



This transcript from the Indiana Disability History Project is under copyright of The Trustees of Indiana University and may be used with permission. Quotes and excerpts must be cited as follows:

*Darcus Nims, 2006, interview 031-mi, transcript, Indiana Disability History Project, Center on Aging and Community, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Bloomington IN, <https://indianadisabilityhistory.org>*

**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH  
DARCUS NIMS  
2006  
INTERVIEWER: JENNIE TODD  
VIDEOGRAPHER: PEGGY HOLTZ  
RECORD ID: 031-DO**

**DN:** DARCUS NIMS

**JT:** JENNIE TODD

**PH:** PEGGY HOLTZ

[00:00:10]

**JT:** So the first story is about tell me about school and the teacher that told you that you needed to remember your place when you went to learn how your sister got her job [inaudible].

**DN:** Yeah. Oh, one day I was in a high school at -- and then, my sister was working in the laundromat and I used to come down there and watch her. And then, I went -- asked my teacher, I said, "Couldn't I get a job like that," because she swept the floors and cleaned out the dryers and stuff like that. And she said that I couldn't get a job like that my kind of people had to learn our kind of place. And I always wondered what she means by that. "Why couldn't I get a job like that? I mean, how hard it is to sweep the floor and clean out the dryers, and clean out the lint from the dryers and stuff?" But she said -- she always said that and I always wondered that it kept on going over and over and over in my mind, you know, that why other people was better than I was and, you know, I mean, couldn't I get a job -- a kind of job that I dream of like and stuff? And she just kept on going over and over in mind, she's saying that and all.

**JT:** So, she didn't help you get that job?

[00:01:22]

**DN:** No. No, she didn't. She just said that they stuck me into a workshop [inaudible] that they said when I turned 18 -- excuse me -- the principal -- told me when I turned 18, said I couldn't go to school no more, and then two days later I got a letter that said that I was going in to Goodwill's workshop. Nobody asked. Nobody asked me if I would like to go into the workshop and nobody asked me what I wanted to do or anything. They just send me to the workshop. And then, I was in Goodwill for a while, the next

**Indiana Disability History Project**

Center on Aging and Community, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community  
1905 North Range Road, Bloomington, IN 47408  
[indianadisabilityhistory@gmail.com](mailto:indianadisabilityhistory@gmail.com) | [indianadisabilityhistory.org](http://indianadisabilityhistory.org)

thing I know, got another letter who said that I was going to Crossroads workshop. Then I went to Crossroads workshop and stuff and then the plant that's -- I was at the Crossroads there, shut down and then they sent everybody to different workshops and they sent me to Noble. And none of the times, nobody never asked me what I wanted to do if I wanted to go to the workshop or if I wanted to see about an outside job or what I wanted; or even asked me how I feel about it and stuff.

But nobody never did asked me, I always wondered about that.

[00:02:37]

**JT:** How did that make you feel?

**DN:** It made me feel awful low. It made me -- didn't feel like I was important to do anything or involved thinking and stuff or because of my disability I didn't think that, you know, my own thoughts counted, you know, because I was -- disability, I thought. I thought that's something that is -- you know, that happened because I was born disability.

**JT:** Okay. Well, can you tell me about school and wanting to study math and your future, tell me you [inaudible].

[00:03:12]

**DN:** Yeah. I mean, I wanted to learn how to count and stuff, add and stuff like my sisters did. And then when I had the math and stuff and then the classes at this school and stuff. And, my mom bought me some flash cards to me and then another student was sitting on the porch practicing numbers from the flash cards adding and stuff. The teacher came and took him away from us and told us it wasn't work time -- school time -- it was play time. And they said that we could not learn -- count and stuff. We had to learn to stay on the porch and it was time to play. I thought, "We're not children, you know. And my sisters don't have no porch and stuff to play on and stuff, and she don't have to -- can't practice her numbers and stuff and learning how to add and stuff?"

And I said, "Well, I guess that comes along with being disability," you know, because they never said nothing different and stuff. Just like I wanted to type and the lady from the regular high school came over and brought a typing thing over for the kids to type and they said, "No, we could not have that typing class. That's only for regular people, not for us kind of people." And I thought, "That's, again, they bring that up, us kind of people. What do they mean by that, "us kind of people"? I mean, is there some kind of -- something wrong with us or something?"

**JT:** So back then, you probably weren't speaking up as much as you do now.

[00:04:58]

**DN:** I didn't speak up at all. I just let them -- even when we went to the workshop, the social worker came to my Momma and said that we had to do something about me because I was so quiet. I wouldn't talk to nobody. I sit by myself and all. Now, they want to find out to shut me up, I talked too much.

**JT:** Do you think it was some of those experiences of these questions going on in your mind and you're not speaking up about like what you're saying and those kind of people that helped you get motivated to do self-advocates?

[00:05:28]

**DN:** Yeah. Because we find out from listening to other people and stuff and then I finally got to know that even with my disability and all that we had the right to do stuff and all, and that's when we got self-advocates and when we got to start talking about self-advocates and stuff and that's why I said, "I was always going to let other people not do get pushed around and start talking for them the ones that can for themselves and help them out.

**JT:** Okay, good. Well now, Nikki I know is 19.

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** So, can you -- do you think her school experience has been different than your school experience?

**DN:** A little bit. It's a lot better -- it's a little bit better and it was my school and one of those parents, she got to learn how to read...

**JT:** Wait, wait, wait. Yeah, we ain't talking about Nikki.

[00:06:16]

**PH:** Yeah. Well, I mean, what you're going with this fine, but, say your niece's name.

**DN:** Okay.

**JT:** Okay. Because, yeah, Peggy, we're not going to [inaudible].

**DN:** Okay.

**JT:** Because -- say, "I think it's different now with Nikki's school experience than mine because..."

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** Okay. So, tell me how the school experience is different for Nikki.

[00:06:35]

**DN:** Nikki, my niece, it's a little better for her than it was for me. She got to learn how to read and write and stuff, but not quite as better because they took the tour to the regular children, took them to tours of colleges and stuff, but they wouldn't let them go. They made them stay in homeroom and stuff because they said that they're not -- they wouldn't take them and stuff like that like they act like they wouldn't qualification enough. It's like they took the regular students to Kings Island and stuff, but they wouldn't let the disability children go and stuff. And that's a lot we got to do, a lot of more changes and stuff. We still got a lot of changes to do and, hopefully, I got another -- a great nephew is disability. Hopefully,

when he gets bigger and stuff, maybe -- hopefully it was a lot of changes that we got going on that when he gets go to school and stuff there because he's only three, that they will -- changes to be put in place that he wants to go to Kings Island, he can go to Kings Island and stuff.

[00:07:41]

And he can be just like the regular student and see the different colleges and stuff.

**JT:** Do you think many kids at school are speaking out? Does Nikki speak out?

**DN:** Yeah. Nikki -- my niece, Nikki, she speaks up. She even told her teacher. One day she got to go to one of my conferences and that she really enjoyed herself and stuff, and she went in and told her teacher. She said, "My aunt goes to -- got classes and stuff for self-advocates and disability people speaks up and stuff for themselves and stuff. And then -- and I didn't once know why we can't do the things the other kids [inaudible]. She even brought our handbook to her teacher and stuff, and her teacher did -- had showed the other kids the handbook and stuff and then had -- got to go to amusement park just for them children. And one -- just before they graduated they got to go and stuff because Nikki spoke up for the other kids from going to the classes and stuff that's going to the conferences and the classes and stuff, and listening to me and stuff.

