house. Next to the house was this old bus that we kind of converted into like a little, kind of, like a trailer kind of thing. And my godfather who lived in Davenport. So when he would come visit, he would like stay there. And then there was like another trailer.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 26:28

Encio Cawaling?

**Fred Tejada** 26:30

No, no.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 26:30

Different godfather.

**Fred Tejada** 26:31

Yeah. Because this is Ricardo Ridenio. So he, he was my dad's cousin.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 26:41

Got it.

**Fred Tejada 26:43**

And then there was this trailer. And this older gentleman. We called him Lolo Teroy. I think his name was Cris. Couldn't tell you the last name.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 26:58**

It's hard to remember.

**Fred Tejada 26:59**

He was a, he was like a really, you know. When I was young, he was he was pretty old at that time, right? He didn't have any family. So he was living in this little trailer. And then there's, like, kind of, like, these bunkhouses kind of thing. And that's where the Tana's lived. And there was like another one, I think, next to that. And then there was kind of a little hill and a farmhouse up on top of that. And there was a family up there. Caucasian. They had a bunch of kids and I know I would play with them. What I remember, is the mother's name, and we called her Paula. And that's about it, yeah. So there's like kind of this cluster of buildings in the middle of the field, so then, if you drive out in that area, you just—I think everything's like kind of like, I think, wiped out now.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 27:59**

Yeah.

**Fred Tejada 28:00**

But. But yeah, it was even—it seemed like that was like a mile down. A quar—it probably was a quarter mile. Yeah. Because when you're tiny and you had to walk over to the bus, it seemed like a real long way [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 28:15**

What—so, so these were strawberry fields, right?

**Fred Tejada 28:18**

Yeah, they were strawberry fields.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 28:20**

Okay. Did your family have a garden at all around there? Or was there a garden?

**Fred Tejada 28:28**

Not really. We had roses growing around the side of the house. But Lolo Teroy also had some—so I don't know if we were, like, also planted some stuff there with him. But he—I know that we would butcher pigs every once in a while out there. And then they put together like a bath house with a shower in it.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 29:01**

Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 29:03

So. Yeah. I remember when I got my—my dad cut my hair, so to take a shower we'd go over there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 29:18

What kinds of things would you and your siblings and the Tana kids get up to when you were living there?

**Fred Tejada** 29:26

We would pretty much, like, go run over to—so, right, kind of a little bit away. Not that—we were pretty close to Salsipuedes Creek. So we're always kind of like, I know, I think I've always been attracted to water. So we would kind of like, kind of run around there. But yeah, there was one time when, after a big rain, and, there was a bridge that was there and it got washed out. So they were putting the bridge back together again. And my sister, Frances, was probably about two years old at the time. And so the banks to the creek were pretty steep. She still hadn't figured out brakes at the time. So, you know, me and my sister, Lucy, ran down there. And of course, we stopped. Frances came trotting, running down, she ran into the water. I just remember that the water was kind of, like, kind of going crazy.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 30:30

Yeah.

**Fred Tejada** 30:31

And we don't know. It's both—Francis doesn't recall it because she was really young at the time. But, y'know, she, oh, after that she always had like, was fearful of water. She never did learn how to swim. But my dad, apparently like he jumped in, got her but it's—we want to say that he never got wet. So he probably just like scooped her up. But yeah, that's one experience I remember about (laughs).

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 31:06

Were there fish in the creek?

**Fred Tejada** 31:09

Um. You know what? Not like, where you go for trout or anything like that. I mean, I think it's more like sort of stuff you'd see in Pajaro River and you know, the, those little sucker fish or. And it wasn't like, we would sit there and go fishing at it to catch anything.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 31:30

Okay. Do you remember anything about the work that your parents or the other adults around were doing when you were living there?

**Fred Tejada** 31:43

I think my mom—was she at the time working at, like, at the pajama factory? Yeah, she probably was working there at that time. And my dad was like—so he was. When we were there, we were definitely were doing strawberries. Then after we moved to the Poultry Lane, then you did like some other—you

know, we—I think we've always been, like, sharecropping strawberries. But during like—with strawberries, you know, they're only have a certain season. Right?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 32:23**

Right.

**Fred Tejada 32:24**

So during the winter, he would like work. All I remember one, one person he worked for? Because I actually did, like, one—work there, too. So I'm gonna say it's David Willowby.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 32:40**

Yeah, I've heard that name before.

**Fred Tejada 32:43**

So I did, did thinning, thinning lettuce. And then he would, like, work in brussel sprouts, you know, up until during the winter. And then, you know, spring time when the strawberries are going, and back on strawberries.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 32:59**

Could you describe what kind of, like, what it was like for him to work in strawberries? Like what a typical day would have been for him? Like, what did it look like? What did he do?

**Fred Tejada 33:12**

Well, pretty much when we were. So when we were sharecropping, he would—a typical day for him is he'd wake up, he made us all breakfast. And he'd head out. So, like, early morning, pretty much four, like, six o'clock in the morning, go out. And at that point, you'd just be harvesting berries. And then after you've, you've pretty much picked the row. At that point, either—my mom was kind of, like, burning the candle on both ends. So she would also go out there. And if it was summertime, drag us out there, and we'd be out there too. So we'd all be picking, and then towards, you know. Yes, picking strawberries. And then, towards the end of the day, we'll irrigating the rows that have been picked. And then doing it again.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 34:25**

What was it like for you, as a kid, to pick?

**Fred Tejada 34:29**

Well, it was, it was a pain in the butt [laughs]. It was. And my dad would tell us all the time, he's like, You guys are all going to school so you won't be doing this when you're growing up.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 34:43**

Yeah.

**Fred Tejada 34:46**

So that, that, that [indiscernible] hit us, I think all of us ended up going to school so.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 34:53

Did you guys ever—I've heard from other people about this—did you ever have, like, strawberry fights?

**Fred Tejada** 34:59

Oh, Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 35:01

What was that like?

