

## **Race and Oral History Project, UC San Diego**

Narrator: Ju'ne Sablan Hawkins

Interviewer: Annie Chin

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Annie Chin: Hi, um, this is Annie, um, today is June 1, 2018, and I am here at the Sons and Daughters of Guam Club, specifically in, um, the little boutique right outside. Um, and I'm here today to interview Ju'ne Hawkins, uh, for the Race and Oral History Project at UC [University of California] San Diego. So if you could go ahead and introduce yourself.

Ju'ne Sablan Hawkins: Yes, my name is Ju'ne Sablan Hawkins, and I was born in Guam but left Guam in '79 marrying a military personnel.

AC: Did you get married here or did you--

JSH: I got married back home in Guam.

AC: And then you traveled with--

JSH: We traveled. We were stationed. We moved to Mississippi; and then from Mississippi to Madrid, Spain; then from Madrid, Spain to Washington, D.C.; then back down to back to Mississippi again on our home part. And then from there we completed our home stay there, and then we were stationed in D.C. And then from D.C., we ended up here in San Diego.

AC: Oh, wow.

JSH: Yes.

AC: Um, so you said that you were born in Guam, and I was just wondering, like, where specifically and what was it like growing up in Guam?

JSH: Growing in Guam is a very big ex--I won't say experience because I'm born there so I need to follow all the, the guidelines of our parents: what we were taught what to do. So it's not what you want to do; it's you have to do it. And learning that, having to do it, is what I learned a lot from it. Because it's--it's not a--it's not a chore; it's a must. So that's how we--I loved it there because I learned a lot of trade from my grandma. From growing up in the ranch. And that's where I learned a lot of her trade too. You know? So that's how I learned to become a moneymaker person, a self-business because that's what we do back home, raising vegetables and bringing it back to the village and sell it to the village. So that's the trade of doing retail.

AC: Oh.

JSH: And I loved it.

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: And I'm still doing it up to this day.

AC: Are you still selling vegetables or *(gestures to items in the boutique)*

JSH: No.

AC: Just like, okay.

JSH: New stuff now. So I'm here in the states so we--I--don't vegetables. I sell maybe gifts stuff. You know?

AC: Yeah.

JSH: So that's why I've asked to open up a little gift shop here at the Guam Club, and they finally gave me a space. So here I am now, running it.

AC: When did--when did finally give you this space? Cause--

JSH: Last year in March.

AC: Wow.

JSH: Last year in March. And from there I'm--it kept me busy. It kept me on my toes. I have to replenish the gift shop, um, maybe once a month, bring in new merchandise so I can bring in new customers. You know?

AC: That's cool, yeah. (*laughs*)

JSH: But--

AC: Um, I would like to kind of go back and ask you, like, how did you get involved with both CHE'LU [Chamorro Hands in Education Links Unity] and, um, the clubhouse [Sons and Daughters of Guam Club] here?

JSH: CHE'LU, I was involved with them because I was a--how you call it, uh, uh--a fateful, a fateful, um, volunteer for about four years 'til they finally brought me in as a board member. So being as a board member, I was there for maybe three terms? And then now I'm an adviser with them.

AC: And what does what, uh, what do you have to do as and adviser? What are some of your duties?

JSH: They'll come to me and ask me. For example, they have their annual, um, festival. So they will come to me and say, "Can you still take care of the vendors for the annual festival of CCF, Chamorro Cultural Fest?" I'll say, "Sure." So I've been taking care of that ever since they started the festival, so it's about going on tenth year now that I've been in charge of the vendors. Like, getting contact with the vendors, making sure they're going to participate, telling them all the information, all the guidelines of being a vendor at the festivity.

AC: That's cool. Um, do you do other, um, I know CHE'LU, their main event of the year is the Chamorro Cultural Festival, and do you do other, um, events with them? 'Cause I know, um, they had done language classes with younger, younger kids.

