[00:00:03]

We're listening to Tell Your Story where we connect to HLS staff on a personal matter. Hello everyone. This is Edgar Kley Filho from the Equal Opportunity Office. My pronouns are he, him, his. Today we are talking to Edwin Armani Melo from Securitas who will tell us about his life. How long he's in this position at HLS and the work he does? Thank you for joining us Edwin and please, Tell me your story.

[00:00:42]

Hi everyone. My name is Edwin. I work here at HLS. I've been here for almost three years now. This coming September, we'll be making my third year. Time flies, man.

[00:00:55]

What are you do here?

[00:00:56]

I'm the security supervisor. Just for the morning shift.

[00:01:00]

For the morning shift.

[00:01:03]

Basically, my day pretty much goes a little something like this. I'll come in check in, grab equipment. That's my keys, my radio, work phone. I get out onto the floor and patrol the campus. We assist the students if they're locked out. We help out staff members as well. We're essentially like the first responders on the campus.

[00:01:27]

On-campus presence. When you say morning shift, what time and until what time does it go?

[00:01:33]

Our shifts are broken up into three different shifts. Mine is 8:00 to 4:00.

[00:01:39]

It's 24 hours?

[00:01:40]

Yeah, 24 hour system. Exactly. Keeping the campus safe.

[00:01:45]

That's really good. I feel for the students in case, for any reason, we always think about security, but at the same time, any kind of question. If they need anything and having someone around is a good thing.

[00:01:57]

We've had times where sometimes I'll pick up, like an overnight shift. Somebody called out and I could use the extra hours. I'll be here. Sometimes we have situations where a fire alarm goes off. You may think, shoot a fire alarm, and it's the middle of the night.

[00:02:12]

Exactly.

[00:02:12]

How serious could it be? We'll check around. When we find out through operations, what location it's coming from, we'll check in, make sure everybody's okay. We clear out the building.

[00:02:26]

Usually is nothing.

[00:02:28]

Nine times out of 10. It's like somebody burnt some popcorn. [LAUGHTER]

[00:02:33]

That would be me present here. Thank you. Tell me a little bit about let's go back to talk about your background history. You and your family are from New England. You are from a different place.

[00:02:48]

To elaborate on your question, I'm from New England, and I have other family members that are from New England, but my grandparents who raised me, they came all the way from the Dominican Republic.

[00:03:00]

Dominican Republic.

[00:03:02]

My father was born in the Dominican Republic before moving to the United States. He spent his early childhood years out there.

[00:03:11]

Your father was also born there and came here young.

[00:03:14]

Very young. I was about like, six, seven years old when they moved to New Jersey, and they were there for a few years before coming over to Boston.

[00:03:23]

Did you have a chance to keep the Spanish?

[00:03:26]

Yeah. Actually, due to my grandparents being my actual parents, throughout my life, I learned to speak Spanish first through them, and later on I learned how to speak.

[00:03:40]

That's fantastic. Because that's the best way because once you learn as young as you are the English is going to be a natural thing to happen because [OVERLAPPING].

[00:03:49]

Because it is everywhere. Exactly.

[00:03:50]

That's what we tell everybody who wants to learn a different language. The most difficult thing is not about sometimes just the course that you take, whether it is online or in person, whatever it is, is the environment that you belong to. Because you are so surrounded by, visually sound and everything by the language that's in that environment. That makes it difficult. If you don't have someone to practice every day, the one that you are trying to learn but it is difficult. It's not easy.

[00:04:23]

I agree with you on that. It's definitely a lot of repetition is needed, you were saying without that practice, without having people to continue and using what you learned over, over and over. You will forget it. I had a younger cousin that was living with me during a point in time in my life. Her mom had went away to the army and she was very young. We took her to the Dominican Republic one summer, and I was still in elementary school at the time that's that this happened. We go over to D.R. She's practically living with us. She learned how to speak Spanish. We went to DR. She could communicate well, she was like two years and she could speak fluently in Spanish. We came back, and when her mom graduated from the army, she moved back to the States and took her daughter with her, of course. This day, you can ask her. She can't speak a little Spanish.

[00:05:26]

She can't speak anymore.

[00:05:27]

Not at all. She will understand it a little but it's not how it used to be.

[00:05:32]

Should have kept because that's such a good thing. I think people when they know, do you have one or more language? I think that's really important. I'm curious now because it said that you used to go often to DR.

[00:05:44]

I was pretty much every summer from four months old up until I was 12. It was almost every summer.

[00:05:53]

Could you sense the difference in terms of both cultures?

[00:05:57]

Yeah.

[00:05:57]

You were living already in an environment that gave you a lot of that part of that culture. I believe food was all.

[00:06:04]

Oh, yeah, for sure.

[00:06:05]

Was not much different?