**Fred Tejada** 35:01

My parents. That was only towards like, late—lat—the later part, when my sister Connie was—because we didn't. If you have, if you threw strawberries, you're going to end up, like, possibly spoiling the strawberries, right. So you—we didn't—never throw him before. But when my—Connie was like, you know, little, y'know, four year old, right, just kind of out there, kind of hanging out. So she was like, do things like—the boxes were pretty big for baskets. And so, you know, we would like sit there—and she was like, you know, an easy target. So then she would like, get a basket box and put it on, like wear it like a turtle shell. And then it's like, Oh, wow, look at her [laughs]. Perfect target. So, yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 35:59

How long would you say—or, age wise, were you helping out your parents in the field, in the strawberry fields?

**Fred Tejada** 36:06

Literally up until I started college. And I think even then, I think my dad was still sharecropping for, like, a couple years after.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 36:17

Okay. Wow. How do you feel about strawberries now? Do you like them still?

**Fred Tejada** 36:23

It's like my favorite fruit.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 36:24

You still like them? Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 36:25

Oh yeah. My dad didn't [laughs]. When we celebrated his 80th birthday, we, I think we got, like, a couple strawberry plants. And that's when he said he didn't like strawberries.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 36:40

I mean, I can imagine if you're picking them everyday, you might not like them anymore [laughs].

**Fred Tejada** 36:46

Well, when you get—when you're picking them every day, and then you know exactly what to look for, it's [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 36:52**

Do you feel like, when you, when you get strawberries now, you're like picky about what kind—like they have to be just right?

**Fred Tejada 37:01**

Not just right, but I definitely know when they're not going to be tasty, so [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 37:08**

Yeah.

**Fred Tejada 37:08**

Do you want more tea, or?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 37:10**

Oh no, I'm good. Thank you.

**Fred Tejada 37:12**

Help yourself. There's plenty.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 37:18**

So you all were living there, on Casserly Road. Were are you all going to a school nearby? I assume kids, what school was it?

**Fred Tejada 37:26**

Salsipuedes Elementary.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 37:28**

What was, what was that school like?

**Fred Tejada 37:34**

Kind of typical [laughs]. Salsipuedes—so, I went there from first to second. Oh, third grade. And then, then we moved to, to Poultry Lane, and then, after that, that's when went to Amesti. But, yeah, I—when I first went to school. So this is a story my mom told me, and I really didn't recall it. But when I—and I think I do remember bits and pieces of it, but when I came home, she asked me why I had a Kleenex in my pocket. And I said, I was crying. And she asked me why I was crying. And I said, Well, because I couldn't understand the kids. Because up when I first went to school, all I spoke was Aklanon.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 38:31**

Oh, okay.

**Fred Tejada 38:32**

So I didn't speak any English. And then I kind of think back because like, I remember I was like kind of there with this one, one kid, and I think he can only speak Spanish. So we kind of, like, commiserated together [laughs]. We couldn't understand each other, but [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 38:53**

So your parents spoke Aklanon at home?

**Fred Tejada 38:56**

Yeah, but after that, they just spoke English. So my sisters after that, they could—the sister immediately after me, she can understand it, but from Frances on, nobody.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 39:14**

Do you have the language still with you?

**Fred Tejada 39:17**

Kind of a little, it's, it's, about the equivalent of like, a five year old. And, yeah, the first time—so we went, when we went to the Philippines, they were worried that I wouldn't understand them. And that I wouldn't eat anything. But my mom told them, He eats rice, and speak to him and Aklanon and he'll answer back in English. And that's—and I did. And then when I tried—we went like a few times. And I think on my second trip, I wanted to try to speak more. So I kept asking people to repeat themselves. And my cousin had a little smart-ass four year old. And he was kind of enthralled with us. He was like, kind of following us everywhere, right. And he's now working, I think on a cruise ship. Disney lines? You know, we're friends on Facebook. But he, y'know, walked up to me and he's speaking to me in Aklanon, and is like, Why do you keep asking people to repeat themselves? What's wrong with you? Are you deaf? Right? And the word we use for deaf is bungol. So it's very distinct when you (mouths bongol)—so somebody would be talking to me, and he'd walk up behind them, and go (mouths bungol). So I go, Yeah you little smartass. But yeah, I, I can understand a lot. I could definitely talk—when they're talking about me, I know what they're talking about.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 40:52**

How I want to go back, I just recalled, to ask you a little bit about the pajama factory, where your mom worked? Could you, could you explain a little bit about what that place was, what they made there?

**Fred Tejada 41:06**

They made—I believe that they made pajamas or shirts. Um, definitely because—and because they, I remembered like, my mom would bring back, you know, pins and plastic bags that they use to package the pajamas at night and I think everybody—I do recall seeing pajamas once. And it was just off of—I don't know what's over there now. Right? Because it's so changing. I want to say it's like, McDonald's. No, no. Can't be McDonald's. Near Atkinson Lane. There was—used to be a Snow White drive in out there, and then I think there was, like, a car dealership for the longest time. But anyway, it was just, just off of Freedom Boulevard. But, but yeah. I believe what they did was, they just, they—I don't think they sewed, I think they just like folded. But I think there was sewing taking place. I think they were, like, putting together.



**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 42:21

Was it—this was the Colshire? Colshire factory. Right. Okay. Was it— was she working there at night?

**Fred Tejada** 42:33

I want to say yes. Yeah, because—we were. So I'm trying to remember when, when they would, like, bring—dragging us out to the strawberry fields. Right, because. Yeah. I, I want to say it's at night. But you know, I really couldn't tell you. I—definitely, Green Giant was at night.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 43:04

I mean that, that's a lot of work. Working in the fields during the day, and then working at a factory at night. She must have been tired.

**Fred Tejada** 43:13

And I think that's probably why she ended up, like, passing younger.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 43:19

Yeah. Did she also do a lot of the cooking at home?

**Fred Tejada** 43:23

She did some, but mostly my dad.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 43:26

Yeah. What kinds of things did he cook?

**Fred Tejada** 43:31

So he did, like, chicken adobo. We had a lot of steak. So he would, like, go get, get like half a cow from Freedom Meat Locker. And we had a, like, a big freezer, and freeze it and, like, be pulling out stuff. Yeah. But yeah. Or go down to Daylight Market.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 44:05

Is that where you guys got vegetables and things?

