

MiraCosta College Student Veteran Oral History Learning Project

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Acronyms: JG = Jimia Daniel Graves

BB = Bonnie Blaine

KM = Kristina Martignago

LL = Leslie Lopez

BB: Okay. Today is April 15 2017, we are interviewing Jimia Graves for the MiraCosta College Student Veteran Service Learning Project and present in the room are Myself, Bonnie, Leslie and Kristina. So, I'm just gonna start, can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

JG: Yes.

BB: You have any hobbies?

JG: I ride motorcycles a lot...other than that... I run, like to workout. Pretty much the only things I do.

BB: Okay, and are you from California?

JG: No, I'm originally from New Jersey.

BB: Okay. What Branch of service were you in? (0:45)

JG: Marine Corps.

BB: Okay, How long were you in for?

JG: Four Years.

BB: Okay... What was your rank?

JG: I got out as a Corporal.

BB: Okay and then, Did you ever do... so you started in New Jersey, That's where you met your recruiter?

JG: Yes.

BB: Was Camp Pendleton where were first station or were you stationed anywhere else?

JG: No thats where...well I did my schoolhouse training in Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

BB: Okay...

JG: And I was there for maybe like Five or Six Months. And then I got orders to Camp Pendleton and I've pretty much been here ever since.

BB: Okay so you've never been to any other bases?

JG: No, I mean... as far as like training, Yeah. I've been to Yuma, 29 Palms...Stuff like that, but...

BB: Which is better do you think, 29 Palms or Camp Pendleton?

JG: Definitely Camp Pendleton.

BB: (Laughs) Yeah

BB: Okay, So you went, you weren't...You enlisted, You weren't an officer...um...some hard questions for this... Do you have any family members that have served?

JG: Yes, pretty much every male in my family has served.

BB: Okay, were they all in the same branch? Were they all marines?

JG: My grandfather was a marine, and after he got out he became a 20 year police officer and both my uncles, his sons were army.

BB: Okay. And did that kinda tie into why you wanted to go into the military?

JG: That's basically the exact reason. My grandfather was like the most influential person in my life and i wanted to be exactly like him. As far as everything he did, career wise. I wanted to be a police officer when I got out, I wanted to join the same branch, I wanted to do what he did. So, definitely, I would definitely say he influenced me.

BB: That's what you are doing right now? Preparing to be a police officer...

JG: no... definitely can't do that anymore unfortunately, But, I am just going to find something else to do now.

BB: Okay. Did...uh, let's see...Okay. Can you pause it? I was gunna ask, like, if you minded talking about why you were out. I didn't know if that was something you talked about earlier, if you're okay with mentioning that?

JG: I won't go super in detail about it but, I got out for medical reasons.

BB: Okay...

JG: I was diagnosed with a chronic health condition, and blood disorder...

BB: Okay...

JG: And that's basically what retired my military service. (3:00)

BB: Okay, I was like... I didn't know if you were gunna be comfortable with that so I didn't... i stopped myself before doing that

JG: It's Fine.

BB: i'm still figuring out questions to...

JG: So this is still the dry run?

BB: Is it?

KM: We can use it anyways, cause y'all sounded real good.

BB: Oh...I was like...Im going until yall said stop, not til we're done...but...Okay...

KM: We can go through it, and we can listen to it and if we don't like the way it sounds, we can record it again. 3:30

JG: Oh i'm fine with however it sounds, as long as you guys have good work.

JG Interview Part 3

BB: Untranscribable

KM: So just like ask the question, would you be comfortable talking about, like, your grandfather's influence in your life?

JG: Yeah, definitely.

KM: Okay. So, that is just one thing that i thought we could takes this direction in...

JG: Okay.

KM: Maybe if it was something you were comfortable with?

KM: because you know like, this is, you know, Whether not you like it... like this is about you, like whichever way you want it to go as we're going through this, piecing it together...like we would be good with whichever direction you wanna go.

BB: Right. Are you guys gunna wanna add on to? And ask questions? Or is it just gunna be me? Cause you know how Strona said we could do the setup of like (1:00) us three asking questions, or like if we had follow up questions with a question one of us asked...

KM and LL: Mhm...

BB: Are you guys wanting to do that? Or just?

KM: Yeah, we can do that. I just um...just wanna see how like this run goes first then i feel like we do the follow up, with like other questions. I feel like that would be like the best time for us to like really... interject.

KM: Because then we like have most of the information of what's been said and that way like, we can touch on it a lot better

BB: Okay.

KM: Instead of like, just kinda like asking questions and not really knowing like

BB: I get you, yeah.

(1:45-1:51 Untranscribable) Something about Devices recording

JG: Is it recording?

KM: That one is.

BB: Oh! Right now?!

LL: Yeah

KM: That's going to be one long file...I can cut it..its fine.

BB: Cut it...

KM: I cut all my stuff like the day before it was due. (Laughs)

BB: I straight up, redid my whole last one, the night before...

LL: Oh yeah?

BB: Oh yeah...Mmm, Okay.

KM: You good?

KM: One...Two...Three...

BB: I'm going to go back about,when you mentioned training, was... how was that, like?

JG: It was fun, for the most part. I guess you can say like, for the unit that I was in, and being that my MOS (2:45) was 3043 supply administration, we wouldn't... didn't really, uh, we

weren't really necessarily needed in the field that much but I was fortunate enough to be uh, attached to our arts communication section, so i always wanted to go. (3:00) I kinda just really hated being like, you know, in my unit in my work, in the work space, in the office...every single day. So to break it up and like go to the field and train, I guess you could say, do what marines do, like get dirty and do that kind of stuff. Like I definitely, like that's where I preferred to be (3:15)

BB: Okay.

