

FILIPINO-AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HAWAI'I
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
INTERVIEW #1

NORA GOZON-TAGALOG (NT)

Interview Conducted By:
Melinda Tria Kerkvliet (MK)

August 31, 2009
Makibaka Village, Waipahu, O'ahu

MK: I am now with Nora Gozon-Tagalog in Makibaka Village. Today is 31 of August 2009. I'm gonna ask you about your family background, your migration to Hawai'i, your participation in the Ota Camp struggle...but you are free to talk about anything, whatever you like. Those are just the main guidelines. OK? Could you tell me when you were born?

NT: August 31st, 1951.

MK: That's today.

NT: Yeah. [laughter] I was born in Kamorosan, in Davao City. Panabo, Davao del Norte.

MK: And where you born at the hospital or at home?

NT: [laughs] At home. My grandmother is the deliverer. She delivered babies, my grandma.

MK: Oh. OK. She is hilot.

NT: Yeah, midwife. I mean she don't go to school. She was born like that. She delivers plenty babies.

MK: OK. Where you the first child or the third child?

NT: I'm the the first one.

MK: The first one. How many others in the family?

NT: I have two brothers and two sisters.

MK: So all five?

NT: Yeah, five.

MK: And your parents, what is the name of your mother?

NT: My mother is, her name is Inocencia Pegod Guzon ["Guzon" was used in the Philippines], and my father is Rafael Flores Baclaan.

MK: And why was the family...I thought you were from Cebu.

NT: No, my grandparents, from Cebu. My Dad's parents is from Cebu. San Fernando. But my grandparents is from Leyte. My Mom is number five child.

MK: And they migrated in Davao. When?

NT: In 1932 my Dad's parents went back to the Philippines. In 1940 they try to come back to Hawaii, but war declared between Filipinos and Japanese. And that's the time they bombed Pearl Harbor, so they cannot come back here. My grandpa tried to come back, you know, but he failed.

MK: So your grand father was here, came to Hawai'i already a long time ago?

NT: Yeah. In...sakada, in 1919. And he is only 19 years old that time.

MK: And then he got married here? And...

NT: Yeah. He got married here in plantation. And he raised his family in a plantation.

MK: So he married and then had children.

NT: Yeah.

MK: And one of them is your father.

NT: Yeah. My father is number six, number six, I think, my father...one, two, three, four, five, six...I think he is number seven. He had nine brothers and sisters. The oldest is 104 years old; he lives in San Fernando, Cebu.

MK: Do you remember your grandfather's name?

NT: My grandfather, his name is Pantaleon Tanudra Baclaan.

MK: Tanudra...T-A-N-U-D-R-A?

NT: Yeah.

MK: And did he marry a local girl?

NT: No. He married my grandmother; she also a sakada.

MK: Oh, that's interesting.

NT: Yeah. She run away from the first husband.

MK: Oh...and where is she from?

NT: She's from Cebu.

MK: Cebu also. Do you know where they worked? What plantation?

NT: Uh, my grandpa worked at 'Aiea plantation and, then, so many years, and they occupy Waipahu. He was a luna [foreman].

MK: Luna?

NT: Yeah.

MK: And then you said, they went back to the Philippines before the war. Everyone...the family?

NT: The whole family.

MK: The whole family? Why did they do that?

NT: Because they just...I guess my grandmother misses the family a lot. Because she left two children behind, her children from the first marriage.

MK: Oh, she left the children?

NT: Yeah, so that's why they decided to go back and visit the family.

MK: So brought the whole family, seven or eight children, nine children?

NT: Oh wait now. [laughter] My auntie...yeah, seven all of them.

MK: So they went back, and the war caught them.

NT: Yeah, they cannot come back.

MK: So what did they do?

NT: After that, because they cannot come back, so they stuck in Cebu. [laughter] They stuck in Cebu and then from Cebu...you know, my father is da kine - cannot stand one place - so they migrate to Mindanao.

MK: Your father only? Only the grandpa?