**Fred Tejada** 44:08

Yes. And. And Daylite Market, that seemed like a place where people will, like, meet. And I want to say that's where my parents ran into Luisa Reyes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 44:25

De los Reyes?

**Fred Tejada** 44:26

De Los Reyes, yeah. Okay. Like, I think. Because my, my mother, she looks very Asian. She was—she had a real fair complexion. So people would assume that she was either Chinese or Japanese, right? And when she would speak in Aklanon, and they would, like, be really surprised. But yeah, when we

were, I think she—her, her and Auntie Luisa—Auntie Lisa and Uncle Johnny were speaking, and she recognized the dialect. Right?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 45:06

It—was Daylite Market owned by—?

**Fred Tejada** 45:17

Chinese.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 45:18

—Chinese, okay.

**Fred Tejada** 45:20

And I think, I think my dad knew them. Well, I don't know if they knew him, but I don't know. I don't know whenever we go to—because they had, y'know, one of those, be like butcher counter, right? Y'know. I remember hearing the bandsaws going all the time, when you walk in there, right. And they would go to—when I was young they all call anybody who walked up in counter, "Hey boss." But my, I think one of them opened another market in Freedom. Freedom Food Center, and then we would be shopping there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 46:00

I, I think that I heard that Luisa De Los Reyes also worked at the Colshire pajama factory. Did your mom know many women in her circle, kind of, that worked there too?

**Fred Tejada** 46:14

Did—I don't remember if Auntie Rosie, at that time, was also there? Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 46:29

Okay. When did she start working at Green Giant?

**Fred Tejada** 46:35

You got me, because—but I know that she got, like, this award. Longevity. And then she was there up until they closed down the, closed the doors.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 46:45

which was in the eighth—eight? The nineties? Eighties?

**Fred Tejada** 46:51

Probably. The late '70s, maybe.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 46:57

Did she work with other women that she knew there?

**Fred Tejada** 47:01

Yeah. There was some, I know that there was, like, one woman from Seaside that would come out to gatherings.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 47:14**

I think Auntie Lita worked there?

**Fred Tejada 47:16**

Yeah. I think even Uncle Encio was there to know.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 47:21**

What, did she ever tell you what it was like to work there?

**Fred Tejada 47:27**

No. I think she's had she handled like a packing machine. Okay. So yeah, just remember an apron gloves.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 47:42**

Hmm, that's a danger. It's kind of a dangerous, yeah. And—

**Fred Tejada 47:45**

I think I want to say that the one time I guess one mechanic lost a finger or something on the machine she was operating.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 47:57**

So she worked. Did she have another job after Green Giant closed?

**Fred Tejada 48:02**

She would—did some, like caretaking.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 48:08**

Okay. All right. What—when about what year was it when you guys moved to Poultry Lane?

**Fred Tejada 48:18**

'62? '63? Somewhere around then?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 48:23**

What was that home like?

**Fred Tejada 48:27**

So that place was on an old apple orchard. And it was a house that they moved from Santa Cruz. Yeah, I looked back on and I was like, Well, I can't imagine how they got it down the road. But it was, it was also pretty small, originally. And then we, y'know, added to it. But, but yeah, when we first moved in there's these like little signs in there that said, Arnold Surf Court and gave the hours of when you would, like, had to check out.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 49:04

Like a hotel.

**Fred Tejada** 49:05

Yeah. So I want to say it was probably out in the beach flats senators somewhere. But yeah, we—it was just under an acre. And we know that. Yeah, we planted all sorts of stuff on it.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 49:22

Like what?

**Fred Tejada** 49:24

Corn. Beans. We [indiscernible]. We actually had chickens on it, too.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 49:38

Were these vegetables for just your family to use or were they being sold?

**Fred Tejada** 49:43

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 49:43

Okay. Who was doing a lot of that, kind of—

**Fred Tejada** 49:48

My dad.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 49:48

—your dad? Did he enjoy doing that?

**Fred Tejada** 49:56

Seemed to. I know he did a lot of it. And when he was retired, he was still doing a lot of it. He did a lot of climbing onto roofs, kind of to our dismay. During the '89 quake we had, so, we had a little patch of ground in front, in front of the house. And we would eat cherries, and throw the pits into there. And a cherry tree actually popped up. But it was really close to the house, right? And so he was like, trimming the branches—I mean, it was a good sized tree at that point. And when the quake hit, it knocked the ladder out. So he's like, kind of dangling on that thing. And my nephew was, I think he was like seven or eight at the time, was kind of running around and saying, Earthquake, earthquake. And my Dad is kind of hanging in a tree, and the things swaying around.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 51:00

Oh my gosh.

**Fred Tejada** 51:02

But, but yeah. He was always, kind of like, going up on roofs and, just, not too long after that, he was up on the roof trying to fix something. And he fell down, he hit his head, cracked some vertebrae. Scared the hell out of my mom., you know, because there's a lot of blood.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 51:26

He was very active in doing stuff around the house?

**Fred Tejada** 51:29

Oh, yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 51:31

Who else lived around the area on Poultry Lane?

**Fred Tejada** 51:35

It was just us.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 51:36

Okay. Were, like—

**Fred Tejada** 51:39

Well, we, you know, we had our neighbors. And I mean, if you're talking about other Filipino families. Yeah, we were the only Filipino families. It seemed like Doering Lane was, that area was kind of a.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 51:56

Where everyone lived there. But you guys didn't live there?

**Fred Tejada** 52:00

No, but it was close by

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 52:01

Okay. Who were your neighbors, then, if they weren't other Filipino families?

**Fred Tejada** 52:06

So we had the Cooper's for longest time. And up the road from them was Plum Orchard, and the Reeds lived there. And then front, the front house on Green Valley Road, it was the Dunnes. But that they moved out and I think that ended up being, like, a rental. And then the Reeds, that's still owned by the, the granddaughter. She's, she's still living there. And then when the Cooper's moved out, then she's—actually the people who moved in—were living near us on Casserly, they ended up like moving into that house. So, it was a Mexican family.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 52:55

Where there kids in those families?