**JT:** You've been a good influence on Nikki.

[00:08:54]

**DN:** I hope so because I want Nikki to know not to go through what I had to go through in school and stuff, and I want other children to learn that they can do things and stuff and graduate because I didn't get to graduate. And luckily, my niece Nikki got to graduate with the other classes and stuff just like a regular person and stuff, like when my niece graduated from junior high. They separated the children. They called the disability children "moonwalkers" and the other children "regular." And the other children got roses, but the disability children didn't get no roses and stuff." And then, I thought that was so wrong. I even said something to the principal and stuff, you know, "I mean, why do you think -- you know, the children was, some kind of outer space or something, calling them moonwalkers because of their disability and stuff?" But I made sure that she got a rose because I went and bought her a rose because she can be special and stuff, too, and she got a junior high graduation dress like the other kids because she can look just as pretty as they did, the other children they looked [inaudible] special.

[00:10:06]

And that -- and she got to do things that the other children thought she couldn't do because she's disability. She learned how to drive. She learned how to cook for herself. She learned how to take care of herself, clean house, wash clothes and stuff, stuff that people didn't think she can do because she was just disability and stuff. But she showed them that she can do and stuff, and I want people to know that, you know, just because your disability and stuff that you can do the things that other children does, and there's other people who takes for granted things you can't do and stuff, thinks that you need to be put in to a nursing home or a group home, or even an institution and stuff because of your disability and stuff. I wanted them to know that, you know, because of that, you know, don't mean that you have to

be -- couldn't get your own house or get your own apartment and stuff, even you might need help and stuff, you know.

And the other people take for granted things like that, you know, you can do and stuff, but want them to know they can do it.

[00:11:13]

**JT:** You're a good aunt.

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** You're a really good aunt. Well, I also know you've done some traveling...

**DN:** Yes.

**JT:** And you've been to Washington, DC a couple of times?

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** And the first time you got the President's award, right?

**DN:** Yeah, I got the Victorian Award in Washington, DC.

**JT:** Can you tell me about that award and what it meant to receive it?

[00:11:36]

**DN:** It was really neat. I mean, I got to go to Washington, DC, something I never got to go and -- I mean; and got to stay in a fancy hotel, stuff that I never got to do and stuff and got -- Victorian Award for Achievement showing people that things that I can do for disability and stuff. I mean, we stayed in the Watergate Hotel. We got a room broken into just like anybody else and stuff, this and showed people that even because of my disability and stuff, I got to be treated just like anybody else. I got to go to the Kennedy Center and got a beautiful dress that the Noble - had the bookkeeper at Noble made for me and the Ladies League paid for me made me seem like -- feel like Cinderella with a fancy dress and all.

**JT:** Wow, that's great. So, what did it mean to you to get this award?

**DN:** It made me show people that even my disability didn't stop me from being just like anybody else. I mean, I got award from the president. I got to go to the White House. I mean, I had lunch with the President and his wife and stuff; and it showed people that even with my disability and stuff and that people think you can't do stuff because of your disability. I got to do things just like anybody else and got treated just like anybody else.

[00:13:03]

**JT:** Do you know how you got this award that nominated you or...?

[00:13:09]

**DN:** Noble nominated me from achievement for my self-advocates and for showing people that what I could do and stuff.

**PH:** Was this the first time you'd been out of the state?

**DN:** Yeah. That's the first time. I was 30 some years old, the first time I ever got to stay in a hotel, the first time I ever got to go to a fancy restaurant and stuff. My mom was like any other mother. She was -- didn't think I should do it at first because staying overnight in a hotel because of my disability because I was diabetic and all. And I showed her that -- I promised her -- when I got there, I had -- I would call her and stuff. I thought it was so strange because my helper wasn't disability and she had to call her mom, too, and I thought, "Wow, ain't that something? I'm disability and got to call my momma. She's not disability and she has to call her momma, too." And that just showed people that I -- I mean, I got to stay overnight in a fancy hotel. I got to go out to a restaurant and stuff. People with not disability takes for granted the stuff like that, the way to travel and all. I remember the first time I got to go on a plane; I mean, I said, "I would never go on a plane."

But there's a conference that I helped plan for and I wanted to go very bad and my helper said, "The only way we're going to get to go is on the plane," and I said, "I don't know about that but I got -- took the brave and went on that plane. I got in that seat and I didn't get up from that seat [laughter]. And I got a little braver when we changed planes and stuff.

[00:14:50]

**JT:** Well, good for you. And you went to Washington, DC, again, recently, right? Can you tell me about that trip?

**DN:** I can't remember...

**PH:** Well, I don't think it was recently. So, when were you and Betty...

**DN:** Oh yeah!

**JT:** Wasn't that the last few years?

**DN:** But so much happened since then [laughter].

**JT:** Okay.

[00:15:07]

**DN:** Yeah, I remember. Yeah. We -- me and Betty, we asked to go to a conference in Washington, DC again. This time, we didn't have no helpers. We were going to go on our own. Some people we're supposed to meet us -- me and Betty our president of Self-Advocates of Indiana and supposed to meet us. They did not meet us. Nobody met us at the hotel. I had some money on my calling card. I kept on calling all these hotels and stuff and see if they had someone -- I had this registered, nobody had us registered.

Betty had some money saved on her credit card and we got the cheapest hotel we could and we took a cab. And then we finally called the people who had sponsored us and then they told us where the rally was going to be at. Me and Betty drugged ourselves down to the train station to take the train underneath and got to the rally and stuff. And that -- then, we got there to the get our way home and got booked into a storm [laughter] and then we had to switch planes and stuff because the plane that was supposed to take us wasn't going to take us home and stuff.

But, if we didn't know about self-advocates and how to do this and stuff, we wouldn't know how to book a hotel or how to get to the place where we were having the conference and stuff like that because we always depend on our helpers and stuff, and -- or depend on other people to help us. There was nobody there to help us. We had to depend on ourselves, something that nobody thought we could do. Really, we didn't think we could do it ourselves and we thought -- we were shocked we did it.

[00:16:56]

**JT:** Well, good for you. Did you feel proud of yourselves?

**DN:** Yes, we did. We felt really proud of ourselves.

**JT:** So, is there anything else we would know about that [inaudible]? Okay. Well, I know a pretty long time ago your mom died.

**DN:** Yes.

**JT:** [Inaudible] about that. And then your house burned down.

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** Right?

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** And then, I remember hearing that you had to use your insurance to pay for bills or do some -- to pay for things instead of building your house, is that right?

**DN:** Yeah. When my mom died, our house got burned down and then I had to take the money that was supposed to build the house, paid for doctor bills and medicines and stuff that had to be done and stuff because didn't have the insurance to take care of the medicines and stuff and I had to have so many different medicines and stuff and they kept on adding up and adding up.

**JT:** Now did you have a contractor somewhere [inaudible] help you?

[00:17:54]

**DN:** Yeah. We had a contractor and they always told me, Billy always said, "You call the Better Business Bureau." Okay. I thought I was being smart. I called the Better Business Bureau and they said these people was fine. They even billed out a contract and everything. And [inaudible] got ripped off. They took our -- my mom's and my life savings, a thousand dollars with down payment. They ripped out the

bathroom because they were supposed to make it handicap accessible for my mom because she was in a wheelchair. They tore off the porch, they were supposed to make it a ramp and stuff, and then they just left it there. And they told -- a piper was in the bathroom because it was an old house and found out it was old sewer line and that the bathroom -- that -- the basement was full of sewer and stuff. We had to take another loan to put back the bathroom, take care of the sewer lines and stuff and put in the porch and stuff.

