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## Interview with Jose Avalos

Christian Martinez-Canchola

Jose Avalos

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**Researcher's Name:** Christian Martinez-Canchola

**Event:** Interview with Jose Avalos, 10/28/2011, 10:45 AM

**Place:** Rural Life Center at Kenyon College, Gambier, OH 43022

**Co-workers Present:** None

M: Christian Martinez-Canchola

A: Jose Avalos

*Interview started at 1:48 mins.*

M: Hi! This is Christian Martinez-Canchola interviewing Jose Avalos at his – oh, actually at the Rural Life Center here at Kenyon College. This interview is for the 2011-2012 Fieldwork class focused on public spaces with Professor Sacks. It is Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and it is approximately 10:45 A.M.

Okay.

And although you have already told me this, let's begin by talking about who you are and where you're from.

A: Yes. Like I told you before, my full name is Jose Avalos and I'm a native of Mexico. I was born in San Jose de la Paz, Jalisco, Mexico. In the United States, I was reared in Chicago. So while I'm Mexican, I spent the majority of my life here in the United States.

M: And have you always lived in Chicago? How did you arrive at Mt. Vernon?

A: We arrived here [to the United States] from Mexico in 1979. My parents brought my family and me here. Three sisters, one brother, and me. We came here in 1979 from Mexico D.F. – the Distrito Federal. We arrived here in 1979 in Chicago. We were schooled in Chicago. We did our elementary school and everything else there. We were there for approximately 9-10 years with my family, with my mother and father. And then they decided to return back to Mexico in 1987.

We returned back to Mexico together. All of us again. Then in Mexico I continued studying and I returned back to the United States by myself in 1989. But when I returned, I went to North Carolina. At that time in North Carolina I wanted to keep studying so I enrolled at Fayetteville Tech(nical Community College) which is a little college there.

I went to school but at the same time I worked in the food industry. I worked at a Mexican restaurant there. I liked it there and I liked the restaurant so I worked and studied at the same time. Then, after some time, I realized that I enjoyed the restaurant business so I changed my major. At Fayetteville I switched to managing food – food service – in the town.

While I did not graduate with a degree, I did it. I completed the exams. And because I liked food service, I got more involved with the food industry. So I graduated from school and I began to work in the restaurant business so I could own my own business.

Not to work as, well, I did work as a waiter and everything but in 1992 or 1993, I opened my own restaurant in Wilmington, NC. On the beach. After I opened my own restaurant I came to Columbus in 1995. In 1995 when I came to Columbus, we opened a chain of restaurants.

Do you want me to talk in English or Spanish? Is it better for me to talk in Spanish?

M: Pure Spanish is fine. Sorry, I'm just turning off my phone.

A: So in 1995 I came to Columbus and we opened a chain of restaurants in Columbus. Mexican restaurants. And I came to be reunited with some family and friends and we opened a chain called "Casa Fiesta" restaurants. We opened up 15.

I also had a restaurant on Route 3 in Wooster, OH and I passed by this town, Mt. Vernon, probably three times a week. I really liked this small town Mt. Vernon. I always liked it. I told myself, "One day I'm going to open up a restaurant here in Mt. Vernon." And that's how it happened.

In July 1997, we arrived at Mt. Vernon to open the restaurant. The people didn't know how to eat Mexican food but we arrived here. And we opened up the restaurant in downtown – in the center of town – and the people arrived to taste the food for the first time and some of them liked it and some of them didn't. But that's okay because it started slowly at first. That's how it was for 4 or 5 years. But then things got better. We started having more clientele gradually. And now today, after 13 or 14 years, we're a favorite of the town. We get people from all over. Apart from people in Mt. Vernon, we get a lot of people from Kenyon. They support us incredibly in Mt. Vernon.

Apart from that, we began opening more restaurants in towns like Cleveland, Akron, and small little towns like Medina, Wordsworth, and others in the north part of the state. We also continued to expand in Columbus. In Columbus I opened up a company. After Casa Fiesta, I went to pursue the restaurant business by myself so I opened up a place called Las Margaritas in Columbus and I opened up five of those. Five restaurants.

While I started a business with five Mexican restaurants in 2007, I sold them because I went back to Mexico for some time. My children wanted to learn Spanish well. So I went back to Mexico for three years and sold them.

Also, we have a factory that sells Mexican food products. We sell them to ourselves and to other restaurants too.

