

**Narrator:** Beatriz Velez

**Interviewer:** NATHALIE BARRAGAN

**Date:** March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Location:** Zoom

**Collection:** Race and Oral History Course, Spring 2021

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00:00:07.290 --> 00:00:17.010

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** So, hi my name is Nathalie Barragan today is March 14, 2021, and I am interviewing Beatriz Velez, through Zoom for the UCSD Race and Oral History project and for the purposes of this project, do you agree to grant the university [audio feedback] p-permission to archive and publish this interview for educational purposes.

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00:00:26.040

**Beatriz Velez:** Yes

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00:00:27.090 --> 00:00:30.630

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Awesome! So first and foremost, How are you doing today?

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00:00:30.840 --> 00:00:31.890

**Beatriz Velez:** I'm great. How are you?

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00:00:33.030 --> 00:00:41.520

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** I'm- I'm good too I'm glad you can come here and do this interview for me, so what are some of your hobbies and passions

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00:00:42.360 --> 00:00:55.260

**Beatriz Velez:** Just first of all, I just want to say thank you very much for considering me to help you out with this project it means so much to me, especially as a first-generation student just being able to give back to you it's- it's amazing!

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00:00:56.910 --> 00:01:05.490

**Beatriz Velez:** Nice to meet everybody, my name is Beatrice Velez Flores, I was born and raised in San Diego my parents immigrated from Mexico to San Diego 27 years ago, so this gave me enough time to be able to explore outside of my comfort zone and enjoy the beautiful community of Barrio Logan. So, some of the hobbies that I'm currently doing right now is I love going to the beach.

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00:01:23.490 --> 00:01:38.700

**Beatriz Velez:** morning walks it just gives me the opportunity to h-have a growth mindset and just give me that awareness of what the community can do, especially right now, during like the Covid time when you're just isolated and at home.

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00:01:39.300 --> 00:01:44.730

**Beatriz Velez:** Being able to know that some of us are already getting vaccinated gives me that.

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00:01:45.540 --> 00:01:54.840

**Beatriz Velez:** gives-gives me that like calm and security that I'm able to explore and go out and just do outdoor activities with my son.

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00:01:55.110 --> 00:02:01.350

**Beatriz Velez:** just because of that is a way that I can cope with a different situation that's going on right now in the world.

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00:02:01.860 --> 00:02:03.690

**Beatriz Velez:** So that is one of the things that I do.

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00:02:03.990 --> 00:02:23.280

**Beatriz Velez:** Another thing that I love to do just for fun is to go shopping I love listening to music listening to podcasts especially that just because right now with the whole situation and not having enough money to like have like the Cox channel I have listening to all these podcast on YouTube.

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00:02:26.970 --> 00:02:44.700

**Beatriz Velez:** Or, just like the radio and it just gives me like that ability that there's so much out there and not necessarily you have to go out but there's other ways, where we can also connect virtually so that is one of the things that I have been doing right now

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00:02:46.470 --> 00:03:01.470

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** that's super interesting to hear I'm definitely someone who enjoys podcast as well. You were talking a little bit about your Community could you probably- a little bit mentioned more about your upbringing, in particular where did you grow up in and like what challenges, did you face growing up there?

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00:03:02.580 --> 00:03:18.090

**Beatriz Velez:** Of course so like I mentioned before my parents immigrated from Mexico to the United States 27 years ago, so this has always been one of the hardest challenges that I've grown up with just because my parents were new to San Diego and.

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00:03:19.290 --> 00:03:26.190

**Beatriz Velez:** Unfortunately, the language has always been a barrier, since they only speak Spanish so when it came for them.

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00:03:26.220 --> 00:03:28.320

**Beatriz Velez:** To giving me the best opportunities.

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00:03:29.420 --> 00:03:39.640

**Beatriz Velez:** Here, just in Barrio Logan it was very limited just because they didn't have that knowledge or resources or even guidance to support them through my education.

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00:03:40.320 --> 00:03:50.880

**Beatriz Velez:** So when it came for them to provide what they needed for me to learn, they were able to offer me the best that they could at that time.

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00:03:50.880 --> 00:03:51.870

**Beatriz Velez:** which was going.

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00:03:51.930 --> 00:04:05.490

**Beatriz Velez:** to school and getting an education, because it was something that Mexico wouldn't be able to provide any-any student over there, especially over there, since the dynamic is so different from the dynamic that we have here in the United States.

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00:04:06.120 --> 00:04:16.170

**Beatriz Velez:** So that has always been a challenge in mind thankfully, I was able, or my mom was able to find the Barrio Logan college institute that was right next to Perkins.

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00:04:16.980 --> 00:04:24.510

**Beatriz Velez:** 10 years ago so she was able to give me that opportunity which allowed me to grow as an as an individual.

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00:04:24.930 --> 00:04:35.400

**Beatriz Velez:** and give me the resources and that guidance that I needed to find, in order to be successful, and with that I was able to learn, like the meaning of what it meant to give back.

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00:04:35.910 --> 00:04:44.790

**Beatriz Velez:** because at that time my parents didn't have that chance and I-I like to mention it like my parents so much because I believe that.

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00:04:45.210 --> 00:04:54.150

**Beatriz Velez:** Their experiences relates to the experiences that I'm living now because all their sacrifices that they did when they were younger.

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00:04:54.690 --> 00:05:08.880

**Beatriz Velez:** it's paying off and eventually hopefully next year spring 2022 I'm able to graduate and just say to my parents, thank you because all their sacrifices is eventually paying off and in the future.

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00:05:08.880 --> 00:05:12.090

**Beatriz Velez:** And like I, I want to let others know that it's possible that.

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00:05:12.150 --> 00:05:19.200

**Beatriz Velez:** It takes time, this is not from one year to the next there's always going to be challenges in your community in schools.

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00:05:20.010 --> 00:05:33.000

**Beatriz Velez:** Even in your own personal life like there's always going to be challenges, but you have to find just those networks and the strength and the strength to-to move on and just know that you can do it.

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00:05:34.890 --> 00:05:45.150

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Thank you so much for sharing so you know, as you said, your first generation college student, what is your field of study, why did you choose that field of study?

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00:05:45.900 --> 00:05:46.350

**Beatriz Velez:** So.

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00:05:46.620 --> 00:05:50.550

**Beatriz Velez:** Like I mentioned right now I'm at San Diego State University studying.

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00:05:50.580 --> 00:05:51.690

**Beatriz Velez:** [computer noise] Chicano studies.

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00:05:52.080 --> 00:05:52.620

**Beatriz Velez:** And it's.

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00:05:52.650 --> 00:06:03.960

**Beatriz Velez:** Very funny because when I graduated from Point Loma High school in 2013, I went straight to Community college, because I didn't know what path, I wanted to go towards to.

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00:06:04.500 --> 00:06:10.800

**Beatriz Velez:** So, at the beginning of my Community college experiences, I decided that I wanted to pursue education and work with students.

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00:06:11.430 --> 00:06:17.820

**Beatriz Velez:** Because that was obviously like my mentality, though, giving back to the students, because they did that to me when I was a student.

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00:06:18.420 --> 00:06:24.150

**Beatriz Velez:** So my first year of Community college, I was focusing on education and doing all the requirements.

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00:06:25.020 --> 00:06:30.510

**Beatriz Velez:** That I needed to fulfill to get my associates degree in education but for some reason.

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00:06:31.140 --> 00:06:41.280

**Beatriz Velez:** I started working at the BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] and I got all those experiences of doing like Business Administration work, so I decided to change my major to business administration.

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00:06:41.700 --> 00:06:47.040

**Beatriz Velez:** which eventually led me to the career, that I am now, which is chicano studies, because I was able to.

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00:06:47.910 --> 00:06:59.850

**Beatriz Velez:** connect a lot with my family when it came to my roots my Mexican roots and it's it's something that growing up, they don't really tell me a lot about my my personal roots and where I come from and where my grandmother come from.