JSH: We started that earlier, yes, back, way back.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: Um, but we have an in and out instructor so we, it never was consistent. So now, we have a Chamorro Language Foundation, which I'm in. I'm a board member. There's four of us left because everybody kind of, like, resigned because there's so much other duties that they're doing. So we got this foundation that we're trying to get back again, which is already on record with the California here, you know? And, um, so we started our meeting last, two days ago. And we're gonna [going to] bring that language back again. But it's not with CHE'LU; it's not with the Guam Club. It's a separate entity called Chamorro Language Foundation. So we're trying to start that up so hoping it'll kick off soon.

AC: How exciting!

JSH: I know, yeah.

AC: Yeah, do you, um, well, obviously you grew up in Guam, so, like, do you still speak the Chamorro language fluently?

JSH: I still speak it fluently, yes.

AC: Wow.

JSH: Yes. Once you learn a language, I don't think you can forget it. But I do know that Japanese language is more difficult to keep track with because at one time I almost kind of spoke it fluent because I hung out with Japanese people. You know but you have to speak that everyday to keep up with that language 'cause it's different dialect I think? I don't know whether they have a

different dialect of Japanese so--But I know some--When I start hanging out with Japanese people then, it'll start coming back to me again, how it sounded. So, yeah.

AC: And was this, like, was this through the military as well or--?

JSH: No, I was an instructor for the foreign exchange student here in California so I was in charge of eighteen, um, junior high school. Where I have to look for home stay for them. And then, back to back when they leave, comes in the university college, uh, student comes in so I have to look, like, maybe twenty-one of them coming in. So I have to look for a home stay for them. But I'm still connected with them when they're here because we do other projects. You know, so. That's how I'm involved with the Japanese, um, people. Because of the, uh, the, the job that I had. Yeah.

AC: Can you talk a little bit more about that job? Where you an educator or--?

JSH: I was not an educator. I was just asked, "Would you like to be a teacher guide for the Japanese foreign exchange?" And I said, "Sure! I don't know how to speak Japanese but, um, I will try to do my best what to do for them. So my job was like I said: they'll send me, um, a little bit of what the student is. Give me a letter of what they're all about and I will match that student with a family.

AC: Oh, okay.

JSH: Okay. So while they're here, we try--they're here to learn English, okay. So there's nothing changing the family household that I place them. If they don't like the food that they cook, they have the option to go out and buy their own food. You know? But they're here to learn how to speak English. So that's what we're trying keep intact with the project when they're here is speaking English. No Japanese or what not but sometimes I say, "Teach me how to speak a little bit of Japanese." You know.

AC: What program was this with? Was it with the school or was it outside or--?

JSH: I think it was--I don't know how--what business it is but it's just called Foreign Exchange Student. I didn't know what I was getting into, whether it's German or other country but it was Japan! So, along with that, students that comes in, the twenty-one or the eighteen, there's a professor that comes with them.

AC: Oh, okay.

JSH: So the professor stays at my house.

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: And then the other student we place it with family that will match their background.

AC: Okay.

JSH: Yeah.

AC: That's pretty cool.

JSH: So I enjoyed that. It was nice.

AC: What other jobs did you, um, did you have when you first moved to the U.S.?

JSH: I didn't have any job because I couldn't. One, I don't want to hold a job when we're only there for six months 'cause the way my husband's job is they travel every six months. So every six months, he takes me with him so which I don't mind 'cause I can learn other places too. So I just became a crafter.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: You know. Do sewing or do knitting or crocheting. Things that I can just bring with me.

You know, um, not too much stuff to, to take along but just a little stuff to bring with to work on.

AC: Wow.

JSH: So with the six month period that I was with him in Madrid, Spain, I knitted--not knitted--I crocheted a blanket. So that was like a project for me for six months while I'm away from the U.S. Yeah.

AC: Nice. How was, um, how was, uh, kind of the transition, I guess, to, you know, just constantly moving every six month. Was it exciting for you?

JSH: It's exciting because, um, I didn't have--I did have a child to bring with me but the child stayed--my son stayed with the grandparents at first while I do that the traveling with my husband. And then once we get stationed and stabilized, that's when he came and stayed with us.

AC: And did your kid, uh, live in Guam?--

JSH: No.