Around 2010, I returned back from Mexico so I've been back for approximately one year (after being gone for three years). Well, sure, I came and went right? So, yeah. I don't know what the plans are. Well, I obviously have plans but I don't know if you want me to tell you my plans or just tell you what's happened.

M: Why don't you tell me what your plans are.

A: Sure. Our plan to be located in Mt. Vernon stemmed out of the idea of being here for a little bit. Just a short amount of time. Maybe a year or two. After all, I have my business

here. Well, to be honest, I have two Mexican food businesses here in Mt. Vernon. They are Fiesta Mexicana Express and Fiesta Mexicana downtown. And we're going to Columbus this upcoming year partly because my daughter will be going to the university there. I want her to go to Ohio State. She wants to study medicine.

Secondly, I want to go to Columbus because all of my contacts are there, all the people I know are there, and well, my company is there and I know I can grow there. I can grow my restaurant there more. We're thinking about opening another chain of restaurants but of fast food in Columbus. We want it to grow. And we have the same idea of selling our products to other restaurants too.

I haven't opened up any franchises or restaurants outside of the state and I don't want to. I just want it to be a small family-owned business. Those are our plans as of right now for the upcoming year. Probably beginning in June. So now we're currently moving to Columbus to start those plans. And when the kids grow up and start their own lives? Well, we haven't planned that far in advance. Would we move back to Mexico? No, no. We don't have any of those plans. We were there for some time, the kids grew up there, but we do return. I go back to Mexico almost every three months. Two months, three months. I go back for a week or so when I visit. Foremost though, we'll go visit like three times a year. We'll go to the pueblo, to the city, the beach, and really wherever but first and foremost: we go back to Mexico. We're always in communication.

So yeah, those are our plans for our future in Columbus. To keep working because I still have kids. Two young kids. So I need to keep working hard. So yeah, that's Columbus. What else would you like me to tell you? My plans? Those are the plans I have. What else would you like?

M: Why don't you tell me more about your business here in Mt. Vernon. I know you mentioned a little that it took a long time for a lot of people to come but, how was it at the beginning? How did it look like?

A: Oh, okay. You want me to explain more about what it's like to be in Mt. Vernon? To focus a little bit more on Mt Vernon?

M: Uhum.

A: Okay. So like I told you previously, we arrived in Mt. Vernon in 1997. We arrived here and the people were not accustomed to eating Mexican food. So I arrived here with a faith that yes, people from here would like Mexican food. You just needed to bring them there, to teach them how to eat. But no – not everyone! Because here was the college, and the company Cooper which is now known as Rolls Royce. So I brought everything here and situated the restaurant in downtown because Rolls Royce or Cooper was there. What happened was that I had a lot of faith. The restaurant started out very slowly. The people didn't come. Apart from that, the restaurant was very antiquated. It was very old. And at that time we didn't really beautify or remodel the place. So it began very slowly. We remodeled the place very simply – with just a hint of Mexicanness and we thought to wait it out and see what the public thought. The people came, but no not really, and then they came... And that's how it was. Time passed by. And briefly, for a short while, we

contemplated closing down the restaurant because we didn't think it was going to function in Mt. Vernon. But I – well, that's what other people said – but I said no, we're not going to close down. We're going to keep at it because I really think it's going to function here. So with time, you know, I kept telling people, it's a beautiful town, it's a beautiful city, and we have those two colleges, we have Cooper, we have Ariel – which is also located behind here. We have a lot here! We just need to teach them to eat Mexican.

So time passed by, and like I told you, three to five years passed by and the restaurant got better and better. The people started coming gradually more and more and when we saw that more people started coming to our restaurant, we began to remodel the place. After all, it was too old. So we started putting down floors, Mexican walls, rustic ones, a bar, we started adding equipment, a few things here and there, and the restaurant started doing better. It was better acclimated.

Then we remodeled it from the outside. In Spanish, you call it *fachada*. It's the front part of the restaurant. We also remodeled it so it visually looked a lot more Mexican. And then the people started coming. Now it's a restaurant.

At that time, in 1997, we probably sold \$240,000 worth of food. A year! \$240,000 to \$250,000. Now this restaurant in 2007, sold somewhere between \$840,000 to an all time high of \$2,010,000. Now that's bringing in a profit of over \$2,000,000 annually. So for me it proved a challenge and a competition between myself because I knew Mount Vernon had the capacity to maintain a restaurant of that capacity.