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00:07:00.690 --> 00:07:07.920

**Beatriz Velez:** So whe-whenever I was able to take my first Chicano studies class I was exposed to all these different cultures and all these different.

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00:07:08.460 --> 00:07:22.680

**Beatriz Velez:** opportunities that I didn't even know that I had as a first-generation student, so I was very interested, so I decided to take more classes and just learn about the dynamics of the border, the dynamics of like the music and the culture.

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00:07:23.670 --> 00:07:28.680

**Beatriz Velez:** The Food and I'm very familiar with the food to put the way that each.

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00:07:28.920 --> 00:07:36.330

**Beatriz Velez:** Place makes their own food like, for example, like the mole is so different than the way we make mole here in the United States.

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00:07:36.990 --> 00:07:50.880

**Beatriz Velez:** So I wanted to pursue Chicano studies see because they wanted to connect more with my history with my parents history with my culture and I knew that I wanted to give back to my communities, so I knew that.

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00:07:50.910 --> 00:07:54.810

**Beatriz Velez:** Focusing on Chicano studies was gonna give me the best opportunities.

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00:07:55.350 --> 00:07:57.600

**Beatriz Velez:** In order to do that for my future.

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00:08:00.750 --> 00:08:08.280

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Thank you for sharing maybe, can you expand a little bit on Community, as you said, you know a lot about the culture and it's very much.

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00:08:08.790 --> 00:08:21.180

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Important to you culturally can you tell me more about wher- how you grew up there were there any biases and challenges your Community specifically faced that may have differentiated from others in San Diego and other communities in San Diego.

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00:08:21.300 --> 00:08:23.670

**Beatriz Velez:** Yeah so like I mentioned, I.

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00:08:23.760 --> 00:08:38.370

**Beatriz Velez:** grew up in Barrio Logan I'm 26 years old now and I never left San Diego or Barrio Logan and to just growing up and seeing the Culture differences, how it has developed throughout the time it's very impressive.

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00:08:39.000 --> 00:08:47.370

**Beatriz Velez:** because Chicano.. Chicano Park just in general, was a very small community and out of nowhere without the movements.

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00:08:47.760 --> 00:08:56.550

**Beatriz Velez:** And all and everybody having a voice Chicano park became a huge community, and not just for the Mexican community, [laughs] but for anybody .

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00:08:56.880 --> 00:09:09.390

**Beatriz Velez:** And it's so diverse now and I love that fact that Barrio Logan was able to create that sense of belonging, with just people in general, so I really embrace the fact that.

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00:09:09.780 --> 00:09:13.770

**Beatriz Velez:** My own community was able to open the doors to anybody else.

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00:09:14.400 --> 00:09:30.540

**Beatriz Velez:** And the way that I have--- the way that I've been connecting is like I mentioned in my classes, I try and be more involved, especially right now that Chicano park open a museum so I'm trying to get more involved with that with that program that way I.

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00:09:30.540 --> 00:09:33.060

**Beatriz Velez:** know all these opportunities that others.

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00:09:33.270 --> 00:09:43.290

**Beatriz Velez:** In the Community can can obtain because there's so many people who are either new to the United States or they've been living in San Diego.

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00:09:43.770 --> 00:09:50.250

**Beatriz Velez:** For a long time, but they're not aware of all the great amazing opportunities that Barrio Logan has.

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00:09:51.120 --> 00:09:59.880

**Beatriz Velez:** And I feel like during like throughout the time there are so many battles and constant denials, especially in Chicano Park

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00:10:00.630 --> 00:10:14.610

**Beatriz Velez:** it's- it's known to be a dangerous Community a Community full of homelessness, poverty but, in reality, like if someone doesn't know about Chicano park and they go and experience it.

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00:10:15.480 --> 00:10:21.690

**Beatriz Velez:** it's amazing culture amazing murals that they have show a lot of history and. A lot of Chicano History and it's movements it's a very beautiful place and I love the fact that they expanded, not just the resources but there's so many boutiques now small businesses in Chicano park that are that are growing, and that is- that is like the meaning of.

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00:10:37.620 --> 00:10:48.360

**Beatriz Velez:** Growing right and I love the fact that we were able to do that and, hopefully, one day, when I'm older I'm able to have my own business and just let others know that it's possible that.

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00:10:48.870 --> 00:11:03.870

**Beatriz Velez:** Education is the key, and I believe that a lot and I've have experienced it as first generation as Latina as a mom as a daughter, so I-I love the fact that I'm able to grow in a community that is amazing.

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00:11:05.670 --> 00:11:07.830

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Thank you, sounds awesome.

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00:11:09.270 --> 00:11:23.610

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Can you, maybe expand a little bit more on like how that made you feel the portrayal Chicano Park of within San Diego and surrounding areas of San Diego. How does it make you feel that they portrayed as this kind of a center of violence, when in fact it's not?



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00:11:24.060 --> 00:11:35.730

**Beatriz Velez:** yeah, you know it's- it's upsetting the fact that people label Chicano park as dangerous and violent and as a place where drug is used.

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00:11:36.480 --> 00:11:46.470

**Beatriz Velez:** And in reality it's not a I feel like it's it's a regular park with so much history its a movement, and I really believe so.

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00:11:47.160 --> 00:11:55.110

**Beatriz Velez:** Because they started small they fought-they fought against all these rules that was happening back before.

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00:11:55.740 --> 00:12:00.360

**Beatriz Velez:** I was even alive and to see it grow and to see it to see all the murals.

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00:12:00.810 --> 00:12:15.900

**Beatriz Velez:** Growing throughout the movement of history that, is why Chicano park is still there, the people keep it alive, but it's not even us as first generation or Chicano's it's the fact that people believe in the movements.

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00:12:16.860 --> 00:12:29.970

**Beatriz Velez:** And, in reality, I feel like the people that do label Chicano Park as dangerous, they are not aware of the history behind the movements and behind Chicano Park and so I.

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00:12:31.080 --> 00:12:41.280

**Beatriz Velez:** First even for me growing up as-as Mexican I didn't know the movement of Chicano Park and why they celebrated to Chicano Park because that's a big celebration, that we have each year.

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00:12:42.450 --> 00:12:52.890

**Beatriz Velez:** And I didn't know that movement and I grew up there for 27 years, and so I took classes that eventually gave me that awareness of what it was.

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00:12:53.550 --> 00:13:10.740

**Beatriz Velez:** So I know that there's-there's a lot of people that need to know more about the movement, and this is why they created the museum here at Chicano Park, so that other people can be aware of why Chicano Park is and why it's considered such an amazing community of history.

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00:13:12.240 --> 00:13:21.450

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** I-I would love to maybe know, can you maybe expand on a little bit of the history of Chicano park and maybe your affiliation with the museum. I'm so interested in that factor if you don't mind me asking.

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00:13:21.510 --> 00:13:31.350

**Beatriz Velez:** yeah no so they they're still working on the on the museum here, by Chicano Park, but the purpose of the of the museum is to bring awareness.

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00:13:31.740 --> 00:13:39.540

**Beatriz Velez:** and show the movements that have created Chicano park so from my understanding there's a Chicano.

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00:13:40.470 --> 00:13:51.600

**Beatriz Velez:** Committee who are working on having different presenters go once a week to talk about their experiences and some of the things that they did during the Chicano-Chicano park movement, which is so good, because I mean, I want to know, like what we're in the barriers that they had what were the challenges what made them successful like what were their outcomes, their perspective.

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00:14:05.460 --> 00:14:14.130

**Beatriz Velez:** Of the movement, so I heard that they're going to have that they're also going to have all these different paintings during the movements of Chicano park and.

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00:14:14.820 --> 00:14:23.880

**Beatriz Velez:** Low riders as because usually you're if you've ever gone to Chicano Park. Annual fundraiser and there's so many Low riders and they even have their own business.

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00:14:24.420 --> 00:14:30.030

**Beatriz Velez:** Down the block from Chicano Park and so all of that history is going to be in one single room.

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00:14:30.660 --> 00:14:46.740

**Beatriz Velez:** where people are going to come and give their perspective and the challenges of the Community. so that's what I know so far they're still working on it, I know that they're doing construction right now and to be open their doors as soon as they can so super excited for that.

