

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

DOMESTIC WORKERS UNITED

Interview Transcription: afc2015027_03400_ms02

Liseth Valencia interviewed by Patricia Francois

Pat Francois: Good afternoon.

Liseth: Good afternoon.

Pat Francois: My name is Patricia Francois, and I'm chair of Domestic Workers United, and here we are archiving the voices of domestic workers into the Library of Congress. Today is the sixth month, the fourth day, 2016. Could you say your name?

Liseth: Yes, good afternoon. My name is Liseth Valencia.

Pat Francois: Liseth, [00:00:30] this project, how ... What make you interested in this project?

Liseth: As a nanny and a housekeeper and elderly care, I always be interest in we have a better treatment, get better jobs. That the people one day has to ... Not to thanks because we do for them, just little consideration. Like, we do the work that [00:01:00] anyone else do like lawyers, high position, it's a job.

Pat Francois: Okay. What is the name or name you would like, you'll be using for this interview?

Liseth: I can use my name. I don't have any problem with. I'm okay.

Pat Francois: Okay. What is your current occupation?

Liseth: I do nanny.

Pat Francois: [00:01:30] What borough or neighborhood do you live in?

Liseth: Bay Ridge, Brooklyn.

Pat Francois: Bay Ridge, Brooklyn.

Liseth: Yeah, by the Verrazano Bridge.

Pat Francois: Okay. Where are you originally from?

Liseth: I was born in Guatemala.

Pat Francois: Guatemala.

Liseth: Yeah, I'm original Guatemala.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: How did you become a domestic worker?

Liseth: That's a long story, because as a teenager, [00:02:00] I came because I'm a Catholic, so I have an aunt that is a nun, but I will tell you a little story. I don't want to go ... It's a long story. I come with a family from we are six, but unfortunately the number six, my brother, at the age a month they have to remove an eye. Background you don't have any help.

Pat Francois: Okay.

Liseth: Doctor, whatever you have, only you worked for it. You have [00:02:30] to have the money. If you don't have the money, you don't get any medical treatment.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Liseth: My brother need to a lot attention, especially it wasn't the attention with my parents were care about it, because where we grew up you take care of the ... Oldest take care of the youngest, so that wasn't a problem, but I still notice they still worry about. Like my mother, [00:03:00] when we used to go to bed at two in the morning, three in the morning. She got a job with designer to sewing clothing. Some of the samples, they were samples. I learned to sew how and I saw my father never have a day off from the [inaudible 00:03:18]. He was working a [stairway 00:03:28] 360 days a year. Never a day off, but he wanted us to always have that food, we go to school, [00:03:30] like us girls. I remember my father always said to my mother, "Teach the girls never beg anyone for anything. I don't want my girls never to beg for love or food." Grow with dignity and respect.

When I was teenager I had the opportunity, because my aunt is a nun, because my mother side, they're Europeans, from Spain. She had [00:04:00] some cousin that were nun in New York City, so that's how I came, and I came to the first time I got to the United States, I went to a church that's between Little Italy and Chinatown. In the fifth floor, they were renting rooms to single girls that used to come out of the country or they were around but singles, from ... They said teenagers to 20 years, but as long as you pay rent it was okay. The first time [00:04:30] I got there, I went help to change the flowers, the vases for the person who was charge in the church, so I met a Guatemalan woman there.

I start to talk and I say, "Oh, I'm here with this," and she said, "Are you planning to stay working?" I said, "I don't know. I will look. If I see how the money is here." I remember she said, "Well, you want to do here, I'm a nanny housekeeper, live-in job." She told me, "I work with a Jewish for 10 years [00:05:00] in East 8th in Kings Highway, Brooklyn." She said, "I used to work in that market, you're going to start working \$200 for six days, but live-in job. Most of them they have six children plus two, but you have to do everything depends." I said, "I should try. Let me know you have something," so three weeks later she saw me in the church and she says, "Are you interested

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

[inaudible 00:05:27]?" I said, "Yes." Then [00:05:30] she said, "You will love children?" "Yes, I do. I can clean, I can do everything. Any kind I will do." You have to do what ... I need the money so that's how I start in the market.

Pat Francois: As a domestic worker.

Liseth: I started working six days. I remember when I went in interview, it was her boss sister, so because she introduce me to her. She said, "Yes." She didn't ask me a question. She said, "You know Rosa?" "Yes, I know through the church," the same way she [00:06:00] told her. She just look my hands, she look my face. I was a teenager, and I was a good-looking, strong. Not like now, so that's what ... Then she gave me the job, and I started working for her six days, 180 days for six days. To get in the morning six thirty, seven, Monday, and get out Sunday around ten. Nine, ten. Yeah, because they have an alarm and they put alarm at night, and we have to wait until they ... [00:06:30] They use Shabbat, so inside they didn't allow to touch electricity and anything. That's how I start in the market, and that's how I keep going.

Pat Francois: How long have you done this work?

Liseth: This work?

Pat Francois: Yeah.

Liseth: The first job I did only for ... I didn't last. Maybe seven months, because I said to myself I'm doing here \$180. I started knowing people, saying, "You can do more." I said, "I was looking for \$200," so I started working Sunday [00:07:00] for housekeeping. She was giving me ... There was a teacher, the Jewish, and she used to give me \$40 for eight hours, but she was a nice, and the husband was teaching me English.

Pat Francois: Hold on, did you say \$40?

Liseth: For eight hours. \$40 for eight hours, but I was so happy, I'm telling you. I was so excited.

Pat Francois: [00:07:30] What year was it?

Liseth: It was 1994. I was so happy.

Pat Francois: That made you happy?

Liseth: I'm telling you, I was so happy, because-

Pat Francois: Without knowing you was being exploited?

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

- Liseth: I know, but I am telling you, when I was doing \$180 I was waking ... They were Shabbat, Jewish and religious. On Friday they do celebrate the dinner.
- Pat Francois: Shabbat.
- Liseth: Yes, Shabbat. The dinner, so in Mrs Jill house, she still living [00:08:00] East 8th, Kings Highway. Sometimes I pass by their house and remember that. Just walking, and they're still there. Mrs Jill used to invite her mother, her sister, so there was a big dinner. I remember the time it was longer than that, and the first time I saw the dinner I got shocked, because the father tried 12 dishes different. Say how he can eat like a horse, how that fits in the tummy. Too much food. The first time I saw a human eat that [00:08:30] much, I never see before. I'm telling you, I was so happy, so in this job because they were Shabbat.
- Pat Francois: They work you hard.
- Liseth: For I, we used to stay until Saturday until one in the morning. Sometimes two, because all the dishes are not easy washing.
- Pat Francois: Especially if they have friends over.
- Liseth: Every silver is special, that you have to do hand-wash, but her mother, her sister used to bring her worker, her housekeepers and her nannies, so we do a team. [00:09:00] One were washing, we have another drying, and the other one was putting pile, because the same day, Saturday, we had to be at six thirty, seven up, because they used to go to church Saturday morning too. I'm telling you, I was so happy. Mr David, the husband, I remember every ... Sometime he used to do Monday or Friday morning, he used to go open the door of the fridge, to make sure there was enough food. They never deny food to me.
- [00:09:30] It's long hours, but I was happy. I don't have nothing to say about them. I learnt to eat the pita, their bread. Pita with cheese. They used to leave for us. Put the cheese on and put in the microwave, melt it like [inaudible 00:09:46] I learnt to eat that, all their food, and I love their food. I don't complain about it. They were exploiting me, I was so happy, so excited. Getting money.
- Pat Francois: Question to you. If what you had [00:10:00] known then what you know now, would you have worked for how much hours? 10 hours?
- Liseth: The part-time I do housekeeper there were eight hours for \$40, and-
- Pat Francois: Would you have worked-
- Liseth: Let me finish. The living-in job they were seven to nine, nine thirty depend the children, because there was two boys and two girls, and the little one [00:10:30] was five months.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: How many days?