NT: [laughs] No, the whole family. They migrate to Mindanao, the whole family, and then they expand their life there, own land, stuff like that.

MK: Why did they try to do that?

NT: Move?

MK: Yeah

NT: Because they have land in Cebu...

MK: Already?

NT: Yeah, they still have until now, but it's not too fertile for farming. You know Cebu is mainly fossil; you only rely on fishing. So they move to Mindanao because Mindanao at that time is rich. Soil is rich. And then there's no...not like in Cebu that is already divided, Mindanao is still open. What you occupy is yours.

MK: When did they move?

NT: I wasn't born yet. [laughter]

MK: OK, they moved after the war then.

NT: Yeah. No...still continue the war. Because the Pearl Harbor.

MK: Yeah, December 1941.

NT: And '42.

MK: And '42, the Japanese came.

NT: And then when that time still war between Filipino and Japanese.

MK: They moved?

NT: Yeah. And then when they was in Mindanao already, my oldest cousin was in the stomach yet, and he was born in the war. [laughs]

MK: Wow, so they migrated to Mindanao during the war.

NT: Yeah.

MK: How did they do that? By boat?

NY: Yeah.

MK: Was there any relative in that part, in Davao. How did your grandpa decide that, ah, we will go to that place? Who told him?

NT: My grandpa is very...he explore, my grandfather. When he thinks the future is not good for him for tomorrow, he could go, he could move. And when he move, he bring all the family.

MK: How did they get the piece of land?

NT: In Mindanao, when you say, "this is my territory," that's yours.

MK: You just occupy it.

NT: Just occupy it.

MK: But this land, is this near Davao city?

NT: No it's far?

MK: Is it in the barrio?

NT: No, in town...in town of Panabo.

MK: Panabo is a town? OK, let's go back. So your father...

NT: He was young when went back to the Philippines.

MK: He was young, about how old?

NT: He was born '27.

MK: He was born '27, so...

NT: They couldn't come back [to Hawaii] right away because he got sick. Then they got stuck because of the war.

MK: When your father was younger in Davao, what did he do?

NT: They do farming, they grow rice, farm, abaca.¹

MK: Did he go to school there?

NT: Yes, he did. My grandpa, not too good in education. My grandpa have little value education.

MK: Really?

NT: Yeah. My grandfather told me that children work hard on the farm. So all they finish is grade five, only enough to read and write. "You know how to read and write, that's it." My grandpa and my grandmother, selfish. To me, is selfish. Me, if my kids like to go to school, oh, I'll be happy, you know.

MK: So your Dad worked hard, left school after third grade?

NT: Fifth.

MK: Fifth grade...and then he got married to your Mom?

NT: Yeah.

1 [editor's note] Abaca (*Musa textilis*) - also known as abacá, abaka, or Manila hemp - is a species of banana native to the Philippines and grown widely as well in Borneo and Sumatra. It is harvested for its fiber - extracted from the leaf sheath around the trunk. Originally used for making twine and rope, as well as the Manila envelope, most abaca is now pulped and used in a variety of paper-like products including filter paper and banknotes.

MK: So where is your Mom coming from? How did she meet your father?

NT: My Mom, she sells.

MK: In the market?

NT: My Mom no more education. But she can read and write, count.

MK: How did she learn? Self-taught?

NT: Yeah. Same thing, my grandpa died.

MK: The mother side.

NT: My Mom...very young age when grandpa died. I think she was number five child. She helped my grandma.

MK: Where was she born?

NT: Leyte.

MK: How did they meet? She grew up in Leyte, your father was in Davao.

NT: But they meet in Davao...

MK: Because she went there...selling?

NT: Selling...that's how the story go.

MK: Do you remember the date when they got married?

NT: They got married in August 30, 1950.

MK: Yesterday.

NT: [laughs] Yeah...1950.

MK: When did your Mom die?

NT: She died in June 7, 1964. I was twelve years old.

MK: You were twelve years old. Did you go to school?

NT: I go to school eight years old. [laughs]

MK: Eight years old?

