

The following interview was conducted with Uma Mouser For the Star City Treasures AmeriCorps History Project. It took place on May eighteenth, two thousand and six at "F" Street Rec Center. The interviewer is Nikki Hunter. Hi Uma how are you?

U Hi, I'm fine. How are you?

N I am doing great. And um Uma is also an AmeriCorps Volunteer member. And Uma can you tell me a little bit about yourself and where you came from?

U Okay. I, I came from India, excuse me. (Cough) uhmm I was born in Bareilly.

N Can you spell that for me?. I'm sorry.

U Bareilly.

N Ooooh and what was that like?

U Um.. I was born there I didn't know any better (small Laugh) until I came to United State um I had a happy childhood. Uhmm, We were nine children in the family and is um I'm the only one that got lucky to come to live here.

N So, are your other family is back in India?

U Well yes, they came and left. Like my two brothers, three brothers came and he left, they left. My oldest sister came, they all gone (laughs) and I'm the only one here.

N Oh, Is there a particular reason why you decided to leave India to come here?

U Well I was married to this man he wanted chase the green. So he wanted to come to the United States. Umm so I followed him. And we came to live first Nashville, Tennessee. We stayed there about three, four years and then move on. With the job. You know.

N So is it a lot different here than it was in India?

U It is entirely different.

N How is that different?

U Ahhh, living, its living situations are different and is very different. Uh living day-to-day life ... People there and here.  
(background noise)

N Is their homes different here than in India?

U Is very different. Because ummmm ...Weather conditions are normally not very good. Summer is very hot. Winter is cold. But no heating in the homes. People just put on overcoat in winter. Like around (small laugh)

N So tell me about your trip uhmm over here and what you first thought of America when you saw it?

U First, when I came I had difficult time with airlines but I didn't speak any English. I mean I spoke some but uhmm couldn't understand American accent. I was just lost. (Laughs) Then and when I got to Tennessee it was worse, that Southern accent was so different. It took me; it didn't take me very long. I enrolled in a foreign student class. And I picked up in six months.....?

N So what was schools like were you uh... excuse me. What were your schools like back in India?

U I um I went to school I have Bachelor Degree in Fine Arts.

You see the school I went to is a totally, my language, Hindi school. All my subjects I study in my language. English was just a language class. So it was difficult for me to learn English phrases, how people speak, it took about six months to

N To learn it?

U uhm-hum

N Wow. UmMMM also uhmm just tell me about some of your family traditions, some of what you guys celebrate and things like that.

U Okay, In India back in India we celebrate many festival functions. Uhm. I would say like Christmas, before Christmas comes in November we have a festival of light. We have whole houses, everybody's house candlelight the lights. Everybody had it. That particular day our God came home so we have that coming nnnnnnnnnnnnnnnn him here with the light. In our home.

N Any particular foods that you eat during that time?

U Umm. There are many dessert? Umm is different food, different food we cooked. Indian food that some people know, in Lincoln now. The restaurant you go Indian food served really well here. But this is similar type. Uhmm Is difficult is difficult for me to describe.

N Umm What were the laws? Are they different in India than here?

U I think the same. India one of the largest free society. India has a largest people of freer, than here. They know more people are not looking for to security not looking for people they want to catch. . Like a drug problem. Is free like marijuana, ummmm opium grows, but people can smoke and nobody gonna bother them.

N What recommendations would you give others who are following in your footsteps?

U (small laugh) UmMMM come to America at least once see the situation how people live here, then go back, compare, you know situation. over there..

N Is there anything else you would like to share before ending this interview.?

U uhmm I think Uh this is best thing to happen to me coming to America. UmMMM. The life. We all have a happiness and sorrow, I raised two children; they already medical doctors... So you I would say coming to America good thing happen to me.

N Well that's great and I thank you for your time for this interview and everything. And have a great day.