Liseth: Six days.

Pat Francois: What salary that was like?

Liseth: \$180 for six days.

Pat Francois: \$100-

Liseth: \$80 for six days.

Pat Francois: For six days?

Liseth: Yeah.

Pat Francois: My question to you is if you had known then what you know now, would you have worked for \$180 for six days?

Liseth: I know it's a tough question [00:11:00] and tough answers, but I needed. I didn't know anyone, so I was pleased she opened the door to me. It give me the job and the money. I was able to stay here and pay my rent in the church, because the church I had to pay my rent. They never let me stay free. If I wouldn't pay rent they would be kicking me out, and I was by myself. I was educated very good, not getting [inaudible 00:11:26] thing. Some people don't understand, [00:11:30] but I was pleased with them. I was appreciate they opened the door to me without knowing me, and they give me a job. That's how I learn a lot of things, that's who I am now. How I start in the market.

Pat Francois: Yes. That was tough.

Liseth: I was happy. Teenager, tough teenager.

Pat Francois: How long you have done this work?

Liseth: Excuse me?

Pat Francois: How many years you've been doing this work?

Liseth: This work, it's going to be almost 20.

Pat Francois: A long time.

Liseth: [00:12:00] Yeah.

Pat Francois: How many positions you have had in this work industry?

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

- Liseth: Only three jobs. Three jobs in the 20 years.
- Pat Francois: All the three jobs were babysitting?
- Liseth: In all these years.
- Pat Francois: All three jobs were baby-
- Liseth: Yeah, full-time, but I've been doing extra weekends housekeeper or elderly caregiver. Extra babysitter for people who need, my friends [00:12:30] replacing me, but full-time job only three positions.
- Speaker 3: I'm sorry, is that common through ... You worked for 20 years. That's-
- Liseth: Yeah, the person, the one I work eight years, the twins that I left recently, I started taking care of their teens since they were born until 10 years and a half, almost 11. Now I'm with the same family. I didn't ask, but it's a relative. The boy is going to be three.
- Speaker 3: [00:13:00] That's interesting. That's a long period.
- Pat Francois: She was a fortunate one to have jobs that last that length of time.
- Liseth: I've been patient. Doing a lot of things, like getting here I get all like this. I've been focused only in my job. Never like, "I love you." That doesn't work for me. That's baloney, you know why? I remember the first time someone tell me, "I love you. You're part of the family." She [00:13:30] said, "Can you come to work free Saturday?" I was always say in the market, how I've been keeping good is they only know I'm Liseth. They don't know if I have father, sister, cousin, whatever. I always keep my distance and I always never have relationship with them. Just good morning, good afternoon. The boy did, the child this. Only with the job, nothing my private life, and I've been having issues with that, because someone was ...
- Like on my recent job. [00:14:00] When the guy knew I ... This beginning of [inaudible 00:14:03] and one day I need to be at school at six, because the day of the test. I can't be late, so the woman asked me to stay. I explained to her, so when the woman told the man that I'm studying he said, "Who give permission to her to study?" He didn't tell me directly, because when I spoke the woman I told [00:14:30] her, "You hiring me from seven thirty to eight in the morning to five. I make my own plans, but you hire me until five and every day I have a problem to leave at five, or every day I live five fifteen, five twenty, and I need sometimes to leave on time. My hired time."
- Pat Francois: [00:15:00] What I'd like to hear is walk me through a typical day routine, what are yours day-to-day responsibilities?

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Liseth: As a nanny?

Pat Francois: Yes.

Liseth: When they hire me the woman needs to hire worker woman. I depend from her and she depends from me. She has high position and she needs to be in her job, so my [00:15:30] job description isn't, because I started working when the boy was, full-time, two months. No, he wasn't two months. Yeah, around the time. It was cook for the child, feed the child, bathe the child, do the boy's laundry. If he needs some iron, the boy clothing. Clean around his area, keep every neat. Everything that this belong to a child. "If something [00:16:00] happen to a child immediately take picture, and send it to me. Whatever it is happen to a child let me know. I want everything about him, good, bad things, and follow rules." I have to feed them what they say. Everything that ... They have a menu. Go to places where they said. The classes, everything to inform on. That's my position, yes.

Pat Francois: As you stated, your responsibilities.

Liseth: Yeah, that's my responsibilities.

Pat Francois: [00:16:30] What skills do you need to become a domestic worker?

Liseth: What skills do I need?

Pat Francois: To become a domestic worker?

Liseth: I need to be mean. To be less appreciated. I find it, because easy that way. More tough. I have the feeling that I'm not tough person. I'm tough, I'm serious. I'm honest, but I know its people [00:17:00] where I've been they don't ... I'm sure they know, but they don't ... As a domestic worker, they don't want to use what it is courtesy. I will give you simple. One time since I was hired, was the child needs to go the doctor's appointment. If I need to get there at six thirty in the morning I have to be there, okay? One time the man ask me, "Can you come tomorrow at the latest seven ten, seven something, all right?"

I said, [00:17:30] "Fine," because I thought it was for the child. When I got there it was because he had to go move his car, so when I knew it is his car I said, "Excuse me sir. Next time, I did this time, but next time I won't do it, because I have to leave my house five thirty in the morning, because I don't live across the street, and without pay the extra hours." That things.

Pat Francois: What training is necessary to be a successful [00:18:00] domestic worker?

Liseth: We need little of everything, you know? Little of everything. The more important thing I'm telling my friend. Don't trust that, "I love you. You're part of the family," because this is only from the [inaudible 00:18:15] because I have

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

some experience. They don't know courtesy, because courtesy they come and they go ... That's when you got issues and you have to leave the job. I was trying my this, and so as a domestic [00:18:30] worker we need to know a little everything, and unfortunately in the market as a nanny, one of the job description you're supposed not to do anything, but for the child. I don't mind to do his cleaning, but only the child. Not the adults, so I think that make the family more comfortable, and if all the house the nannies we have those rules, we're going to get more jobs. [00:19:00] If I have my child, I want that they grow up in the clean, not in the dirt.