In Mount Vernon, you have the people. Mt. Vernon has supported us greatly. We have supported them and they have supported us. From the colleges to the factories, the community is there. While there isn't a Latino community, the American likes our food more and well, the American is here.

Our food isn't too pricey either. People from the community have been able to buy a lot of it. They have supported us. And we're pretty content and happy now too because we've also been able to bring our family here. We were able to bring my sister, my brother-in-law, and so the restaurant became very familial. They've also been here for about ten years now working in the business. And actually, they're the business here in Mt. Vernon. The business is a society within the family only. It's not a franchise and it's not owned by anyone outside of us. We started it, it's ours, and we are the family that owns the business.

Here, like I told you, Mt. Vernon has helped us out a lot and we try to help Mt. Vernon as much as we can. We try to do everything we can in Mt. Vernon to keep the money here. For example, if I'm going to make menu's I do them here in Mt. Vernon. If I'm going to do advertisements or t-shirts for the employees, I buy them here in Mt. Vernon. Or if we're going to buy food, we buy a lot from Lannings Foods so we can help the town and so the money can stay here in the town and so it won't leave. We do this because people from the town help us.

We try to donate to the police department, the city, and whatever we can do we try to cooperate with the town. Our bank too is from here. We do our banking in Mt. Vernon. It

use to be National City. Not it's PNC Bank. We've always done our banking here so everything can stay here. So yes, we're at that level.

But Mt. Vernon has been and continues to be a town I believe in. There's a future here. It's growing. Thirteen or fifteen years ago, the town wasn't that big. It use to be smaller. People didn't think it was a good town but I always knew it was. I thought we could do well here because there's a future in this town. And now there's two restaurants owned by us!

While the other restaurant [on Coshocton] doesn't do as well as the downtown location, it does produce good numbers. But yes, we've seen the town grow little by little. For us, Mt. Vernon is a beautiful town and very healthy for us as a family.

M: Is there a clientele that... (Phone rings, Christian laughs) Do you want to answer that?

A: No, no it's fine. I'll turn it off okay?

M: That's fine. Are there clientele in Mt. Vernon that you know really well? In either location? I ask since you talked about having relationships here like with the banks and...

A: Oh, I see. Yeah. Since the community here is small, everyone knows each other. The community knows each other through one way or another. Including me. People here who know me primarily, well, the people I know primarily are people like the bankers, the mayor of the city, the sheriff's department, the department of police. We know each other because I talk to them the most. After all, when there's a meeting or something I like to get participate. For example, if there is someone who had a problem with the police and they need to go to court and there's no one there who can speak Spanish, we go to interpret for the person.

My sister, Irene, who works at the restaurant, she's the one who knows the people from the community more. From the clients to the people. Because she's been here in Mt. Vernon the longest. But I also know a lot of people. Like I told you, we're always trying to help and that's how we have come to meet important people of the town like the mayors. Politically speaking, we know the person right now running for mayor and we support them and then when they become mayor, they support us. You know, like the police and the sheriff and really, everyone. We try to support them. We know a lot of people. From small companies of landscaping like Adiele, we know their owners. They come to the restaurant. We know UPI. We know their owners. We know all the people. The owners of Lannings Foods, we know their owners. All of these people are our clients but at the same time, we have a good friendship with them. Like with Heralds, who are all from here, who have so many years here, and who *are* from the community and town. We have united with them more or less as clients and as friends too. We have also built a good relationship with lawyers and other people from the town of Mount Vernon.

M: Let me just look at my list. And why did you think that Fiesta Mexicana brings a crowd? Because of the food? Or is it also for entertainment or?

A: I think that Fiesta Mexicana, above all, is a family business. And that has a lot to do with the kind of town we're in. This town and these kinds of town are very family

orientated. They're all about family and they are very tranquil. And so this company, Fiesta Mexicana, brings the people because you can come here with your family. You can come with your son, your grandson, with your cousin, with your mother or father, and you can come and sit down at the restaurant or at the bar and you can sit down wherever you want and relax. Yet, it's very festive. It's familial. That's one of the reasons.

The second reason is because the food is reasonable. They give you a lot for your money. I think that as a family, you can eat pretty well compared to other restaurants. And the people here like to come here, sit down, and eat well without it costing you too much. That's reason number two and it's very important.

Reason number three is that they like the product. In this case, it's the food. The people have enjoyed the food and they've tasted it, they have that flavor in their mouth and they like it. That brings them here.

