

Hi, it's May 11th, 2022, I'm TAHTAH-LINA(Daughter) and I'm here with Marcus Stewart (dad), we are recording at home

TAHTAH-LINA: How long have you lived in this area?

Marcus: In Tacoma WA, I have lived in Tacoma all my life I'm 42 so I've been here pretty much my whole yeah, my whole life.

TAHTAH-LINA: where did you live before?

Marcus: Fort Lewis is where I'm born, I was born on Fort Lewis, and we lived on base I don't know maybe probably a year and then we moved to Tacoma.

TAHTAH-LINA: what brought you here?

Marcus: To Tacoma

TAHTAH-LINA: Yeah

Marcus: my family from here

TAHTAH-LINA: what is something from your culture/ homeland that you wish more people in this area practiced?

Marcus: Meditation and manifestation because meditation helps you, you know to relax and understand things differently when you look at them from an inside POV rather than just a reaction and manifestation that's pretty much you know if you want something you can definitely get it the right way not Robin stealing and killing, talking about making a way to where you invite that into your life and you welcome it and the more you think about it the thought of it just grows and then it happens.

TAHTAH-LINA: what are some experiences you've made with microaggression in this community or others?

Marcus: when I was younger, I was called a nigger by kids in my neighborhood they used to make fun of me and call me big glasses nigger and that really affected me as a little kid

TAHTAH-LINA: what have you experienced discrimination or oppression?

Marcus: In Turkey the country Turkey we were guarding the unit for what it was we were guarding a quarry a rock quarry and when it was time for lunch they made lunch for all the soldiers but because I was black they told me to go to the other side of the little mill house but on the other side that's where they fared like the workers that work for them they fed them like slop food and I didn't know that and for all the soldiers they fed them hamburgers and pizza and when I brought my food to the lunch room my NCO asked me what is that cause it just looked gross and um he went back and talked to them and told them they better not ever do that again cause we won't guard your rock quarry we don't care if the Taliban coming to attack you. so, I thought that was pretty messed up.

TAHTAH-LINA: Do you see or hear from students who experience racism or other forms of oppression?

Marcus: I don't hear it, but I know it goes on because you know kids always run across someone that says look at her trying to be black you know whether she's white, Mexican or whatever.

TAHTAH-LINA: I had that in kindergarten I was sitting across these twins, and they looked at me and said why are you black and I was like I don't know that's my color.

TAHTAH-LINA: Who has been a hero or inspiration to you on civil rights or social justice front?

Marcus: WEB duBois' cause he was one that founded the NAACP which is a civil rights movement and the Niagara movement which is a civil and political rights organization for African Americans.

TAHTAH-LINA: what was an experience or memory from your childhood where you learned about inequality?

Marcus: Oh yeah, so I was hanging out with my friends and they just happened to be all white this was when I was younger and at that time the Tacoma police station had just been built on the east side of Tacoma when we were walking down the street, the only person that they wanted to talk to was me, and they put guns in my face and I kept telling them my name, but they kept telling me I was lying because they said I was you know I look like somebody else listen that but I think it was just because I was black.

TAHTAH-LINA: How do you identify ethnically?

Marcus: I identify as a black American.

TAHTAH-LINA: what role does culture play in your life?

Marcus: it's important because it gives you guidance and it teaches you leadership and you know just basic life skills.

TAHTAH-LINA: describe a tradition or practice that you learn from your family?

Marcus: Eating or cleaning chitlins because they stink, they smell like “Yep “but yeah you got to learn how to clean those if you don't clean them all the way you're going to be eating poop when you cook it, yeah you got to really have a stomach for that stuff because they smell bad.

TAHTAH-LINA: what was your childhood like?

Marcus: my childhood it was cool, I hang out with people, I was mainly like making money washing cars, mowing lawns, you know I didn't really play too much because I was too busy worried about making you know couple dollars to go get some JoJo's or something.

TAHTAH-LINA: How did your childhood differ from what you see children living today?

Marcus: Oh yeah well today you know the kids rely on the Internet you know they depend on it like it's so part of their body and people can't go anywhere without a

cell phone, I didn't grow up with that stuff, cell phone wasn't in even around when I was growing up until the 90s and then that's when the cell phone hit.

TAHTAH-LINA: remember when we were younger, we never had phones we would always play outside in the dirt but now kahleah she always wants moms' phone and she be like mom can I get your tablet or mom can I get your phone and mom be like no, go outside and kahleah just don't want to be outside.

TAHTAH-LINA: What are some historical events from your lifetime that have had a big impact on your life?

Marcus: serving in Afghanistan' because that helped me to realize a lot of things about life and about people you know, people in general not just white or black people but people in general.

TAHTAH-LINA: which aspect of your culture ethnicity or heritage brings most pride or satisfaction?

Marcus: standing out, because everywhere you go you know the police are always staring at you or someone staring at you because you look this way or that way, so it doesn't really bother me, I feel like it makes me stand out and I feel proud.

TAHTAH-LINA: how do you feel about participating in the Pledge of Allegiance or the national anthem?

Marcus: it doesn't bother me really because I wasn't brought up on the old ways like the original Pledge of Allegiance I wasn't brought up on that, I know there's another real Pledge of Allegiance but I don't know anything about that but so I really can't speak on that cause it doesn't really have an effect on me, actually I feel prideful you know to be able to say it.

TAHTAH-LINA: when was the time that you realized you had power or privilege over another group or person?

Marcus: serving in Afghanistan as a soldier you know protecting the people because they must initially do what we say you know but we're there to help them but if they don't want our help then we just leave them alone.

TAHTAH-LINA: did you feel that you ever misused that power or privilege?

Marcus: no but I never did anything that you know will get you in trouble. I treated them just like human beings like we are because we are human.