Pat Francois: When caring for a child, what are some ways you help him fall asleep?

Liseth: Children that I've been, they've been very ... It depends. It depends the age, depend the situation, depends how we training. That's how the children goes to bed. Like [00:19:30] example, the children that I've been for the nap time, the one that are now, he never naps. I was already fall asleep and not him. He never naps, but the ones I've been before, I used to sing a song or sing a little book first, and lay down on the bed and they got so used to see me, that I have to lay down on the floor and they just go speak if I were there. They just go and then finally fall asleep in half an hour. They just were afraid to be by themselves. [00:20:00] That's what I've been doing, but all children are different, you know?

Pat Francois: What training is necessary to be a successful domestic worker?

Liseth: Which training?

Pat Francois: Yeah.

Liseth: Probably, I've been thinking about it.

Pat Francois: [00:20:30] What training, what will suit you more in your workplace?

Liseth: To learning things, something like that?

Pat Francois: Yes. What would make you more professional in your workplace?

Liseth: That, in my experience we can be-

Pat Francois: With given kids.

Liseth: With the kids?

Pat Francois: Yes. What will help you make it better for you in your job?

Liseth: Example, if we know how to help them in homework, [00:21:00] if the parents are not there, but of course this thing always have to in the beginning discuss with the parents. All the kind of things, like help them in more the activities. Like

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

my child jump on my shoulders, be more flexible on certain things, but this depends the child you have, the parents you work for, and depends the child's condition too, because everything depends.

Pat Francois: Okay. Is there [00:21:30] some specialty or expertise that you have?

Liseth: Like what?

Speaker 3: Is there something that you feel like you do that's-

Pat Francois: You specialize in. Something that you do the best, and whatever you do people like it a lot. All right, for instance. Example, let's see. Some people make some very good cookies, some people bake some [00:22:00] very good bread, so something that you're really good at that make it easy for you.

Liseth: I think that I don't have that specific choice, but in the job whenever I ... As I told you, I do other things for the child that they're okay for. I never-

Pat Francois: Do you personally-

Liseth: In my personality?

Pat Francois: Yeah, you individually.

Liseth: In my individually?

Pat Francois: Yeah.

Liseth: [00:22:30] I like to do a lot of things, but-

Pat Francois: What specialty? Something special you like to do, or cook, or make, or sow.

Liseth: My specialty is skin care esthetician, so skin care.

Pat Francois: Skin care?

Liseth: I love to do massage, to clean. To clean those with pimples, to put the mask, the steamer, use the high frequency. All the kind of things I love to do people to. When the people wake up and see their face in the mirror shiny, clean, to feel something they [00:23:00] feel inside. I love to see that, to do that.

Pat Francois: You are an expert in that field?

Liseth: Skin care, yeah. I'm an esthetician.

Pat Francois: Okay, you deal with the skin?

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

- Liseth: Yeah.
- Pat Francois: That is alongside with your domestic work?
- Liseth: I use only for my friends. Like the weekends, if someone needs a facial.
- Pat Francois: You specialize in that, you're good at that?
- Liseth: That what they say, I don't know. Either way-
- Pat Francois: You have to know what you're [00:23:30] good at too. Sell yourself, so what you're good at.
- Liseth: I do a lot of things. I do a lot of things that are-
- Pat Francois: Something that you're very good at, and it would sell you, sell your stuff, sell your product, whatever you're good at. Like that, and when caring for a child, what are some ways you help them fall [00:24:00] asleep?
- Liseth: That's what I told you, it depends the child, and I depend the situation where you are, because I give you example. When I work with the child overtime after work, and after I feed them, give them a bath, read a book, and I brush their teeth. If they're out of the diapers, go to the [inaudible 00:24:24] or give the last part of them the diaper. Read a book, and I said to [00:24:30] them if they have the last bath before going to bed. Give you half an hour before, to go and bathe, and I explain to them it's time to go bathe. After I read the book I say tell me the children, where I've been.
- I lay down next to them and they're fine, so it depends the child. How they are and how they've been. That depends the child, but the only thing that I notice in children is that some people expecting they [00:25:00] fall asleep, and they go ... I have that thing meet in my mind that you got, instead you make him fall asleep, you wake him up, so I keep them in a quiet room. No light, and be shh! That's my rules when I'm with child.
- Pat Francois: What are some ways you get a child to eat?
- Liseth: That's hard part, but [00:25:30] I always focus on the child's favorite. Like my child, he likes barbecue sauce, so for make to eat the chicken breast I dip the chicken breast in the barbecue sauce, and he ate it. I focus on the child's favorite thing that add it to the food, and they eat it like this.
- Pat Francois: What are some ways you get a child to stop [00:26:00] crying or fussing?
- Liseth: I try ... I know my children, their favorite things, and I say like in the summer, my child likes strawberry ice cream. "You stop crying I give you strawberry ice cream, and we're going to go ... " Depends how the situation they're crying.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

- Pat Francois: You always give them a little reward.
- Liseth: It's not a reward, but it [00:26:30] depends the reason of crying. If he's crying for something that he's not supposed to get it, I say, "Sorry. You're not getting if you crying, but when you stop crying let me know, and we're going to do something else, or we can play something else." Depends the situation of the child.
- Pat Francois: Okay. What are some ways you get a child to stop crying and fussing?
- Speaker 3: I think we just asked that.
- Liseth: It's the same one.
- Pat Francois: It's [00:27:00] the same question?
- Liseth: Yeah.
- Pat Francois: All right. Have you ever used homeopathic remedies or folk remedies to help care child who is sick?
- Liseth: Yeah, the child that I work, I mean in 1997 to 2008. He was little. He used [00:27:30] to be ... He was like to see only the mommy. It's funny, when the mommy when was around he was-
- Pat Francois: Fussy.
- Liseth: Yeah. She was saying, "He have sugar," and he never have sugar because he was with me, so he knew the mother will say, "It's the sugar," so he was stopped doing that. He used to use homeopathic pills to put under the tongue to make him calm down, but that's something ... Children are very smart. They know how to behave with you, so that was issue. Mommy and my son [00:28:00] thing.
- Pat Francois: Yes. Is there any special skills you might have taught your employer?
- Liseth: No. Nothing, as I told you, when they hired me they just wanted they see me to cook, clean, to take of their child. That's what they be asking me.
- Pat Francois: What was the best part of the job? Please give an example.
- Liseth: My best part [00:28:30] of the job was in my job when I was with the twins, because they were twins and when one start to cry, you know? I remember I had one here with the bottle and the other and the other in my foot, was like this, and I joined them. I had some fun with them.
- Pat Francois: What is the worst part of your job? Please give an example.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Liseth: My worst part of my job is [00:29:00] when you are with the ... Let's say if I'm feeding the children, and the parents get distracted, making them ... They're eating okay, and they go aah. When the child getting hyper, they disappear like this. Like example, when my children are ready to go to bed, the parent used to go ten o'clock turn on the lights, say aah, and walk in. I say, "Please, shh! They're going to [00:29:30] sleep," because they have the mentality that you do noise the children going to sleep, and I have the mentality that you put children bed. Has to be quiet, dark and smooth, you know?