So Fiesta Mexicana is an icon here in Mt. Vernon because we are established here. We have been here for years now. It's very important then that we don't have the restaurant like a bar but a family-style restaurant.

M: And out of curiosity, I too, do you think... Do you think Fiesta Mexicana does serve the Latino/a community here in Mt. Vernon? Or, do you think it welcomes Latino/as who are new to the community? Do you know if they go to Fiesta Mexicana to meet other Latino/as?

A: Yes. Well, Mt. Vernon is a small town. There's not a lot of Latinos. The community Latino is very small. When we came here there were zero Latinos. Right now there are a little bit but that's because they're employed by companies like UPI. They're employed by companies that have orchards like apple trees so they can cut down apples. AT UPI. A lot of them also work as engineers brought from Mexico that work at Rolls Royce. So yes, they do come here but very few. A lot of them typically come and go very quickly. The people who are here first and foremost are our employees who have been employed for a many years. They are both Mexican and American.

But yes, the Latino community comes [to the restaurant]. For example, when somebody comes to live in the town, they do come to the restaurant. And then they start to build community. Right now, there's a small community. Not in the hundreds but let's say, maybe fifty people roughly here. Additionally, we created a relationship with the Catholic church here. At St. Vincent of Paul we formed a way to have a day of mass service in Spanish for those of us who are Catholics the last Sunday of every month. So every last Sunday of every month at 11:00 AM we have mass service in Spanish because we want to invite the Catholic population that's Hispanic or rather, who aren't Catholic but are Latino. And yes, this has functioned well. So I think that the community is 50-70 people large within the whole community. Latinos. They are people who come to eat at the restaurant, people who arrive there, and the Latino population is also growing. Granted, it's not growing big but there will be a moment when the workers will be here. There will always be 50-100 people here in Mt. Vernon. That's what I think.

M: And the mass that you're talking about... Is that going to take place this Sunday then?

A: Yes. It's the last Sunday of every month. So yes, this upcoming Sunday. 11 A.M. in the morning. At St. Vincent of Paul.

M: St. Vincent of Paul?

A: Yes.

M: I'd like to go!

A: Yes? Well it's going to be good! But yes, we have tried. We want to create an icon here in the community. We want to succeed and move forward. Be here for a lot of years. And Fiesta Mexicana well, it's a fiesta for everybody.

M: (laughs)

A: (laughs) What do you think?

M: Sounds good!

A: What other questions do you have?

M: Well, I only have... Well, do you know if there's something that you'd like to tell me but I haven't asked you about?

A: Well, let's see. It just gives me great joy that people like you have interviewed me about my business. I have done a lot of interviews for people in Columbus like for the Columbus Dispatch, Business First, the Department of, of... Well, a lot of periodicals in Columbus. Additionally we have been interviewed nationally as a result of our expansion. Yet, it gives me even greater joy to do this in a small town like Mt. Vernon. I have never done it before like this. Yeah, I have done a piece in the Mount Vernon News describing who we are and what we do but we've never done an interview this big to help the community or the college. You know, to set an example in the town so you can judge our culture and everything else. It gives me great joy that you have taken notice of us and hopefully we are an example of the culture here in the town. This little town. We are very happy that you are taking us into account and hopefully we can help you. We are at your service.

M: That's one of the reasons why I personally wanted to interview someone from the restaurant. Because as you may know, the culture of a place changes very easily and very quickly. Like the African-American culture, historically has been here in the United States. But the Latino community is changing big cities like Dallas, where I'm from, to small towns like Mt. Vernon. And I don't think it's something we have to study scientifically but in doing this interview, I take it as a voice that we need to have as part of the conversation.

A: Yes.

M: Does that make sense?



A: Yes. I understand perfectly and I'm very well in accordment with that. Latinos need to be involved in everything. Even politically. The Latinos in Texas, in Dallas, in Chicago, have very large communities/populations. But here, in small towns... Well, in Columbus too we have a population of roughly 80,000-90,000 Hispanics. Here in Mt. Vernon, our community is small but we still need to have a voice and vote. Yes, I understand what you're saying. And we try to simply... The Latino population is growing and taking more advantage of the opportunities in the United States. Or rather, we're composing a greater part of the United States than before. And it's about time that in small towns – or rather, that your voice matters. Your voice should be heard as an example of voting like for the levys happening right now in Mt. Vernon for the schools. There are a lot of levys that the Hispanic population will say, "Well, I don't know what that is. What is a levy?" Well, either one doesn't know or one can't vote but for the people who can vote, we need to be more involved so our voice can be heard.

