



NEW BEDFORD FISHING HERITAGE CENTER

Date of Interview, June 11, 2017

Garcia, Valeriano ~ Oral History Interview

Corinn Williams

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New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center
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Interview with Valeriano Garcia, June 11, 2017.

Background

Name of Person Interviewed: Valeriano Garcia [VG]

Facts about this Person:

Age	40
Sex	Male
Occupation	Warehouse Employee
Residence	New Bedford
Ethnic Background	Guatemala

Interviewer: Corinn Williams [CW]

Transcriber: Pricilla Gamboa [PG]

Interview location: New Bedford

Date of Interview: June 11, 2017

Key Words

New Bedford, Guatemala, Fishing, Warehouse, fish cutting, filleting, auctions, fish, shrimp, squid

Abstract

Valeriano Garcia is from Guatemala and his job is an essential part of the fishing industry in New Bedford. He shares experiences working at a warehouse and skills that are required.

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[00:00] Introductions. Has lived in New Bedford for 10 years, 5 years have been working in the fishing industry. He is from Santa Lucía, Cotzumalguapa, Guatemala. Shares about life back in Guatemala and coming to America at the age of 30. Before living in New Bedford he lived for a short while in Providence, Rhode Island.

[05:55] Jobs before obtaining his position in the warehouse. How he got his job in the fishing industry. His job at the warehouse is managing storage. Regular work day at warehouse is unloading what the company has ordered, such as cardboards and plastics. It is a small warehouse. Also works inside the cooler, storing the fish that is purchased at the auctions.

[10:52] Fish from the auctions are bought in New Bedford. They store various types of fish, squids, and shrimp. They do not have scallops. His main job is warehouse storage, he only deals with fish if there is less work to do in the warehouse.

[14:09] Uniforms used at work. Talks about filleting the fish. They use very sharp knives to get a good fillet out of the fish. Different types of fish are cut differently. It requires a lot of skill to be able to cut fish and not be injured.

[19:40] The most interesting part of the job is described as everything, because he is not pressured from his superiors he is able to do his job at his own pace. The hardest part of the job is the long work days that sometimes are required. Long days range around 12 hours. Regular work days are around 7 to 8 hours, 35-40 hours a week. Job hours vary depending on the merchandise that is brought in and out of the warehouse. Work is usually busier when the market price drops.

[26:54] Work hour salary is discussed. Salary is very dependent on the work skill. Works through a staffing agency not directly by the company. Gender differences in the work area. Women usually clean the fish after it is cut. The cutting of fish is a male dominated skill in this industry.

[35:31] Diversity of co-workers is discussed. Environment is very diverse from many different Central American countries and locals from the area. Some arguments during work have happened but company has a zero tolerance for fights during work, therefore everyone does their best to get along. At work Spanish is very common to be spoken. English is the dominant language. English is very needed to be able to advance in a job, it brings more opportunities. Some co-workers are only Spanish speaking and are able to work there.

[41:30] Shares about relationship with brother. Mother and other family members are still in Guatemala. Is uncertain if he will remain in the fishing industry. If he is promoted in the future he will stay, if not he hopes to get other jobs out of the New Bedford area.

[47:28] End of recording.