

INTERVIEW -

Colby Mocarski: [00:00:00] Hi my name is Colby Mocarski. I am a senior at James Madison University and today I will be interviewing Paola Iturbide. And so my first question is can you tell me your age and something about you?

Paola Iturbide: [00:00:16] I'm 25 years old. I was born in San Diego, California. But I moved to Mexico where my parents lived since I was a baby. My parents used to live in Mexico City. They met there. Then they moved to Tijuana. And they decided to just have me in the United States so I can have more opportunities like in the future. And so I do. I was just born there. But live in Mexico all my life and now I live in the States.

Colby Mocarski: [00:00:50] OK so can you tell me some about your childhood or your education?

Paola Iturbide: [00:00:56] My childhood I grew up in Guadalajara, Mexico. I was in a Catholic school all girls school and my friends were middle high class so they had money to give me the location that I needed and I learned English in school.

Colby Mocarski: [00:01:16] So you said that you went to a Catholic school so that was that your religion growing up?

Paola Iturbide: [00:01:22] Yeah. Because a lot of people in Mexico are Catholic. That's like the main religion. So I grew up Catholic and I'm Catholic and I was raised in a Catholic school.

Colby Mocarski: [00:01:36] So what made you want to come to the United States?

Paola Iturbide: [00:01:41] The first thing is like there's no jobs in Mexico because I mean I study a career. But I saw a lot of options but they don't pay you well. You have to have a connection or know someone in the government to have a well-paid job. And also I did and say I did and I study a lot. Also I had to study more to be someone I think I was a little lazy in school. So that also was the problem. If you put a lot of effort in school you can be successful in Mexico. What a lot of people are lazy and that's why they come to the United States because they think it's gonna be easier. But I think you have to work at the same level that you will do it in Mexico or in the States.

Colby Mocarski: [00:02:44] What made you choose Harrisonburg when you came to the United States?

Paola Iturbide: [00:02:47] Because my sister and is in Bridgewater and I came with her and it was easier for me because she knew people because coming to United States not knowing anyone it's difficult it's difficult living here it's difficult.

Colby Mocarski: [00:03:02] What what was your first initial reaction of Harrisonburg? Did you like it right away? Did you feel like you fit into the community right away?

Paola Iturbide: [00:03:20] I think it's warm because I came from a big city so I prefer big cities. I fall in love with D.C. This is like not for me because it's like living in a ranch but it's really pretty. Just like for coming on a vacation I mean and people here are nice. I think there's a little bit of racism. I think there is but I mean it's it's ok living here. I'm just not like a country girl.

Colby Mocarski: [00:03:53] So how was it finding a job in Harrisonburg?

Paola Iturbide: [00:03:58] It was so easy. That's the thing of the United States. It's really easy

finding any job well me because I have papers but I don't know the people that are immigrants. I work for a week in a restaurant in a Mexican restaurant. The name is El Charo they get it. They they just have immigrants and they treat them like slaves. They made them work all day and they paid them nothing. Just the tips from people and I think people that come here as an immigrant it's not worth it because they are treated like slaves. You have to have papers to be OK here or on have a decent job. If you don't have papers is horrible. You are surviving, just surviving and maybe you are living a little better. We maybe in Mexico didn't have a TV and you have a TV here with you. You have to pay it every month and you work here in the States. People that don't have papers they work like slaves. They live better but they are their slaves.

Colby Mocarski: [00:05:04] So I know you came here also trying to get a certification to be a translator. Is that something that was offered in Mexico too?

Paola Iturbide: [00:05:16] No I just like look in here and I saw that they have the certification. I just did it.

Colby Mocarski: [00:05:25] So what is like your long term goals? Like what jobs do you want? Do You see you staying here, or going back to Mexico full time?

Paola Iturbide: [00:05:35] I mean if I pass the exam to be a translator. My plan my initial plan was to move here and find a better job, because having a job in Five Guys that mean you earn a lot but if you save it and you go back to Mexico. But here things are so expensive that if you want to leave here you have to have a better job than Five Guys cook. You know what my goal to have my certificate and to work in a hospital and get paid minimum 30 dollars per hour so you can be fine you know because if you have like a job you are not going to leave fine. You're going to just survive. So while not my plan was coming here study that if I pass it I was going to leave close to D.C. because I fell in love with D.C. But now my ex-boyfriend is talking to me again. We're going to meet each other and if any if what he proposed I'm going back to Mexico because he has a lot of money so I'm gonna have to worry you know. But if he doesn't propose in New York I won't. I'm going to come back and work as a translator in the hospital because in here I will have a decent life. And in Mexico I will be a slave just to survive. Like working in an office eight hours to get paid. I don't know. Two hundred dollars per month. So it's nothing. Per day I will get paid like 30 bucks.