[00:06:06]

No.

[00:06:06]

But I think there is a difference when you go there and experience being on the ground and being visited the place.

[00:06:13]

No definitely is just not just the environment, but people you interact with on a day-to-day basis is nothing like what you experience here. For us New Englanders, we're commonly known for being rude when we're out and about. You can't go around just speaking to anybody in public. People have a goal in mind already. They're trying to get from point A to point B. No interruptions. That's just the lifestyle here. D.R everybody is speaking to you.

[00:06:46]

All at the same time, sometimes.

[00:06:47]

Sometimes you'll get a few people trying to get to know you. But the funny thing is that a person like myself who was born in Boston, and I spent a good part of my life traveling to the Dominican Republic, but they could still to this day, and mind you, I hadn't been there. Last time I went was in 2022. That's a 10 year gap that I hadn't gone. When I went back, finally after all that time, I stuck out like a sore thumb Edgar, I tell you. Soon as as I went to visit family, everybody else that was in the area instantly knew I was American. Instantly. They can spot you out.

[00:07:29]

Isn't that amazing? This is well, of course, community. If you're in a place, and sometimes it is the way that you dress, the way that you carry yourself.

[00:07:40]

Yes, the way that you carry yourself. But you touch something that's really important. It's interesting for me to see. That's what the Latinidad is there for, for me is something that's so beautiful, the expression, being happy or loud or dense or whatever it is, which I think is really cool. All these years, having the family influence but also having the American influence. How do you navigate between the two?

[00:08:09]

Navigate the two. I'll tell you this, I'm a very naturally friendly person. I wouldn't say I'm very outgoing. I can definitely be a shy person, for sure but I'm fairly easy to talk to. If the opportunity presents itself, and someone is more than happy to engage in a conversation with me, I open up like a book. That's instilled within me. That's just me as a person. I'm still closed off, but I'm not hard to read. I'm not hard to get through to. It's only a matter of the environment. We were just saying. Once I get to DR, and I'm familiar with everybody around me, I open up even more. I'm more outgoing. Walking with a little more confidence because I know where I'm going. I know the person down the street, I know the person at the corner. Because this just is more, I feel that has something to do with familiarity.

[00:09:17]

Yes. Do they give you or so do give you a hard time by being a gringo or how was [OVERLAPPING].

[00:09:26]

A lot of the conversations usually start off with, Can you bring me some sneakers? [LAUGHTER]

[00:09:36]

Can you bring me a PS 4, and I'm like, dude. I don't have what myself.

[00:09:40]

That's exactly Brazil. It's the same story, every time when I travel there, there's a list. Sometimes people that I don't see for ages. Hey could you?

[00:09:48]

They're expecting something when you come back.

[00:09:50]

How can I transfer that to you? Where is that money that you're never going to see but it is always there. At the same time, how was growing up here and going to school here?

[00:10:02]

Growing up in my neighborhood, early on in my life. Everybody was very friendly. Neighbors were always outside, the kids would be outside a little more often.

[00:10:13]

Where was that?

[00:10:14]

In Dorchester.

[00:10:16]

Dorchester.

[00:10:18]

I had a lot of friends growing up in my area. Over the years, you would see them come and go. Some of them would move to another street, not too far away. Some of them would just completely leave the area. After a while, I started seeing less and less familiar faces, more newer people moving in, and now it's almost like it's a complete difference, a complete 180 from when I was growing up in my area. Of course, the kids are always going to be kids and they're going to be at the park but you don't really see like, no one really hangs out outside and interact with one another. If you see people outside, they're usually amongst family members or friends that they invited over, sitting on their porch but no one's really, it doesn't feel like a community anymore.

[00:11:15]

When you say that, when you mean that new people are coming, you are talking about the same culturally experience or people who are completely different background coming in and that's what changes?

[00:11:26]

It's a mix of both now. Before when I was growing up in my area, it was a lot more brown, Black Latino people. Now we're starting to see some other cultures. There's a Caucasian family that moved. Well, actually, I think there's two that moved right across the street from me. They completely remodeled an apartment right across from me. It looked like it had almost burnt down years ago. It was completely crappy from the inside out. They put in some work. People moved in, I feel like.

[00:12:10]

It's changing.

[00:12:11]

It's changing. It's a reflection of what my area is like now.

[00:12:16]

Amazing.

[00:12:16]

You don't really see too many people engaging with one other as other cultures come in, the cultures that were once there, moving further out or getting away from the inner city areas. I'm not going to blame it on anyone. Everything is about the cost of living.

[00:12:35]

It's the economical situation that forces things to change and you notice in that way, it's not necessarily saying that whoever is moving there is good or bad.

