

February 10, 1981
Interviewer - Irene Ruiz
Interviewee - Sally Magaña Ramos

Tape 88A

- 004-032 Mrs. Ramos is a teacher with the Kansas City, Missouri School District. Born January 26, 1945 in Kansas City, Kansas. Lived on Kansas side until 1951 flood, attended John J. Ingalls school for 1 year.
- Both parents born in U.S., grandparents all Mexican. Maternal grandfather was Julio Castilleja. Mother, one of 8 children. Paternal grandmother remarried to a Frennert. Grandmother was Indian from Tarasco. Other grandparents from Monterrey.
- 003-039 One of 4 children, parents divorced. Stayed in church during the flood and never returned to Kansas side. Both parents still live on West Side.
- 040-056 Parents both worked at packing houses, married at 16. Mother attended Central Jr. High, lamented quitting school. Mother told of competition in school between Greeks, Poles, Mexicans, etc. Only mother's youngest 2 siblings completed high school.
- 057-070 Mother encouraged children but never forced them to attend school. All 3 girls, one boy attended Switzer, West Jr. High and Westport High School. Only brother did not graduate.
- 071 Description of neighborhood. Men walked across railroad yard to get to work. Recalls a family friend who was killed while crossing the tracks. Accidents were common because the men drank.
- 091-114 Attended parades, circus downtown but childhood in general was very boring. Has 2 children of her own now. Tries to keep them busy, give them variety. Not much money as she was growing up, father drank a lot.
- 115-131 Father had an accident at Swift's packing house and lost the fingers on his right hand. Got an excellent settlement from the company but squandered most of the money. Grandfather was injured once at a soap company. At that time, two companies would give workers 5¢ compensation and ask them to sign a paper (probably a legal release).
- 132-149 Elementary teachers very cooperative. Good experience. Encountered more difficulties in junior high.
- 150-182 Family attended Mexican Baptist Church, setting her apart from most friends and neighbors. Did not realize at the time she could have participated in Guadalupe Center activities.
- 183-208 Began swimming daily at Jarboe city pool. Met lifeguards there-- mostly older students who counseled her, gave her a more positive outlook on life.

- 209-222 Ridiculed by peers for liking school. Great trouble making friends. Mexican-American society as a whole was not oriented towards education.
- 238-260 Hated school so much she wanted to quit after 8th grade. Director of the swimming pool, himself a teacher, let her live with him and his wife for a year so she could attend Southeast High School. The year away from West gave her an entirely new perspective.
- 271-310 Worked her last years in high school during evenings at Capris Theatre downtown. Met other young, responsible people there. Walked home at 10:30 p.m.
- 311-324 High school better. Found it was popular to make good grades. Few Mexicans at Westport. Most went to Northeast.
- 325-341 Grew up bilingual. No language problems.
- 342-392 Uncles served in WW II, Korean War.
- 393-465 Saddened by the loss of family antiques, photographs in the flood. Recalls a neighbor who drowned because he became drunk and would not leave. A polio epidemic followed the flood. Had to go to the hospital because she began having trouble with one leg.
- 466 Befriended by a Mrs. Cana, ministers wife.

Tape 88B

- 005 Found once she attended Westport that youngsters who had previously ridiculed her suddenly wanted to be friends. Observed that most Mexican youths who excelled were from her church rather than the Catholic church.
- 036-075 Active in Spanish Club, literary organization, yearly Pan American festival, was a class officer. Graduated 1963, received a scholarship through the school board.
- 076-097 Attended William Jewell on scholarship in 1963-1964. Felt the college was too conservative, too expensive to pay room and board. Returned to Kansas City Junior College (now Penn Valley).
- 098-113 Majored in education, graduated from UMKC with Spanish and French degree.
- 114-124 Helped start Upward Bound program at UMKC, involved in other government programs. Married in senior year, graduated 1968.
- 125-134 Husband's family and hers were good friends. Became acquainted through church.
- 135-164 Started teaching full-time in 1970 after 2nd child was born. Taught at Martin Luther King school one year, insighted a Spanish program at West.

- 165-180 Left full-time teaching to be with children more. Substituted until getting an offer to teach English to adults through a CETA grant. Grant money cut.
- 181-199 Joined UMKC as minority recruiter for the dental school. Traveled in Midwest 1977-1979.
- 200-205 Joined Kansas City Schools again, returned to teaching at West.
- 206-224 Satisfaction from returning to the hispanic community to teach. Tries to be a role model.
- 205-246 Recently started master's degree program in reading.
- 247 Has discovered several people she went to school with who also have returned to the community as a role model.
- Feels more tutoring programs, etc. are non-available to help young people.