Colby Mocarski: [00:07:17] So you said you worked at Five Guys did you ever feel like not being an American has affected you in your workplace?

Paola Iturbide: [00:07:27] No I don't think so because there's Mexicans there in five days. I mean Spanish speaking people. There are a lot of Spanish speaking people here.

Colby Mocarski: [00:07:39] So do you think that there are Americans that work in five guys that treat you differently because you are aren't American?

Paola Iturbide: [00:07:48] No.

Colby Mocarski: [00:07:51] So how is Harrisonburg changed since you moved here. Have you seen any big differences or anything?

[00:08:01] Yeah I mean just because I had a car in Mexico and I have lived with my parents I was fine but what I saw the poor people that live in Mexico is a huge difference here because I'm going to put an example. The bosses here have air conditioner and in Mexico people have to wait in lines to get on the bus and they go squish. They have to walk thousands of miles to get to their jobs. And here is more access to all or it's more accessible to have a car than in Mexico is impossible because

of they because of what they get paid in there. In any job because jobs there if you don't have a connection or if you know someone if you come from a wealthy family you screwed your whole life! Or you are very smart to become a successful doctor or you know in here you're not that smart you can work two jobs and you are going to survive and live decently we have to be really smart to stay or to, to do it in Mexico.

Colby Mocarski: [00:09:20] So do you feel like there is a community within a community of immigrants in Harrisonburg because for example JMU has over 200 different countries represented within our campus. So do you think there's a community within a community of immigrant students or people?

Paola Iturbide: [00:09:45] Yeah. There's a lot of immigrants here because they told me Harrisonburg is the city that you don't get deported at deported. I don't know why. So they call their safe place so that's why immigrants come here because if you don't have papers you don't get deported. That's why there is a huge community of immigrants.

Colby Mocarski: [00:10:07] So do you feel like that you see a lot of other people reaching out like within that smaller community? Like do you feel like there's a stronger bond between those people?

Paola Iturbide: [00:10:22] People that I have met makes you can with Mexicans, Chinese we Chinese like they don't get makes a lot I think because of their racism, and because of the language maybe they find it difficult.

Colby Mocarski: [00:10:39] So what made you end up working for five guys? Like what made you decide to work there?

Paola Iturbide: [00:10:44] Because it was close to my house and I don't have a car it is a bad job. But I mean I will love to work in other place but it's like you so hard to move here because their transportation is horrible.

Colby Mocarski: [00:11:02] So do you see yourself like staying with Five Guys? Are you going and try and look for a new job? Or try to start your career as a translator?

Paola Iturbide: [00:11:15] Yes. I just need the translated stuff I'm just doing my exam if I pass it I think I'm not leaving here because he's boring. But I'm going to maybe move to Charlottesville, if my ex don't propose.

Colby Mocarski: [00:11:31] So what Changes would you like to see in Harrisoburg in the nation in general as far as looking at immigrants?

Paola Iturbide: [00:11:45] Transportation people that don't have cars so difficult. You don't have transportation you don't have transportation and Saturday and Sunday. It's horrible.

Colby Mocarski: [00:11:56] But what about like how our nation views immigrants?

Paola Iturbide: [00:12:02] I think it's really hard for people that immigrants. So I think they don't have a decent job. If you are an immigrant you're screwed. You're going to leave this in but you're not gonna live, you're gonna be a slave. So people here treat immigrants that they don't have papers as slaves they are slaves.

Colby Mocarski: [00:12:33] As a whole like especially under President Trump he's been like extremely strict with immigration policies. So like how do you feel about our nation. Like right now

he's shown to appeal the 14th Amendment that says that if you are born in the United States you are a citizen even if your parents are not. So you shine to get that reversed. So like how do you feel about the way that our country is moving towards like a no immigrant population?