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00:14:49.620 --> 00:15:01.320

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** awesome so um you know you also mentioned, your first generation college student, so I kind of wanted to go back a little bit to that can you tell me about your experience how was the application process like.

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00:15:02.490 --> 00:15:02.820

**Beatriz Velez:** yeah.

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00:15:03.210 --> 00:15:04.110

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** What were some of the challenges you faced?

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00:15:04.440 --> 00:15:16.830

**Beatriz Velez:** Yeah, so as first-generation student growing up in a low-income Community, low-income household it was hard for me to even know about private schools.

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00:15:17.250 --> 00:15:23.400

**Beatriz Velez:** in the Community, or even outside of Barrio Logan because again my mom didn't know.

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00:15:24.060 --> 00:15:33.540

**Beatriz Velez:** The English language so it was hard for her to even find those connections, so I was able to go to a school here called Perkins elementary school, who gave me all these.

102

00:15:33.810 --> 00:15:41.100

**Beatriz Velez:** Different amazing connections and friendships but eventually they were able to tell me here, we have all these different.

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00:15:41.640 --> 00:15:52.230

**Beatriz Velez:** high schools ,that you can apply all these different scholarships and, at the time I'm like what is a scholarship, nobody has ever told me what a scholarship is

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00:15:52.830 --> 00:15:58.650

**Beatriz Velez:** So they were able to explain that process to me and, as usual, like I had all these questions I'm like.

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00:15:59.400 --> 00:16:12.480

**Beatriz Velez:** Like Do I need to have certain grades to apply to a certain school? Do I needed to have this community service? at that time I don't know if I knew what community service was, but I was probably like Do I need to do any anything extra [laughs].

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00:16:13.590 --> 00:16:26.580

**Beatriz Velez:** In order to get to that school, and so the teachers had a lot of- a lot of connections as well so they were able to guide me, which is super helpful, especially growing up, and knowing what's out there.

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00:16:26.910 --> 00:16:39.390

**Beatriz Velez:** And so, eventually, I was able to go to Point Loma high school were at there, I had a separate counselor who was able to help me through the College application process, which was also very hard.

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00:16:39.900 --> 00:16:44.910

**Beatriz Velez:** Because Point Loma that at that time was very limited and they didn't have enough.

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00:16:45.810 --> 00:16:51.900

**Beatriz Velez:** resources to help off the students because Point Loma is a very big school and they have a lot of students from different backgrounds.

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00:16:52.830 --> 00:17:04.230

**Beatriz Velez:** So they were able to help me and they were able to provide me that one on one support which I really needed at that time and that's how I eventually ended up applying to.

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00:17:04.890 --> 00:17:19.200

**Beatriz Velez:** city College and the the way that they explained it to me at that time was because I didn't have a major they said, because I was a low-incomes that the best option for me, was to do Community college that way I wouldn't pay as much money.

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00:17:20.220 --> 00:17:29.460

**Beatriz Velez:** As a four year university, so I ended up going to Community college there three years and then I decided to apply to San Diego state now knowing.

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00:17:29.850 --> 00:17:40.350

**Beatriz Velez:** All these resources and there's all these scholarships and grants and even loans that I could apply, so I was already aware, I already had all my information my list of all the resources.

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00:17:41.070 --> 00:17:48.480

**Beatriz Velez:** That I any school had so I applied for different schools and eventually I ended up.

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00:17:49.110 --> 00:17:59.430

**Beatriz Velez:** Choosing San Diego state just because they-they have really good programs there, and a lot of amazing support and just different-different mentors and guidance.

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00:17:59.850 --> 00:18:09.900

**Beatriz Velez:** but-but, honestly, the application process for me I didn't have my school counselors at Point Loma, or at City College it would have been hard.

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00:18:10.290 --> 00:18:24.000

**Beatriz Velez:** And, thankfully, I was already a student at Barrio Logan college Institute, so I was able to find that mentor to guide me through the process and to explain what SAT was and.

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00:18:25.230 --> 00:18:34.530

**Beatriz Velez:** scholarships and grants and just the application process and doing practicing for interviews, all of this, is what BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] helped me with.

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00:18:34.920 --> 00:18:41.790

**Beatriz Velez:** So I'm super grateful for them, and you know I- you never forget the people that get back- that give all their help to you.

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00:18:42.390 --> 00:18:55.170

**Beatriz Velez:** And it's just not the resources or the money that they provided but it's- it's the time that they spent with you, and knowing that they believe in you, I think that was the thing that I needed the most.

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00:18:55.920 --> 00:19:01.800

**Beatriz Velez:** growing up and going through the application process and knowing that I have that support system growing up.

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00:19:02.430 --> 00:19:12.120

**Beatriz Velez:** So I'm very, very thankful, and I think of every day that I see that or when I'm working at the office I'm like thank you very much, because-because you guys provided me with the support.

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00:19:12.420 --> 00:19:20.940

**Beatriz Velez:** I'm doing the same for my family and eventually I'm going to be doing that with my community with the students with a New Generation Students so yes.

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00:19:22.650 --> 00:19:34.230

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Thank you, I-I'm very intrigued in your college experience in your application process so that was very interesting to see how it differentiated from my own experience as well.

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00:19:35.280 --> 00:19:50.160

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** So maybe, can you expand maybe on how the transition or to college was what was different in terms of Community-Community college to state college, as well as just transitioning from high school to college, if you could describe your experience.

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00:19:50.340 --> 00:20:04.650

**Beatriz Velez:** yeah so my experience, right after high school was very similar I've just the fact that city college was a small campus and I knew like I knew the type of student that I am and I really need that one on one help.

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00:20:05.430 --> 00:20:12.390

**Beatriz Velez:** Just because that way I know my priorities so going from high school to city college was an easy transition.

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**00:20:13.920 --> 00:20:18.540**

**Beatriz Velez:** and, especially because I when I applied to city college I applied to be.

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00:20:18.960 --> 00:20:30.900

**Beatriz Velez:** EOP [Educational Opportunities Program] at city College has this program EOP [Educational Opportunities Program] for first Generation Students where they give you that one on one support with counselors and mentors exactly what I'm doing at San Diego State but

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00:20:31.200 --> 00:20:38.130

**Beatriz Velez:** My transition from city college to San Diego state was very, very hard, just because I had to do.

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00:20:38.850 --> 00:20:45.840

**Beatriz Velez:** Like orientation plus I had to do like a whole week of transfer bridge program something that I didn't do at Community college.

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00:20:46.680 --> 00:20:57.660

**Beatriz Velez:** But the reason why I decided to take the transfer bridge program was because I knew that there was going to be a cultural difference between going from one single.

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00:20:58.590 --> 00:21:07.410

**Beatriz Velez:** Group to having all these different people from different backgrounds, so I decided to take that transfer bridge program and I was able to.

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00:21:08.100 --> 00:21:14.730

**Beatriz Velez:** be able to connect but not just the counselors but the professors are there to other students from third and fourth year.

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00:21:15.360 --> 00:21:27.300

**Beatriz Velez:** were able to share their experiences and just tell me a little bit about their situation at San Diego State, so that made me just very calm and know that there was that support that I knew that I was going to need.

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00:21:28.410 --> 00:21:34.050

**Beatriz Velez:** So, my first semester at San Diego state, you know so hard, especially because it was all virtual and.

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00:21:34.590 --> 00:21:44.010

**Beatriz Velez:** And to me, I was already ready to go in person and you like [laughs] have to struggle finding this building, like, I was already, for I mentally I was ready for that.

138

00:21:44.790 --> 00:21:54.390

**Beatriz Velez:** But when I heard about the pandemic and that it was going to be virtual I was like I'm a procrastinator I know I'm not like going to do well I'm like taking five classes.