Pat Francois: Yes.

Liseth: That's what I ... That really make me angry from them, because you've been working hard to make the child, and they go ...

Pat Francois: Yes, when you want the child to settle down.

Liseth: Yeah.

Pat Francois: How is your relationship with your current boss?

Liseth: [00:30:00] Very strict. Only, "Good morning, good afternoon." She got me things that she wrote for me, and I wrote for her what we needed. I send a picture from we are. That's all, very strict. From, "Good morning, how are you?" Just-

Pat Francois: Formal.

Liseth: Formal. Only from the child, nothing from me. Very strict.

Pat Francois: Will she ask you how you doing?

Liseth: No, they never ask me. Just, "Good morning, how are you?" That's [00:30:30] all.

Pat Francois: She doesn't care about the person who taking care of her precious gem?

Liseth: I love that and I don't care, because I really don't want they ask me question about my life, because a lot of things to do with the children.

Pat Francois: No, not to get into your personal life, but simply, "How are you doing today?"

Liseth: Just, "Good morning."

Pat Francois: "How do you feel today?" If I-

Liseth: The woman, I don't see her. She's a hard worker. When I get there, once in a while she's there, and then she's ready to leave at seven fifty. The [00:31:00] man sometime is there, and he just say, "Good morning," and that's good

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

morning to me because I don't want to ... When she hire me, the first interview we talked on everything is going to be in the job just between her and me, so it's fine for me. It's fine for me.

Speaker 3: Not the husband.

Liseth: Not the husband, no.

Speaker 3: I see, so it's just ...

Liseth: Yeah, between her and I, because she said she don't want to have confuse. Like, "He said, I [00:31:30] said." It's only her, but when he's around and he says things like commenting, "Do you see?" My two jobs has been like that.

Pat Francois: Are there relationship with previous children you have cared for, that are particularly memorable in a good or bad kind of way?

Liseth: The one I am now, or the one I left?

Pat Francois: [00:32:00] Previous children that you take care of. Do you still have a relationship? Like your former boss, like the last job you had. Not this current job.

Liseth: Yeah, the twins, I'm still working for the twins once in a while, and I have a wonderful relationship with the twins. They still, when we do [inaudible 00:32:27] they go see the show. You will see them.

Pat Francois: Okay, you invite them to the-

Liseth: Yeah, [00:32:30] invite them and they always ... Sometimes, "Are we going to the movie to have lunch together, dinners together?" I have wonderful memories from the children, they were so great. Even with the twins. Sometimes I feel like I'm taking care of only one, and I got double tired from one from the two, so I always remember them. Say, "How come I'm so tired? It's only one, and with Olivia and Winston I was okay." Maybe if I was younger. I don't know.

Pat Francois: Double energy.

Liseth: I enjoy them. I have wonderful memory from my children, [00:33:00] all of them. I don't have issues with them.

Speaker 3: Can I just ask you a question? What was that like, taking care of the twins?

Liseth: Like?

Speaker 3: What was it like taking care of twins?

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Liseth: It's funny because I was enjoy it, and when they grow it's more, because when you're at the park you have to be like this. As a nanny it's very important you to be with them since they start growing, so you teach them to be next to you. Not to go [00:33:30] disappear. I never have problem with them. I used to go with them everywhere, and they still ... I miss them a lot and they got used to me too, and I got used to them. That's why we're still keeping in touch. Wonderful children, they always respect me wherever they see me. Just have a great relationship with them. Not with the parents, but with them.

Pat Francois: Yes. Do you feel that the amount [00:34:00] of hours you work and your holidays [inaudible 00:34:04] being respected?

Liseth: Yeah, all the time.

Pat Francois: It is?

Liseth: Yeah, it is.

Pat Francois: You get public holidays off?

Liseth: Sometimes, not all the time.

Pat Francois: If you do, do you get pay for them?

Liseth: No, I don't get paid. Oh, yeah, I do get paid. If I get in I get paid, but if they need me I don't pay overpay.

Pat Francois: [00:34:30] Okay. Yes, would you say that you or any worker that you know, has been exploited due to immigration status?

Liseth: Yes.

Pat Francois: Could you give an example?

Liseth: I have a friend that she was working with a woman, [00:35:00] and the woman make her believe like she should be please because, "You don't have documents, and you are here. We're not supposed to give work to the ... " They're called [illegants 00:35:14], and my friend told me that ... I told my friend, because I've been in Domestic Workers United to know now all the laws and everything from lawyers. I told her, "Ask her if you provide [00:35:30] one she's going to pay? Her security taxes, benefits," and she only asked for the Green Card. "Do you have Green Card?" I told her, "Ask her why she want Green Card?" Green Card doesn't ... Nothing to do with social security, taxes. She didn't even pay taxes during her overtime. Even the first family, so people using just as excuse to abuse.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: Yes. Do you ever share cultural things [00:36:00] from your heritage with the families you assist? For example, food, languages, art, folk tales or beliefs about life and death?

Liseth: Yes, I do, because the families, the first one, the \$180, all of them were kosher, so I got used to eat. You were not allowed to bring any food from outside, so I know [00:36:30] kosher, and the second one where I work is eight, almost nine years. She was a Jewish but not religious, but when she have her [inaudible 00:36:44] it was kosher, and some members have with kosher, so you're not allowed to bring food from outside, so you eat what they ...

Pat Francois: Eat.

Liseth: I got leftovers, but I always being picky. I bring my own, because ...

Pat Francois: Interesting.

Speaker 3: What about your [00:37:00] culture? Do you ever talk about cultural things in Guatemala?

Liseth: That's what I tell my friends. They're not interest in anything about you. They just interest in you give a good job. Do whatever, as much you do, they better. Let's say, I use example. If they have to go outside after my schedule and I have [00:37:30] to be overtime, if the children wake up something, next time they're so pleased, so happy. That's how they are, so they're really interesting only the job things.

Pat Francois: Yes. Exciting, isn't it? How do you manage balancing your personal life, family life, and your work life?

Liseth: This is a very [00:38:00] hard thing, because I've been having hard moments for my family. Like the kind of things and are being happening in the moment that I've been working, and the time that you don't pick up the phone. When you get out work you hear the message that you have to do something for them. The day when we did poetry, that day when my- oops.

Speaker 3: It's all [00:38:30] right. It's pretty indestructible.

Pat Francois: You hear me?

Speaker 3: Yeah.

Pat Francois: All right. Sorry.

Liseth: My brother, my youngest brother pass away 2011, and I was going to work but in the train, it's two hours, difference of background from here. Let's say over there it's twelve, here it's two o'clock. They call me, and I was in [00:39:00] the

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

train so I couldn't get the call, so when I get off the train I turn on my phone as usually. I hear the message that my brother passed away, and I have to be at work. I was ready to get into the building and the signal fail, and I have to be there, so it's very tough situation. It's very hard, because these people don't understand.