Paola Iturbide: [00:13:07] I think is fine if you like if their parents are not from here. I think it's OK. What they are doing. I don't know why people come here. They should fight in their own countries to be better and other countries should like fight so that their people have better jobs and not leave their countries. So I think America is doing the right thing not having immigrants here.

Colby Mocarski: [00:13:48] So you said that your family still lives in Mexico so what do your parents do to be successful and have a life in Mexico if finding jobs are very difficult?

Paola Iturbide: [00:14:01] Like I said I was not a very studious person. I didn't study a lot. I'm kind of I like to study both my parents my parents my parents. My dad he's he's really smart so he become a lawyer so like I said if you are smart and you study you can be successful anywhere. But most of the time people are lazy. That's why they are not successful.

Colby Mocarski: [00:14:30] So what jobs do your parents have in Mexico?

Paola Iturbide: [00:14:33] My father is a lawyer and he runs a call center he's them. Like their manager of all Mexico. Like all the, the country because they have different call centers in different parts of the of their country.

Colby Mocarski: [00:15:01] And what does your mom do?

Paola Iturbide: [00:15:02] My mom right now she doesn't work.

Colby Mocarski: [00:15:05] So what do you think about the overall view on immigration? Like what do you think about the American perspective of immigration.

Paola Iturbide: [00:15:34] What Americans think of immigration. I think that right now they're really racist about immigration and I think they should stop immigration and not let people in. If they are were not born in the United States and or if they are born here and their parents are not from here they should not give them the papers because governments on other countries should fight for better education and everything like that.

Colby Mocarski: [00:16:11] So yeah it's just America was built on immigration because everybody that's ever really been here immigrated from overseas from Mexico somewhere. So it's just like how is how are the times so different now where immigration is viewed as a negative thing and we're trying to cut it off completely versus we were built on immigration. So like why do you think it's like completely changed?

Paola Iturbide: [00:16:44] Because back in the days there was they were everything was building it was building like everything was not done yet. So all like Mexico was built because European people move to that country. So now that is overpopulated like they should stop immigration because everything's done right now like people like countries have their own people so they should stop immigration.

Colby Mocarski: [00:17:17] So what do you think you will take for Mexico to, I guess become more like the United States where it has more job opportunities and higher wages and things like that?

Paola Iturbide: [00:17:30] When they when the government stops robbing has a robbing, because people are really really corrupt. That's the problem that in other countries government is so corrupt and they steal thousands and thousands of dollars they don't have the values like Americans have. They have honesty values here and Mexicans, they don't have that because the government steals. The steals their taxes monies taxes money. So that's why it's like a circle, like it repeats repeats repeats the same stuff because if they don't stop from the government, stealing the government give give them more opportunities. People will stop stealing to have a better life. So the government should start not stealing and have their values like America has more Americans have more of honesty. They are more honest. There is not a lot of crimes like in Mexico because of that because it starts from the government that the government steal. They don't rob. They don't commit crimes. So is everything. Start start start from the top like from the government.

Colby Mocarski: [00:19:10] So, with not a lot of job opportunities before you moved to the United States even if it was just for a short period of time. What job did you have in Mexico?

Paola Iturbide: [00:19:22] I was just like Secretary.

Colby Mocarski: [00:19:26] What. What did that involve?

Paola Iturbide: [00:19:30] What do you mean?

Colby Mocarski: [00:19:31] Like what were your tasks to do every day?

Paola Iturbide: [00:19:35] Just type things on the computer. Answer the phone. It was awful.

Colby Mocarski: [00:19:42] So how does that compare to like the salary you made in that job. How does that compare to the salary that you're making in your current job?

Paola Iturbide: [00:19:51] Yeah it's way like this is a bad job also. Also that's the difference. Like I had a bad job over there and they pay me like thirty dollars per day. So that's, no not thirty dollars like twenty dollars per day. And that was an eight hour shift in here a bad job. You get paid per day seventy dollars so that's a huge amount of difference. That's the difference. Working in Mexico than working here and in Mexico you work one day and you you can like if you work in that bad job for the whole month you can just buy groceries and that's it. You don't like you. You don't have money to pay rent and to do other stuff in here. If you work a bad job you can't pay rent. You can have food and you can live decent. That's the difference between Mexico and the United States that you can live more decently having bad jobs.

