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**Speaker 1** [00:00:03] He's a high. Welcome. Javier Coronado, thank you so much for being here today and being willing to share your story as a part of the X says app or Student Experience StoryCorps Archive Project. And so today we're sharing on our prompts, which was given to him earlier, which is tell the story of your experience so far. As an engineering student, you may want to start with your background and what brought you to pursue this program. Then you may want to include your initial impression of the program and how you began to understand how you fit into the program. AH the program fits into your life or doesn't, or how you feel that maybe you don't fit in and also how you how what characteristics of the program have impacted you most in terms of your life or your community? Well, with that, I will hand it over to Javier. Thank you. Yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:01:11] Thank you for the introduction. I'm. I'm here. I'm from originally from Boise, Idaho. And I consider myself to be Chicano as a Mexican-American that kind of wants to keep that cultural identity. And I'm also a first generation student, so first generation for my undergraduate and graduate study. So. So, yeah, so my engineering experience has been interesting. It kind of first started in undergrad, a I went to Columbia University and I was kind of met with a lot of I feel like I feel like it was a lot of resistance. So I remember one of my first days there, I met with my advisor. My what? How do you call it? Just my academic advisor. And I remember she kind of ripped into me saying how I was only there because she made the decision to let me into the school and that it was my responsibility to make her look good and that I if I. And that it was. Kind of insinuating that none of my work had got me to where I was at, and it was all just because she decided to. And so that kind of sentiment, I think, is something that I'm pretty familiar with in engineering as someone from my background. So like, you know, having to constantly feel like you have to prove yourself or just because of your background and so on. So that was kind of how I started my whole engineering career. And so it's kind of a rough start and. So as I proceeded, I finally finished my degree. And so after I had graduated, I didn't really know what to do. So I spent some time kind of thinking about things. And so I decided to go back to school and pursue graduate study. And I kind of did this back in Boise, Idaho, because it seemed like a. I was kind of close to family and close to that support network. So that was that was pretty important to me. Um, so, so yeah. So then I started at Boise State and my, my advisor got a job at Oregon State, kind of, I think, in the second year of my study. So the whole group kind of packed up and moved over here. And it was kind of a kind of an interesting experience because we moved in the middle of the year. So, you know, I didn't really get that. Your usual experience where you meet everyone and you kind of go through that whole orientation process and you kind of have a good idea of what's going on. I just moved to here in the middle of winter and didn't really know anyone or kind of really know how to get around or all of that. So it's kind of a steep learning curve and. My lab mates and as we all kind of formed their little group and helped each other out through that process. And it's not like any fault of the department or anything like that. It's just I think it's just a consequence of the situation. It would have been nice to have more of a welcoming experience, I guess. But, you know, I quickly realized that people at Oregon State are very busy and have a lot to do. So that's understandable. So yeah. And you know, to touch on my background a little bit. So like I said, I was I'm from Boise, Idaho, and I kind of grew up in a more like I have something like a humble beginnings, right? So I didn't I didn't have a lot of resources, Um, but I did have a lot of teachers throughout high school. That kind of really helped pave the way for college, you know? And a lot of other resources, like like Treo, for example, Treo kind of helped a lot with the application process and. Because also, since I'm a first generation student, my parents don't really know much about college or application process or what even to expect, what kind of requirements you have to do or any of that. So it's good to have those resources to kind of help help that process. It kind of makes because someone in my situation in college and in education and engineering can seem like such a daunting and impossible task. So having those kind of support networks is really what is not only important for me, but I think important for a lot of people, my background. So. So I guess my impression of the program so far is, is that I kind of like it. You know, I haven't had as much of that resistance that I had in my undergrad. I think there's still a lot of people that still have those ideas of of like, you know, you have to prove yourself that you're good enough, I guess, to be in this degree here in this program, which I think I think is okay, is just. It's it's difficult sometimes to as as someone from these underrepresented groups. It's difficult to separate that academically versus kind of like like whether it's like a racial thing or an ethnic thing or a cultural thing versus like an academic thing. That's kind of a tough thing, I think that is. Kind of, I think, president in a lot of different programs and especially in graduate school. And yeah, so I think. So how does it fit into my life? And. So. I think the thing about graduate school is it does take up a lot of your time. Which is. Which can be kind of tough, you know? There's a lot of different cultures that value like family time or spending time with your family, and it could be tough to fit that into. And to your graduate life as how the program stands. So that's kind of one thing that I think it's hard to or I guess one way in that where I don't fit into the program. And. But I do feel that the program allows me to be kind of self-motivated and kind of lets me kind of pave my own way, which is which is kind of nice. I kind of appreciate that. So, yeah. So I think another thing about the program that I think I started to notice is that maybe. There's there's a lot of people in the program that maybe aren't too familiar with different cultures and that can kind of provide the provides kind of like a boundary, I guess, to the education process. So it's kind of like almost like a misunderstanding, right? Like and it kind of overall makes it a little harder for for both, you know, for everyone involved. And I think that's why the diversity aspect is so important. The diversity, I think, is is very important because, of course, different people from different backgrounds have different cultures and they approach problems and situations very differently. And if the people in the program are not aware of that, that culture, like that's a way of thinking. It can provide kind of like a boundary to the education process because instead of kind of focusing on the situation, a lot of time is spent just trying to understand each other. And sometimes people can lack the patience to kind of get through that boundary if they're not familiar with someone else's culture. So I think a good solution to that is just to have a large amount of diversity, right? So and not only that, but also have kind of a. Kind of decreased barriers to talking about culture and because I think a lot of people. From what