Pat Francois: They think you don't have a life.

Liseth: It's not that they're not ... [00:39:30] They don't have that kind of humanity that we born or we grew up. The respect for elders, respect for older. In background, you respect elder. You never see someone hitting or pushing elderly. You held them, right?

Pat Francois: Yes.

Liseth: They don't have that kind of humanity. They will do for the cat, for the dog, but not for us. That's the reality.

Pat Francois: Right.

Liseth: That's why that I ... [00:40:00] What happened with me is because I've been doing nanny, housekeeper, elderly care. When I've been doing housekeeper I be hear what they say about the nanny, right? Bad things.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Liseth: When I've been doing nanny and I go somewhere, I be here what bad thing they say about the housekeeper, so my ears are educated. When I've been doing elderly care, I be hear what the family say about the nannies, about the housekeeper. They're like, "They're not busy, they want to be this." I've been educating my ears.

Pat Francois: Yes. [00:40:30] Are you a member of other organizations or group?

Liseth: I'm so please, I be happy to be a part of Domestic Workers United, DWU, and [inaudible 00:40:49] I try to participate and I have a conversation whenever my free time, but I'm DWU.

Pat Francois: Officially, you are [00:41:00] DWU.

Liseth: I'm a Domestic Workers United.

Pat Francois: If you have time and you're being asked to volunteer at a different organization you will?

Liseth: Yeah, I will go to [inaudible 00:41:12] if I have a change. I like to the movement.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

- Pat Francois: When you are doing domestic work, do you feel part of a larger group or community?
- Liseth: [00:41:30] When I'm in the group, like let's say Domestic Work or [inaudible 00:41:35] it's funny, because I feel ... I being since a teenager without my family, I like to be with them. I feel like a part of the family. I feel if I was with my boss I feel like go far, with this group I feel warm. I like to be there. I feel comfortable.
- Pat Francois: [00:42:00] Right. You feel secure.
- Liseth: I feel comfortable. I can laugh, I can move. It's comfortable, I feel that way.
- Pat Francois: Yes. Glad to hear that. When and why did you become a part of Domestic Workers United, and how did you hear about it?
- Liseth: The first time I hear about Domestic Workers United, because I was working in Long Island. Sorry, my voice got coarse. In 2005 there was an [00:42:30] Asian woman who escaped that was a slave in Long Island, so I was in Old Brookville, Long Island, so it was around there. Not close but not far, so that's how I knew. Before I remember that, because I was doing live-in job. I came with my boss one weekend, and I remember I met someone were talking about, but because I was living-in I remember I told the person, "I can't belong because I'm coming only Sundays, I'm not off [00:43:00] during the week." When I left the job and I moved to the twins, that's when I looked for DW. I knew on the news and AM newspaper. They used to giving free for them.
- Pat Francois: Yes, right.
- Speaker 3: What is the story? You guys just sound like you know about it. What is the story about the woman that was-
- Liseth: There was a woman in Long Island that the people bring from their country, Asia, and they have a slave. One day she escape and the gas [00:43:30] station, they call for the police and she was without shoes, and she was extremely abused. There was two of them. Remember?
- Pat Francois: You talking about the Indonesian woman?
- Liseth: Yeah, Indonesian.
- Pat Francois: That was Islip?
- Liseth: Yeah, that one.
- Pat Francois: Domestic Workers United, when they were having a trial.
- Liseth: That one.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: Domestic Workers-

Liseth: 2005 was that year.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Liseth: They escaped.

Pat Francois: A group of domestic workers, myself included, we all went up to Long Island Islip when they were having a trial, to support these [00:44:00] two Indonesian women. The female employer, she got 10 years imprisonment, and the husband he got five years imprisonment. The two women were set freed, and most likely I believe they went back to Indonesia.

Speaker 3: My gosh.

Pat Francois: Yes. That's the story you're talking about?

Liseth: Yeah. She was naked, without shoes. Anything on, and I don't know if she could escape.

Pat Francois: They treat these people worse [00:44:30] than animals, because as Liseth mentioned earlier, they take their dogs to the dentist, they take their dogs to the beauty parlor, the doggy parlor. They take their dogs to ... They have doggy summer camp, because when they go out on vacation they take their doggies to-

Liseth: Yeah, and they pay more than 20 an hour.

Pat Francois: They take their doggies to doggy school, doggy camp. If they have a bird they take it to bird camp. Yes they do.

Speaker 3: I'm just going [00:45:00] to ... Actually, because we've been doing this for a while. Is Long Island ... If you would rate the best and worst places for domestic workers, is Long Island one of the worst?

Pat Francois: Long Island is one.

Speaker 3: I feel like-

Liseth: Brooklyn and Long Island.

Speaker 3: Really?

Liseth: Yeah.

Pat Francois: Followed by New Jersey.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

- Liseth: It's like a market, and those people, they have [00:45:30] houses from millions, but they don't have the worker. It's a hard work, live-in job, and they go everyday out for dinner, and they're going to pay \$50 for a glass of wine. Some of them, I have a good boss that she was paying me transportation. The eight years that I work for her, I never spent any penny on transportation, but her friends. I remember she used to tell her friend on the weekend, on Friday night. [00:46:00] "Today please just drink five glasses of wine and save \$50 for giving to your nanny, so she can take a cab in the morning so you don't have to wake up drunk in the morning. To drop her to Hicksville Station. Yeah, it's true.
- Speaker 3: That's crazy. Sorry to interrupt. I just-
- Liseth: No, it's fine, and Brooklyn is the worst too. Brooklyn.
- Speaker 3: Is it really?
- Liseth: It is, yeah. Recently I went to consulate of Guatemala, so I met two women from indigenous, [00:46:30] and then she told me that her sister and her cousin were fired because they don't speak very well Spanish, and they were fired because they don't speak Spanish. I say, "I understood they were fired because of no English, because we are in the United States." They were fired because they don't speak perfect Spanish.
- Speaker 3: Crazy.
- Pat Francois: Yes, so what has it meant for you [00:47:00] and your work, that domestic workers bill of rights has passed in 2010?
- Liseth: It's very hard and tough answer, but we're going to be honest. That if we help in one wait and another wait, it won't. The way we help in the law is like now you can go to department of labor and they will listen your complain. If you are document, undocumented, [00:47:30] speak English or not speak English. You are human, but this person. That's why they [inaudible 00:47:36] they open a lot of day-cares, the one I mentioned to you.
- Pat Francois: Day-cares?
- Liseth: Yeah, so they say, "They do the law, now we don't need them." Why? They can't abuse as much as they used to. They don't like, "Why we have to pay overtime?" 44 hours over the 40 hours. It's funny, because they have [00:48:00] the idea ... I have the issue like I was in a family one time for a friend, and the woman says, "The bible said you are a slave." I said, "I'm sorry, but the bible didn't say you say you're a slave." These kind of people that we have to please to them, because we are here in the United States. I always say the bill of rights really is going to work if finally God give amnesty. If [00:48:30] they ask for, "Give me Green Card." I will give you my work permit or my social security for my benefits, because even if they know we can provide the IRS number, like my

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

friend said. "I have the IRS number that you would like to pay my taxes." The woman goes like, you know?