139

00:21:54.900 --> 00:22:05.910

**Beatriz Velez:** So, I was very scared but, thank God, that I was able to apply the soar program so that was one of the programs that they mentioned during transfer bridge, and of course I had like my notes.

140

00:22:06.480 --> 00:22:14.820

**Beatriz Velez:** During the transfer bridge I'm like okay what program should I apply for that's best can see me and my needs, so I applied to be.

141

00:22:15.720 --> 00:22:22.620

**Beatriz Velez:** A mentee for the shore program and I was able to get in I'm so lucky, I was able to get in and I didn't have to pay for that Program.

142

00:22:23.400 --> 00:22:40.530

**Beatriz Velez:** So throughout the whole academic year I was able to work with the counselor once a month, just to make sure that I was on track if they needed any-any help if it came with just helping me and my family go through the Covid.

143

00:22:41.850 --> 00:22:47.250

**Beatriz Velez:** The Covid situation or if I needed to apply for any assistance, they were there to help me and they.

144

00:22:47.490 --> 00:22:58.230

**Beatriz Velez:** always emailed me or call me or even text me we have like a group chat so they were very, very flexible, the fact that the professor's were also there too to provide.

145

00:22:58.530 --> 00:23:12.000

**Beatriz Velez:** me with any help that I needed if I had any questions they will always contact me something I was very scared because San Diego State, as you know, like it's hard to get that one on one help, especially when they have so many students, like my first class.

146

00:23:13.050 --> 00:23:18.300

**Beatriz Velez:** I had was taking biology and it was like 400 students and I was like how am I supposed to get this one on one help.

147

00:23:18.930 --> 00:23:28.830

**Beatriz Velez:** but thankfully, because I applied for the soar program, and I was an EOP [education opportunities program] student at San Diego State I have all these extra help and from different from different.



148

00:23:29.130 --> 00:23:39.240

**Beatriz Velez:** Different professors from different cultures which made it very, very nice, because I was able to hear their perspective and somebody else's perspective about their their education.

149

00:23:39.750 --> 00:23:46.980

**Beatriz Velez:** which really gave me the confidence that I needed that semester, because that semester I was like I don't think I can do it.

150

00:23:47.640 --> 00:23:54.330

**Beatriz Velez:** because at that time I had my son to like right after I had my son in February and Covid started in March.

151

00:23:55.020 --> 00:24:01.860

**Beatriz Velez:** So I'm like I don't think it can do this and I'm going to have my newborn and I really want to focus on him, he was my priority.

152

00:24:02.460 --> 00:24:10.680

**Beatriz Velez:** But, thankfully, like my counselor was like you need to let your professors know about your situation I'm sure they're going to be flexible.

153

00:24:11.220 --> 00:24:22.410

**Beatriz Velez:** And I did, and I was able to talk to my five professors and they were so flexible, and I am so thank you for that, because I don't think if they were flexible, so I don't think I would have been successful, a semester.

154

00:24:23.280 --> 00:24:38.130

**Beatriz Velez:** and luckily, I was able to finish my semester at 3.7 so I'm very, very thankful, and then this semester on it flew, it was super-super nice it was such a smoother transition the classes were they [laugh].

155

00:24:39.060 --> 00:24:44.220

**Beatriz Velez:** a little bit easier, but I already knew like my technique and the way that I studied.

156

00:24:45.120 --> 00:25:03.540

**Beatriz Velez:** So, I already knew what I was like what to come learn what I needed to do in order to be successful, that second semester. Something that I wasn't prepared for my first

semester so definitely I'm now that we're we're reopening and San Diego state it's going to be in person next semester [laughs].

157

00:25:04.710 --> 00:25:06.360

**Beatriz Velez:** Like my anxiety it's coming back.

158

00:25:07.170 --> 00:25:11.490

**Beatriz Velez:** I'm just like now I have a one year old and happy-- a year and a half.

159

00:25:11.670 --> 00:25:23.820

**Beatriz Velez:** How much he's a crazy one, but I think he's going to be fine now he-he wants a one-on-one attention, but he knows that, as soon as I have my degree like he's going to have a better life he's going to have this better resources.

160

00:25:24.420 --> 00:25:36.450

**Beatriz Velez:** So, I like to just stay very positive through all of this, so I'm very excited to finally experience that college life and that campus life that I was looking forward last year, so.

161

00:25:37.920 --> 00:25:45.090

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** I definitely feel you on that, I think I also miss campus living so I can definitely relate in those sentiments.

162

00:25:45.870 --> 00:25:57.780

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Maybe, can you just briefly talk about I know you're a mom and how that may be a little bit different when you're in college and your your experiences as being a mom and juggling college, the same time, if you are.

163

00:25:58.380 --> 00:26:05.940

**Beatriz Velez:** yeah so like I mentioned, I had my baby Joseph in February and Covid started in March.

164

00:26:06.960 --> 00:26:18.870

**Beatriz Velez:** And I think classes started that the like the end of February, so I was very, very scared and like I mentioned before, I knew what my priorities were I knew that my son needed my whole attention.

165

00:26:19.470 --> 00:26:32.250

**Beatriz Velez:** Especially because I'm a single mom so I didn't want to let this opportunity go because I waited so many years to fly to San Diego state and I eventually got admitted to the Program.

166

00:26:32.910 --> 00:26:42.600

**Beatriz Velez:** So I knew that I did not want to let that go, so I I, thankfully, I had a good mentor Abby OCI and Jannette Lopez.

167

00:26:43.620 --> 00:26:53.250

**Beatriz Velez:** who also has her son offer her sons already he's already 10 years old, but she had experienced having a son, while she was in college.

168

00:26:53.790 --> 00:27:04.560

**Beatriz Velez:** So she was able to just talk with me and connect in that level, like before we would connect in a work environment, but now that I have my son and she had her own son.

169

00:27:05.010 --> 00:27:10.050

**Beatriz Velez:** Like that there was, like the way that we communicate it was so different it was like.

170

00:27:10.710 --> 00:27:19.260

**Beatriz Velez:** Like she was a mom, and I was a mom like we could relate to each other's experiences, and I feel like because I had that.

171

00:27:19.710 --> 00:27:31.410

**Beatriz Velez:** That guidance and she was such a role model to me that she gave me the strength that I needed to push through all those hard obstacles that I-I was imagining that I would have.

172

00:27:32.370 --> 00:27:39.000

**Beatriz Velez:** So, when I was going to school, having my one year old son you will see me in class.

173

00:27:39.510 --> 00:27:50.250

**Beatriz Velez:** breastfeeding my son he thankfully, he was a good sleeper so he would see for four hours I'm like Okay, this gives me time to focus on one class.

174

00:27:51.150 --> 00:27:58.710

**Beatriz Velez:** Do my homework, I have any questions email the professor, so I was very good I'm very responsible when it came to my studies.

175

00:27:59.250 --> 00:28:06.060

**Beatriz Velez:** But, at the beginning, I was very scared I thought that I wouldn't be able to make it and I didn't want to let my mom down.

176

00:28:06.480 --> 00:28:12.180

**Beatriz Velez:** Especially because she's the reason why I went to San Diego State, She is the reason why I applied.

177

00:28:12.870 --> 00:28:25.470

**Beatriz Velez:** Because I knew that-that as the time goes on, she's getting older and-and I don't want her working on a hotel for the rest of her life, like, I want to provide for her and-and because of her.

178

00:28:25.680 --> 00:28:26.850

**Beatriz Velez:** I'm here now.

179

00:28:27.120 --> 00:28:37.830

**Beatriz Velez:** And I want like my son to know those values and I want him to carry that to like I want him to be caring I want him to study very hard to give back.

180

00:28:38.370 --> 00:28:42.780

**Beatriz Velez:** Because that's what my mom implemented in me, and I wanted to do the same with my son.

181

00:28:43.290 --> 00:28:52.680

**Beatriz Velez:** So yes, so school has been too hard I'm not gonna lie having my son made it even harder like my if I had one path now have like two different paths.