NT: Yeah, eight years old.

MK: In the public school.

NT: Uh-huh.

MK: Why...it's a bit late. One year late only.

NT: One year late only. When my father wants me to go school on the right age but, I think, well, my sister wanted to go school, but she still young to go to school. So I told my father, "Well, I wait until she become da kine, then me and her go to school together." But in the meantime I stay in the farm.

MK: OK.

NT: Yeah. My father said also, "You do your chore, the hell your homework"?

MK: Your grandpa said that?

NT: My father. [laughs]

MK: Like father, like son.

NT: Yeah. "The hell with your home work. Feed the pigs and feed the chicken." Work, work, work.

MK: OK, so did you finish grade one?

NT: Yeah, I finished. In the Philippines, I finished first-year high school.

MK: First-year high school.

NT: Yeah.

MK: What school did you go, in the elementary?

NT: In the elementary, I went to...from grade one to grade three, I went to Consolacion Elementary School. How do you call that?

MK: Catholic school?

NT: No, no. It's a barrio, village.

MK: The name is Consolacion?

NT: Consolacion School. But we are living in another barrio called Barrio Kauswagan.² Oh, it takes about two-three hours walk.

MK: One way?

NT: Yeah.

MK: One way!

NT: Yeah. So we have to leave before the sun go up, and then we go run, walk, run, up and down, yeah?

² [editor's note] Kauswagan and Consolacion are neighboring barrios/barangays in what is currently Panabo City, Davao del Norte, Mindanao.

MK: Oh...wow...you were motivated to go to school.

NT: Me, I like.

MK: You liked to go to school. And then high school, where did you go?

NT: And then when my father came to Hawai'i.

MK: He returned alone to Hawai'i?

NT: Yeah.

MK: When?

NT: In February 1964.

MK: How old were you then?

NT: I was twelve.

MK: Thirteen?

NT: Twelve?

MK: You were born...[laughter]

NT: I still twelve. I was born 1951...August. He went February 1964. [laughter]

MK: OK, he went to Hawai'i and left you, your Mom and the other kids.

NT: Yeah.

MK: Why did he do that?

NT: Because my granduncle in 'Aiea, he only fix him to come back Hawai'i.

MK: Petition?

NT: Yeah. And he believes that through him [Nora's father], he can make everybody's life better. That's what he believe, yeah, my granduncle in 'Aiea. My granduncle was Bruno Baclaan, and his wife was Faustina de Asis. He was the youngest brother of my grandfather.

MK: This is the brother of your grandfather.

NT: Yeah. His name is Bruno Baclaan.

MK: Ah,...so the Baclaans really came early here.

NT: Yeah, 1919.

MK: The two of them?

NT: Yeah. My grandfather came first. Then the youngest brother followed. The older brother try to help the younger brother and help out the whole family.

MK: Was the idea for your father to come to work in Hawai'i to send money or eventually to get the family?

NT: One by one, to come here.

MK: So he left. You are with your mother.

NT: And then my Mom also sick with cancer.

MK: She got cancer?

NT: My Mom had cousin, Minggay and Aning Gerona, in another barrio, Kauswagan...and he took us, the children to live with him. My Mom's cousin was capitan del barrio [barrio head], then after that we go school just across. But my Mom getting worse. My grandpa on my father's side came to visit, and then he took my mother to hospital.

MK: And she died there?

NT: She died after three months in the hospital - general hospital in Davao City, Philippines.

MK: What kind of cancer?

NT: Started from the cervix area, then...the whole body.

MK: That's hard, especially during those days.

NT: Oh, yeah. No more father, no more da kine, big responsibility, that's all I know.

MK: So, she died when you were...how old were you?

NT: I still twelve.

MK: Twelve. So your mother got sick right after your father left?

NT: I never knew that she was already sick. My father, he had his job already. He was working in Dole company.

MK: Dole, in 'Aiea?

NT: No, Dole in Dillingham. He just started that time.

MK: Did he go back for the funeral?

NT: Uh-uh.