Colby Mocarski: [00:20:55] In the span of comparing these two jobs. There is a difference on how far a dollar goes so even though you getting paid less in your other job your money probably went for the men in the United States because things are more expensive here right?

Paola Iturbide: [00:21:13] Yeah. But you can like, but it depends where you go if you to the dollar family store. It's really cheap. Well it depends on what you do.

Colby Mocarski: [00:21:25] Yeah because the big thing in America right now is buying organic and buying one freshly grown products and going to farmer's markets which can all be really expensive. So do you see a culture of like Americans spending more. Just because we have more?

Paola Iturbide: [00:21:43] Yeah. I mean here I can see like this consumerism, consume. How do you say the word? Like you consume a lot like you just want to consume a lot of stuff. It's a lot of competition. And because these are first world, first world country like they have everything and

more so if you were to a store you just want to buy like everything because you can't like you see everything it's like you can buy with your credit card. You're gonna pay it in, I don't know six months. So it's consumerism, you you people are buying and buying and stuff that they don't need.

Colby Mocarski: [00:22:37] Right. So how are things like talking about stores and groceries and that thing like how are they different in the United States than in Mexico? Like do you see a huge difference, are things helps here in one place or another?

Paola Iturbide: [00:22:54] No it's just like here. I see also the fruit and everything is really I don't know the word, it is they made their fruit not natural because they don't know the orange. It doesn't have seeds. So I think food here is really processed, and in Mexico. No because of their consumerism. So a lot of competition. So people here the food is not healthy like natural like in Mexico and it's expensive here also.

Colby Mocarski: [00:23:42] So did when you were coming to the United States did you also see it was harder or easier to find somewhere to live to find friends too?

Paola Iturbide: [00:23:54] Oh yeah. It's really hard here to find like friends and it's on where to leave also because they ask you for so many stuff like cosigner any of you don't know anyone is really difficult. And I think people here live more by, they do everything they own and they find people on apps because they are so involved in just their job and just in themselves that they are not like involved in different stuff like in Mexico because here is expensive here I'd like to go to our country club and people don't do that here because it's expensive just for rich people. The difference in Mexico is like to go to a country club it's cheap so it's more like people hang out more. You don't have to meet someone like community. Yeah because this is cheaper. Like being middle class can go to our country club in here, middle class they cannot do that, people get more and more together. They have more time to do things with their friends. And here everything needs money and work work work work.

Colby Mocarski: [00:25:26] So what would you like when the public is listening to this interview like what is one main thing you want them to take away from your story?

Paola Iturbide: [00:25:38] To think about twice if you don't have papers to come here you are going to have a better life. You are going to live decent but if you don't have papers you are going to live like slaves. You are going to work. I work in a restaurant that they hire immigrants and they work from 8:00 in the morning to 10:00 at night and you are going to have a car you're going to have more things that you're going to have in Mexico where you are going to work a lot because here things are expensive here, than down in Mexico makes it you can leave poor but you are going to be free. So think twice. Call me here if you don't have papers. You are not going to be happy. You marry an American or something like that.

Colby Mocarski: [00:26:29] So are also be students listening to the interview. So what do you think they can learn from your story? Like about your immigration experiences your work experiences your living experiences like what's one main thing you want people and students to learn from your experiences? People are learning about immigration. So as an immigrant like what do you want them to learn from your experience?

Paola Iturbide: [00:27:04] Like I was. I'm not like kind of an immigrant because I have papers but my my friend that I meet here she was she was an immigrant and she didn't have papers and she lived like hiding because she had to drive with no license. And she always had to be like hiding from the police. She had to work in a Mexican restaurant that they don't ask for a social security number and anything. And she worked like a slave. So she couldn't like anything because she didn't

know they, she she couldn't go out of the country because her their papers were in process to be American citizen. So if you don't have papers like is no worth it come in here is worth it. Like coming here for a while and then come back just like save money and then come back because here things are really expensive. So if you work like that as an immigrant you are going to earn money but you are going to spend, spend that all and leave just live by the day. The thing to believe you are an immigrant and don't have papers work a lot and then go back to Mexico or that place that you are and do something there with that money that you earn here because living here is like you're going to be living good but you are never going to be free.

Colby Mocarski: [00:28:28] Well thank you for this interview. It's great talking to you and learning about your personal experiences!

Paola Iturbide: [00:28:34] Thank you! Bye!