JG: Just doing, you know like, dirty work. And Getting my hands dirty.

BB: So, what was, would you say? Okay, so ...what was like the most challenging part about your training...really? If there was anything?

JG: I guess not...having (3:30) like food regularly available.

{All Laugh}

JG: You know like, just, I don't know. I like to eat so that pretty much, eating MRE's and stuff like that gets kinda old afterwhile. Or even like, you know the hot chow, like they will come out there and bring like powdered eggs

JG: And then like, cook it in front of you it was kinda (3:45) disgusting but it's the only thing that's there...

JG: You eat it anyway. But, yeah...probably just food.

KM: What specifically was your MOS? Like, what was like your...

JG: I was trained as a 3043 supply administration and operations specialist

KM: Okay

JG: I went through the school at Camp Johnson (4:00) for logistics school and there I pretty much learned to use a system called a GCSS hyphenated for Global Combat Support System and civilian, the civilian sector its Oracle and its basically a system that (4:15) big companies like Walmart, they use it to order their products.

JG: Military uses different versions, but less expensive, and for only, obviously only military supplies and gear like that.

KM: Okay.

BB: Hm, okay. Um. and then (4:30) I just wanted to know like, the...What's one thing you could really take away from your training? Was like there anything, certain skills that you developed within your training? Or?

JG: Yes, definitely. Um, like I said I was attached to a communications section, and it wasn't my job. But (4:45) since I've had been with the communication section for so long I had no choice but to basically like learn? You know, if I wanted to continue to progress and you know, I guess you can say "Get Promoted"

BB: Okay

JG: I had to like know, learn exactly their job as well as (5:00) continuing to better my skills for my own job. So, for me it was cross training. Like that was the thing I took away from it, just to be open to like, you know, other people's positions to, cause you never know like if you might have to, you might be the only person that is there, that means you might have to do it.

BB: Right...

JG: and if you don't know how to do (5:15) it , it just makes you look terrible and like that's the one thing you don't want to do, like be, i guess you could say like a marine that doesn't know what they are doing .

JG: Because, people just, it's not good for you. Cause you know, it doesn't make you look good and it's just, bad

JG: But definitely uh, just being open (5:30) and continue being open to new information

BB: Okay. and then I also was gonna touch back on your grandfather's influence on you, like, what made him so influential to you? If that makes sense.

JG: He was just (5:45) a hardcore dude, the way he looked, the way he carried himself every single day, like he looked like a marine until the day he died. like, He still Shaved his head every day, shaved his face, and when he, got to the point where he couldn't do that anymore, literally I shaved him.

JG: And it was just something that (6:00) he enjoyed, he loved to carry himself that way. He always dressed nice, ironed his clothes, and just honestly like a lot of people had a lot of respect for him and the way he carried himself and the day of his funeral there was maybe like 30 police officers (6:15) he served with and all of them had nothing but great things to say about him. So, it was just, like he left a legacy in the city of philadelphia and he had been, he went through a lot of crazy stuff as a cop that I didn't even know about until I got older and then it wa just like even (6:30) me, made me respect for him so much more and made my desire to be like him more

BB: Hm...Kay. Um, How was bootcamp for you? Did you...?

JG: Fairly, Honestly I know people say like (6:45) "Oh it's all mental" and for me its, my situation at the time was really bad

BB: Mhm...

JG: So I was ready to get out, I've been waiting like patiently for a really long time to go and as soon as it was time for me to go i was just ready to go, I didn't care like what i went through (7:00) while i was there i just wanted to be there cause i knew it was gunna, it was only going to be 3 months so it's not going to be forever so, i was going deal with it and then honestly once i got there it became easier because everyone was in the same situation as i so it was so easy to like suck up your problems (7:15) well, for one nobody cares and two everyones gone through it so you just kinda develop bonds with people and makes it that much easier it gets to the point where you just enjoy the problems that you go through

BB: Yeah

JG: Because then you kind of, counting down the time you know that this is over in a month we are going be laughing about this (7:30) and pretty much just that's how I took it

BB: And I heard you say bonds, did you make some like close relationships within some of the guys that went through bootcamp with you?

JG: Yeah definitely, we still call each other brothers that's just what we do um, even guys that i haven't necessarily seen since bootcamp still will message me or call me and text me and be like how it going um and thats just, thats i guess you can say one of the real reasons why i really enjoyed being a marine because now i still have like you know,

relationships and bonds with guys that are doing really good things and i don't know definitely made some good relationships

BB: Okay, um... Cause see, im, it gets hard trying, cause i'm trynna like i also want to kind of develop a flow with it but I don't how to like...

KM: Well I can cut the flow

BB: Okay, cause i'm like i came from straight to bootcamp to "Okay" and then we already touched on some of the questions but

KM: Dont worry about the flow just kinda like get all the information out there and then you can piece it all together because i guess that like this is, this is all determined on which direction we are going use it in

BB: Thats why im like trying to figure out a direction, get it established.

KM: We're not even going to use like half of this stuff only because like we're going tie it down

JG: Yeah

KM: To one specific direction so it doesn't matter just ask everything and answer however comfortable you feel because like I said we can just like put it all together in light of one direction.

BB: Okay that like, i'll just ask every question

{Laughs}

BB: Okay

JG: That's fine with me

{Laughs}

BB: I'm just going to...

JG: I was in your guys shoes, so I know like what you guys are feeling.

BB: I liked the other one better the literacy one was I knew where I was going with it

KM: Mhm

BB: But with this one I don't

KM: Well we are going figure it out together so you don't gotta worry about it

BB: Okay, so

KM: I know i tell you not to worry about it we are going figure out a plan

BB: Well then I guess i'll continue.

KM: Should we pause it? Cause when I eat it will be like crunch crunch

{Laughs}