**Fred Tejada** 52:58

The Cooper's it was just a boy, Kevin. And he was the same age as my sister. So we would do things. So we were in Boy Scouts together. And then the, when the Valdez's moved in, so, you know, when you're in high school, it's like, you don't—

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 53:21

You don't play so much. Right. But you all, maybe—did you all go over to Doering Lane a lot to hang out with the families there?

**Fred Tejada** 53:33

Yeah. So Doering Lane, and the Tana's also lived, like, really close by. On—shoot, I forget what the name of that one. There's Trembly, Doering, and then that next street near.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 53:55

Would you say that it would have been, like, walking distance to get to those family friends?

**Fred Tejada** 53:59

They weren't walking distance, really. Though, we have one story where Alvin Tabios walked over to our house when he was, like, about four years old.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 54:11

Walking distance for him.

**Fred Tejada** 54:13

Yes [laughs]. We typically didn't think about it. I'd, like, hopped on our bikes to go. But they discouraged us from going on the roads.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 54:27

What, what kind of, were the family gatherings like when everyone would get together—the family, the friends that were all kind of connected?

**Fred Tejada** 54:37

Typically it'd be a barbecue, and it'd be a bit, a birthday party. So, so yeah, it's definitely the Tanas and the Cawalings. And the Taytayans.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 54:53

Whose house would it be at typically?

**Fred Tejada** 54:56

It kind of rotated, though we, I want to say that the March—Marchant? Marchant Street. We didn't go there that often. But definitely, like, up on, we do stuff on Calabasas Road Yeah, and the Taytayan's also lived on Calabasas road too, just like one, one hilltop away. It was really close. And then Auntie Lita, they live further down Calabasas Road, closer to the school. I think they were like right across from the school. And then the Tayatyan's moved to Marchant and then Cawalings had moved over to

Doering. Then, I think, I think at that point it's Tabios, they moved over close by. And then the Taytayan's moved over there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:10**

Everyone was just generally pretty close, though—

**Fred Tejada 56:13**

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:13**

—throughout this time. I see. Do you have any, like, really vivid or fond memories of, like, childhood hanging out with that group?

**Fred Tejada 56:26**

Well, we, I think pretty much we were like, we all just hung out. Pretty much all my memories of just being with them. Right

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:35**

Can you share one?

**Fred Tejada 56:40**

Well, one time. So over, I think a lot of the celebrations were at our place, because, just because we had a lot of open space (laughs). Easy parking. And another, there's another family I—did anybody mention the Cesars?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 57:02**

Mmhm.

**Fred Tejada 57:03**

The bukid?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 57:05**

Oh, yes.

**Fred Tejada 57:06**

So that was also a place where that— almost like a compound, right, with all the space they had. But pretty much one—for us, you know, the boys, we just, kind of go out and run out on the fields everywhere, right. So near where our house was, it was an old apple orchard that was fallow for, like, the longest time. They, they took out the apple trees and then it just sat for the longest time. And there was—they had a farm pond on it, and we would go there and go fishing. And they had, like, there was bluegill, catfish, and largemouth bass. So we'd go there. Sometimes, I think when everybody was out on Doering Lane, they would like walk over to Pinto Lake. And then at that time the trout was being stocked in Pinto Lake.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 58:12**

So you guys cook the fish you caught?

**Fred Tejada 58:14**

Yeah. So, so yeah. And then we would think—oh, my mom really liked fish. So she would like, take us up fishing. And when—kids you don't have to get a fishing license, right. So we'd go to Moss Landing. And there used to be, over where, I think, MBARI is, there used to be a dock out there. And people would fish off of that. So we go there. And then I think we would, we went out to San Louis Reservoir to catch striped bass. I think one time we, we took the Cawalings with us. So, yeah. It was kind of scary because, you know, a bunch of us, none of us learn—knew how to swim. Yeah, it had really steep sides. Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 59:15**

Yeah. Were there any of the, kind of, uncles or people who weren't married living with your family on Poultry Lane?

**Fred Tejada 59:28**

Yeah, there was, we would have, my—Lucy's, or Crrris, godfather. So his name was San-Santonino Gonzalez. And he was, he was a merchantman. And I guess he was on a, on a boat during the war and it got shelled and he was deaf. So he would live with us and it kind of, like, kind of moved between us and the Tanas.

**Fred Tejada 1:00:04**

And then we had like another, for a while, older gentleman. And his name was, I want to say Manuel Mendoza. I don't know if he was also from the same area in the Philippines. So we call them Lolo Maning. But he had a falling out with my mom. He accused her of cheating. So he was, so he was like totally banished, and I don't think, and when he passed away, we didn't even, like, go to the funeral. So he had stayed with us. And then we had another like, nephew of my dad's. He was like, the nephew of—well, we call him Manang Nino. Santonino Gonzalez. Lorianzo Gonzalez. So he lived with us until he got married, and raised the family in San Francisco, Daly City.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:14**

And these, these men were kind of living with you and doing—were they working in the fields with your dad?

**Fred Tejada 1:01:20**

I think they were working in the fields, but I don't think they're working with my dad. No, because we were all, we were sharecropping strawberries. Yeah, there was like another one, too. He was, his name was—oof. Well, we called him Uncle Al. Alfonso Gonzalez.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:46**

Okay.

**Fred Tejada 1:01:48**



So, the other two Gonzalez's, they weren't really—I don't think they're related to Uncle Al. But Uncle Al was like a, like a traveling salesman. So he had, like, he had a truck that he had all sorts of, like, dry goods that he would bring, and he would go to, like, definitely go to Delano, and sell stuff. And he had all this stuff. Weird stuff, you know, like, pancake mix? You're like, we didn't know what to do with it. We ended—and I remembered using it to, like, make little, like road markings (laughs). And, so yeah, and then, he had a brother who lived in New York. And I was like, looking at one of the pictures there in the, in the archive showing, I think, Auntie Lisa with Marie Gonzalez. So I was like, Oh, okay. I remember Auntie Marie.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:02:55

Why do you think that your parents wanted, like, wanted to have these gentlemen living with you all?