AC: With their grandparents or--?

JSH: No, he stayed in D.C.

AC: Oh.

JSH: Washington, D.C.

AC: So his grandparents were in D.C.

JSH: Yes, yes, yes.

AC: Okay.

JSH: So he stayed in D.C. So when we went back to Mississippi, I brought him with me.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: 'Cause it's just within, but we're going out of the U.S. I made him stay with the grandparents.

AC: Oh, okay.

JSH: Yeah.

AC: What was that like? Like both being in the U.S. and then briefly going to Madrid 'cause, um, I know--

JSH: Um--It was exciting but then once I'm over there, it just became like I'm used to it, you know? So there were other Chamorro people, too, so it's not like I'm alone. You know, because it's military so when they know you're coming, there's always an ombudsman and always say, "Hey, there's this, uh, couple coming in. The wife is Chamorro." So they'll call the, the, the ombudsman to find out who are the Chamorro people that intact with that battalion.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: So there was a lot of us. So it's not like I'm lost when I got there. I was--I felt welcomed. I felt like I'm still back in Guam.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Just like here in San Diego. I feel like I'm still back in Guam.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know because the Guam Club made it seem like it's the mother ship for us to be here, to just mingle with our own people. You know, so.

AC: Absolutely. Do you--Are you still in touch with these people or are they also living in San Diego?

JSH: Um, no, they're not in San Diego. They're just everywhere. Some of them, I think, passed away 'cause they were older than me. You know, so, no, I don't know where they're at right now but you know, it was nice to know who they are. You know? And whatnot so. I enjoyed it when I was over there.

AC: Yeah?

JSH: Yeah.



AC: Yeah, it sounds amazing.

JSH: Yeah.

AC: Um, I guess, um, do you--do you still go back to Guam often or--?

JSH: Yes, as a matter of fact, I'm leaving June twenty-first.

AC: How exciting.

JSH: With a group that we're doing--that we're leaving with because they'll be performing in Saipan so I'll be going to Saipan, too, for the Flame Tree Festival. So our group is going to be performing there. And then back to Guam again 'cause they're gonna [going to] be performing in one of our festivity there.

AC: Oh, okay.

JSH: Yeah, so I'll be leaving June twenty-first, be back July twenty-first.

AC: How exciting!

JSH: Yes, so everything is all set for me when I get back there.

AC: Yeah, you have plans to, like, visit family, specifically?

JSH: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

AC: Yeah, that's how it works. Um, do you ever think that you're gonna [going to] move, move back to Guam?

JSH: Moving back to Guam to settle there? Uh--No. Because my kids are here. They were born here, and I brought them to Guam on the time that they will remember they did went to Guam. So they were good for three weeks. After three weeks, they were ready to come back. Well with me, after one week, I was ready to come back. 'Cause it was so hot over there.

AC: Oh.

JSH: Very hot. But there's a lot of things to do.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, but it's just so hot to go out and to do it.

AC: Yeah. (*laughs*)

JSH: You know? And whatnot but to settle there--Ah, no, but to go back and visit, yes.

AC: Nice.

JSH: Make it like a vacation place.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Like my kids, "It's a paradise island, Mom. It's vacation for us. Mmm, it's too small for us."

Yeah, and for me, it's kind of too small, too. You know, because there's not much of activity going over there? Not like here, we can go up to Las Vegas. There's a big activity going on over there, you know?

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Yeah, so, there's not much to do there. You know.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Or just go to the beach. That's it. (*laughs*)

AC: How small is the island?

JSH: Oh, my gosh, um, that's a good question. You know what? I never put in my mind in case I was asked how big it is.

AC: (*laughs*)

JSH: Um--To go around the island--which is not quite around the island--it takes only about forty-five minutes?

AC: Oh, wow!

JSH: Yeah but to stop by on every site area, maybe two hours? But it's not completely around the island.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: So it's just like the middle part of the island you go around. That's it.

AC: That's pretty small.

JSH: Yeah, it is. It is small.

AC: It's like San Diego. It's--

JSH: Kind of, yeah, kind of, yeah.

