My name is Osvaldo Rivera... they know me as 'Ozzie'. Lifetime resident of Southwest Detroit, I'm a cultural and community activist. I'm Puerto Rican, born on the island. My families have been on the island of Puerto Rico since the 1800's for sure. On my mother's side, her grandparents were, one of them, was from Caracas, Venezuela. That made me who I am culturally and politically, because my father was a musician and growing up, because he was the only one at that time that played a particular guitar called 'El Cuatro'. All the musicians used to hang out at my house... so I grew up kind of in that environment. I found out, especially my high school years in the civil rights and the anti-war movement. And so education was flavored by growing up kind of poor, and growing up during the period that is known as a civil rights period, that really influenced my outlook.

Then I learned how to use culture, music to do community organizing. During my lifetime, I've led theater groups, I've led a couple of dance bands, dance troupes and drum performance groups. One of the things that I can remember very early on when the Mexican American community would hold their parades or festivals celebrating beginning of the Guadalupe, which is December 12th, was the full expression of the Native American heritage. And I thought that was interesting. I grew up in a family... also, were the skin color… you of envision everything from redheads to very dark black. And so having been raised in that kind of environment where you're surrounded by non-European cultural and historical figures, you kind of know there was a different story to what was predominant at point.

What I would hope to be able to contribute in the immediate future would be, to be part of the process where my experiences, both as a community organizer, a developer of organizations, is to pass that knowledge on to a new generation of activists who though

they have a heart for social justice don't necessarily have to have skills at this moment, but are searching for them.