182

00:28:53.160 --> 00:29:04.740

**Beatriz Velez:** My son is my priority my education my priority, and I have work too, which is another priority but thankfully like BLCI [ Barrio Logan College Institute] has been such-such such a blessing.

183

00:29:05.460 --> 00:29:11.910

**Beatriz Velez:** And I'm always going to say that they helped me so much through-through all my crazy rollercoasters that I've had.

184

00:29:12.330 --> 00:29:22.680

**Beatriz Velez:** coming from Community to dropping out of high school up dropping out of college than to applying San Diego state honestly, it's been a roller coaster but they've been through me.

185

00:29:23.280 --> 00:29:36.720

**Beatriz Velez:** they've been helping me through so many years, some I'm very, very blessed even be here today and it's just amazing to know that I'm able to as a mom as a daughter.

186

00:29:37.830 --> 00:29:43.800

**Beatriz Velez:** As an employee like I'm able to find that balance in my life, and I feel like.

187

00:29:44.490 --> 00:29:57.420

**Beatriz Velez:** The new moms that are out there, believe that they can't do it that's -that's not right, but they know they can do it like if I'm able to do it I'm sure that there's other - other new moms and know that they can do it to.

188

00:29:58.110 --> 00:30:09.450

**Beatriz Velez:** it's just finding-finding that that guidance on that connection with somebody maybe it's your mom in my case, it was my coworker who had the same experiences.

189

00:30:10.230 --> 00:30:15.360

**Beatriz Velez:** If she was just able to talk to me, and I think a lot, too, and we still connect to this day.

190

00:30:15.990 --> 00:30:25.200

**Beatriz Velez:** She still asked about baby Joseph and the funny thing is, that my son was born the day she was born so whenever it's my son's birthday it's also her birthday.

191

00:30:26.040 --> 00:30:40.080

**Beatriz Velez:** But that way it's-it's-it's been an amazing just amazing opportunity to even be at San Diego State and finish a whole year with my son and my work so it's been crazy but fun journey.

192

00:30:42.420 --> 00:30:58.170

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** you know you've been mentioning BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] I and how much is impacted you so I kind of just wanted to know how did you become involved with BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] I know you briefly mentioned that your mom played a role in it, and what impact it's had on you so far.

193

00:30:58.290 --> 00:31:10.770

**Beatriz Velez:** Yeah so Barrio Logan College Institute BLCI for short Barrio Logan College Institute, open their doors to the Community in 1996 but my mom didn't get involved until 2002 I think it was when I was in fifth grade.

195

00:31:14.850 --> 00:31:30.420

**Beatriz Velez:** So she applied so I can be a student there but necessarily she didn't know what the program was about she just kind of wanted me there as like a babysitter if I'm being honest she just wanted some time on our own to do her own things.

196

00:31:30.810 --> 00:31:49.440

**Beatriz Velez:** so she applied to this program and with time she was able to get involved in the program as a parent committee, and this is where she learned all this different ways that the educational system function, so the way that I started to get involved was attending Tutoring.

197

00:31:50.550 --> 00:31:58.740

**Beatriz Velez:** once a week with the tutors that they had back then, and then, once a week, I was able to go to this workshop where they provided me with a lot of.

198

00:31:59.070 --> 00:32:09.960

**Beatriz Velez:** experiences and opportunities, and all this awareness of college-college knowledge on behavior support or even academic support, so they provided me with all those.

199

00:32:10.230 --> 00:32:14.580

**Beatriz Velez:** resources and with time, as I started growing in the started

200

00:32:14.970 --> 00:32:18.390

**Beatriz Velez:** going to high school and getting more involved in campus.

201

00:32:19.530 --> 00:32:20.640

**Beatriz Velez:** at Point Loma.

202

00:32:21.240 --> 00:32:27.450

**Beatriz Velez:** I was able to get this opportunity to be a tutor as a senior in high school.

203

00:32:28.050 --> 00:32:36.750

**Beatriz Velez:** So, I was working I thought I was working with fifth graders and just helping them with their homework I'm like Okay, this is great for community service, so I can put in my resume.

204

00:32:37.170 --> 00:32:48.690

**Beatriz Velez:** So, I was able to do that and I did that, for a year, so the my whole senior year of high school, I was volunteering as a tutor with good grades students.

205

00:32:49.230 --> 00:33:00.060

**Beatriz Velez:** So, when I graduated from high school in 2013 there was a position that open as a tutor for the elementary school program and I was like no.

206

00:33:01.230 --> 00:33:13.980

**Beatriz Velez:** I don't have a brain to be a tutor even though I've been doing it for a year, but it's different volunteering than actually being committed to being a tutor so I was like no I'm just gonna skip on this.

207

00:33:14.970 --> 00:33:22.410

**Beatriz Velez:** But my coordinator suggested and really mentioned the fact that this was going to be an opportunity of growth.

208

00:33:22.920 --> 00:33:24.120

**Beatriz Velez:** And I will say.

209

00:33:24.150 --> 00:33:36.510

**Beatriz Velez:** Okay, you know I like a challenge I'd like to try something new, so I decided to apply for the position as a tutor and I was able to get in. so I started working there and October the following academic school year and I was a tutor for two years and then.

211

00:33:44.430 --> 00:33:54.360

**Beatriz Velez:** Because BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] started to expand their resources and-and get more students involved in the program they opened a elementary school program assistant for it.

212

00:33:55.080 --> 00:34:04.710

**Beatriz Velez:** The responsibilities were to do administrative work, and this is again where it goes back to my Community college experiences that I decided to change my major to do business administration.

213

00:34:05.250 --> 00:34:08.010

**Beatriz Velez:** So, then, I got the position I applied to be.

214

00:34:08.640 --> 00:34:20.790

**Beatriz Velez:** The program assistant for the elementary school program and I did that, for three years and I loved it, it was amazing working and doing all this data, and you know it's not spreadsheets but it's what I love I love doing.

215

00:34:21.780 --> 00:34:39.120

**Beatriz Velez:** The data, and then I was also able to work with the students in tutoring so I was doing like two-two jobs but it's to me it wasn't a job to me it was just giving back it's-it's what I love to do and I had that mentality of like I love being here, this is my second home.

216

00:34:40.260 --> 00:34:42.060

**Beatriz Velez:** So I did that, for three years.

217

00:34:43.200 --> 00:34:52.680

**Beatriz Velez:** Four years I did it for four years and then eventually we were able to expand even more BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] grew even more and then.

218

00:34:53.370 --> 00:35:05.640

**Beatriz Velez:** This was two years ago, when we had no parent coordinator at BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] so I was like [gasp] like I want to try something new, like i've been working as students for.

219

00:35:06.120 --> 00:35:15.990

**Beatriz Velez:** For six years so I'm like okay I'm gonna apply to be the program coordinator to see if I get it hooray if I don't it's okay.

220

00:35:16.530 --> 00:35:31.260

**Beatriz Velez:** And I applied and I got it I got the job as a as a parent coordinator but then Covid happened [dishearten] and I wasn't able to get experience that person to person support with the parents that we have here at BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute.]



221

00:35:32.280 --> 00:35:41.370

**Beatriz Velez:** So, then, we were able to provide our resources virtually with the parents so it's been a it's been a tough journey as well because.

222

00:35:42.630 --> 00:35:49.530

**Beatriz Velez:** I was ready to be working with the parents individually in person and with the pandemic it kind of threw my schedule off.

223

00:35:50.100 --> 00:36:00.030

**Beatriz Velez:** But I was able to find amazing workshops that really helped the parents virtually cope with Covid because that was one of the situations all of our families were dealing with.

224

00:36:00.630 --> 00:36:12.720

**Beatriz Velez:** So I think I did a really amazing job, providing them with other classes with relating topics that are happening in the Community and we just created I just created a survey.

225

00:36:13.290 --> 00:36:30.660

**Beatriz Velez:** For the parents to fill out to see if I was able to provide them with the support that they needed and, if I was able to meet their expectations and I- I got really good result, so that makes me very proud that I'm doing what I need to be doing to be fulfilling.