[00:18:58]

Well, we couldn't find nobody to help us with the -- to help us with the -- again, ramp and stuff up there and stuff. And then, the police department wouldn't help us find the people, and then when we found the people and then I went back up there to the detectives and they said -- and then the detective told his boss not to pay no attention to me. I didn't know what he was talking about. He said, "That person, she worked at Noble. You know how them kind of people are." And that person got away with all my money. And then Noble had a newspaper person came out to talk to me about it and they put it in the paper and stuff and then there was oodles of people, disability people and senior citizens and stuff called us and said that they got ripped from the same people. They did the same things to them and stuff. And then that's when I started working for Back Home in Indiana and let them know and stuff for because and figuring out and stuff let them people know that when they get them a house and stuff of their own not to go through what I had to go through with the contractor.

[00:20:08]

And not only that, for the people that comes out, to buy your home and stuff, and you pay them so much money before they check out your home and stuff. And then the lady, we paid a \$300 to check out the home and then found out -- she said there was no reason for us to go down the basement to check out the basement, and found out the basement had all bad pipes and stuff. And that first winter we lived there, all the pipes busted and we had to scrape up the money to get the pipes fixed and stuff. And that's what I told the people from Back Home in Indiana when want to help disability people find homes and stuff for not to go through the experience that I had to go through, that me and my mom had to go through.

**JT:** What did you do for Back Home in Indiana?

**PH:** I thought, do you want to get a drink?

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** Okay. So, what did you do Back Home in Indiana?

[00:20:55]

**DN:** It's a -- it was -- I was on the board of directors. They helped people find -- the disability people find homes of their own. And then helped them go through -- what to go through with to make sure that they didn't go through the experience that I had to go through and stuff. And helped them find homes



and stuff and tell them all the things that come up with, you know, when they go look for a home and stuff.

[00:21:24]

**JT:** Now, did you get some help with Back Home in Indiana finding your own home?

**DN:** I didn't -- when it was time, the money that we put away, we had to use it. I didn't have the money and stuff for -- to get a home of our own at the time.

**JT:** So, how do you think things have worked out for you and finding homes? Has it been difficult or hard or...?

**DN:** At the time that there was no place that was fixed. At the time when we were looking for a place for Back Home in Indiana that it was disability enough for us, for me and stuff, that because of me and my chair and stuff. And then thank God there are places out there now that they got homes and stuff, they're working on this stuff, fixing for wheelchair accessible and stuff. And -- but when I was looking for a place, so they didn't have no place like that.

[00:22:25]

**JT:** What's been your experience in trying to find a decent place to live?

**DN:** Being accessible and stuff, that the houses that I'm living in now and stuff, that they took them a year for them to get a ramp for me to go up and down there. Mostly, my niece had to help me out the door and stuff, and then take my chair and bring it out the door for me.

**JT:** I've come to visit you several different places or pick you up and you've had lots of steps and that one place you lived on the second floor [inaudible].

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** So, is it hard to find good housing?

**DN:** Yeah, and -- because I only get social security and it's hard to find places that is accessible or -- that you can afford and stuff that because you're on this fixed income and stuff, and the houses, it's so hard to find a place and stuff. The one we got now, it's a nice house. It's a nice big house and stuff, and then it's only -- cost us 600 a month, but we won't have to pay the lights and the gas. The landlord pays the water and the sewage and all for us, because a lot of the places and stuff. And then we got -- the place I got like now because the landlord allowed me to have animal. The other place paid the same amount and stuff, but he wouldn't allow me to have animals and I love my animals.

**JT:** What animals do you have?

[00:23:55]

**DN:** I have a dog that my niece got from the humane society she went to pick him out. Her name is Sarah [assumed spelling]. And we got a kitty cat and her name is Angel. And we got another dog named Sam.

[00:24:12]

**PH:** So how do you find these houses? I mean, how do you go about finding one?

**DN:** We look in the paper and then a lot of times that my sisters or -- and all, we go just driving around to find one because a lot of the ones that is -- that you can afford and stuff, you just have to go around looking and stuff to find and stuff. And then, you just hopefully take a chance, find one that is cheap enough that you can rent and stuff and all. And it's hard, that's why we had to move around so much and stuff that the places that -- it's -- the rent goes up and all that the landlord don't want to fix nothing and all or it's just not accessible and stuff. Like before I had to go with my wheelchair and stuff and I said had -- we lived in -- I lived in an apartment and I could afford and stuff after my mom passed away, and there was a -- it's a two-story apartment there. But my niece -- my sister and my niece went around and around with the landlord because she did not have no fire extinguisher or anything and she was worried because there was no -- only one door and stuff and she was worried that there was a fire and stuff and I had so much trouble getting down and stuff that get caught upstairs in the fire. I mostly just stayed upstairs in my bedroom and stuff. I didn't go out and stuff, hardly. And...

[25:45:10]

**JT:** Are you eligible for Section 8, Darcus?

**DN:** Yeah, but you're on the waiting list.

**JT:** So, have you applied for Section 8?

**DN:** Yeah. We applied for Section 8 before we got this apartment there because I was still on the waiting list. I just heard the -- that from the waiting list for Medicaid, they had asked me if I still wanted to stay on the waiting list and they had given me a number to call, just tell them everything the same and all and I say -- so I wanted to stay on the waiting list.

**PH:** When did you sign up for Section 8? Do you know?

**DN:** See, my mom's house burned down, our house burned down five years ago.

**JT:** So, you've been signed up for Section 8 for five years?

[00:26:36]

**DN:** Yeah. And then, we got this house here, this landlord. He made the house accessible for me and fixed the bathrooms for me, fixed the special walls and stuff in there for me. And they even fixed the back porch so I can go out in the backyard and stuff for me. And that he even -- he had this -- he -- the front porch is accessible where I can go out and sit on the front porch. Like the other day when it's so pretty and stuff, my great nephew and nieces, I got to sit on the porch and watch him out in the front yard play and stuff, you know. Mostly, I just stay in my bedroom and stuff or I'll stay inside the house because it's so hard for me to get in and out and stuff. But, he -- I hear he's a pretty good landlord. He fixed everything to try to make it more accessible and everything for me.

[00:27:32]

**JT:** Do we need a sentence that says something like [inaudible] Section 8. Okay. Can you say a whole sentence that pretty much says, "I applied for Section 8 five years ago and I'm still on the waiting list"?

**DN:** I applied for Section 8 five years ago and I'm still on the waiting list.

**JT:** Would you stay where you lived indefinitely if you could? You're like [inaudible] just in there a while?

**DN:** Yeah. I like the house I live in now and I would stay there indefinitely if I could and stuff?

**JT:** Tell me about your neighborhood.

**DN:** I live over there by Garfield Park and then now since I got electric wheelchair and stuff and I got a ramp and stuff. I can go to the park and stuff and my neighborhood is nice and quiet and all, but the factory across the street and stuff and its -- but, you know, it's only open in the daytime and stuff, it's not open at night and stuff. But the neighbors are really nice and stuff and they look out for everybody and stuff. I couldn't ask for a better neighborhood.

**JT:** Oh, good! So, you know some of your neighbors?

**DN:** Yes.

**JT:** Do you socialize with them?

[00:28:41]

**DN:** I talk to them and stuff. When it's pretty and stuff like Monday when I was waiting on the Open Door for the doctor and stuff. I talked to the couple who lives down the street.

**JT:** Okay. Cool.

**PH:** When we drop you off, maybe we'll take a few pictures of your house.

[Background talking].