**Fred Tejada** 1:03:06

I'm not sure if, if they were boarding, or if they just didn't have a place to stay, or, I, I couldn't tell you. There's like, there's always somebody there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:03:19

How was your interactions with the, the manong?

**Fred Tejada** 1:03:24

Um, well, we just, like, pretty much, you know, we, we saw them, said hi to them, they give us some change [laughs]. I think that's where we learned how to play solitaire. Because we would also go out to Beach Road.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:03:45

What was, what's your memory of that? That kind of boarding house?

**Fred Tejada** 1:03:51

Just quiet. The, the adults will be speaking we just be, kind of like, kids just kind of sitting in a corner. Just, like, staying out of trouble.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:04:07

Did you ever see or hear of any of those men doing like, going to Philippine Gardens and doing cards there, or anything like that?

**Fred Tejada** 1:04:18

All I remember about Philippine—Philippine Gardens is where I had my first hamburger.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:04:22

Really?

**Fred Tejada** 1:04:23

Yeah. And we were picking up Manong Nino there. I think that's, I guess I think he liked to play cards, and I think he was always like, you know, that was kind of like the, almost like a, it was—originally the

bus depot was close to there too. So I think a lot of, when they would go off to Reno, they'd go from there. But yeah, I'm pretty sure you—They didn't let me go inside.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:05:01

Inside where they were playing cards?

**Fred Tejada** 1:05:03

Into the restaurant, pretty much. So yeah, I think—so the one time I did, like, go into the restaurant, that's when I actually got a hamburger.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:05:15

Do you think that kids weren't necessarily going in there that often?

**Fred Tejada** 1:05:19

Well, I don't know if my parents didn't want me going in there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:05:26

Did you ever hear of any of the manong doing cockfights?

**Fred Tejada** 1:05:32

Well, my dad would come back home every once in a while with the dead rooster, and he would, like, cook it up and feed it to the dog. So I know my dad was probably going.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:05:43

Yeah. Okay,

**Fred Tejada** 1:05:47

But I'd never went myself, and the first time I saw a cockfight was on my first trip to the Philippines, and I was totally appalled. Because I go, "Wow. Really?"

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:06:01

Kind of scary.

**Fred Tejada** 1:06:02

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:06:04

Um, what other kinds of things did your family do for fun when you were growing up?

**Fred Tejada** 1:06:11

Well, we would go up to visit relatives in San Francisco. And visit my godfather in Davenport. But yeah, I mean, you know, for the most part, you know, we didn't have too many weekends off, right? Yeah. You know, every once in a while, you know, Sundays.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:06:39**

Did you all go to church on Sundays?

**Fred Tejada 1:06:41**

We did not. I think much to the dismay of my, my mother, but we were not particularly, we weren't particularly religious. I mean, we went through the paces. So I did confirmation. But that was about it.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:02**

Um, where did your godfather live in Davenport?

**Fred Tejada 1:07:05**

He lived just, just before you get to Davenport, off to the side road. It's you know, there's like all these little canyons that kind of ran through there. But he had like a little. Yeah, a little kind of shack. Single room.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:25**

Was he working in brussels sprouts?

**Fred Tejada 1:07:26**

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:29**

What do you remember about going up there?

**Fred Tejada 1:07:33**

Cold, windy.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:35**

Yes. That's how it is still, huh? That's my memory there.

**Fred Tejada 1:07:37**

Yeah, that's just kind of the wind, just kind of like blowing through, sandblasting everything, right. He had—there, he had set up like a little garden in one of the little canyons. So he like, set up a little irrigation system and it was like, it was kind of wild. Especially when you think about it. He had to cut out this little garden. He had to walk a way, you know, a ways to get there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:08:07**

Okay. But like he was growing like, vegetables and things?

**Fred Tejada 1:08:10**

Yeah, he was growing vegetables. Yeah. Watercress.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:08:13**

Okay. So, y'all were living on Poultry Lane. Were you still living there all the way up until high school?

**Fred Tejada** 1:08:27

Yes. We still own the property.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:08:29

Oh, you still own it? Okay. Okay. What was it like going to Watsonville High School?

**Fred Tejada** 1:08:37

It was going to high school [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:08:41

Were, were a lot of the other kids that you knew growing up all also at Watsonville High School?

**Fred Tejada** 1:08:49

They were, but you know, I think once you kind of get to high school, everybody kind of like, starts to have kind of, gone with peers. I mean, we would, you know, whenever we'd see each other, and we would do things, but. But yeah, I think at that point, we all start kind of doing our own kind of thing.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:09:09

What kind of stuff were you into in high school?

**Fred Tejada** 1:09:13

I did all sorts of stuff. So I, so I played an instrument in grade school. So, first year of high school I didn't play it, but then I picked it up again. Sophomore. Then I also got into wrestling. So I did that. So yeah. So it was just—I think that's when I dropped out of boy scouts, probably after Junior High.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:09:46

Was there a lot of other Filipino kids besides the ones you grew up with at Watsonville High School?

**Fred Tejada** 1:09:54

There were some, but it wasn't like we all kinda hung out together. Like, you know, Dana and Modesto Tuzon are all the same age. Right? Bert Nabor.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:10:10

And these are people that you, like, did not know before going to high school.

**Fred Tejada** 1:10:14

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:10:14

And you kind of encountered them there?

**Fred Tejada** 1:10:16

Yes. But Dana, we met when I was at Salsipuedes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:10:21**

Oh, okay. Did you ever—this might, I think this might have been before you went to Watsonville High School, but were you ever involved or hearing of the Filipino Youth Club that a lot of people were a part of there?

**Fred Tejada 1:10:38**

I had no idea (laughs).

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:10:40**

I think it might have been slightly, possibly, before you were there. It was short lived. Late '50s. Early '60s.

**Fred Tejada 1:10:48**

Okay. Definitely not, yeah, because I was there from '70 to '74.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:10:52**

Yeah, okay. Yeah. Um, well, what kinds of things did you do outside of school for fun?