I have my kids in that school. There's a levy right now being proposed and I'm going to vote. I need to. Or maybe I don't need to but for whatever reason, I'm still going to go. And yes, it's important for your voice to be heard, to gain strength. Besides, we're all here working and we're here for a good reason. A lot of people come here for bad reasons but we're here for good ones. We work honestly, quietly, and hopefully the people of Mt. Vernon want us here too.

M: Also, I know that you talked about the Latino community in Columbus, is it big too or... How do you feel like the community is there?

A: The community of Columbus, OH has a lot of Latinos from the outside. Why? Because in 1995 or 1994 when I first arrived here, there were not a lot of Latinos. There were a few but that's because those other cities like Dallas, TX, Chicago, and Los Angeles had a lot of work. But slowly and slowly it's gotten more difficult as you may know, because there have been laws passed that doesn't allow the Hispanic to work like before. And the Hispanic has retracted to places like Columbus which is a big city and has a lot of work especially when it comes to construction and restaurants and all of that. A lot of people arrived here to work. And so the Latino community began to grow from 10,000 to 20,000 to 30,000 to a high of 100,000. So everything began to grow at a steady pace like everything else in a city. But now, with problems of immigration – illegally and legally – a lot of the community from here and Columbus has left. Perhaps they move elsewhere where there are no [immigration] laws. Here in Ohio, we don't have any [immigration] laws against the immigrant like they do in Arizona or like in Alabama but one day it can come. At any rate, the people have left. A lot of the people from Columbus for that very reason. Especially because you as employer cannot give them work. As a person who has arrived here without the proper paperwork, I cannot give them a job because they do not have a social security number. And if you do have that paperwork, then sure, I can hire you. But that's hardly the case. That's why a lot of people have left. But yes, it's growing in Columbus. Rather, it grew during a certain period of time and it's decreased for that very motive.

M: And if you can, I can stop the tape if you'd like, but... Do you think that the Latino community has felt, hm, has felt, not accepted?

A: Where? In Mt. Vernon? Or Columbus?

M: In Mt. Vernon.

A: No. I feel like here in Mt. Vernon there has not been an instance of racism. That's what you're talking about right?

M: Yes.

A: Here in Mt. Vernon, what's ours: our company, our employees, and our family has been accepted very well by Mt. Vernon. We have not seen at any moment a signal of racism or anything less than that. We have done everything or rather; we have seen everything on the contrary. The people are very supportive. After all, one should always try to behave themselves. Understand me? We need to behave ourselves because it's a small community and we don't want to stir trouble. Besides, in our company, the men who work with us, all of our employees have years working at the restaurant. They are well known. We behave ourselves because we all have our family here. And we try not to bother anyone. They don't try to bother us. Everything's good. So no we have never felt any tinge of racism by the people of Mt. Vernon for nothing. We have felt nothing but supported and comfortable. We don't have any problems with that or at least, not yet. Right?

M: That's very good.

A: Yes.

M: Yes. Just in hearing you talk, I gather that you understood before arriving at Mt. Vernon or when you arrived to Mt. Vernon that as a small town, you needed to get to know the people before being accepted. You couldn't just be isolated from the community.

A: Yes. Yes, when I arrived to Mt. Vernon I knew it was a small town. Since I have my Mexican culture and I had been here in this country before I knew the rules of this country. So because I went to school here and I'm a United States citizen of this country, I respect its laws because I live in this country. I really want people who work with me to respect the laws of this country. Especially when you arrive to a town. Respect the rules of the town. So I arrived at this town trying to get along with everyone from the town of Mt. Vernon. You know, to be accepted. We arrived, we stayed, we behaved well, and we did good things because we just wanted to work. We wanted to have a restaurant in the community and we wanted to complete our goal of having a good family restaurant with our accepted people quietly. And we ended up achieving that goal and we've done well. Given that the people have accepted us and we have accepted them, we have a good relationship that still exists today.

M: And how do you say... Is there something in your restaurant that you would like to talk to me about? A favorite thing of yours or someone at the restaurant who is your favorite?

A: Do you mean employees and that kind of stuff?

M: Well, whatever you'd like to talk about!