**JT:** Okay. Okay. Well, your health seems so much better, you know, honest -- I told you a couple of times how good you looked walking down and how much stronger you seem and your color is better.

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** Can you tell me what it's like to deal with the medical professionals?

**DN:** [Laughter] Yeah. I mean, this new hospital that I go on to...

[00:29:25]

**JT:** They don't know what I'm talking about, so...

[00:29:26]

**DN:** Oh, okay. It's hard for the hospitals and stuff because the new hospital I go into that the doctor sit there. I've got so much water on my body and stuff. They took a hundred pounds of water off of me and stuff, but I had to be put in a hospital to get it off of me. And then they found out that I have a bone disease in my legs and stuff that -- and they found out that the other hospitals that I went to that didn't - - always told me was from my diabetic and it's -- find and told me that it could've been taken care of a long time ago and it wouldn't got as bad

as it did, but he's taking care with the medicine. But it's hard to get a good doctor that understands about your disability and stuff, or listen to you and stuff. Or the hospitals, like when I'm -- my toe had to be amputated and stuff or had to be amputated off and the bandages had to be changed and stuff.

[00:30:32]

My wheelchair would not fit in to the rooms that they do it in and then they had a -- they changed the bandages out in the hall there and it was so embarrassing. They have people watching and stuff because it was hard for me to even look at it. Or when they had to put a cast on my hand and stuff, they had to stick me in the utility room for to put the cast on because my chair would not fit into the rooms and stuff. But they had -- the new hospital I went to, the -- I was really shocked that when they send me down to the lab there, I said, "No way my chair was going to get in that room." And then they had a special -- the other half of the door, it opened up -- it's a -- put on the door there and then the same way with the bathrooms. The elevators were great big, too. Now, the doctor's office could be bigger and with very -- room to get into and stuff.

But, the hospitals, finally -- looked like they finally started listening to the disability people and stuff and started to make their hospitals and stuff more accessible and stuff. And it takes so long to get the doctors and nurses and stuff to listen to us. When you go to the hospital and, you know, the disability and stuff and you got somebody else with you and stuff. Instead of asking you what's wrong with you and stuff. They look at the other person and asked him and stuff like my niece went with me to the hospital and stuff, the doctor asked my niece what was wrong with me, if I'm taking my medicine, you know, if I'm running any fevers and stuff. And I was sitting right there like I was a stranger or like I was invisible and stuff. And I'm the one who's having the aches and pains and stuff. So they asked me -- they didn't ask me, they asked her.

**JT:** Did you speak up?

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** And...

**PH:** Yeah. I know it's hard, but try and look over this way.

[00:32:36]

**DN:** [Laughter] Oh, okay.

[00:32:39]

**JT:** So, did you speak up when they were asking [inaudible] question?

**DN:** Yeah. I told the doctor, I said "I'm here." I said, "I ain't have no chills. I ain't run no fevers, but yes, I'm taking all my medicines and stuff." If you please don't give no more medicines and stuff. But, I told him it was hard for me to purchase all of my medicines and stuff because the last time I was in the hospital that the social worker got my medicines to hold me for a month and they was \$500 worth of medicines.

**JT:** Well, I know you really helped a lot of the poster that we made that said what people with disabilities would say to the medical profession. And you touched on some of those about having bigger chairs, talking to the people. But were there some other things that were important to you? Were you the person that had the suggestion about getting up on the table or...

[00:33:37]

**DN:** Yeah, because when I was in the hospital and stuff and they want to check you out and stuff and stuff; no way they can get on the tables. The tables was way high and that there ain't no way because when my momma, well, she's in the wheelchair and she was amputee and stuff. They had to have a security guard and another nurse to pick her up out of her chair and put her on the table and stuff, and then pick her up and put her back in the chair and stuff. And that -- and then, I thought, you know, if they could just fix the beds and stuff before she can get in -- for the disability people can get up and down on the carts and stuff themselves, you know. And when -- and they still ain't fixed it. They did all those repairs and stuff to the hospitals and stuff and they still ain't fixed the cots and stuff now. Just like when you go in there to the eye doctors and stuff like that to check your eyes and stuff there, you -- there ain't no way that you can get in the chairs and stuff, or they -- so they can examine your eyes right and stuff.

**PH:** So what do they do [multiple speakers] doctor?

**DN:** They put you in a corner and they examine you best they can, but, you know, [inaudible] completely examination like you should whether you would by the chairs and -- in the chairs and stuff.

**JT:** So Darcus, if your medicines are that much, you know, like your saying, \$500, how do you pay for all your medicines?

**DN:** I just get what I can get and then I don't get the rest and that's...

**PH:** Say it like, "I don't get my medicines.

**DN:** Okay.

[00:35:15]

**JT:** So let me ask you again. So, how do you pay for everything?

[00:35:19]

**DN:** I don't get my medicines. It's -- I have problems affording my medicines and stuff that is why I had to end up back in the hospital the last time because I had a heart attack because I wasn't getting my medicines, and then I couldn't afford it.

**JT:** So, do you have -- do your benefits not cover your medicines?

**DN:** No, my insurance don't cover my medicines and stuff. I had to get that out of my own pockets.

**JT:** So, how are you supposed to do that?

**DN:** I don't know how they expect disability people to afford that and stuff. Medicaid is supposed to help you with that, but, I mean, I filled out all the papers for Medicaid and even the doctor -- had the doctors fill out everything for Medicaid, and then they kept on calling the worker and stuff and she wouldn't return my calls and that -- and then, I just kept on getting the runaround and stuff, and then just didn't -- without -- none of my medicines and stuff; and I just kept on getting sicker, kept on going back and forth to the -- in and out of the hospitals.

[00:36:31]

**JT:** Well, you're a pretty important person, you know, to the state of Indiana, which, you know, you represent -- a lot of people with disabilities, people value your opinion, they value you. You have a lot of connections around the state, you know, because you know a lot of people. So, why do you think it is still so hard for you, you know, that who know people to give this?

**DN:** Because people not listening to us. They say they're listening and they say that they're going to help us and they're going to do things for us to make it better for us for people with disability and stuff, but it seems like it goes in one ear out that ear. Or, they put us on a waiting list or they said they'll get back to us and have you fill out the papers and stuff, and they say, "Oh, I remember you. I'll get right back to you." And then a year later, "Oh, I'm still ain't got back to you yet, has I?" and stuff.

**JT:** ...you feel?

**DN:** It makes me feel like I'm not important, like my health is not important to them, you know, or they don't care that, you know, that if I didn't get better or I'll get worse and stuff. It seems like my feelings don't matter or my health don't care or matter and stuff.

**JT:** Well, when you think about your whole life in terms of support and money and funding and that sort of things, do you wish there were some areas that were better?

[00:38:02]

**DN:** Yeah. I wish there was a lot of things better with funding and stuff out there for people. I mean, funding for people could do things better, funding out there for health wise for people health wise and stuff, you know. I mean, not only for that, you know, for people with disability and stuff. It's like, you know, they worry about the health and stuff and then they should be [inaudible]. But they don't think

that disability people don't think -- they don't think that they should worry -- only worry about the health and stuff, but they [inaudible] think that they like to have fun, too, that they should be some kind of organization to pay for them to go on trips and stuff to go -- just like other people get to go with disability. It's not disability.

[00:38:47]

**JT:** Well, let's personalize a little bit to your life. So, if you could think about just your life, do you think there's some areas that you wished were better, or you had some more help?