AC: What is, I guess, like, what is the difference you see between you and your children 'cause they grew up here as, um, I guess, uh, Chamorro American and you growing up in Guam?

JSH: Mhm.

AC: What do you see differently?

JSH: The difference is my kids, they, they do a lot of different stuff. They all have different identity? You know? So, um, with me being different with them, I try to teach them what I grew up from. They try to learn, but it's just not enough here to really show them. You know, when they went back to Guam, they saw all the stuff, and I showed them all the things I've done. And they said, "That's a hard--hard work, Mom. That's hardship." I said, "Yes, we were brought up very hard and very disciplined, not like you guys." You know, I wish I know who the person is who, um, found the definition of child abuse. 'Cause you don't know what child abuse is back in Guam, you know. But that was--we were disciplined. And if it weren't for that, I would not be here. 'Cause I learned to be disciplined, to do the right thing. I wouldn't know from the right to the wrong. But here, once they [the parents] say, "I'm gonna [going to] beat you," they'll [the children will] just dial 9-1-1 and say, "Oh, my mom is gonna [going to] beat me up!" You know?

So that, you know, that stop of being disciplined by that parents to that child. So that's the only thing that I didn't agree upon of child abuse. Because there's a different ways called child abuse and child being disciplined. You know, you may call it child abuse, being disciplined, but it all depends who will wanna [want to] look at it. How the law looks at it. You know, so, yup. We were brought up hard back in Guam, and I'm here and I learned a lot, you know.

AC: Can you talk a little bit about that? Uh, like, um, did you work as a kid?

JSH: No, we--we, like I said, there--we have choices where it's not really choices. It's--we have to do it to make a living.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: So there's no way of saying, "No, I don't wanna [want to] do that." 'Cause if I said, "No, I don't wanna [want to] do that," pow (*slaps one the back of a hand with the other one*)! You get it.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You--even though you get that, you still gotta [got to] do it, you know. So, and it's not a hard work. It's simple homework.

AC: Oh, okay.

JSH: It's, it's, it's, it's a, it's how you wanna [want to] live.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, like, we have to go harvest the garden because it's time to harvest it. If I was only six years old, and I had to go har[vest]--there was--I was taught how to harvest it. Maybe here, they might think that's it's child abuse of child labor. But for us, that's not child labor. That's work that we have to do 'cause we have to do our living back in Guam.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Yeah. So it depends on how people put the definition of child abuse, you know. I might call a lot of it child abuse when they were--when I was back there. 'Cause they was (*laughs*). But we don't know nothing about child abuse at them times.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, but yeah.

AC: Would people, um, would Chamorro, uh, kind of, point that out and say, "Oh, you shouldn't be doing that," or would it be, um, like--

JSH: No.

AC: --Americans who were on the island.

JSH: No. No, back in Guam, nobody would say anything if we were doing it, you know. Because it's part of our job.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: It's part of our work. It's part of our living that we have to do it, you know. 'Cause it's not just us harvesting. Our parents were harvesting, too, at the same time. So what they were teaACg us at the same time, you know. And I did it when I was married.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: I had a little garden so I learned how to plant and grow a garden so, you know. If it weren't for that, I would not know how to do it. So it was--it was teaACg and, and, I don't know how you wanna [want to] call it--Child abuse. (*laughs*)

AC: (*laughs*)

JSH: But it was something that we were taught, and we, we learned from it.

AC: Did your parents, um, expect you to leave Guam because they obviously, like, tried to teach you the way of living on--

JSH: No, my parents never said anything. Our parents taught us from right to good.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, so it's up to us to make the choice, and it has to be the good choice that you make, you know. But they always say, "You be always be back." And it's true.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: We always go back.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know. So, and they, they never say, "No, you can't come live us." You're always welcome to live with them. No matter you bring in six more kids or four more kids. We always make the room, you know.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: But it's something that I learned because, you know, I'm here as a mother, too, with, uh, four adults that I will call them. And every time they can't afford to get anything, they'll always call me and say, "Do you have something for"--you know--"We wanna [want to] get this. Can you spare us?" I said, "Sure." You know, I always have to make sure that they're good, too, you know. I will never say no to my kids. Not unless I know that they're not trying.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: If they're not trying, then they can't meet me halfway.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: But if I see that they're trying, then I'll meet you halfway, and I'll give you what you need. You know, we always help them out. Because that's how my parents do us. They always help us out what we need. You know, so I don't know. I never regret of anything. I learned a lot. (laughs)