226

00:36:31.830 --> 00:36:44.100

**Beatriz Velez:** My requirements as my job, but not just that, but to know that they're getting the help from me it's so amazing because my mom used to get that help when I was a student.

227

00:36:45.240 --> 00:36:50.490

**Beatriz Velez:** So now, every time that I'm working or whenever we have like the summer break.

228

00:36:51.180 --> 00:36:58.710

**Beatriz Velez:** Or, like the winter break and we have to say goodbye to the parents for two weeks at our monthly meeting I pour my eyes out like.

229

00:36:58.980 --> 00:37:07.500

**Beatriz Velez:** I'm very sentimental I'm like oh I'll See you in two weeks, but to me it's-it's I don't I have like- I get like this feeling like it's a goodbye but it's not really a goodbye though.

230

00:37:08.940 --> 00:37:17.940

**Beatriz Velez:** But because I'm so attached to the program, and I've been with the program for eight years it's truly like my second home like students are like my other children [laughs].

231

00:37:19.290 --> 00:37:31.320

**Beatriz Velez:** So I really like put my heart in this in this program and it's-it's-it's-it's home to me I don't know if I mentioned this before, but here in San Diego it's just my mom.

232

00:37:32.610 --> 00:37:39.390

**Beatriz Velez:** My dad my two brothers that my son, so I don't have anybody else to rely on I just depend on them.

233

00:37:39.720 --> 00:37:50.400

**Beatriz Velez:** and finding that support from them to know that BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] is like my second home and the staff here and students and the parents are here to support me and encourage me.

234

00:37:51.060 --> 00:38:01.770

**Beatriz Velez:** You know that's-that's why I'm here because I love that sense of the home in that what BL CI[Barrio Logan College Institute] brings to me this whole the second home that I need.

235

00:38:03.030 --> 00:38:12.450

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Now you're playing a role and forming that second home, you know and as like the parent program coordinator, I know you said that you're doing it through Zoom so I know me.

236

00:38:13.080 --> 00:38:27.000

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** limit in some ways, on how you feel your interactions go, but overall can you just describe your role as a parent coordinator and some like important impacts that it has had on parents overall.

237

00:38:27.300 --> 00:38:38.010

**Beatriz Velez:** Yeah so I feel like throughout my time as a parent coordinator, and I feel like I've impacted many of the parents, especially the ones who are new.

238

00:38:39.480 --> 00:38:45.960

**Beatriz Velez:** To the United States, we have parents from similar backgrounds, but whole different stories.

239

00:38:47.160 --> 00:38:59.820

**Beatriz Velez:** And I had a parent who's able to share their experiences growing up in Mexico and coming here to the United States and facing similar challenges my mom faced so during the whole Covid

240

00:39:01.110 --> 00:39:11.070

**Beatriz Velez:** We were able to schedule a meeting with that parent and because I know, Spanish and I'm able to connect with her, and we were able to have a.

241

00:39:12.210 --> 00:39:20.280

**Beatriz Velez:** conversation where she just let out her emotions and let me know what her situation was and her commitment to her struggles.

242

00:39:21.030 --> 00:39:28.950

**Beatriz Velez:** So as a parent coordinator my responsibility is to make sure that she feels that she's getting that help that she needs.

243

00:39:29.670 --> 00:39:39.000

**Beatriz Velez:** So I was able to provide her with that support that she wanted and thankfully I have all these connections with other organizations in the Community.

244

00:39:39.690 --> 00:39:49.980

**Beatriz Velez:** different communities like San Ysidro, Chula Vista so we were able to provide her with that helped sh- her family needed, not just the mom, but the whole family needed that help.

245

00:39:51.060 --> 00:40:01.170

**Beatriz Velez:** So, I was able to connect her with somebody else, because here with-with BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] like one of the things that they tell us is that if we're not able to do it, we have all these other connections like.

246

00:40:01.710 --> 00:40:12.420

**Beatriz Velez:** Sometimes, like we don't have our keys you don't have all the support that others do have but the thing that we do have is to ability to connect them with somebody else from other.

247

00:40:13.020 --> 00:40:22.200

**Beatriz Velez:** organizations and that's what I love to do like that's one of the things that I've learned as a parent coordinator is [laugh] how to connect with other organizations.

248

00:40:23.010 --> 00:40:35.640

**Beatriz Velez:** So one of like my- the one of the things I'm so proud of is that last year or two years ago we started working with Casa Familia which is a nonprofit in San Ysidro where we.

249

00:40:36.330 --> 00:40:45.990

**Beatriz Velez:** We created a group of promotoras [promoters] and we had twenty graduate promotoras [promoters] who are now advocating for their children's education and advocating for the Community.

250

00:40:46.470 --> 00:40:55.170

**Beatriz Velez:** So one of the projects that they have now is they're putting a stoplight, by Barrio Logan BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] and putting street lights on, because.

251

00:40:55.500 --> 00:41:02.760

**Beatriz Velez:** around here and night so-so dark and like I mentioned before, the idea of Barrio Logan being a dangerous community.

252

00:41:03.630 --> 00:41:23.580

**Beatriz Velez:** Some-some parents still believe that so now the promotoras [promoters] are working with [name of affiliate] to get that stop light right next to BLCI [Barrio Logan College Institute] so aparents can feel safe and feel more like there's more security around our Community so that's one of the projects that I have.

253

00:41:23.640 --> 00:41:41.730

**Beatriz Velez:** been doing as a program coordinator and I'm so proud of that I'm so proud of the parents, and I think that I didn't do this alone like nobody does anything alone I think it's-it's a group project that we're doing and I feel like in order to be successful, it takes more than one person.

254

00:41:42.750 --> 00:41:52.020

**Beatriz Velez:** and eventually we're going to expand the promotoras [promoters] here with Barrio Logan and San Ysidro so I'm really looking forward to having another cohort.

255

00:41:53.250 --> 00:42:02.220

**Beatriz Velez:** As a parent coordinator it's just a blessing to be able to work with 144 parents, not just [inaudible] parents with different history.

256

00:42:02.640 --> 00:42:09.480

**Beatriz Velez:** with different experiences, with different challenges, but like I mentioned before, I love, a challenge and I love the fact that I'm able to help them out.

257

00:42:10.350 --> 00:42:22.470

**Beatriz Velez:** So that it's that it's like my responsibility as a parent coordinator and just being able to connect with them in just a difference, make a different level, not just as an employee, but as a person to.

258

00:42:25.680 --> 00:42:40.650

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Thank you so much for sharing I know we're in the midst of Covid and hence why we have to call so maybe tell me how- how Covid has affected both your lifestyle and personally and just work wise, how has Covid affected you.

259

00:42:41.070 --> 00:42:42.240

**Beatriz Velez:** yeah so.

260

00:42:43.620 --> 00:42:50.790

**Beatriz Velez:** I believe Covid started in early March, but I'm if I'm being honest at the beginning, I was so happy.

261

00:42:51.420 --> 00:43:03.660

**Beatriz Velez:** That Covid started, because you know it gave me the ability to work from home do school from home and take care of my baby home so in a way, I was very I was very happy.

262

00:43:04.080 --> 00:43:12.090

**Beatriz Velez:** and not the fact that the virus started with the fact that I was able to stay home and be with my son and that gave me a lot of.

263

00:43:13.530 --> 00:43:21.840

**Beatriz Velez:** Just a lot of like a lot of patience and a lot of like the ability to know that I'm going to be safe my son going to safe my family is going to be safe.

264

00:43:22.350 --> 00:43:26.970

**Beatriz Velez:** So, I was very, very happy at the fact that I was able to experience that.

265

00:43:27.660 --> 00:43:44.760

**Beatriz Velez:** But now with time as I'm getting older, now Covid has really impacted like my family's so much the fact that we were unemployed for a few months because we didn't know what was happening like we didn't know what the pandemic was doing, like everybody.