I've seen feel kind of I don't know. They don't they don't feel comfortable sharing that sort of thing because maybe they're afraid it's like looked down upon or that it'll be judged or that maybe they're they're their customers or where they came from. Well, will cause people to judge them and see them as less academically or you know, so. So I think I think that also has a role to play. And and it's and I know I've experienced that before where if I. If I share certain things, I feel like maybe that'll affect the way. People see what I'm capable of academically, and I think a lot of people probably have similar views. See. So yeah. So I think yeah. So I think it's important to not only have that diversity but also have. Kind of been like an open and like supportive space where people can talk openly about their their cultures and their beliefs and and values and stuff like that. I think that's just as important as the diversity aspect, because if you have diversity but you don't allow people to speak freely about it, then that's kind of a kind of get rid it kind of gets rid of the diversity because then people start to of only form the same kind of personalities that they feel like they need to form to be a part of that program or part of that industry or whatever it is. So yeah. So I think I think that's it's. I don't think I have anything else to say, but maybe. Is there something that you wanted to. Think maybe. Oh, I see. Here. Okay. So. Yeah, So. So what specifically am I hesitant to share about myself and my culture? So I don't know. I think it's just. And it's hard to come up with an example on the spot. Like, say, for example, even like speaking Spanish, I feel like. That can be sometimes. I don't know. Just like. Or like Spanglish, you know, a mix of Spanish and English or just kind of like some phrases that I'm used to saying that maybe people think that. I don't know. It makes them think that I don't know English well or. Another incident. And. And it was hard to come up with examples on the spot. But. But yeah, I think and it's something that I haven't just experienced that August day, I think is something that you experience and then all throughout your life. I don't know. It's hard to. It's hard to come up with examples because to me, it seems normal, right? Because I'm used to it. But if someone else sees that, I think that's they have that reaction and it. And sometimes you want to avoid people having that reaction to. Two more proms. And. Okay, so I. What are some strengths or important contributions that I bring to programs or industry organizations based on their perspective? Okay. Um, let's see. So I think. I think a good strength that I have is that I can be very methodical and very kind of observing. And also. So I think that's very important in in programs and in industry. You need to be able to kind of take on a really complex task and kind of break it up and be very methodical about how you're getting through that complex idea. And also, you know, have like, you know, some sharp eyes, you know, be able to see things that that, you know, small details that can be very important and and how things shake out. And I think that's something that I kind of picked up from my parents. Like, for example, my, my, my mom. All throughout. I mean, it's still no wood, clean houses. And kind of her big deal was to always keep an eye on the little details, you know? So like, like any little, like, thing I was. And then, you know, I would help her, so I would have to kind of pick up that skill as well, being able to like, see all the fine details that maybe other people would overlook. And. And. So yeah, I think I think those are that's probably my biggest strength. And just in terms of important contributions, I think another or another strength, I think, is that since I've had the experience that I have, I try to be a good listener and kind of provide that space that I think is important and and try to be really patient and have an understanding, you know, not to just jump to something to conclusions or judgments, but to really get like really try to hear someone out and try to really understand what it is they're trying to convey. So that's I think so that like the communication aspect. Is something that I also have the strength in. So. Kind of like changing gears and thinking about important changes that I think should happen in engineering or the culture and industry. I think I kind of touched on it before, but yeah, just just having that diversity, but also having an openness to understanding, understanding people, you know, so kind of. Kind of getting away from that, jumping to to conclusions or judgments and being really open about other people's ideas, being really open minded and maybe like. I think a lot of times people think they're open minded, but they make you know, they sometimes make some comments like that, maybe they think are harmless. But I think it just shows. That maybe they're not being as as good as they think they are. So maybe in that case, I think it'd be good to have some sort of training or, you know, like and and I think it's hard because the only way I think a good way to do it would be to give people that feedback. So if I'm in an underserved community and someone is doing that to me, I think a good thing it would be for me to say that to them and communicate my feelings. But I think in a professional environment it can be hard to do that because you know that person can be above you or superior to you, and it might be you don't want to like add more confrontation to listen to that situation. So. So yeah, so maybe like some training or and something that's a little better than just an online video that you click through and, and they give you some situations like I don't think that's very helpful. Maybe like a face to face conversation would be better. So, yeah. So I think that's something that can change, that can happen. Um, the education that, that could definitely help and, and, you know, just, um. I don't know. Yeah, I think generally just having more support resources would be good. Maybe have have a dedicated person. And in every department that can deal with kind of these issues would be nice as well because I think. Sometimes the people in a department or in a program, I mean, they're great. I'm not complaining or anything, but sometimes they're not as sensitive or in tune with what underserved communities might be dealing with, which just adds that barrier that I kind of touched on before. And then the I just it can make the whole experience a lot a lot worse than it has to be. I think so. I think overall my experience at OSU has been pretty good. I think there's a couple of things that have made it hard, but I think that's I think has more to do with kind of like the economic situation that the U.S. is in right now. So like living expenses and things like that that have made things a little harder. Yeah. But but overall, I think it's been pretty good. And I think, you know, one of the reasons why I wanted to go. Well, I wanted to go to Oregon State. Was because I was kind of tired of the attitudes that I encountered at other schools, other private schools, you know. So it's a lot of like, but. It's a lot of like superior superiority complexes and and ways of putting yourself above everyone else. And I just I'm not really a fan of that. So what I do like is that at Oregon State, I think people seem to be kind of on the same level for the most part. And. And really treat you like a colleague. And so that's that's pretty nice. I do enjoy that. And yeah, I think that's. That's all I'd like to say about that.