AC: That's good! Do your kids live around here or--

JSH: Yes! As a matter of fact, my oldest, he's in Guam, uh, because he left when he was sixteen. He said he wants to go back to Guam--

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: --for sixteen birthday to learn all his cousins. Ended up he stayed. Because he liked it.

AC: Wow! (*laughs*)

JSH: You know, 'cause he stayed, like, maybe two weeks.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: So, when my mom was alive, she called me up and she says, "Make him stay. You know, I'll take care of him. Don't worry about it." So you know, I said, "Okay." So I spoke with him and I said, "If it's okay with you, I'm okay with it." You know. So he went to school there, finished school. And he's there now, married with eight kids!

AC: (*laughs*)

JSH: (*laughs*) Eight kids! Eight grand [grandchildren] in Guam. Then my second oldest, um, he's in the Army Reserve.

AC: Mhm.

JSH: Um, at this time, he's waiting on the period of December to come because they'll be, um, moved to Romania for eleven months for support. I've never asked too much question about military between my husband and him because they say, "Mom, if we tell you what we're doing, we have to kill you after that." I said, "Oh, really? That bad?" And I said, "Okay, I won't never ask a question."

AC: (*laughs*)

AC: (*laughs*)

JSH: They'll just tell us where they're going, and that's it.

AC: Okay.

JSH: You know, my third oldest, he's on the road right now, traveling. He's an entertainer. He's with Tribal Theory, so he's out on the road right now, touring.

AC: Nice.

JSH: And then my youngest is a girl. Um, she's twenty-eight. She works for federal student loan. Plus she works part-time for the county.

AC: Nice.

JSH: So those are my kids. They're busy.

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: You know.

AC: I can bet. Yeah.

JSH: I make sure that they stay bust at all times, you know.

AC: Absolutely.

JSH: They always call for help. So I'm always there to help them. Yeah, that's them.

AC: Nice.

JSH: Yeah.

AC: Are you--Are you, um, can you talk a little bit about your relationship with them? Are you still really close to them?

JSH: I'm still close with them.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Um, when they ask for anything, like I said, I will provide for them as long as they meet me halfway. You know, that I know that they're trying. So, and I know the--the salary out here is so low compared to the rent that you be paying. It's like you're just working for your rent.



AC: Yeah.

JSH: And there's nothing left for anything. So I try to help them out on those things that they need, you know. Um, and it's not a major needing that they need. It's just minor, which I'm okay with that. You know, I always put a spare money away for a rainy day for something like that. You know, like, they took me out for Mother's Day, and they're gonna treat me and whatnot. But when I saw them struggling, counting their dollar bills to pay the bill, and I said, "Just put it away. I'll pay for the bill." (*laughs*)

AC: (*laughs*)

JSH: "Just keep your money. I'll pay for the bill. There's not a problem." And it's not a huge bill; it's a small bill anyway. You know, so.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: That's--That's how I, you know, I try to help them as much as I could, you know.

AC: Yeah. Absolutely.

JSH: You know, so.

AC: Um, I guess since it's only you and your daughter in your family, um, what's--what's the difference between, like, a Chamorro woman and being a Chamorro man? Like, what is the, kind of, gender dynamic you see in Chamorro culture? And then versus that being in Guam and, I guess, being in the U.S.

JSH: Mmm--Like, how am I here?

AC: Yeah, so I guess the question is, um, can you talk a little bit about, um, the gender dynamics, um, back at Guam and then how you see it different.

JSH: When you say "gender dynamics," mmm, I'm not understanding.

