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Title: Jun Dairiki Interview
Narrator: Jun Dairiki
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 14>

NW: You said that in Chevron, you had been very well treated, and I think you really didn't think that even right after the war's over, in 1950s, when you were back in high school, there was no discrimination against you or people like you. Am I getting you right or?

JD: In high school, there wasn't any problems, in the town that we lived in, there was not any problem. Okay. Now, when I moved out to San Francisco, what I learned later on was that Chevron, from 1945 to about maybe the late 40s, they did not hire any Niseis. That was discrimination, they did not want any Nihonjin to be working for them. And that was totally because of the war. Okay. But once they hired one, found out what good workers they were, then the door's open.

NW: The door's open. Yeah. After you started to work for them, did you feel any . . . , you know, different treatment?

JD: Discrimination? No, I didn't.

NW: So, you're happy with that.

JD: Yeah. I think a lot of us Niseis were very good workers. We had good work ethics. And I think that . . . we were just good workers, not just good work ethic, but we were good at what we did. That's what they saw in us. So there was, there were really no discrimination barriers there.

NW: It's kind of amazing that earlier they were not hiring any Japanese at all, but the same company can change, so quickly.

JD: But it took a few years before they did. And when I went to work for Chevron, there was only one African American.

NW: Oh, so you noticed it.

JD: Uh-huh. She was the only African American that I saw anywhere. Now of course we have tons of them, you know. So, over the years that has changed, but when I started working for them, there was only one.

NW: What was she like?

JD: She was very nice, very well dressed, I didn't know her, I never worked with her, I just knew that she worked there. I don't even know what department she worked in, but she must have been fairly good for her to stay on, for her to be kept on.

NW: Right, right, because she was probably the first example of racial diversity.

JD: And she was the only one for a long time, that I can remember.

NW: Somebody made sure to keep her. Yeah. Now, I know that you are not survivor yourself, but because Jack is very active, I mean, he was really doing all kinds of helpful work. By the way, Mariko, I just talked to over the phone, she was saying, "Please tell Jack that he's number one." [laugh] She really wanted to . . .

JD: [laugh]

[Jack]: She's very kind.

NW: Well, you are, well you are.

[Jack]: You know she had a flat tire one time, and we fixed it up for her. We were at a funeral home and she was driving a Cadillac.

JD: Mariko Lindsays?

NW: Oh, Mariko, I mean, Michiko Benevedes.

[Jack]: Benevedes.

JD: Michiko Benevedes, I remember your changing the tire.

[Jack]: I don't know who's funeral it was but we gathered, and when she was about to leave, we noticed the flat tire. That's why she remembers me.

NW: That's very kind of you. You always show up for medical checkups and that's . . .

[Jack]: As long as I am healthy and able to, I really like to help, today I'm talking about [?].

NW: But you also help out others too. I remember you carrying heavy tables and you packing up the trash. Oh sure, I think people notice that.

JD: I mean, every year, moving the tables around and chairs.

[Jack]: And health [?] is getting difficult to get [laugh]. You don't know how long you'll have it.

NW: Well, you have to make sure that you have it.

[Jack]: I'll do as long as I can.

NW: Hopefully there will be other people who can do that.

[Jack]: Yeah, we used to have more people helping too, but now, not so much.

JD: But they're aging, too.

[Jack]: Yeah, they are aging. I don't blame them.

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