Pat Francois: I know.

Liseth: That really will help the bill of rights, because [00:49:00] now they say, "They don't have paper, so I will give you job." That's how the exploitation grew up, because I explain to people. As undocumented, you don't get a penny for the government. I don't know how people say that undocumented people get help. You don't get any help. You have to do whatever it is for \$5. Do job, because you have to pay rent. Your bills. No one's having you free, so that's what some people don't understand. That made the industry [00:49:30] to more grew up in small exploitation. Probably the amnesty come up, so this thing really is going to work. That's what I've been seeing outside from people.

Pat Francois: What would you like to see happen in the future with the bill of rights?

Liseth: The first thing, I always pray to God [inaudible 00:49:50] because as a worker, as humans we coming on this country for a reason. Like me, we're [00:50:00] not a criminals. I decided to stay in this country to help my parents, for better life to my brother who lose an eye when he was two months. Every year they have to buy a glass eye for him, and they eye glass in background was too expensive. We have a reason here, we're not criminals. I know as a human all the world has good and bad, but workers, [00:50:30] we should serve. Everybody has the documents and let's make a living, so the improvement that the exploitation.

Pat Francois: From your perspective, why is Domestic Workers United so important?

Liseth: As an organization it's very important so people can join, and at least learn.

Pat Francois: Especially for the workers.

Liseth: Learn the bill of rights, [00:51:00] because what happening is that some people don't complain because they're afraid, and I understand their frightened-ness. They have background and their family who support, so they're in school, their children in school. Like in my position, my grandmother passed away a few days before the [inaudible 00:51:25]. She was 100 years and she was celebrating her 100, and [00:51:30] she died that day. I was so sad because I spoke her in the morning and she said, "Come. I want to see you." I said, "I can't go. You won't die." She say, "Yes." I say, "No." She pass away later on, so everybody we have a reason. That's what I expect.

Pat Francois: Are you happy with the bills impact? Are you happy with the impact the bill of rights [00:52:00] made?

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

- Liseth: For the department of labor yes, for the other side no, because as I explained already. These people taking advance. Okay, they have your rights, now we have our rights.
- Pat Francois: Yes. Could we pause for one second?
- Speaker 3: Sure.
- Pat Francois: I can't take it no more.
- Speaker 3: It's okay. It sounds like you have a good relationship with the family.
- Liseth: The [00:52:30] secret, you have to keep your distance.
- Speaker 3: Yeah. Could you tell me a bit more about ... Did you have a particular situation where you needed to keep the distance, or didn't keep the distance and you got ... It turned out bad or something, how did you learn that, to keep the distance?
- Liseth: The experience that my ... When I started in the market as a teenagers, everybody when in the job years ahead of me.
- Speaker 3: I can-
- Liseth: That's how I got in the market, [00:53:00] and all of them, my lesson and friend, she was in a job for 50 years. One weekend they called her, "Don't come anymore, because we don't need anymore. The child is going to school full-time."
- Speaker 3: I see.
- Liseth: That's how we get in. My other friend was 20 years with a housekeeper, and one day I was with her. It's funny, because we get in. She said, "Good morning Mrs [Gorsin 00:53:27] I'm not feeling okay." [00:53:30] She goes like, "Go home. You don't feel okay, why I want you here?" She kick us like that. Seeing all these things that I being see it, that's how I'm keeping my distance. I'm sure my boss is not being so happy, because they're thinking if I'm mellow they're taking ... They will be okay in taking advantage of me. Not because they do love it.
- Speaker 3: Got it, [00:54:00] so you feel like you've seen people just immediately get fired or be asked-
- Liseth: Yes, first thing they're done. One time I was in vacation and I always get job for my friends. My work vacation, because I want to have my family, especially my brother was little when I had my parent, because the eye glass is very expensive. Everything is from your money, from your pocket. Not from the government. [00:54:30] My president says, he's right. "I didn't ask you to have children." He's right. I respect him. It's right. No one asked you to have children,

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

it's your own children. That's what make me always worry about it, and it's funny, because when my brothers turn 18 we have the money for his eye. The transplant, and he goes, "I don't want eye. Who wants eye? I don't need an eye, do you need [00:55:00] an eye?" He's like, "Give me that money." He open a business, so he's okay. He married and he has two children.

Speaker 3: That's amazing. Did he ever get an eye?

Liseth: No, the glass. He got the glass.

Speaker 3: He got the glass, right. That's amazing.

Liseth: Yeah, but that was our goal. To save the money for him to have his own eye, because the doctor say when he's turn 18 we can do a transplant, because all he needs to ...

Speaker 3: He's developed.

Liseth: Yeah.

Speaker 3: Right.

Liseth: He didn't want an eye.

Speaker 3: That's amazing.

Liseth: In my case, [00:55:30] that's why I tell people. They should understand, they accept their jobs for little money, because everyone we have responsibilities. I be having my brother. Nothing that they force somebody, something that you want to do it, you know?

Speaker 3: Right. How have you managed to keep a distance with families? Are there some particular things you do to keep a distance between?

Liseth: I'm very serious. I know they [00:56:00] thinking I'm very serious too, but I told them-

Speaker 3: Hold on. Let me get that. What were you saying? I'm sorry.

Liseth: Since they interview me, I always been telling them I'm very busy person. I have a lot of things to do after work, so when we talk to just, things only from the child.

Speaker 3: Got it, so you keep ...

Liseth: [00:56:30] Yeah, and when we have a conversation very serious like this, and I say, "I'm sorry. Got to go, I need to run." Like this. With the twins' mom, when

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

the boys stopped full-time school, she started like, "The boys love you. How they love you, what are they going to do without you?" Things like that, so she keep going, keep going. I was listening to her and she goes like, "Well, I have here my schedule. [00:57:00] Sometimes I need you in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon, sometimes at night. Sometimes, probably I will need only three times a week full-time, sometimes only two days. Sometimes when we go away we can do share with my friends. We can split with my friends," so I said, "Thank you so much. I appreciate your love, but I have a lot of people to support. [00:57:30] I have rent," and she asked me ... When she hear what my answer she goes, "Don't worry Liseth. My cousin wants to give you job. Tomorrow you're going to interview my cousins." I went and he said, "Next week you start full-time."

Speaker 3: Really?

Liseth: Yeah. That's how I'm in the job I am.

Speaker 3: You got it from her?

Liseth: Yeah, and you see what she asked me before?

Speaker 3: Right, I see. You kept up a wall and said, "No. I won't do that," but then you got ...

Liseth: Yeah.

Speaker 3: [00:58:00] She was ready to take advantage of you. Just saying-

Liseth: She just was ready to see if I say, "Yes." You see? All this experience that I've been having in that way. That made me be far from them.