AC: Yeah, um, I guess I'm just asking, like, what are--what, um, what are you expected to do, I guess, as a Chamorro woman versus what a Chamorro man is--

JSH: Nothing really. No, I'm still the same as I am back home from here. I'm still the same.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: I don't change anything, you know, because I carry my culture with me, you know, so. But if there's any changes that needs to be changed, then that's the time we change but it's gotta [got to] be a good change. You know, like, here when we our meeting everybody has differences on opinion. So we try to take the best opinion out of it, you know. We sometimes argue over it, and then I said, "There's no sense of arguing over." We can sit and make policies and, and, and good things, but we need to be understand more. We need to, to, um, be nice. Be understanding, you know. Um, communication is the best policy.

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: You know, you know that right?

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Communication's the best policy. So when we--if we communicate the right way, then we're all good, you know. If you got different opinion, come out and say it, and then we can sit down and, and talk about it. You know, what would benefit us on that opinion, you know, so, yeah. Communication is the best policy. And that's what I always tell my children. You know, "Talk to me. 'Cause if you don't talk to me, I don't know what's wrong with you."

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, and whatnot. Especially when you're having problems. Today's generation is, like, they rather talk to someone else instead of their parents. But for me, I tell my kids, "I wanna [want to] be the first to know what your problem is." Because it's the same thing if you tell

another person. That's the same help you're gonna [going to] get is the help that I will find for you. So I would rather let it stay in the family so we'll know what's our problem before we spread it out there, and you'll be creating more problems. Because it, it transfers from one person to the next and it changes as it goes.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: But if you keep it within the family, we know what the real problem is, you know. But as you tell another person, that person tells another person, it changes the story. So that's where, you know, communication gotta [got to] be the right, you know. Communicate with the right people for the right reason that, you know. If you're in charge of vendor, you be the person I will go to and find out what's this and what's that, how much, or where am I gonna [going to] go instead of asking somebody that question that don't know but just guess. So there's no need to ask. Go to the right source and get it. You know, instead of traveling everywhere, tryna [trying to] find out what's right or what's wrong.

AC: Um, I mean, I guess, going off, uh, your vendor example, um, why did you, um, become so, uh, interested in opening a shop? And--

JSH: It's my passion! I love to make money. I love to show--I love to show off part of some of our culture. I like to show off some of my work that I do. I even, um, ask other vendors or other businesses about their stuff that they, they do to bring it in here so that we can share and share what we know, you know. And tell people that there's more people who makes this stuff, not just me. You know, so I just don't keep it to myself. I--I call in some of our vendor people--um our clientele and vendor people, too. Come and join me. Put some of your stuff in the store. So I can help you along as you help us here.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know.

AC: And what do you make here? (*gestures around the boutique*) Um, I know you made the, you made these beautiful flowers.

JSH: Yes, I made the flowers by a material.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: I made pillow covering matching with, uh, blankets. Um, I make mop dolls. As a matter of fact, I, I had a class of how to make a mop dolls. But I do teach class. How to make the flowers. And when you learn how to do that, and you make a lot, you can do a fundraiser.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Because I taught some of the people how to do the flowers, and they end up making fundraisers and they were making that. Like, I lost that business now because they know how to do it. But they pay me to have a class. So once you pay me, I pass on my, my what I know so that you will know it too and make money for yourself. So I'm not greedy. I share my wealth, and I share my knowledge to people. You know.

AC: That's amazing.

JSH: Yeah.

AC: That's amazing.

JSH: Yeah.

AC: Yeah, um, I guess, um, with your work here and you really--you obviously really, um, love you Chamorro culture, I guess, um, what is something that you would like, um, future generations to, kind of, keep and remember about?

JSH: The language. They need to learn how to speak the language, you know. Um, for me right now, for me to my children, but I try not to make that die for them to teach their children. So

when we start this class that we're tryna [trying to] put together, I have to tell my children, "You have to attend! Try to attend!" You know, so that you can learn some of the wordings and sentences so that you can pass on to your children, you know. So it's hard for me to teach my children 'cause they're not living with me.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, and whatnot. Not unless I go babysit at their home, and then that's when I'm talking Chamorro to their children.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: You know, and whatnot. So that's the only way I can, I can teach my kids that. The language. But I'm very passionate to, to teach the language to anybody who wants to learn. It may not be--all we're asking is conversational. Let's converse. Because I've seen some 'cause I, I did try to teach the language, and I did see some that they're not classroom material.