**DN:** Yeah, I wish it was better for my medicines; better things for my health wise and stuff like I got a walker for around the house and stuff; but I can't use it to do my cooking and stuff because there ain't no -- ain't got no basket or anything to put my food and stuff in there, but my niece got to do my cooking and stuff for me. And then, that makes me feel bad because I like to do things for myself and stuff. I mean, not only me, but other disability people like to do things and stuff. Now, when I was in the hospital doing the therapy and stuff, I've seen -- had these baskets hooked on to the walkers and stuff like that. And I called the social worker but she never did return my calls and she said that she mostly only for the people that's in the hospital. I said, "I guess I has to wait to get back in the hospital before I can get any more help."

[00:39:55]

**JT:** Okay.

**PH:** You know, hearing all these stories, and you've gotten a runaround a lot, it must make you feel really frustrated. What keeps you just going and not just giving up?

**DN:** Because I was hoping...

**JT:** And look over here...

**DN:** [Laughter] Okay. Okay, because I'm -- not to give up and stop because I hope and keep on hoping that the people finally will listen to us and stuff. And my groups, my self-advocate group keeps me going because I like going to my meetings. I like to meet my friends and stuff and like hearing things that -- I like [inaudible] people was doing and stuff. And hopefully that all city in Indianapolis get to do these things that other cities are doing and all. And finally, maybe these legislators and stuff will finally saying that there are four other people for disability finally say, "Yes. We are and we're listening to you and stuff and we'll start doing things.

**JT:** But like Peg said, what keeps from just screaming? I've done this for 10 years and I've done this...

**DN:** I don't know. I just -- I mean, I just keeps on hoping and hoping that things like that are changed and stuff, that's all I do, all I can keep on doing, just keep on hoping.

[00:41:20]

**JT:** Do you think life for people with disabilities has changed in your lifetime?

[00:41:26]

**DN:** A lot of things has changed but not very much. I mean, they keep on saying things it's going to get better and stuff, but it seems like they're not. It seems like if you take one step forward, they kick you back two more steps backwards.

**JT:** Can you give me some examples?

**DN:** Okay. Like now with the health thing, they finally -- it seems like they're starting to helping out with the -- help with your medicines and stuff like that, but the doctor bills is eating me up with more and more doctor bills and stuff. I mean, from when I was in the hospital and stuff, I got a bill that says I owe them \$5798.83. And want to know how arrangements I can make they're going to pay that and stuff. Like, I get help for medicines now, but what's going to need help now with the medical bills because it seems like that. I mean, you could help with something else and, you know, something else needs help with.

And housing or services or transportation, have you seen any changes in any of those areas?

[00:42:48]

**DN:** I mean, we've been working on with in Indianapolis, we've been working with Open Door because we've been having a lot of trouble with Open Door and stuff that Open Door is not doing like they're supposed to. I mean, dropping people off places they're not supposed to be dropping them off or not, picking up like they should and stuff. But they all finally started to listen to us and stuff like that, like Greyhound now. We worked so hard with Greyhound, finally to get the buses and stuff accessible and stuff. But now, they cut the services to Greyhound and budget to little towns and stuff has cut -- the services cut there and stuff, and then people with all disability and stuff [inaudible] and stuff. And want to come up for statewide meetings, or is on the board of directors and stuff like that, can't do it now because they ain't no transportation for them.

**JT:** So, if I were to ask you what areas that you think, the service system falls short or is still failing, what would you say?

**DN:** Transportation -- transportation is a big problem with a lot of those people for disability and stuff because they don't know how to drive, some of them don't and stuff. And that if they want to go places or stuff like that, you know, they can't go because of transportation and stuff.

**JT:** What about housing?

[00:44:22]

**DN:** Now, housing, I'm sure they're working on it and they all doing a lot of things and fixing it up and stuff for the people for disability and stuff. But it's still so much [inaudible] tape -- the red tape and stuff they had to go through and all to get in there. And then they get apartments to put them in and stuff and they don't take care of apartments and stuff, and they all run down and stuff like the downtown like one of the HUD apartments downtown. They are [inaudible] big buildings and stuff that my girlfriend work -- lives and stuff. They're talking about selling them to IU for their people for IU to live there and stuff.



[00:45:04]

And that they don't know where the people is going to go or live in those apartments and stuff, and that it's -- and in the -- there's so much work that got to be done to the places and stuff like that. And then, not only that it's safe wise and stuff.

They got rid of the security that watch out to make sure for security and stuff for them, to make sure they're safe and stuff. They got rid of like that and like their lives are not important for the security reasons and stuff like that. And like they go overboard for checking people out for the -- to live in the group homes and stuff and like that they supposed to watch out for them and stuff like to make sure they're safe for the people and stuff. But they're not doing it and stuff, they're not watching them and stuff. They're not worry about the people that's in their group homes and stuff like that, or is in the -- being safe and stuff, all the drivers and stuff being checked and stuff for safety and stuff. But they all are doing -- the people who is in schools and stuff, they watch the drivers to make sure they ain't got no DDIs and drinking drive and stuff.

But, I know they don't do that for the group homes and stuff and they don't watch the staff and stuff for the group home and stuff and seeing the people is not getting them treated and stuff. It seems like, you know, they're not paying a lot, they're not worried -- to get -- who they can get in there to watch him because they don't worry about the money deal.

[00:46:51]

**JT:** Do you want to take a drink again...

**DN:** Yeah.

[Multiple speakers].

**JT:** The trick is that you have to keep looking at...

**DN:** Yeah, I know. Yeah.

**JT:** But if I do this, that means you're looking over it [background talking] [laughter] at the camera.

**DN:** Okay [laughter].

**JT:** All right. So, you were talking about things where you feel that the service systems fall short -- transportation, healthcare, the sort of stuff they get in. If you could sit down with the governor...

**DN:** Oh boy!

**JT:** Yeah.

[00:47:14]

**DN:** [Laughter].

[00:47:17]

**JT:** All right. I want you to pretend like I'm the governor and tell me what you would say.

**DN:** I know that we -- you know, worry about money deals and stuff like that and all.

**JT:** We don't know who you are talking to, so... So, if you could just say, "Okay. I'd like to say to the governor..."

**DN:** I'd like to say to the governor, I know that, you know, [inaudible] worry about money deals and stuff like that, you know, but don't all have just as much as important is cut back all these -- cut back some stuff because you're cutting back the safety of the people that's in the group home, safety that of the people transportation, health wise -- health wise for them. And that, you know, you act like -- worry about everything else and stuff and you seem like you're not really worried about us because we're disability and stuff, you know, that like our lives are not important and stuff, you know. I mean, that you worry about the, you know, the schools and all that and that, but you seem like when it comes to the people for disability and stuff, it seems like we're -- it seems like we feel like we're second-hand citizens and stuff. That you should start worrying about us, too, you know, and stop worrying so much about moneywise and stuff, you know.

There's so much -- you know, you can do it for cuts and stuff, but there's so much you do with the cuts and [inaudible] with safety wise.

[00:48:58]

**JT:** Well, I'm going to follow up on what Peggy was asking you a minute ago. You were always so pleasant and you're always in such a good mood and cheerful and positive, and I know you have a lot of hope. And the only time I have ever even seen you not be 100% happy or pleasant is when you didn't feel all that good.

**DN:** [Laughter] Yeah.

**JT:** And, you know, of course, that's to be very expected. But, do you feel despite all this that the service system in Indiana and what Indiana offers people with disability has let you down?

**DN:** A lot. I think people -- you know, the services and stuff, what people with disability and stuff -- [inaudible] a whole lot, you know.