266

00:43:45.810 --> 00:43:46.980

**Beatriz Velez:** And so.

267

00:43:48.270 --> 00:43:57.120

**Beatriz Velez:** My mom got unemployed my brother got unemployed, I was unemployed, I was like barely recovering from maternity leave [nervous laughter] barely recovering.

268

00:43:58.860 --> 00:44:15.960

**Beatriz Velez:** So just knowing that none of us had a job and we were still expected to pay the rent That is what caused my family to be really stressed out and like we were like where are we going to get this money like well how are we going to pay rent how are we going to buy groceries.

269

00:44:17.220 --> 00:44:21.510

**Beatriz Velez:** But, thankfully, I was able to apply for unemployment [laughs] [computer sound cut off audio].

270

00:44:23.160 --> 00:44:35.100

**Beatriz Velez:** So I was able to file for unemployment my brother did too, we were able to provide my mom with something stable maybe it wasn't sorry mommy couldn't buy you a purse. we needed to get food but some....

271

00:44:35.490 --> 00:44:40.710

**Beatriz Velez:** those were the things that you know the pandemic also you know taught us was to.

272

00:44:41.070 --> 00:44:51.810

**Beatriz Velez:** You know value the things that we have like we didn't need to get a new phone, are old phone is perfectly fine like things that we didn't take into consideration before the pandemic.

273

00:44:52.680 --> 00:45:10.560

**Beatriz Velez:** really like impacted my family in that way, like don't waste the water, you know [giggles] like you got no money to buy water bottle- we can save water like we're going to do that, so we were able to evaluate things and see things in a different perspective.

274

00:45:12.000 --> 00:45:21.540

**Beatriz Velez:** And now that more people are getting vaccinated just the fact that we're able to go outside now with our face mask and walk around the park.

275

00:45:22.290 --> 00:45:33.480

**Beatriz Velez:** Even taking my son out to the park has been challenging because he hasn't seen anybody for a whole year, I was just been me my sister in law and my brothers and my mom.

276

00:45:35.130 --> 00:45:43.050

**Beatriz Velez:** So now that I'm trying to have him interact with other people it's been challenging on him, and you know, at the same time as a mom it's.

277

00:45:43.260 --> 00:45:57.090

**Beatriz Velez:** it's very frustrating to know that you want your little one to learn how to interact and play with the kids at his age, but all he does is cry because he doesn't know how to cope with that with that expect, with that.

278

00:45:58.440 --> 00:46:10.050

**Beatriz Velez:** experience just knowing that he has other kids that he can play with you know not just play alone but-or with me, but he has other kids his age can also play with an interact.

279

00:46:10.920 --> 00:46:29.940

**Beatriz Velez:** So it's been hard in that situation where he's-he's I'm exposing him to all these new things that he didn't do last year because of COVID so slowly, I'm trying to take him out expose him to that oh look at this little kids at the park playing no need to cry [nervous laughter].

280

00:46:31.500 --> 00:46:43.470

**Beatriz Velez:** or even like my brother who's-who is in high school he's a junior in High Tech High. Who hasn't left the House in a whole year, so when the whole schools, reopen I am like bye Junior you got to go to school [laughs].

281

00:46:44.550 --> 00:46:48.540

**Beatriz Velez:** You need to go out and get some fresh air at least get some fresh air.

282

00:46:49.230 --> 00:47:01.290

**Beatriz Velez:** So just the way that, like my family has, like all of us have like my mom and my two brothers, we all have like different personalities and different ways we adapt to the whole situation of COVID.

283

00:47:02.040 --> 00:47:07.560

**Beatriz Velez:** To me, I was like very thankful that that happened because I was able to spend more time with my son.

284

00:47:08.040 --> 00:47:15.900

**Beatriz Velez:** But to my brother who is a junior in high school, the way that he coped was completely different than the way that I coped.

285

00:47:16.590 --> 00:47:24.720

**Beatriz Velez:** So just seeing the dynamics and just seeing the way that there was there was they were coping with the situation was- was hard for me because I'm the oldest one.

286

00:47:25.350 --> 00:47:35.130

**Beatriz Velez:** So I didn't... like I saw my brother struggling and being scared for the first time I saw him being scared like am I going to go out you better clean door knobs.

287

00:47:36.870 --> 00:47:47.160

**Beatriz Velez:** You better disinfect the food, so it was it was very scary to see him say all of that, at his age and-and the way that he isolated himself.

288

00:47:47.910 --> 00:48:01.440

**Beatriz Velez:** From- from- from us four was so.....was something was strange it was something that i've never seen from him and as the oldest one you know my responsibilities to take care of my little brothers.



289

00:48:02.520 --> 00:48:11.910

**Beatriz Velez:** So, to me, I was very worried, I was like okay let's- let's just go outside and throw the trash or do you want to come with me to get groceries [scoffs]

290

00:48:12.450 --> 00:48:22.590

**Beatriz Velez:** the answer was a no but you know I just-just trying to make sure that he was okay and he was coping with the situation because, at the beginning, he was just eating and eating and eating.

291

00:48:23.280 --> 00:48:27.240

**Beatriz Velez:** into now recently that he's like OK and I'm going to go to school wake me up.

292

00:48:28.200 --> 00:48:33.360

**Beatriz Velez:** or I'm gonna go with my friends and celebrating his birthday party I'm like okay like.

293

00:48:33.630 --> 00:48:44.700

**Beatriz Velez:** that's a new like beginning for him and just seeing him go out to get a haircut because he didn't cut his hair for a whole year. Just all these different things like he's doing now, but he's getting back to normal.

294

00:48:45.690 --> 00:48:55.380

**Beatriz Velez:** You know I like to see that in in my family so COVID has really impacted my family but we've learned to just adapt and grow from it and just.

295

00:48:56.280 --> 00:49:12.030

**Beatriz Velez:** At the end of the day, I have to say, these are our experiences that we take with us, because we can't go back like we're all experiencing this and in a different way than others, but eventually we just gotta you know, work together and figure out what's going to be best for our family.

296

00:49:13.980 --> 00:49:20.730

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** you know I totally agree with those ideas and those sentiments being that I'm also stuck at home with my family.

297

00:49:21.780 --> 00:49:31.110

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** experiences are different for all of us, so you know, considering the pandemic has 2020 in general has just been a year of self reflection and improvement.

298

00:49:32.280 --> 00:49:39.600

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** What is something that the temp[?] pandemic has taught you about yourself, that you probably wouldn't have known otherwise what has it given you to think about.

299

00:49:41.070 --> 00:49:46.380

**Beatriz Velez:** I feel like the pandemic has really given me the ability to.

300

00:49:48.240 --> 00:50:00.240

**Beatriz Velez:** Just-just feel more grateful for the for the things that I have, for example, my family before I'm like oh I'll just see them next week.

301

00:50:01.440 --> 00:50:18.930

**Beatriz Velez:** Oh i'll just go to Mexico next year or in a few months, but you know, like the statistics of how many people died within a year, really like it was very heartbreaking because, like I didn't expect so many people to die because of an illness.

302

00:50:20.670 --> 00:50:29.130

**Beatriz Velez:** So the pandemic has just really opened my eyes and just be grateful for the people that I have for the things that I have.

303

00:50:30.030 --> 00:50:36.450

**Beatriz Velez:** Like I mentioned before, like before we were careless about water bottles because little bit of water, we would dump it out, but now its like.

304

00:50:37.050 --> 00:50:50.010

**Beatriz Velez:** That it's something necessary that we need, and like I made me just see like there's other people that don't have water bottles or they're struggling like even now, some people are still struggling to pay the rent.

305

00:50:51.390 --> 00:51:00.390

**Beatriz Velez:** You know so just being lucky to know that I have what I need to have in order to provide for my family and even for others on.

306

00:51:01.260 --> 00:51:13.920

**Beatriz Velez:** has really just given me like the pandemic just has given me the like the self reflection that you're mentioning and just gives me time to just sit down and reflect on what's going on in the world what's going on with myself.