Speaker 3: That's such an interesting thing, just talk about boundaries.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Speaker 3: You would think that the right thing to do is to be okay with them praising you, and saying, "The kids love you," and trying to make everyone fall [00:58:30] in love with you. That could lead to exploitation, which seems to be a big-

Liseth: Yeah, because it's funny. In this job, the cousins pay me more than her.

Speaker 3: Really?

Liseth: Yeah, and it's less job. I feeling more because, I don't know. The child is very active, but sometimes that's what I said before. I feel I'm working more than the twins, maybe because I used to the twins more. She pay more than her.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Speaker 3: Right, [00:59:00] that's amazing.

Liseth: Yeah, so that's why I'm telling my friends. Love you is only from hear out, so that experience have me, have this in my mind.

Speaker 3: It's important.

Liseth: Yeah.

Speaker 3: You articulated that really well. We've been hearing a lot about that, but I think you made it. That's an important point. Thank you.

Liseth: You're welcome.

Pat Francois: What do you want legislators [00:59:30] to know?

Liseth: I let them know that all countries, all we want for immigrants, everywhere we are, that's how the world make for immigrants. We are here to make our lives better, and as humans we deserve to treat us with any respect as another worker, because it's a [01:00:00] job. I know cleaning it doesn't have a title, but it's a job. It's a responsibility.

Pat Francois: It is.

Liseth: That's why I don't understand why people say we don't have brain. How, if the brain control the bodies? I have to tell, I wish them help us to have the amnesty, so all we have better life. I'm sure they were born from immigrants too, because everybody we were born from immigrants. I don't understand in this country, why some they forgot that. [01:00:30] Someone had to immigrate to this country, so that's how I'm here.

Pat Francois: Yes. Well, I could remember when the Domestic Workers United were vying for that bill, and were going to the legislators and the senators. I could remember Senator Bill Perkins, he signed on our bill hence the reason his mom, his mother, was a domestic worker. The work that his [01:01:00] mother have done as a domestic worker, had put him through school and college and make him go to study to be a legislator as he is. Sitting in Congress to sign this bill into law.

Liseth: It's the job that opens the door, and we not only domestic we are exploited. I have a cousin working in constructions and their men, [01:01:30] and their boss is going to vacation for two months, but they don't have money for pay them. For them going to vacations they do.

Pat Francois: Exploitations.

Liseth: I have to say that, unfortunately, now that this year ... I only call that people European, because as a Latino you have Europeans too. They were born from

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

immigrants too. I hope they help us to have better future for everybody and all. Like humans.

Pat Francois: [01:02:00] Yes. What area of education/skills are you looking to gain?

Liseth: I would like to be personal training, and soon I finish nursing. After that I want to go in nutritionist, and after that I want to be a medical assistant.

Pat Francois: You [01:02:30] have it lined up for you.

Liseth: Thanks to this job as a nanny I'm able to do it. That's why I keep doing nanny, because it's a decent job. I always say do you prefer I'm sell cocaine or marijuana to this mothers, so we doing these things to keep honest people.

Pat Francois: Yes. What skills did Domestic Workers United teach you, and what type of training?

Liseth: The first [01:03:00] one that I have and I love was the nanny training of University of Cornell. I was working with the twins and I learned a lot with them. The doctors, things like what to do, what not to do and what to do with the parents doing wrong things. How to learn signs, if the children being abused. Not from you, from others, and I do [01:03:30] how they call this? House management.

Pat Francois: House management.

Liseth: From this woman who was managing for many years too. I love that. Helps me a lot, to learn safety, because I'm doing housekeepers too part time. When someone need it, and I used to use a lot of bleach to leave the tiles bright. It's funny, because now-

Pat Francois: The fumes wasn't good [01:04:00] for you.

Liseth: Now I start to, my eyes when the sun, very sensitive. Now I can feel. I was so happy, so I learn that I shouldn't do those things. Actually, talking about that I'm so happy. [inaudible 01:04:12] housekeepers, we have to have that training. From how to prevent all that hazard things.

Pat Francois: Chemicals.

Liseth: Yeah, and-

Liseth: Now I start to- my eyes when there is sun- very sensitive. Now I can feel it but I was so happy, so I learned that I shouldn't do those things. So, you know, actually, talking about that I'm so happy OSHA is coming. Like, housekeepers we have to have that training from how to prevent all that [inaudible 00:00:21] harsher things.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: [crosstalk 00:00:20] chemicals and ...

Lizeth: Yeah. And, they said we must have a card that we did that training, so, I [inaudible 00:00:26] OSHA for construction. So I'm happy that come up because all by [00:00:30] the women need ...

Pat Francois: Good.

Lizeth: ... all the housekeeper needs to know.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: You know, now I using a lot of baking soda with vinegar. And the tiles and [inaudible 00:00:37] everything get sparkling.

Pat Francois: The baking soda?

Lizeth: Yeah, I mix baking soda with ... And I learn in this house management.

Pat Francois: Okay.

Lizeth: Yeah. Very good. You know.

Pat Francois: Okay. What do you mix baking soda with?

Lizeth: Baking soda, vinegar.

Pat Francois: Vinegar.

Lizeth: [inaudible 00:00:52] a paste.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: You see that the tile gets shiny like new. My [inaudible 00:00:54] been asking me "Wow, what a shiny bathtub."

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: Yeah.

Pat Francois: [00:01:00] Good, good, good, good. So besides, you know, that, did you learn any other type of training?

Lizeth: I think in a lot of- I learned- all the, I [crosstalk 00:01:18] ...

Pat Francois: CPR? Did you do CPR?

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Lizeth: I did, I did CPR, but we did it together with [inaudible 00:01:23] a nanny trainer- it was included. Remember?

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: It was included CPR with [inaudible 00:01:25] nanny training.

Pat Francois: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lizeth: I has a child pathology, all kind [00:01:30] of things.

Pat Francois: Child ...

Lizeth: Yeah.

Pat Francois: ... pediatrics?

Lizeth: Yeah. All that's included in nanny training. A lot of things included in nanny training.

Pat Francois: Right.

Lizeth: For child care.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: And another one I did was to learn colonialism. Remember the, the trainer who were doing with ...

Pat Francois: The leadership trainer ...

Lizeth: Leadership training.

Pat Francois: ... about colonialism ...

Lizeth: Yeah. All the things ...

Pat Francois: About the history ...

Lizeth: History of the United States.

Pat Francois: Right.

Lizeth: We were doing ... You know the one trainer was [00:02:00] coming a lot of questions about- it's- that questions coming with the American citizen [inaudible 00:02:06] a lot of from the United States. It was included in the leadership, I think.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: Yeah, because when the leadership [crosstalk 00:02:12]...

Pat Francois: [inaudible 00:02:13] citizenship and all these things.

Lizeth: They include a lot of things that are included in the program and they call just leadership, you remember? We do a [inaudible 00:02:19] Murphy's, Murphy's Institute.

Pat Francois: Globalization.

Lizeth: Yeah. All that kind of things, yes.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: I've been doing all that in the [inaudible 00:02:25].