**PH:** Wait a minute. Start off with "The service system has let us down," okay?

**DN:** The service system has let us down a whole lot. They ain't seem like they care about us and all. They say they do and they say they're going to do so much to help us out and stuff, but it -- when it comes down to it, it seems like they just don't worry about us.

[00:50:01]

**JT:** Can you give me some examples about you personally?

[00:50:07]

**DN:** Okay. Like they said -- like all this time that they supposed to help me out with my medicines and stuff like that. They kept on telling me -- as soon as I get these papers filled from the doctor, you know, they were -- going to be helping me out with my medicines and stuff. Got all the papers filled out with the doctors and stuff, I got it into them and stuff. I even had them -- the doctors faxed it to them personally and I even checked in to make sure they got the papers and stuff and all. And then she told me -- then they told me that, you know, it will be only a couple of months and stuff, you know. And then I called back and keep on calling and calling and calling, and then they keep on giving me the runaround or they won't return my calls. I leave messages and stuff but they wouldn't return my calls and stuff or they say that I had to wait and stuff, and on. They keep on -- I keep on calling and I tell them I say, you know, I can't afford my insulin because I don't have the money for my insulin, you know, what I'm going to do and stuff, you know.

And then she says, "You know, I don't know what we're going to do about it. You know, it won't be very long" or stuff. And that went on like that for five years that they kept on saying they were going to give me medicine and stuff. I had to be stuck in a nursing home before I can at least get some of my medicines and stuff. And then, when I was in a nursing home, at least I got my medicines and stuff. And then [inaudible] you know, and saying to myself, "Do I have to spend my whole life into a nursing home? Just to get my medicines and stuff, or do I have to beg and then tell them Darcus Nims is still here, you know, and she's waiting on some help, you know, and stuff and I don't want to be stuck in a nursing home. I don't want to be stuck in an institution and stuff like that. I just want be on -- live with on my own or live with my niece or something just like anybody else does and stuff.

[00:52:07]

I just wanted a little bit of help, I mean, help with my medicine and doctor bills and stuff. Just like anybody else and stuff, you know, just like any other human being and stuff. And, but they think that, you know, that I'm not important and stuff because of my disability, that's what I feel like.

**JT:** That was excellent. People are going to listen to that and cry [laughter]. Well, do you want to -- do you have anything to say about that in terms of housing? Like you feel like you've been let down in terms of housing?

[00:52:39]

**DN:** I mean, not only me and housing, problems with housing and stuff, other disability people and stuff, you know what I mean? That they are not taking care of them and stuff. They put them in these apartments and stuff. They're not taking care of the apartments and stuff and not worrying about the security and stuff, they cut all the security and stuff. And they worry about the safety and stuff of them, you know. These fancy apartments where these people that got all those money and stuff, they make sure that their lives are taken care of good with security and stuff, but because of your disability and stuff, they're not worrying about your life and stuff being for the security [inaudible] taken care of and stuff, and the apartments safe and stuff for you and all. They're not worry about it, you know, and it seems like -- and another flag going up and saying, "You're disability. You got to take the backburner again."

[00:53:36]

**JT:** What about jobs? [Inaudible] services system has let people down the job?

**DN:** Yes. I think they let people down finding jobs and stuff, you know, that they seem like they say that they're going to find me jobs and stuff. My niece Nikki, you know, they got -- she graduated from high school and stuff and that took her out to see about some jobs and stuff, and couldn't find her a job and stuff. She still hasn't found a job and stuff. And all you get -- and you get board and stuff just sitting at home and stuff. And you feel lonesome, you feel -- you know, you feel let down and stuff like. You feel like they just want you to stick in -- in the institution and or stuck in group homes, you know, or stick you into the workshops and stuff.

You want to get out of the workshop; you want to get an outside job and stuff. They're just saying the workshop is there, you got a choice -- workshop, or nothing. And that's what it feels like, you know, and stuff, and you want to make yourself better and stuff and make your life better, and worry -- and stuff and they seem like they don't worry about it, you know, they just want to stick you back into the workshops. And they say the job coaches are there to help you find your outside jobs and [inaudible] to get your outside job, get you out of the workshops and stuff. They don't really mean that and stuff, they just worry about, you know, getting you some place to keep you shut up so you won't keep yourself hollering at them.

[00:55:20]

**JT:** So, really, things haven't changed. Do you think things have changed since you got out of high school and Nikki getting out of high school?

**DN:** No, I don't think things changed a lot for jobs and stuff, or [inaudible] you know, I mean, it certainly seems like they just want you to stick into the workshops and stuff. They say they don't but it seems like they do, you know. Or, transfer -- they do find you a job and if you ain't got the transportation, they'll go out that far because this young lady that lives in the workshop now, they found her a really good job, but it's past Greenwood and Open Door don't go out that far and she goes Open Door and stuff.

**JT:** Has Nikki been encouraged to go to the sheltered workshop?

**DN:** Yeah, but her mom...

[Multiple speakers].

**DN:** Oh yeah. They had said they want Nikki to go to Goodwill and then I told her mom. Her mom said "No." You know, she would want her to -- she don't want her to get stuck into her workshop because I tell her what goes on and stuff, and she said that she didn't want her to go through that experience. She wants her to go through the experience but find the outside job and stuff.

[00:56:40]

**JT:** [Inaudible] topic. Okay. Well, there's a couple of questions that I know a while back there was -- or a long time ago, there was an issue with your bank account and there was a mistake. [Inaudible] tell us a

story on the way up that you saw a mistake on your bank account and you went in and somebody helped you with your checking account that the statement was wrong. Do you remember that story?

[00:57:05]

**DN:** Oh yeah, that they held me -- that when I had -- my bank statement said that I had -- so much was taken out of my bank and stuff and then all I know that it wasn't took out and stuff. And then that they were nice enough to help me. The lady was nice enough to sit there and help me figure out what was happening and stuff, and that it was a computer error and stuff. But, they kept on giving me the runaround on the phone and stuff and then they wouldn't -- it seems like they kept on thinking -- they said, kept on saying they was right and I was wrong and then they looked at me and they said, "You know, you know how to figure and stuff, you know, because of your disability and stuff, you know. You can easily make the error and stuff." And I said, "I know I didn't make that error and stuff." And the lady said -- this other lady said, "We'll sit down and we'll see if we can help you out." And found out it wasn't me, it was the computer and the computer made that error.

But they kept on thinking I was right, they was -- kept on saying they was right because they didn't look at me as a person, they just looked at me as a disability person.

**PH:** What did they say when they found that it was their error [inaudible]?

[00:58:30]

**DN:** They said that they apologized, they were sorry and stuff, but still didn't make me feel any better because they act like they made me feel like I was a liar, or that, you know, I didn't know how to handle my own -- didn't know how to handle my own money was coming out and stuff. Because, I mean, ain't a very good reader and stuff, but at least I do good in adding and stuff, and I know -- what was taken out of my checking account and what wasn't taken out of my checking out.

**JT:** Well, good for you. Well, we were talking a little bit before we starting taping about Easter Sunday and your church. Can you tell me what your church means to you?

[00:59:09]

**DN:** My church means to me that I get to go Sunday -- go to church and stuff like any other person and stuff. I mean, get to worship the Lord and stuff, you know. I could tell you a story about the -- when we were doing this training 10 years ago at Noble and we were doing a training with these parents and stuff. And then these other -- and then we did training with these other people which came and we did the training and we telling them about some of our hopes and dreams and wishes and stuff. And I tell -- we tell them that, you know, we believe in the Lord, we're good, you know, and we go to Church and stuff like that and she said, "You're not angry, at God from a -- you know, being disability like you are and stuff like that that, you know, and you are a good Christian person and stuff. And I said, "Yeah. You know, I mean, I'm just like any other person, you know, I don't blame the Lord, you know, for me being crippled or all the problems that I have and then stuff like that."