AC: Mhm.

JSH: They're conversational material. They want to learn how to speak it by conversing.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Not by writing.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Not by telling them this is the subject, and this is the verb. No, they want to learn how to speak it by conversing with them, you know. Just sitting around, talking in a bar--you know, over a barbecue thing, joking around.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: And you speak the language. They can learn fast that way.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, instead of tryna [trying to] be in a classroom. So I see that we try to doing a classroom, and it was hard, you know, and whatnot. So we try to do the conversational Chamorro.

AC: Do you, um, is it easy for them to, I guess, listen and then respond in English? 'Cause, um, I know, like, for me, personally, um, I am kind of fluent in Mandarin. I actually moved, um, from Taiwan to here. But I find it easier to listen.

JSH: Yes.

AC: And then respond in English.

JSH: Yes, yes, yes, yes. And, and, and some of them, which I don't understand, I don't know why I don't understand that. Some of them say, "I understand it, but I can't speak it." Like, huh? I understand that. That's me.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, other people may have other opinion over that, but that's me. Why say that you can understand but you can't speak it? Have you tried speaking it? Have you tried responding from it in Chamorro? But not in English, you know. They said, "I try, but it's not coming out right." I said, "It's rather be not coming out right, but we understand you, what you're tryna [trying to] say."

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Because you're trying. Yes.

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: You know, but for me, I still don't understand that, up to this day. "I can understand, but I can't speak it." Ugh.

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: I don't whether I'm dumb or something. That, I don't understand.

AC: Did your kids tell you that growing up, too?

JSH: No, they never said that to me. They never said that to me. They always tried to speak it-- speak something back to me when, when I say something to them in Chamorro, they says, "Yeah, Mama, okay, back to you." I said, "No, that's not the way to say 'back to me' because that's not the question I'm asking. 'Back to me?' No." So they said, "So how do you say?" That's when it comes from this. "So how do you say?" So I try telling them.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: So they try pronouncing it, and it may not be the right pronunciation, but they try, you know. But they never say that "We understand it, but we don't speak it." Because I know for sure they don't understand it.

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: You know.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: And whatnot. 'Cause I know them. They're my kids, you know.

AC: Did you grow, um, when they were growing up, did you try to speak with them? And then they were like, "No." *(shakes head)*

JSH: Um, especially when we were in D.C. 'cause that's where they were born.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: I tried speaking to them in my language when they were younger, but since they have a nanny, they nanny speaks to them in English so I said, "Oh, God, I'm confusing my children."

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: You know, because I work a lot when I was back there.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: So they were mainly with the nanny more than I'm with them. You know, so, it kinda [kind of], like, died. Because for me, when I'm home, I'm already tired. I don't have time to talk to anybody. I just wanna [want to] sleep to get back to the other job again, you know. So I was working a lot so. For me, my mistake was I didn't have time for my children to give them, to teach them the language. 'Cause if I had time I would've taught them. But I was just too tired to talk to anybody when I got home. (*laughs*)

AC: Yeah. No (*laughs*). What about your son who lives in Guam? Does he speak Chamorro better now?

JSH: Yes, he speaks--he made--he speaks broken Chamorro. But then we know what he's talking about. But when I call him, I speak mostly English to him. But sometimes I get carried away, and I said something to him in Chamorro. And then I said, "Oops, did you understand what I'm saying?" He said, "Yes, Mama, I do." I said, "Oh, okay." You know, so he's, he's learning, too, while he's there. He's got an accent of a Chamorro boy, so I think--'cause right now, he's, he's not talking Chamorro to his children.

AC: Oh, okay.

JSH: It's English.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: You know. Because when I was growing up, we've forbidden to speak it, Chamorro.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: But, you know, at home, that's when we speak it. But at school, we're not allowed to, you know. So I don't know, um, it's mandatory now in school that they speak Chamorro. So I think the kids are learning Chamorro in class.