Pat Francois: [crosstalk 00:02:26] learning from domestic workers, yes.

Lizeth: Yeah. I know I learned that some people being, you know, [00:02:30] like, they have no idea [inaudible 00:02:32] from skin care and I win a little cream and they, they were like "How a nanny knows about skin care?" You know? I say ...

Pat Francois: I know.

Lizeth: That's how, we don't have brain, I answer, you know?

Pat Francois: Yes. But what they don't know, some of us come well educated from our countries. Some of us came, you know, real, you know, we left highly paid jobs. We come as qualified [00:03:00] teachers, as qualified nurses.

Lizeth: Yeah, but, here, that doesn't count, because ...

Pat Francois: [crosstalk 00:03:04]. No, it didn't count.

Lizeth: Yeah.

Pat Francois: But the reason why for leaving our countries ...

Lizeth: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Pat Francois: ... is due to the economical downfall and, and, and the worldwide, when you look at it.

Lizeth: Yeah, this all, all worldwide.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: Worldwide.

Lizeth: Yeah.

Pat Francois: It's all worldwide.

Lizeth: We have, you know ...

Pat Francois: Not just in one country.

Lizeth: We have a better life. Unfortunately, you know?

Pat Francois: So this ... My understanding is [00:03:30] one of the reasons why people left their country come looking for a better living, also to help their families back home. Sometimes they send their kids to proper schools that they didn't for ... In general, they have a better life than, than they have.

Lizeth: Yeah. The ... Well they don't understand that, like, we are here, right? But things that we are here, they can do, you know, get hired to, because they can, their [inaudible 00:04:00] work, [00:04:00] with activities.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: You know, what we do with our nanny? I give example ... If [inaudible 00:04:04] they do one dollar equal one [inaudible 00:04:09] quetzal, no one's gonna be here.

Pat Francois: Right.

Lizeth: Because there no reason, because it's gonna be equal the money. The reason we are here because when I send there is a double and I can do more [inaudible 00:04:18] to help. I always, you know, do things in United States too. Like, I love, I love the United States because, you know ...

And another thing that people don't understand ... Like, in my case, [inaudible 00:04:25], there was a woman that almost kicked me out the window [00:04:30] when I said like- she said to me, "You should be proud you are an American." I say, I'm sorry, I were born in Central America so I'm an American too. And she was saying, like "No, over there is not America." I say yes, we have Central America, we have South America, Mexico is North America. She almost killed me when I say Mexico is in North America. So these people, I don't know if they don't know what, but, this America continent is not only the United States. That's why when I ask me, I said no I'm not in America, I'm in the United [00:05:00] States of North America, because, [inaudible 00:05:02] background is Central America. So, that's a lot of issue, but, what we can do?

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Another thing I notice here, immigrants exploitating immigrants. You know, like, people has ... I was, I was working with a woman who became America residence, so she put in her mind because she became American residence and American citizens, we were there to, you know, to be her slave, [00:05:30] to kiss her feet. I did, I did with part-time and like weekends. Some her friend refers me there and I want to do extra money and then she wanted me to, before to leave, to ask her. And one time I say why should I ask you to leave if, if my, my shift finish at three o'clock? You know, things like that?

Pat Francois: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lizeth: And I ... It's funny because she never left the money. She always was three thirty, so she ... You know, this is me ... One time [00:06:00] you late [inaudible 00:06:02] is fine. Second time is okay. Third time, I don't work for you.

Pat Francois: You make it [inaudible 00:06:06] habit.

Lizeth: Yeah. So ...

Pat Francois: Yeah.

Lizeth: ... this ... And these people were immigrant. What happened is I explained to them, like, people like ask we are here by our own. These people, they have family who invest for them, different, you know, different balance ...

Pat Francois: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lizeth: ... so they don't understand that. I'm not saying no one forced us to be here, but as a human, the world is full of immigrants. That's how ...

Pat Francois: [00:06:30] Immigrants built this country.

Lizeth: That's how the world is. All the countries have immigrants.

Pat Francois: Immigrants built the countries.

Lizeth: All the countries, you know, all countries.

Pat Francois: Oh yes. Do you have any last words or parting shots you would like to share?

Lizeth: Like what kind of ...

Pat Francois: Any last words? Any last thoughts that you would like to leave with Domestic Workers United?

Lizeth: [inaudible 00:06:58] as I said in my focus in my [00:07:00] mind is we get the [inaudible 00:07:02] documented ...

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lizeth: ... so when no one's afraid, like, you have Green Card? Here my Social Security, my work permit and thank ... You know what I did one person one time? She said you have a Green Card and I said thank you so much, but I'm not interested in travel. You ask me for Social Security, work permit, it's different thing. Or taxes. Yeah, because American residents want it for travel. [00:07:30] So that ... I really focus on [inaudible 00:07:34] that give the opportunity [inaudible 00:07:36].

I know, you know, as a group, some people do bad thing, but, now [inaudible 00:07:42]. All people [inaudible 00:07:45], some people will do good, some people will do bad.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: It's international. All over the world, not only our people.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: With any place.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Lizeth: I mean, we not terrorists, you know, I mean, I never do something to harm the United States, you know? [00:08:00] We're, we're workers.

Pat Francois: Right?

Lizeth: Yeah, we're workers, you know?

Pat Francois: Yeah. We are the workers. The mighty mighty workers.

Lizeth: Yeah.

Pat Francois: So Miss Lizeth, I want to thank you.

Lizeth: You're welcome.

Pat Francois: I really enjoy sitting having this ...

Lizeth: Thank you so much.

Pat Francois: ... conversation with you. And it's my pleasure.

Lizeth: Oh, I hope this helps a little bit what I said.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Pat Francois: Yes.

Photographer: Thank you.

Lizeth: Thank you so much.

Photographer: Thank you.

Lizeth: Thank you.

Photographer: What's nice is that you, you really brought the conversation to another ...

Lizeth: Thank you.

Photographer: ... level.

Pat Francois: Yes.

Photographer: And Pat is always great. Great job! You were fantastic. And if you have to use the rest room, just, [00:08:30] jump, just get out of here.

Pat Francois: I [inaudible 00:08:32], but I'm holding [crosstalk 00:08:32].

Photographer: I know. I'm sorry. You suffered. It's not ...

Pat Francois: [inaudible 00:08:36].

Photographer: No, I don't want to see that.

Pat Francois: [inaudible 00:08:38].

Photographer: Yeah. No. That's the worst feeling in the world. Can I just take a ... Do you mind if I take a photo of you guys over here, together?

Pat Francois: [inaudible 00:08:54] Mission accomplished.

Photographer: One, two, three. One more. One, two, three. Hold on. One [00:09:00] more. [inaudible 00:09:18].

Pat Francois: Sure.

Female: [inaudible 00:09:22].

Photographer: Yeah. Perfect. Okay. Thank you.

Female: Thank you so much.

Domestic Workers United
afc2015/027

Photographer: Great job. [00:09:30] Great job.

Female: Thank you.

Photographer: Nicely said.