MK: Couldn't go back. So what happened?

NT: He could go back if wants to.

MK: So, what happened?

NT: First, my uncle, Isidro Guzon, took us to their place to work on their farm. [NT cries] This is Mom's side. He also took our water buffalo.

MK: No more schooling.

NT: No more schooling.

MK: That's hard.

NT: And then my other uncle on my father side, Felomino Baclaan, took us from uncle Isidro and took us back to my grandparents.

MK: Back to your grandparents, father side?

NT: Yes. We plow the fields, plant corn. My grandfather side, they only like corn. And they have coconuts.

MK: Is it a big piece of land?

NT: Not really big. Our land is more big than theirs.

MK: Oh, what happened to your land?

NT: We lose them.

MK: Bakit? [Why?]

NT: We lose them because I was only 12 years old, yeah?

MK: Uh-huh.

NT: After my Mom died, the guy went squatter the place. And then, I don't know how true it is, because I only 12, yeah? So they pay 800 pesos to my grandpa [for the farm]. I like the place because that was the only place, in my knowledge, that have good water. There was natural cement - the spout - and the water coming from the spout is very clear. And it is very tasty. Better than water in Panabo.

MK: So did you get back to your grandparents? Worked harder raising corn?

NT: Yeah. Raise chickens. I learn how to train the water buffalos.

MK: Train the water buffalos?

NT: Yeah. It's so funny, since we are staying with my grandparents, the water buffalo multiply plenty.

MK: Bakit?

NT: I don't know how. OK, this is how me and my youngest sister, we feed the water buffalo we call that "bakero," that means riding on top of the animal while grazing. And then we let go, and then they mate. My grandpa get only one female buffalo, come pregnant, then three months again, come pregnant. So come multiply plenty.

MK: So you learned to train them. Who taught you?

NT: My case, I already learn from young time. I go with my father in the farm. You have to plow and make kaingin [swidden farming]. When I was growing up, I was his right-hand to make the kaingin, stuff like that, and then my Mom wants to separate the land. One for the wild so we get something to eat. And then the other side is for us, for eat. So that the wild pigs and everything like that, they got place to stay so that they don't attack and eat your crops. They got place to stay.

MK: So you can tell the carabao how to move right, how to move left.

NT: Uh-huh. So when my Mom died, my father is here in Hawaii, only us...my grandpa...

MK: So while you were there [grandpa's farm], did you hear from your father? Did he write you?

NT: [laughs] In the beginning he does.

MK: Did he send money?

NT: He send money to my auntie [Helena Baclaan].

MK: Did she give you the money?

NT: No, we live with them.

MK: I thought you were living with your grandparents.

NT: Yeah, my grandparents. My auntie them also live with my grandparents.

MK: Your auntie...this is the...

NT: My father's sister. She's single that time.

MK: So the auntie, did not give you pocket money.

NT: She never give us nothing.

MK: Buy clothers, buy shoes, buy...?

NT: Up to them, because we were living with them.

- MK: OK. But did they take care of you, your auntie? You know, did they treat you well?
- NT: They treat different. If you have parents, they treat you well.
- MK: Shouldn't it be the opposite? They should be kinder.
- NT: [cries] Not very nice to me when I was growing up. I did my part. The main thing was, I protect the youngest one [sibling].
- MK: That's most important because that's your responsibility.
- NT: Yeah. That's the main thing.
- MK: Madamot [selfish]. They did not feed you?
- NT: Yeah. I rather no eat. Sometimes they talk harsh because my father no send money. So they talk harsh just like we are eating free, yeah.
- MK: Even though you are working hard on the farm.
- NT: Yeah. So I feel that kind of talk.
- MK: Because your Dad not sending money, they're saying, "what kind of a father is he?"
- NT: Yeah. They talk stink, yeah? Good my grandpa likes my youngest brother. Me, I watch, yeah?
- MK: And your grandma, was she a consolation?
- NT: No. I don't have good memories with my grandma. And grandpa, too. My chest is very heavy for them. Because I've been treated badly, yeah? And the main thing is my brothers and sisters.
- MK: When you say badly, meaning, in words, or working?
- NT: Words and...?
- MK: Did they beat you up?
- NT: No, they cannot, because I do everything what they told me to do, because I'm obligated. I'm the oldest. So the main thing is my two youngest can eat three times a day. But then my two youngest work hard too. My second youngest sister, she become my right hand. See, my sister next to me and my brother, one year after my Mom died, they run away.
- MK: Oh.
- NT: I wanted to run away, too.