AC: Is it, um, a language class or every class is taught in Chamorro?

JSH: Language class.

AC: Okay.

JSH: Language class.

AC And is--these are, um, I'm assuming, state schools. So, like, do the government--

JSH: To the government, to the public school and private--public school and private school, I think they make Chamorro now a language.

AC: Oh.

JSH: They have to take that as a, I think part of their, their, um, uh, credit? That they have to learn, to get Chamorro language. Yeah. So it's now it's a much that they learn.

AC: And was it a problem, I guess, um, kind of in the '70s and '80s, that the language was dying out? Because you guys were forbidden.

JSH: I think that from what I was told was that when I was in elementary school, that most of the teachers are stateside. So in order for us not to speak Chamorro in school, so that the teacher can understand what we're talking about. So we were forbidden to speak the English in school. They were told by our parents that we have to teach our kids how to speak English at home. So my parents didn't follow that.

AC: *(laughs)*

JSH: You know, they taught us how to speak Chamorro. Because that's our language. You know, so that's how I learned that. You know, I didn't learn it from sitting in a classroom or whatnot.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: You know, and I know majority of the culture, too, they learn from home, not from the classroom.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Yeah.

AC: Yeah, I mean, I heard, um, I actually had met David Atalig, uh, recently, and he was also telling me that, um, you guys used to teach through playing music?

JSH: Yes.

AC: And through lyrics!

JSH: Yes. Yes.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Yes. Well my parents are not musical family. They're more farming family. So that's where I learned some of my farmings from them. But for music, uh, we learned it when we have festivity, is that's when we learned how to do music or learn the music.

AC: Can you, um, I guess, talk a little bit about, uh, music in the Chamorro culture? 'Cause I know it's a really big thing and that people, um--

JSH: Now it is.

AC: --record.

JSH: Now it is. Um, kids just picks up the ukulele and then start singing at a barbecue party and whatnot. So that's how they--Everybody's invited to come sing along.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: So that's how they do it. Um--My mom, like I said, yes, she's a piano person. She's a ukulele person. She sings more. You know, but she never said, "Come sit here and learn this from me."

AC: Yeah.

JSH: No. It's--We have it at home, and on her spare time, she just sits down and play the piano, sing along with it, while we just do our chores at work.

AC: Uh huh.

JSH: It's never like, "Come here and learn this." No.

AC: But it's just kinda [kind of] like part of everyday.

JSH: Part of everyday life. Yes, that's how she is. She sent my sister to piano class. I was sent along with my other sister how to do housework, so we how to keep up with the home. You know, as a woman growing. You're gonna [going to] grow up as an adult. You have to learn how to keep your home clean.

AC: Mhm.

JSH: Because if guests comes into your home, and they see your home dirty and whatnot? They don't--They don't go out there and--They talk about you. The only person they're gonna [going to] talk about is the person that lives in that home. Like, "God, I went to so-and-so's house, and their house is filthy." So they're talking about that family. You know, so we're taught how to keep our home clean because that's the first thing people see when they come into your home is how clean you are.

AC: Mhm.

JSH: You know, and that's how we're brought up with. Is to make sure your home is clean, especially the bathroom.

AC: *(laughs)* Absolutely.

JSH: You know, yes, especially the bathroom.

AC: Um, I guess, uh, it's lunchtime and--

JSH: Okay.

AC: --I was wondering, so at this point, I would like to ask if, um, there's anything else you would like to talk about that I hadn't asked?

JSH: No, I think you asked everything. Um, you've asked everything. Uh, if we missed something, come back to me or call me and let me know and I'll put it right in there. You know.

*(laughs)*

AC: Thank you.

JSH: Oh, you're welcome.

AC: Um, well, thank you for taking this time out in your day to sit down with me.

JSH: Thank you for coming.

AC: Yeah.

JSH: Thank you for having me and interviewing me. I hope it helps--

AC: It will. *(laughs)*

JSH: *(laughs)*--along the way.

AC: Thank you so much.

JSH: You're welcome.