[01:00:12]

And she said -- she was really shocked that as people are being disability like that that we'd be believing in to the Lord and stuff like that, you know, and I was like -- was really thinking. "You know, we [inaudible] different than anybody else, you know." She said, "You know, because some of them was mentally handicapped and stuff that she wouldn't think that they would be going to church and stuff like that. And like I thought to myself, "[Inaudible] who she thought we are? You know, I mean, we're just like anybody else; we like to go to church and go out to you know, like that and stuff. And just let people know and stuff.

**JT:** Well, you were talking about your preacher used you to help him [inaudible] the church was accessible, could you talk about that?

**DN:** We're building a new church and that old church, the bathrooms wasn't quite wide enough for my chair and stuff. And that -- and then I telling the pastor about all the new things and stuff for the disability people and stuff, and he asked if I would help him show him some things that the new church when they're getting built can be fixed to make sure it's accessible for everybody and stuff. And we made sure that the bathroom doors go in the bathroom were wide enough, made some extra wide bathrooms and made sure the sinks and even the sinks was low enough for the wheelchairs to go under and the paper towels was hidden right. And the soap dispensers can be on the corners, except way across there and stuff. And then the ramp to go up there is not -- is fixed with granite and it's not smooth for in the winter time and stuff for the ice and stuff or and all.

[01:02:11]

And he made sure that the rooms was -- for the Sunday school rooms and stuff was -- were big enough and stuff, and that for the people to go and stuff, too. And they asked questions -- asked my questions and stuff and for the water fountains and stuff for and all. And that I said, "Wouldn't it be neat if everybody would ask a disability person how to make a [inaudible] and stuff like the Dome down in Indianapolis, the Hoosier Dome and stuff. It's supposed to be accessible but it's really not because -- it's hard for you to get around and stuff in your wheelchair and stuff, and it's hard for you to get into the restrooms and stuff. Even the -- excuse me, the...

Oh, excuse me. The bus thing, the bus service up here in Indianapolis and stuff that when we had to go in there, the Open Door, you had to go in there to get your ID picture taken and stuff. And they make you doing stuff. I could not go into the office because my chair wouldn't fit in the office. I had to sit out there in the hall where the other people waiting and stuff, they asked you all these information and stuff. Couldn't get into the bathroom because the bathroom, you couldn't get your chair into the bathroom and stuff. And that's all supposed to be accessible and stuff, but none of them wasn't accessible.

**JT:** Well, I'm glad your preacher took the time.

[01:03:59]

**DN:** Yeah.

[01:03:59]

**JT:** It sounds like he really valued...

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** How does it make you feel when your preacher asked you?

**DN:** I thought it feels really special, again, I mean, he was really worried to make sure the new church was going to be accessible enough for us, for all disability people that come in and stuff like that. And you think that these other places, restaurants and all like that would take the time to ask and stuff that, you know, and make sure it's accessible and stuff like that. And like they say and they're telling you on TV like that you supposed to keep your social security number private and stuff, you know up at Open Door when you had to fill out the application, they ask you all the information and stuff and that I could not go into the business room for ask [inaudible] all their question, all them people sitting outside there. They all know my social security number. They all know where my telephone number and all that, you know, all that supposed to be kept private and stuff, and all of them people know that and stuff.

[01:05:07]

And not only me, there was four other disability people with wheelchairs could not go in there, and the other people learned all the information, supposed to -- the government tells you supposed to keep private, not to let other people know about it. They all know about it now.

**JT:** [Inaudible]. So, as a church, talk about Easter Sunday...

**DN:** Okay.

**JT:** You were saying that after church you guys go out sometimes. Could you talk about what you do with the other church members at the church?

**DN:** We get together on Sundays, after Sunday service and then Thursday service and stuff we go to the restaurants, to eat and stuff, all of this goes, big crowd and stuff. And we all go and we eat and stuff. And they don't see any difference in the -- ones that is disability and stuff because we have four or five different people with there in wheelchairs and special needs and stuff. And that they don't see no difference in stuff. We all get treated the same way and we're on in the restaurant the same and stuff.

**JT:** Is that fun?

**DN:** Yeah, it is.

[01:06:13]

**JT:** Okay. Well, I got one more question that, you know, I wrote down and [inaudible] talk about. But you've had a really, really full life and you've had a lot of things that have been important to you and you've done a lot of important things. If you were to think about your proudest accomplishment, you know, the thing you're most proud of, what would it be?

[01:06:35]

**DN:** Getting self-advocates started.

**JT:** Okay. So, can you put that in a sentence? "I am most..."

**DN:** Most proudest thing would be getting self-advocates started, that showing people that what all the special stuff that disability people can do, you know, that all the things that, you know, people can do as disability and stuff. I mean, show that to the schoolteacher, show the business people, show even the politicians and stuff, you know. What disability people can do, you know what I mean? They can hold a job. They can hold a family. They can hold a career. They can learn how to drive. They can learn how to cook and take care of family and stuff, you know. Just like when I was in the workshop there, that the social worker told me that because I was taking care of my mom and then my niece was coming to go – chance to live with us and she came to me and told me that I couldn't take care of my niece and take care of my mom, too.

[01:07:44]

And work and go to my meetings and stuff, and then I saw – thought one and I asked her, I said, "Don't you work?" And she said, "Yeah." I said, "Don't you got a family to care of?" And she said, "Yeah." I said, "Don't you have to go to meetings and stuff like that?" And she said, "Yeah." I said, "There ain't no difference between me and you, just takes me a little longer to get them done." And I showed her that I took care of my mom, I took care of my niece. I went to my meetings. I kept my group going. I worked, and just like anything else, you know, they didn't think I could do it and stuff. But, I showed them, you know, because I was disability and stuff, they say I couldn't do that and stuff. And I took my mom to her doctor's appointments and stuff and even with the classes, to learn about diabetic and stuff for my mom. And then when I turned to be a diabetic, I learned how to special things had changed since when she was and all. And I even told people things that they could do that's for the diabetic and stuff.

When we were at a conference, a young man, he was saying that his son was diabetic and he was on a strict -- on he only gets so much money and how -- he didn't see how he has a hard time. But, food and stuff [inaudible] different kinds of food and stuff and I tell them then that -- they would talk to me in classes that he can buy the regular peaches, just put them in the drainer and drain them off with cold water, put them in a bowl, put them in ice to get cold, and there ain't no difference in buying expensive peaches with NutraSweet and stuff in it, and it is that kind of peaches. And he said, "He did not know that and I told him that things that he could do to help his son and stuff for his son, for his diabetic and his son can stay on his budget. Because I know I had to stay --sticking on a budget, and I have to worry about my diabetic.

**JT:** Did you get the first sentence...?

[01:09:48]

**PH:** Yeah. Yeah, I'm pretty sure that'll work.



[01:09:54]

**JT:** Okay. Well, Darcus is there anything you want to talk about that we haven't talked about [multiple speakers].

**DN:** No

[Inaudible].