MK: Where would you go?

NT: If I do run away, but I get vision. yeah? I get vision. That vision I have to follow.

MK: What was that?

NT: The vision is that I saw my brother bitten by the snake. And I don't know what to do. So, how could I run away? He gonna be bitten.

MK: Oh, the younger one.

NT: Yeah. And then I saw my sister cannot stand hard work.

MK: So, the three of you remained. The two went away.

NT: Yeah. The two run away.

MK: Where did they go?

NT: My sister next to me went away to one of my auntie. And my brother he run away from places to places, and places to places. He went through a lot of struggle about himself.

MK: So you were left with the two younger ones.

NT: Yeah. The two younger ones.

MK: So what happened then, you were working and then...?

NT: We working, and stuff like that, and then...we go school.

MK: You could go to school.

NT: Yeah.

MK: The three of you.

NT: Yeah. And then my youngest sister have problem. They run her down.

MK: By who?

NT: By my grandparents and their family.

MK: You mean, they kind of put her down?

NT: Yeah, but my sister have problem. She cannot see, she's half-blind. She can hear, but she cannot read something on the board, you know.

MK: So what did you do?

NT: I cannot do nothing. So the teacher, the husband is a doctor, tried to talk to my grandfather. My grandfather denied it.

- MK: Because he does not want to spend?
- NT: Either that or wala kaming kuwenta [we don't matter to him]. To me, wala kaming kuwenta, because we don't have nobody but ourselves, you know what I mean.
- MK: Uh-huh. What happened to your sister?
- NT: I pray, pray, pray. She [Virgin Mary] appeared to me, she fly me over, she make me see my father...
- MK: In the dream?
- NT: No, in the vision.
- MK: Vision?
- NT: She pick me up, she pick me up. I don't know, believe me or not, but...at the beginning, you know, I pray before I go to sleep, and I crying while lying down, I stay awake...and all of a sudden the bright light, you know, the golden light came, and then I get up and I stand up. She stood right in front of me.
- MK: Virgin Mary. Mother of Perpetual Help?
- NT: Yeah. And then showed me, if I want go to go pasyal [stroll around].
- MK: Go pasyal where?
- NT: Go pasyal. I don't know where. So I reached out. I only hold baby Jesus feet. We fly...
- MK: So the Mother, with Infant Jesus?
- NT: With infant Jesus. We fly, I only hold the toe. And then she showed me Hawaii, she showed me my father. My father was turning, looking, because he's working and she showed me where my father go. After my father pau work he go cabaret and stuff like that. And then she showed me my father activity, yeah, that's what she showed me, and then she showed me all the Oahu and she showed me Hilo, Big Island, Lanai and everything, like that. She made me travel the whole island. And then just like that, she bring me where I am, between my brother and my sister. And she ask me questions before she leave me. She said, "why are you going to see your father? Now you see your father, you know your father now, why you still want to go to Hawaii?" Only one answer, I said, "I really need my father."
- MK: You said?
- NT: Yeah, and she look at me and disappeared.

MK: Hmm.

NT: Yeah, and after three months he wrote...with tickets.

MK: He wrote asking you to come?

NT: Uh huh.

MK: What about your brother and sister [who ran away from home]?

NT: I had to find them.

MK: The tickets are for the five children?

NT: Yeah. That's why it's miracle that we come here because my father do nothing for us to come here.

MK: Did he explain to you - did he have the same dream - how did he decide to send tickets?

NT: Uh huh.

MK: How did he decide suddenly?