307

00:51:14.940 --> 00:51:19.320

**Beatriz Velez:** Again, I think that I, because I have my son, I was able to feel.

308

00:51:20.520 --> 00:51:27.870

**Beatriz Velez:** Like I was coping with the situation, the right way, just because I had somebody that was depending on me.

309

00:51:29.100 --> 00:51:33.870

**Beatriz Velez:** And I feel like on that is what really helped me survive through the pandemic.

310

00:51:34.920 --> 00:51:42.150

**Beatriz Velez:** And I feel like right now that the pandemic slowly going away and there's more vaccines going around.

311

00:51:43.410 --> 00:51:52.560

**Beatriz Velez:** You know now I like really encourage everybody to get vaccinated because that is not just a safety for ourselves, but for our little ones and for our family.

312

00:51:54.330 --> 00:51:56.460

**Beatriz Velez:** So I know I have my vaccine coming up, but.

313

00:51:58.140 --> 00:52:04.290

**Beatriz Velez:** Just knowing that COVID was just something that I didn't expect whatsoever.

314

00:52:05.310 --> 00:52:23.520

**Beatriz Velez:** Like it just gives me like that mentality like this, like in the future that's something that could happen again, you know we never know like life is, just comes and goes and we just have to value what we have, and I feel like i've learned that's through COVID.

315

00:52:25.260 --> 00:52:30.900

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** Awesome you know since everyone is getting vaccinate or majority of the populations already.

316

00:52:31.980 --> 00:52:37.290

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** vaccinated you know what are you most looking forward to once the pandemic is over.

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00:52:38.310 --> 00:52:47.550

**Beatriz Velez:** I'm just looking to just going back to Mexico and visiting my family, I think that I took that for so...

318

00:52:48.360 --> 00:52:54.150

**Beatriz Velez:** Just I didn't really consider them to be like a big deal just because there like they're over there and Mexico and.

319

00:52:54.600 --> 00:53:04.530

**Beatriz Velez:** Like when I go you like we connect but it's so different from the way that they connect because they've been growing up with each other for so many years to when I go it's so different.

320

00:53:05.520 --> 00:53:10.920

**Beatriz Velez:** But I just I just want to go back and just-just give them a hug and not that they're safe.

321

00:53:11.700 --> 00:53:19.410

**Beatriz Velez:** And we're here to help each other, like we're family, like we're from the same blood and just know that whatever they need like we're here, yes I'm over.

322

00:53:19.920 --> 00:53:29.910

**Beatriz Velez:** The United States. we're still family we're still here to help each other out and that's one of the things that I want to do once the pandemic is over.

323

00:53:30.810 --> 00:53:44.880

**Beatriz Velez:** But another thing that I want to do is I, I know I mentioned this but I want to really experience my last year at San Diego state [sigh] because it's my last year and I just really want to just connect with the professors in a different way.

324

00:53:45.450 --> 00:53:52.980

**Beatriz Velez:** Because virtually like it's nice you get to meet them, but your person it's just like a whole different vibe, a different environment I'm.

325

00:53:53.490 --> 00:54:01.350

**Beatriz Velez:** sure that there's so much resources and opportunities in person than it is for truly like virtually sometimes.

326

00:54:02.310 --> 00:54:10.530

**Beatriz Velez:** Like it makes my head hurt sometimes I'm just like I'm over it been using the computer for a long time, like, I just want to disconnect.

327

00:54:11.250 --> 00:54:18.060

**Beatriz Velez:** So going to San Diego state's just going to give me the ability to make new friends and-and, like meet all these new people.

328

00:54:18.480 --> 00:54:25.410

**Beatriz Velez:** And their careers and other resources and other clubs that they also have like I there's so many things that can get involved with.

329

00:54:26.130 --> 00:54:42.870

**Beatriz Velez:** So hopefully when we go back to San Diego state just the in person learning I'm super excited about that and I just know and just one more thing that I want to say is that once everything go back to normal, like, I want to take a vacation family.

330

00:54:44.700 --> 00:54:55.680

**Beatriz Velez:** And, just like of course it's like the safety guidelines, but I feel like we we deserve it, I think we deserve to just even if it's going to the beach or.

331

00:54:56.700 --> 00:55:10.020

**Beatriz Velez:** Making a picnic like something that we haven't done in a year and a half, like just having that time, just to be with family and not work or worry about other things to just enjoy the day enjoy the Sun the night.

332

00:55:11.040 --> 00:55:21.090

**Beatriz Velez:** I want to do that, and I know it's like so boring but to me it's just, I want to care and I just want to carry that and just want to know that that I did my best.

333

00:55:22.140 --> 00:55:35.760

**Beatriz Velez:** To support my family and to know that we made it through an unfortunate you know there is a lot of people that can say that you know but I'm so thankful that I have my mom I have a brother, so my dad my son.

334

00:55:36.780 --> 00:55:38.670

**Beatriz Velez:** my sister-in-law because she's family now.

335

00:55:40.260 --> 00:55:53.370

**Beatriz Velez:** Just to know that you know we're safe and I just want to cherish them and just be thankful that I still have them so that is-is one of the things that I'm looking forward to was the pandemic is over.

336

**00:55:54.180 --> 00:56:11.460**

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** I'm looking forward for that for you, I know you want to experience SDSU [San Diego State University] in person, I hope you get to do that, and you know [inaudible noise] meet your family you know just kind of closing this interview out anything else you would like to share feel like you want to input.

337

00:56:12.540 --> 00:56:15.660

**Beatriz Velez:** yeah I just want to let everybody know that.

338

00:56:16.860 --> 00:56:19.680

**Beatriz Velez:** The pandemic is it's a weight that.

339

00:56:21.150 --> 00:56:29.100

**Beatriz Velez:** Like we all need to cope with it, like in reality, like it's it's something that has happened in the past and it might happen again in the future and.

340

00:56:29.520 --> 00:56:34.890

**Beatriz Velez:** And I feel like we really need to rely on our Community and our families.

341

00:56:35.550 --> 00:56:48.900

**Beatriz Velez:** Even our work, I feel like work gives us the ability to learn all these new skills that we didn't have before like the pandemic just gave us that chance to like be more aware what's happening in the world.

342

00:56:49.290 --> 00:56:57.120

**Beatriz Velez:** And it just gives us the ability to to connect and connect more with the families, especially me and my job.

343

00:56:58.200 --> 00:56:59.850

**Beatriz Velez:** like knowing the situation.

344

00:57:01.260 --> 00:57:10.920

**Beatriz Velez:** You know it's-it's- a it's a job that I, I feel like I'm doing what I need to do to provide that support for other families.

345

00:57:12.270 --> 00:57:26.730

**Beatriz Velez:** And like I mentioned before being a single mom being a daughter, being a sister being first generation, you know all of these are hard challenges that I face that many others have phase.

346

00:57:27.990 --> 00:57:39.450

**Beatriz Velez:** And I just want to say that we, we just need to work together as a community as an individual as a mom as a daughter as a sibling.

347

00:57:40.230 --> 00:57:57.540

**Beatriz Velez:** and eventually soon we're all able to connect and just be thankful that are still here and I just like to say that I am very, very thankful to even be here today have a job, have a healthy life have friends connect with you.

348

00:57:59.610 --> 00:58:08.760

**Beatriz Velez:** So I just want to say thank you so so much once again just for giving me the opportunity to even be here, virtually hopefully one day, we're able to do this in person.

349

00:58:09.450 --> 00:58:21.600

**Beatriz Velez:** But just thank you so so much for listening to me, I hope I was a great help to you, and if you need anything else, please reach out to me, you have a number just thank you so much.

350

00:58:22.230 --> 00:58:30.840

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** I would also just like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to hear your story and for coming here today, I feel like I've learned a lot about you and you know.

351

00:58:32.010 --> 00:58:35.850

**NATHALIE BARRAGAN:** It was a pleasure hearing everything you've had to say and hearing your experiences.

352

00:58:36.240 --> 00:58:36.870

**Beatriz Velez:** Thank you.