**DN:** [Laughter].

**JT:** All right. We didn't talk about that one, the Brown County story.

**DN:** When I was little, my aunts always took my sisters and my brothers and stuff, took turns and took them to Brown County and stuff, or took them out to eat and stuff. But she would never take me because of my disability, and I used to cry and stuff and my momma used to tell me that, "Don't worry. I'm going to show them all. I'm going to be special." She said that "I'm going to show her." And then, and when I got to go -- we had a family picnic and stuff, my mom brought my pictures from Washington, DC and showed them all. She said, "See? I told you she was going to -- See? I told you guys she was going to be special. She got to see the President."

**JT:** Who was president at that time?

**DN:** President Bush's father.

[01:10:57]

**JT:** Big Bush?

**DN:** Big Bush, yeah.

**PH:** That was a good story.

**JT:** It is a good story. Anything that -- any profound thoughts? Any important things that you think we ought to have in tape...

**PH:** ...that you want people who might be watching it and [inaudible] think about?

[01:11:18]

**DN:** Think about, you know -- thinking about the person's disability, to think about the person. You know, they're always saying, "You know, this person can't do this because of their disability," and "This person can't do this because of disability," or "This person can't do this because they're not physically, mentally or handicapped and stuff like that. They keep on saying that, you know." And they think that -- but [inaudible] think about the person, you know, [inaudible] they're handicapped or they're mentally [inaudible] like that. Put all that beside and just think that's a person and a person just like any other person and stuff. They want to be treated the same. They don't want to be treated that they have to be put in the corner because of their disability or they're not physically handicapped and all that. They

don't -- and they can't -- thinking they have to be -- can't go out to a movie and stuff and like that because of their handicap and stuff.

[01:12:23]

They don't want to go out to a movie. They want to go out to eat. They want to go to amusement park and stuff. It's like a group went to -- saved all their money all year round to go to Six Flags. When they went into Six Flags, Six Flags would not let them go on the ride because of their disability and stuff, because -- and wouldn't let them and stuff, and that made them feel bad and stuff because of that. And then there's one -- then, a -- and then this one restaurant wouldn't let this young man come in because of -- because of his disability because he -- that he tried to say [inaudible] his -- the way he looked and stuff because he wasn't -- because he didn't -- wasn't physical perfect and stuff because his stuff, and that they wanted to keep him in a -- they wanted to -- they didn't have no seats and stuff for him in the back of the part and stuff and he wanted to sit in the front part and stuff and all.

[01:13:32]

And it's just like it's like they feel and stuff. If they -- the shoe was on the other feet, you know. There's like before we got electric doors in Noble and stuff we had then the bosses and stuff. We put in chairs and stuff and, you know, and see how they liked it. And they tried to open the doors and stuff like that and they didn't -- couldn't do it and stuff. And they've seen what we mean about the -- you know, about the wheelchairs and stuff like that. And then, you know, some of the places thinks because you don't work at the workshop no more and you get involved by doing changes and stuff, but helping out with changes to be done in the workshop and stuff and they say, "What are you getting involved for? You know, you don't work here no more and stuff." But you're there for the -- for your friends. You're there for the other disability people who don't -- won't speak up for themselves or can't speak up for themselves. But like this young man who was getting abused and stuff. And I did not know at the time about anything -- I know about these senior citizens got abused about the people you could go to but if a child got abused, you know.

But if a disability person got abused, I didn't think there was nobody could do about it and stuff. This young man always told me about he was getting abused at home by his mom and stuff, and then I didn't know what to do. One time, he called me at home telling me that his mom was abusing him and stuff. His mom got on the other end and she is telling me I couldn't do nothing and stuff, you know, it all -- like that. I called my helper and then they would send the cops out there and took care of him. And then the next day, I told him that he's telling me, I said, "You got to tell the social worker what's going on so they can help you." I said, "I mean, I'm not the one getting abused and stuff." I said then, "[Inaudible] I'll stay here with you and you turn around and tell the social workers exactly what's going on at home and stuff. And then he did and stuff. And then they took care of him and stuff. And then later on, I figured -- found out that there was places that you could go to and as for -- for disability people getting abused and stuff. But I didn't -- I never known that and stuff. I had to figure that out and stuff.

[01:15:57]

**JT:** Do you watch TV much or the news much?

[01:16:00]

**DN:** Sometimes.

**JT:** Did you see the -- all the rallies, all the people getting together about the -- what they're talking about doing with the illegal immigrants and the aliens...

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** Thousands of people in Indy?

**DN:** Yeah. Because I just came from the doctor's office and we were right there in the middle of it.

**JT:** So, you saw -- so Maribeth and I were talking about wouldn't it be amazing, you know, the -- these people have a big issue. They want to stay here. They don't want the president to send them back to their country and they're here illegally. And they all got together and they did this big protest and we were wondering what it would take, you know, all issues that people are unhappy about in the disability [inaudible] and all things you can talk about. You know you're not alone; a lot of people...

**DN:** Yeah.

**JT:** ...feel that way.

**DN:** Yeah.

[01:16:45]

**JT:** So, why don't all people -- why do you think all people with disabilities don't together and do a protest march just like the alien...

**DN:** They feel intimidated. They don't think that people would listen to them because of their disability. And they feel scared and stuff and then stuff, because [inaudible] feel like they're strong enough, or people would listen or pay attention to them and stuff, because they think that their feelings don't count.

**JT:** But in a way, it's really similar to the big march that we had for those people had to have been scared because, you know, they're basically saying here I am up here illegally.

[01:17:26]

**DN:** Yeah. I mean, like the big march they had down on Washington, DC that time me and Betty and stuff went to. And they had marching and we had -- they had signs and stuff like that, you know. And none of the big people, you know, the senators and governors and stuff would -- it seems like they didn't even come out, you know, about it, you know. And the big march -- the -- and had in the park and stuff like that, maybe a couple of them did, but, you know, not like they did with all those senators and governors and stuff, they came out, you know, for the big rally and stuff and like they were really listening to that and stuff like that. But they seem like they didn't pay no attention to us as we had ours and like our feelings didn't count.

[01:18:12]

**JT:** Well, it seems like that would be a good thing to kind of get people doing and just pick a day, you know, [inaudible] think, "Okay. Everybody, go to your town square."

**DN:** Like the problems we had -- the problem we were having at Garfield Park. Okay. For our picnic problem we had last year with the bathroom system. Okay? They were giving me the runaround this year, the same thing and stuff. And the lady said that, you know, she gave me a bunch of different numbers and I kept on calling and stuff. The place that where the bathroom is at where we're going to have the bathroom at, it's ran by a different place. And she said, "Because there wasn't going to have no activities and stuff the day we have and our picnic, they couldn't open the bathroom -- they couldn't open the doors for the bathroom. But they would see about those porta-potties and stuff, and then they said -- I said, "No, we can't -- you know, I ain't going through this and I don't see why -- " They said, "Call this other one fellow." And then, I got tired, I called the governor and talked to him, told him what was going on and stuff, and then I told him, I said, "We feel like we were getting discriminated against, you know, that all disability was not -- they're not listening to us because of our disability and what happened last year and stuff."

[01:19:35]

And she said that -- she said that "We'll take care of it," and stuff. Then, the lady from the park's department --the lady called me back and she said, "Didn't I tell you that I was going to take care of looking into it and stuff?" And I said, "But you didn't seem like you were interested in what I was saying and stuff. You kept on telling me that for two days and stuff." And I said, "And no calls back and stuff." And I said, "I went over your head and stuff and I told him and stuff." And then now she said, "The bathroom doors are going to be open. We're going to have four accessible potties, two regular potties, and stuff."

**JT:** Good for you.

[01:20:13]

**DN:** And stuff. I was scared but I was tired of getting the run around.

[END OF INTERVIEW]