**Fred Tejada 1:11:01**

Well, [indiscernible] if it was springtime, we were probably—homework. We didn't do much of anything. Maybe go out fishing. Right. But once it was band and wrestling. If it wasn't band season, it was wrestling season, so.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:11:31**

Yeah, I—that's how I was in high school, too. Just the extracurriculars. Did your band ever—was it the marching—

**Fred Tejada 1:11:38**

It was a marching band?

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:11:39**

Were you in the Fourth of July parade ever?

**Fred Tejada 1:11:42**

We were not in the Watsonville Fourth show, we were in the Redwood City Fourth of July parade.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:11:53**

I've heard the Watsonville Fourth of July parades were pretty, a pretty big deal—

**Fred Tejada 1:11:58**

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:11:58**

—back in the day. Do you remember going to them as a kid?

**Fred Tejada** 1:12:02

I remember going when I was a kid, yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:12:04

What were they like for you?

**Fred Tejada** 1:12:06

Well, just kind of a lot of people. Everybody y'know, being a little bit dressed up. I think we have, like, a picture of us. And I think when my sister, Josephine, was probably, maybe one or two. So yeah, and Annette probably wasn't even born. Okay,

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:12:32

I'm gonna ask you a little bit about some of these different organizations that your parents were a part of. So you said they were in the Makato Aid Association? Do you remember any? Like, did they gather? What did they kind of do?

**Fred Tejada** 1:12:51

They would have meetings. All at different houses. They would all, all, all the adults would get together, and then all the kids would just be off doing their own thing. So I had no idea what they did. On my one of my last trips with both my parents, they went there to, basically, distribute the last remaining funds with the Makato Aid Association. And they gave it to the church at Makato.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:13:29

So they perhaps were getting money together to send back to the Philippines?

**Fred Tejada** 1:13:34

Yeah, and I think they like donated money to, like, to the library there, something like that.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:13:42

So the aid was for Makato. I got it. Okay. Okay. What about the other groups, the Visayan and the Aklanon? And kind of other groups? Was it kind of the same people in all the groups?

**Fred Tejada** 1:13:54

Pretty much. You know, I think. Yeah. Except the Visaya. I don't recall too much actual meetings there. Oh. But I do remember asking one time, What is it? What do they do? And my mom tell—saying, Oh, they give you \$50 When you die or something like that. Okay. And they stopped doing it because, you know, it wasn't growing, and it was shrinking. And then you know, people would be dying off and.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:14:35

Couldn't keep up.

**Fred Tejada** 1:14:36

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:14:36**

Were those meetings all at people's houses, or were they?

**Fred Tejada 1:14:40**

As far as I know, yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:14:41**

Okay. Was your mom involved in the Filipino Women's Club?

**Fred Tejada 1:14:47**

No, she wasn't.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:14:47**

She wasn't, okay.

**Fred Tejada 1:14:49**

As far as I know.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:14:51**

What about your dad? Was he ever in any—that you know of—any of the like, fraternal, like the Caballeros.

**Fred Tejada 1:14:58**

I've seen pictures, but I, again, it's like, when I was like looking for him, I didn't see his picture in it. But we had pictures in our albums

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:15:14**

Of other people.

**Fred Tejada 1:15:15**

Yeah, so. But I don't think he was.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:15:20**

Okay. Did you guys ever attend any of the like big dances that some of the groups were putting on ?

**Fred Tejada 1:15:27**

Yeah, I think, like, the Philippines—the ones like they had over the Vet's Hall? I remember going to one. And I think that was when my cousin, Liz, was being crowned.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:15:42**

I saw a picture of that, that one happening. Do you remember what that dance was like?

**Fred Tejada** 1:15:52

I think they had, like, a live band. That [indiscernible] all sound like Lawrence Welk-ey kind of thingy. But you know, wasn't very interested in [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:16:13

And they did—this is where they would have done the social box dances.

**Fred Tejada** 1:16:17

Yes. Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:16:18

Do you recall that at all?

**Fred Tejada** 1:16:20

I, just—a little bit. But, you know, because I wasn't. I didn't have to be in the social [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:16:27

Yeah. Did you ever learn any of the Philippine dances as a kid? Like—

**Fred Tejada** 1:16:34

I think we had to do the tinikling for something. But I do—we used to have, like, I think it was Aklan Civic League would have, like, a Christmas party. And then they would, kind of like a talent show. And they would make the kids go and do something. So.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:16:56

Maybe that's when you would have been doing, like, the folk dancing or?

**Fred Tejada** 1:17:00

Folk dancing, and then I think I had to play my clarinet a couple times.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:17:08

How would you feel about, like, did—or, hmm, not feel. What are your memories of continuing to help your family on the farm through high school?

**Fred Tejada** 1:17:22

It was just something they had to do.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:17:24

Did you, do you remember anything specific from that age?

**Fred Tejada** 1:17:35

Well, just that it was an obligation to do, and then I swore to myself I wasn't going to do it when I grew up.



**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:17:40

Right. What then it was always strawberries—

**Fred Tejada** 1:17:47

It was always strawberries.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:17:48

—out there.

**Fred Tejada** 1:17:48

Yeah. We didn't do anything else.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:17:54

Let me look at my notes very quickly.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:18:03

Where did you go after high school?

**Fred Tejada** 1:18:06

Stanford.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:18:07

Oh, really? Oh wow. Oh, did Oh, no. It wasn't Lanny, who went to Stanford.

**Fred Tejada** 1:18:13

He went to Cal.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:18:14

His sister went—

**Fred Tejada** 1:18:15

Yeah, his sister [indiscernible] went to Stanford.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:18:17

—to Stanford. Okay. Okay.

**Fred Tejada** 1:18:19

Yeah, I didn't know that she was there until I was, like, getting a sandwich at Togo's, and she was working at Togo's. So [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:18:28

Was that the first time you, like, left home?

**Fred Tejada** 1:18:31

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:18:31**

What was that like for you?