NT: It's the power of...he just changed his mind.

MK: So he must saved money to buy the tickets.

NT: Borrow from the bank, before, easy to borrow money.

MK: So you all came?

NT: Uh huh. With my grandfather.

MK: Grandfather, too?

NT: My grandmother died, yeah?

MK: Oh, she died.

NT: 1968.

MK: OK, so grandpa is left alone.

NT: Yeah. But my grandpa gotten used to us already.

MK: Oh, did he change his mind. He began to like you, all of you?

NT: Not, really.

MK: Wala na siyang kasama [He's go nobody with him].

NT: Uh huh. He got used with Amparo, my youngest sister, and Ranulfo, my youngest brother. Because Ranulfo is the pet, you know.

MK: When did you come here?

NT: 1970.

MK: 1970.

NT: 1969 is when I called my brother and sister [who ran away] to come home to my grandpa so that we can make the papers and stuff like that.

MK: You remember what month you arrived in Honolulu?

NT: April 1970. I still 18.

MK: You were 18 years old?

NT: Yeah.

MK: OK, so when you came, you came to Ota Camp?

NT: Not yet!

MK: OK.

NT: Not yet, this is interesting story. When we come here, we thought we got place to stay.

MK: Because your daddy was here?

NT: Yeah. We don't have place to stay. [laughs]

MK: Where was he staying?

NT: He stay with his girl friend. [laughs] So he dumped us to my uncle who had so many kids.

MK: Uncle...that's the...

NT: Uncle Diosie [Joseph Baclaan], the brother of my father.

MK: Oh.

NT: Yeah, he dumped us there, so... [laughs]

MK: Where is that?

NT: In Waipahu. In Mokuola Street.

MK: Over there, near the transit.

NT: Yeah.

MK: The bus transit. [laughs]

NT: Yeah. My uncle used to live there.

MK: OK.

NT: Yeah. And then...six of us in one room. And then, of course, there's so many of us, there was personal conflict.

MK: It's hard.

NT: So my uncle that no-more hand [Florencio Baclaan] have extra room in downtown [Honolulu], Pua Lane apartments.

MK: This is another uncle?

NT: This is uncle that no more hand.

MK: What happened to the hand?

NT: Well, their hobby before is to dynamite the ocean and for fishing. [laughs] They get karma. [laughs] Lost the hand, yeah. [laughs]

MK: This uncle is the brother of...

NT: The oldest brother, oldest brother of my father. [laughs]

MK: OK, so he's alone living in downtown.

NT: Yeah.

MK: No more family. No wife, no kids.

NT: No, because the wife is still in the Philippines.

MK: Same story.

NT: Yeah, same story. And then...

MK: What kind of a house did he have?

NT: Apartment - two-bedroom.

MK: OK, so you are also cramped there.

NT: Yeah, we stay cramped. And my father try to get us a place in Mayor Wright...

MK: Mayor Wright housing?

NT: Yeah. He cannot qualify because his income is high.

MK: Why, why was it high?

NT: His income? He work for Honolulu Gas Company.

MK: Ah, what kind of work?

NT: He do the welding, he do the...

MK: Skilled work. That's well-paid.

NT: Yeah. He got pretty good income. So, at the same time, my grandfather went to chicken fight, yeah, when he went to chicken fight, he met Manang Portun Manzano. [laughs] They used to be neighbor long time ago before he went back to the Philippines.

MK: Oh! Before, before.

NT: Yeah. [laughter] So they met in chicken fight. [laughs]. So they have two guys talk, that we need place to stay. Yeah, because he said, he not happy in the apartment. [laughs)]

Of course, nobody like stay in the apartment. Just like prisoner. Although it's close for us to go to work. Because me, my sister next to me, and Boy - Boy is the third child - we working for Dole company. Before, minor can have work in company. And so my grandfather meet Portun Manzano and then tell my father there's an opening in Ota Camp. But only one thing - the roof still good but puka-puka [have holes]. Puka-puka the wall and the floor. And then my grandpa said, "Hmm, it's OK even though the roof is raining as long as me and my grandchildren together," yeah.

