

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with José Colón

Date 2000 June 7

Primary Maker José Colón

Medium digitized audio cassette tape

Description Two audio cassette tapes of an interview with José Colón.

Interviewed by Ruth Glasser and Amanda Rivera-López on June 7, 2000. José

Colón was born in Comerio, Puerto Rico. He immigrated to Hartford,

Connecticut in 1966 at age 24. He lived with his sister, Maria Colón Sanchez,

when he first arrived in Connecticut. He discusses the Sacred Heart Church in

Hartford. He discusses his sister's life and the activities she was involved with.

Maria opened a store at 246 Albany Avenue in Hartford called "Maria's News

Stand." José would work at her store on the weekends doing paperwork, prep,

and purchasing. In 1968, hired under the Equal Opportunity Employment Act,

José became one of the first Hispanics in Connecticut to work for the

Department of Motor Vehicles. He faced discrimination in this job. He discusses

how he came to work at the DMV and the challenges he faced in his job and

applying for promotions. Maria started becoming involved with politics because

of her involvement with the Puerto Rican community and seeing a need to make

people's lives better. She was an advocate for bilingual education. Her first

political position was serving on the Hartford Board of Education. She was

involved with starting the first Hispanic radio station in Connecticut, WLVH. She

became good friends with Ella Grasso. In 1988, Maria Sanchez became the first

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Hispanic woman elected to the Connecticut General Assembly. She was involved

with the founding of the Puerto Rican Parade, La Casa de Puerto Rico, the

Spanish-American Merchants Association, and the Community Renewal Team.

After her death, a school on Babcock Street in Hartford was named after her as

the Maria C. Sanchez Elementary School. He discusses urban renewal and the

decline of neighborhoods in Hartford. He also discusses the riots in Hartford that

involved the Puerto Rican community. José is the youngest of five siblings. His

parents worked in the tobacco farms and didn't receive any education.

2013.27.10.1a-d: two digital files, J-card, and tape 2013.27.10.2a-c: one digital

file, J-card, and tape

Dimensions Duration (tape 1, side 1): 46 Minutes, 6 Seconds Duration (tape 1,

side 2): 44 Minutes, 47 Seconds Duration (side 2): 46 Minutes, 45 Seconds

Duration (total runtime): 2 Hours, 17 Minutes, 39 Seconds