**Fred Tejada 1:18:35**

It was weird. I remembered like, so I was in the band at Stanford. So I got there like a week early, or a few days early. And then, when school started and registration it was like, all these white guys looked exactly the same to me. Like. I couldn't tell the difference. And I had—it happened the first time went to the Philippines, I had the same problem when we went over to this big old shopping mall in Manila ,and I just met my net-cousin, you know, earlier the day. I'm like, God, they all look alike.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:19:21**

Oh my goodness. Were you more used to, like, a diverse, diverse, like ethnic group going to high school—

**Fred Tejada 1:19:27**

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:19:28**

—In Watsonville, right.

**Fred Tejada 1:19:28**

Yeah. I had never seen so many blonde, white people.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:19:35**

Wow, was it, was it—was that kind of the biggest change you noticed from being in Watsonville? And then going to Stanford, that, like, it was less diverse—

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:19:47**

Yeah,

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:19:47**

—more likely? In high school, would you say that you were, like, your friends and your friend group was very, like, ethnically diverse, or?

**Fred Tejada 1:20:00**

Um, yeah. I mean, I was. Shoot. That's—the crowd I hung out with was Lanny and Dana. But they, they were all, they were also in the band too. But yeah, we were kind of like the, I guess, the more intellectual, studious people. So, yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:20:28**

But also Filipino. Well, yeah. Then Dana and Dana and Lanny are mixed-race. Okay. Well, when you were in Stanford, did you get to come home a lot to visit, or did you kind of stay there?

**Fred Tejada** 1:20:44

Yeah. My sister would come and grab me. And bring me home.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:20:50

Okay. What did you and Dana and, and Lanny do in high school, aside from being in band? Did you ever, like, do anything together?

**Fred Tejada** 1:20:59

No.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:21:01

Man, you guys were real studios then.

**Fred Tejada** 1:21:03

Yeah. I mean, we were in the band. Yeah. Oh, I think I, I played in the play that senior year that Lanny was in.

**Fred Tejada** 1:21:22

Oh, okay.

**Fred Tejada** 1:21:25

But yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:21:28

What did you do after college?

**Fred Tejada** 1:21:32

Well, pretty much. Worked over at Seagate. So, so yeah, that's how—I ended up over here is when they made me a manager, and I was like, Okay, well, I kind of like dodging the bullet about moving back into the county. And that's when, about this place.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:21:54

And you've been here, in the area, the whole time—

**Fred Tejada** 1:21:56

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:21:56

—the whole rest of the time. Wow. How do you kind of think about, like the changes in the region over the years. Like the Santa Cruz County kind of region?

**Fred Tejada** 1:22:08

It's kind of interesting how Watsonville is kind of like, I don't know, it's gotten a lot of the white people kind of, like, pulled out of downtown. It used to be a lot more. I don't know. I—it's, it's more, more Hispanic. Watsonville. Yeah, it's like the white people kind of, like, fled.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:22:44

There was a kind of, like, a fancy area in downtown that were, like, a lot of white people lived at some point. Is that what it was? Close to downtown?

**Fred Tejada** 1:22:55

Not—well, it was close to St. Patrick's Church, right across from—there's, there used to be some tennis courts, on there. But anyway. I remembered—I forgot what the name of that little enclave was.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:23:19

Yeah, so it did change demographically. Do you, do you recall the kind of change of the downtown businesses. I know Dana talks a lot about that. Like how the businesses—the Filipino and other like, minority owned businesses.

**Fred Tejada** 1:23:38

Pretty much it was like, I think up until the quake. It was changing a little bit, but I think the earthquake definitely—I think that was kind of like the last straw and the thing, right? Because I remember that's when, you know, I think Daylite disappeared. Or, they tried to, like, set up a smaller footprint. You know, Ford's department store, when that disappeared. And, yeah, a lot of stuff just getting torn down and.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:24:14

And Philippine gardens, too?

**Fred Tejada** 1:24:16

Philippine Gardens, yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:24:21

What about in Santa Cruz? Have you noticed a lot of change in Santa Cruz?

**Fred Tejada** 1:24:26

Well, sadly, we didn't really go that much into Santa Cruz, except for the boardwalk.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:24:31

You guys went to the boardwalk, though?

**Fred Tejada** 1:24:33

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:24:33

I've seen pictures of Liz at the boardwalk. What was that like, his kids?

**Fred Tejada** 1:24:41

Well, everything was kind of big. And scary.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:24:46

And there's, I mean, I imagine the boardwalks changed a lot, but also, probably some stuff is still the same.

**Fred Tejada** 1:24:52

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:24:53

Feels vintage. Some vintage stuff there.

**Fred Tejada** 1:24:57

Yeah, the roller coaster.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:24:58

Right. It feels old and dangerous [laughs].

**Fred Tejada** 1:25:00

Yes.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:25:04

Yeah. Did you all ever go to events held at the boardwalk? Or was it more just for like fun just hanging out?

**Fred Tejada** 1:25:12

Just hanging out.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:25:13

Okay. Yeah. Kind of, I'm kind of going to start wrapping it up a bit. So I wanted to kind of finish—I know, you've talked a bit about going back to the Philippines over the years. How many times have you gone back? Like in total?

**Fred Tejada** 1:25:35

Six, maybe.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:25:39

Six times? That's, like, a lot. How did you feel like—I know, you said you felt like everyone looked the same. And like, you kind of understood people talking, and kind of it took a while to get it back. How did you feel, like, going back to the Philippines? Did it feel like you were like reconnecting with, like, an identity? Or did it feel.

**Fred Tejada** 1:26:01

Well definitely it was kind of like a reconnection. Because my parents had—that was when we went—well, that was the first time they went back, after coming here. Right. So anyways, it was kind of a big deal. And I told my mom, that, you know, when I started working, I would take her back to the Philippines. And I think she just kind of like, “Yeah yeah yeah, right right right.” And just like, just before we went—I think it was Christmas before we went. And I said, Okay, what's the best time to go to Philippines? And she kind of looked at me like I was from another planet. Yeah, when's the best time to go? So we went, like, August '84. And I just remember my dad, just having this perpetual grin the whole time. And we just kind of went around the home, visited family around Aklan. So.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:26:55

Were they excited to introduce you to all these relatives you never knew?

**Fred Tejada** 1:27:00

Yeah, they were.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:27:03

Do you know if these were people that they had been, like, over the years of them been in, being in America, were they corresponding with them a lot?

