

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Andrew Velazquez

Date 2023 April 5

Medium born digital audio file

Description (a) Interview with Andrew Velazquez. Interviewed by Felicia Pilewski on 5 April 2023 in New Britain, Connecticut. (b) Photograph of Andrew Velazquez taken at his interview. He was interviewed as part of the Connecticut Historical Society's Community History Project discussing his experience during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Andrew recalled first hearing about covid in November 2019 regarding its presence in China. He discussed his struggle to find a job, which was the biggest disruption to his life in the early stages of the pandemic. He wore a mask, practiced social distancing, and agreed with mask mandates. Andrew discussed the severity of covid symptoms in different members of his family, including himself, his mother, and his girlfriend. He was impressed with the speed at which the vaccine was developed, despite it causing issues for some people with underlying health problems, and agreed with vaccine mandates. Andrew used the internet as an escape tool, but also used it to be social and keep himself up to date on the social issues prevalent at the time. He shared detailed experiences from participating in the Black Lives Matter movement and protests. He voted for Joe Biden in the 2020 election, though he was not a Biden supporter. He supported absentee voting and expressed the belief that it should be a normal part of our society. Andrew's mental health was greatly impacted by the pandemic. Initially it affected him negatively, then

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he found coping mechanisms and his mental health improved. He discussed his improved relationships with his mother and his partner, as well as the ways his personal community shifted during the pandemic. Andrew was able to take his stress and anxiety and channel it into acts that were beneficial for people around him rather than detrimental to himself. Andrew's greatest lesson from the pandemic was to "just be yourself" and people will appreciate you for who you are.

Dimensions Duration (Part 1 duration): 38 Minutes, 53 Seconds Duration (Part 2 duration): 9 Minutes, 33 Seconds Duration (Total duration): 48 Minutes, 26 Seconds