MK: Oh.

NT: "Together. We got place to stay." So that's how it started. We moved in before we get enrollment to go to school. So when we moved in, then I process all the papers so that we can go back to school. And at same time, my sister next to me and my brother still working in the Dole company. I cannot work. The reason I cannot work - I worked only three months, my whole body burn.

MK: Oh...allergy?

NT: Yeah, somehow the chemical go into my body. I have cut only this one but somehow the chemical went in and then I burn, my whole body. So the only one working is Boy and...

MK: What did you do?

NT: Boy and my sister next to me gave me some money. I have also my own money that Dole company give me, you know, for not working. They have to pay my medical.

MK: Did you get well? Months?

NT: No. Two years.

MK: Two years?

NT: Yeah. Two years. That's why my brother and my sister them, they got mad at me.

MK: Why?

NT: Because I couldn't work much, you know what I mean? I cannot work much, and they have to give me money.

MK: Because you were sick.

NT: Yeah, try to recover. And then sometime my brother and sister call me any kind name because they give me money to da kine, but while I use money to pay, which is \$20.00, for the rent, yeah. And then for grocery, yeah.

MK: Uh huh.

NT: And then, meantime, my father not giving us. He only give us when he feel like it. So that means he abandon us up again, he's still abandoning us up again.

MK: Your grandpa, what's your grandpa doing?

NT: My grandpa...nothing. He only go home. Holoholo.³ He can do nothing, he's old.

MK: So only two were working.

NT: Yeah. So, finally, I find dishwahr-kine job and then waitress-saimin-kine job, and then at the same time go to school, yeah.

MK: Where did you go to school?

NT: High school.

MK: Waipahu High School?

NT: Waipahu High School.

MK: So you finished your high school education.

NT: Uh huh. So after high school, it's 1972 that's when I graduate, before I graduate, Ota Camp came up, we don't have a place to stay.

MK: Why?

NT: Eviction!

MK: Oh, OK. [laughter] Everyone also.

NT: Everyone. At the same time, he was our neighbor...

MK: Pete? [Tagalog]

NT: Yeah, our neighbor, he also goes school in Leeward [Leeward Community College].

3 Holoholo = "To go for a walk, ride, or sail; to go out for pleasure, stroll, promenade." Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, revised and enlarged edition. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986. [editor's note]

MK: Did you go there too?

NT: After graduation.

MK: You went to Leeward, too? What were you studying?

NT: I studying...difficult to answer [laughs] because when I go to counseling after high school, I told the counselor that I want to be a nurse.

MK: Uh huh.

NT: But the counselor told me, "The nurse is not suitable to you because I don't have enough."

MK: That's what she said, you need money?

NT: Yeah. And then another thing, too, I got to get grades. Right? Another thing, too...

MK: Uh-huh. This is Waipahu counselor?

NT: No. Leeward.

MK: Leeward?

NT: Yeah.

MK: OK.

NT: And then: "You are responsible with your brothers and sisters. When you go nursing, you have to focus." He told me like that. And which is true. He said, "If you have responsibility back home, it hinders your studying nursing." So he got points.

MK: Yeah.

NT: "So why not just go for accounting?"

MK: That's hard, too. So you finished accounting?

NT: Yeah.

MK: At Leeward. Two years?

NT: Uh-huh.

MK: Did you like it?

NT: I don't because it's not what I want.

MK: But you finished it any way. You got the skill.

NT: Yeah.

MK: Who supported you? How did you get money?

NT: Financial aid.

MK: Ah, from Leeward.

NT: Uh-huh.

MK: Did you have to work for that?

NT: No, because I'm working. I have a job. Our rent is about \$20.00.

MK: Your rent in Ota Camp was \$20.00?

NT: Yeah. We renting Primo Fontanilla's home.

MK: But the land...

NT: They owned by Ota, and Ota not collecting. That's something good about Ota until...

MK: OK, then Blackburn bought the land.

[End of Interview]