A: Well, what I like the most about the town and my restaurant is how first of all, when I arrived here in Mt. Vernon I did not think it was going to be a big business. We never thought it was going to grow. Well, to some degree we thought it was going to do fairly well but that was it. And what I like the most is how the restaurant has changed over time. It's almost always in construction. And people comment on that all the time! They'll say, "Hey, we noticed that you're always in construction." A lot of people like it because we're renovating but a lot of people will say, "You know, there's always too much construction going on over there." But you know, I'll tell them, this restaurant is old! And we need to do it like this because tomorrow if the walls don't work tomorrow then we need to tear them down. If tomorrow the floor doesn't work then we need to tear it down.

That's an example. So I really like how the restaurant has been renovated and how much the public seems to like it. We have made the restaurant very festive. And I like that renovation. It's always changing. Always. There's always something different.

People will exclaim, "Oh! Look, today you painted the walls a different color!" The people like that and I like it that they do. I like it when they feel that way. Understand?

M: Uhum. And what do you think... Uh, I'm going to ask you in English. My apologies. What is the best piece of advice you've gotten?

A: For the people that want to do restaurants?

M: For whatever reason. Just, what has someone told you that resonates with you? That you always remember?

A: Me, personally? Well, for example, from business people they call you an entrepreneur. You know, they point at you and say, "You're an entrepreneur." They say that about me because I've had 16 restaurants. I created a company, worked hard and strong to have a company, and I've sold them and bought them but what people most tell me that I really appreciate is how proud they are of me. Especially family but other people too. They don't understand how despite how difficult my situation was, coming from another country, not being from this country, I've come ahead. So yes, for me, a lot of people have told me that: that they're proud of me for being capable of doing all of that. People from Mt. Vernon have told me that too. "I can't believe how this person that came from nothing has all of this." And for me, to hear that, is very good because you're proud of yourself. And not arrogant because I have this and they don't but genuinely proud. Good proud. Meaning, that you're happy with yourself.

For me, that's for my heart. To feel happy with one's self. And when people tell you that, they mean to say that you're doing a good job and that you've done well too. It doesn't mean that you're not worth anything or that Hispanics are worthless so they don't need to be here. So it's not just about the work of the restaurant but the work of the community as well of Mt. Vernon.

M: I'm going to ask you something a little more different. When you're not working or when you're not in Mexico, where do you go? To relax. Do you go to the restaurant or...?

J: Regularly, like I told you, since we have a business with other restaurants my business is always in my office. I have an office in Columbus. A central office where we negotiate all of our business. When I had more restaurants... Right now I don't have that many because I didn't want to grow anymore. I don't want to keep growing like that. I grew to a certain level and I could have kept growing but I decided to wait. And so we had a central office that really, is where I spent most of my time. In Columbus. With my accountant and with all the other people there but now that I don't have as many restaurants, yes, I spend my time.

For example, now I live in Mt. Vernon but I go to Columbus to go shopping. If I'm not working I go to Mexico. I also have a business in Mexico. I spend time with my kids from one place to the other. I'm always doing something if I'm not in the restaurant working. But yes, always. From here or Columbus or in Cleveland visiting other restaurants because we still have some there. So, for example, I'll go to Big Fountain, Ohio or around there or all the way up there or wherever. Even to Kent University. We're there too. That's what we do when we're not working here in Mt. Vernon.

M: You're very busy!

J: Every now and then.

M: But you like to work and you like to do what you do right?

J: I like what I do. That's why I have – and I should have said this earlier – been working in this business since 1987. I have grown with the restaurant since then. I started being involved in this business full-time in 1989 though. So we have about 22-23 years working in the Mexican restaurant business. I love it. After 22 years, I still love doing this. It's like a hobby for me. It's something I like. However, I don't want to grow too much. I like it, I'm going to keep doing it, I know how to do it, but I'm not going to grow it like a big company. I'd prefer to stay as a little company, sell it to someone who wants it to grow, and I can stay at peace from behind. I mean, I could grow it if I wanted to but it's not my goal. My goal is not to grow too much. I had it once. I could have grown bigger but I stopped. That's not what I wanted.

But that's it. What do you think? How did we do?

M: It's great! I loved this interview. Thank you so much.

J: You're welcome.

M: And before I cut the tape, do you want to tell me anything else?

J: Simply, thank you so much for taking us into account. It makes me very happy. Like I said, no one has ever asked us to do something like this in Mt. Vernon. In Columbus yes but never in Mt. Vernon. It makes me very happy to cooperate and set an example of the

Latino culture here in Mt. Vernon for everyone. We're always at your service if you need us for anything. If you want us an example of this community we're here to cooperate.

M: Perfect! Thank you so much!