**Fred Tejada** 1:27:10

They were corresponding on a regular basis. Yeah, I mean, a lot of—there was. I have an aunt—or had an aunt—mother's side, who was the same age as my sister. And if you look at pictures, they look like twins. And so when I went to—when we first went to go visit my grandfather. So he, he was my mother's side. My grandparents on my father's side, they passed, like, early. I think my—I want to say like, '61. Never, I never met him. But when I met my aunt, she talked about, you know, hearing about this other sister that she never met. So [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:28:12

Did you feel, like, did you feel like you were, like, connecting with an identity? Or did you kind of feel outside because you were from America?

**Fred Tejada** 1:28:24

A little outside. But you know, it was just like, kind of sitting there and going, "Wow, you know, this water I'm drinking probably contains DNA of, you know, generations." Because everybody's been living here for God knows how long, right? So yeah. And there's this other barrio when my cousin was taking me around this person, this person. And then, like, Holy crap.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:28:52

They're all related.

**Fred Tejada** 1:28:53

They're all related.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:28:55

That must be really, like. I mean, not. I mean, I know you had a lot of relatives and extended family here, but that, that must be really different.

**Fred Tejada** 1:29:04

It was different, I guess. Yeah. We call you know, the Cawalings, we call them cousins. But yeah, I don't think we have any blood relation. The Tanas, definitely. And the Taytayan's, possibly but [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:29:21

When was the most recent trip to the Philippines?

**Fred Tejada** 1:29:26

2004. Well, when I say most recent, that was the trip with my dad. I've been to the Philippines since, but it wasn't for family. So I was scuba diving and I was lugging all this gear, and I didn't tell anybody I was there.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:29:43

Just vacation

**Fred Tejada** 1:29:44

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:29:48

Oh, wow. What did your parents do up until their passing? Did they work the whole time?

**Fred Tejada** 1:29:56

My mom was, like, taking care of people. My dad was just, like, worked the garden at home, watched TV.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:30:09

And they never moved back to the Philippines.

**Fred Tejada** 1:30:11

No. I asked him, you know, at one point, if he ever wanted to move back to the Philippines. He said no.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:30:20

Why do you think he wanted to stay?

**Fred Tejada** 1:30:21

I think he liked to convenience. Yeah, in reality, I think he's spent more of his, most of his life here. I mean, because he left the Philippines when he was like, 21. And then, you know, he went back when he was like, 45, or something like that. So most of his life is here.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:30:42

He felt comfortable. Did you know a lot of other men of his age who moved back?

**Fred Tejada** 1:30:51

There was, like, definitely. One that I remember. We talked about Uncle Albert. He was very tall. Big guy. And he was, he was, like, the head chef for, like, the, the gatherings. So he did a lot of the cooking. He was the one who made dinuguan. But yeah, he went back to the Philippines. And I remember one trip, maybe it was like the second trip, and my mom was telling me that they had some Christmas carolers come to the house. And my mom was saying, Oh, this is the son of Uncle Albert. But I never got his last name. I was just kind of [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:31:46

Do you feel, now, kind of, that you still have a, kind of, connection to the Watsonville, kind of, Filipino community that you grew up with? Are you all still close?

**Fred Tejada** 1:31:57

I, I'm close to the cousins. I actually went to that, they had that event. Couple of months ago—

**Fred Tejada** 1:32:09

Christmas party.

**Fred Tejada** 1:32:10

It was not a Christmas party. It was there was in the plaza.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:32:13

Oh, yes. The FAHM event.

**Fred Tejada** 1:32:15

Yeah. So I went to that, and I just, I felt kind of lost.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:32:19

Really, why?

**Fred Tejada** 1:32:20

I really didn't recognize anybody. I ran into Dan Fallorina. And then he was telling me that there was, like, a couple other, like Ted Reyes. But he just, didn't know, I didn't see anybody and was like, Well, okay. So I just [laughs].

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:32:38

There were kind of like, a lot of younger people at the event. I guess people who just live in Watsonville now.

**Fred Tejada** 1:32:46

And I think my youngest sister might know more people. But yeah, I mean, pretty much. It's just.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:32:57



How did it—how does it feel when you look back on the old, like, old photos, especially the ones that are, like, from other families that you can see, like, now?

**Fred Tejada** 1:33:09

Well I just kind of. Kind of reminisce about those days.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:33:19

Well, I am going to wrap it up. Is there anything that I didn't ask you about that you'd like to share on the record? Anything about your parents that you think is important? No?

**Fred Tejada** 1:33:32

Um, not I can think of. I know that they were both kind of involved with the Filipino Community.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:33:42

The organization.

**Fred Tejada** 1:33:43

The Organization.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:33:43

Oh, really?

**Fred Tejada** 1:33:47

Yeah. Whenever I go to the community center, I guess, up there. Guess they—I didn't know that they donated a bunch of money. I'll put it up

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:34:00

Do you go to events there?

**Fred Tejada** 1:34:03

I went to a couple. I think we've used it, we've used the place.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:34:09

Recently-ish?

**Fred Tejada** 1:34:09

Not recently, no. It's been a while. Well, I think the last time I was there was when they were celebrating Auntie Lita's 90th birthday.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:34:22

Do you know people who are still, kind of, actively involved in that organization?

**Fred Tejada** 1:34:27

Um, well, the one couple, so Leticia—gosh, why can I think of their their last name now? Montejo. The Montejo's, yeah. So she, she passed away, like, six months ago? Within a year. So I know that they were kind of involved.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:34:59

I've heard that the organization is kind of, it's more like people who are more recent, like, people who migrated in in like the '70s and stuff who are more involved now in that organization.

**Fred Tejada** 1:35:12

Yeah.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:35:14

Okay. Anything else that you would want to share on the record?

**Fred Tejada** 1:35:19

I can't think of anything.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:35:22

Maia, do you have anything you want to ask?

**Maia Mislant** 1:35:24

Oh, I don't know. I was just listening.

**Meleia Simon-Reynolds** 1:35:26

Oh, okay. Well, I think we're all good. I'm going to stop it. Thank you so much.