[00:12:45]

Like for example, when I was growing up, there was a good handful of Cape Verdian people in my area and I live fairly close to Roxbury. Roxbury was known for having a lot of Cape Verdians. Nowadays, it's rare for me to see a Cape Verdian person. A lot of a lot of that community has moved out to like Brockton or further out, they're not really in the inner city areas anymore.

[00:13:12]

Because that's becoming possible to have affordable housing right here Boston. It's becoming that crazy. Then going to school, did you feel the impact going to school and engaging with other kids. I assume that you were around Dorchester area school.

[00:13:32]

No, actually, I went to school in Jamaica Plain.

[00:13:35]

In Jamaica Plain?

[00:13:37]

That school after I graduated, got remodeled, became a high school but while I was there and I was going to elementary school, it wasn't hard for me to fit in. A lot of the students in my class, and within the building, all throughout, were a lot like myself, Hispanic or Cape Verdian, or Black-American, so I felt at home if that makes sense. I didn't feel like I was being displaced anywhere or felt like I didn't belong.

[00:14:11]

The majority there also from Jamaica Plain?

[00:14:15]

A lot of the kids were from other neighboring cities.

[00:14:20]

Around.

[00:14:20]

Exactly, like the Mattapan, and the Hyde Park.

[00:14:24]

Would all go to that?

[00:14:25]

Exactly.

[00:14:26]

Probably was a huge.

[00:14:28]

It was a decently big school. I mean, when you're a kid, everything looks big.

[00:14:32]

Exactly, look at the buildings.

[00:14:37]

After because I could almost, to this day, still picture the landscape on the inside of that school. I find it hard to imagine what changes they have made after we graduated and they remodeled it as a high school. I would think as a high school student, that school might be too small, it's not a massive building. It's long, but I was like two, three floors.

[00:15:06]

Throughout high school was a good navigation and not too much conflict.

[00:15:11]

No not at all. I started off by taking the yellow bus to school when I was in elementary school and when I got to high school, I got into a school close enough that I could just walk from your home, less than 10 minutes honestly.

[00:15:27]

That's awesome.

[00:15:29]

During the day, assume I'm asking that question because the school system in Brazil Well, I'm talking about from my time that. This is ages ago. I don't know how it's working right now but in my time, we used to have three different periods for classes. There was a moment that I have to help at home because of economic situation was not good and I had to go to class at night, so from, I would say 6th or 7th grade, all the way to the end of high school, I was going to school at night. I would say 6:30 or7 all way to 10:30,11:00pm. Then, go back home and it was kind of a 10-minutes walk as well but interesting enough, at night, they had course during the day but those were for people who could afford to be just going to school and didn't have necessary. People who had to, poor families and had to make ends meet and help at home somehow, and that time I had to work all day and go to school at night. Remember how many times homework, certain projects that school asked my friend and I who lived halfway from my house to the school. I would come from school, stop at his house, and sometimes do the project until 2 or 3 O'clock in the morning. Go home, I in my case, going back home, sleep and wake up next March of work. That's why I was saying still during the day, was American style of having your high school, throughout the day and not having to worry too much about other things.

[00:17:12]

Exactly also my grandparents having both of them in my life. They took care of all of my needs. I never felt like I was without. I mean, I'm sure, any kid could want more toys but I never needed. I always wanted, but I never needed. I was always okay growing up.

[00:17:39]

That's great.

[00:17:43]

After middle school, I ended up starting school in the old Hyde Park which got renamed to New Mission.

[00:17:55]

When I started going there, that was my first experience of taking public transportation. Never in my life did I ever have to rely on public transportation. My grandfather, if I needed to go somewhere, if I had an appointment, or if I missed the bus and I needed to get to school, he would drop me off. He made sure I was good. I am like his fifth son.

[00:18:17]

It's amazing. Grandparents really spoil the grandkids. It's funny, with my sister always says that because dad and mom were not as strict. They were parents. There is no doubt about that. But with my nephews and niece, my God, they changed completely.

[00:18:34]

Different people.

[00:18:35]

They have kids that don't belong to them, but they spoiled to the limit. That's okay, even sweets and stuff. You never gave me that. Well, you couldn't, because then by this one, I can see your grandfather being just that cool, like my dad used to be for my nephews and nieces. How was the whole experience, like you said, your first time taking transportation.

[00:19:00]

It took me a few days to get used to. I almost didn't make it to school the first day because I got off at the wrong stop. I thought I knew where I was going, and I didn't use the GPS. I try to rely on solely with our practice over the summer when I had orientation. It didn't go 100% my way.

[00:19:21]

You had to walk back?

[00:19:22]

I had to walk at least 20 minutes. I was so far off from where I needed to get off. I was embarrassed walking to the school that way.

[00:19:30]

Oh my goodness. Did you tell your friends?

[00:19:32]

I did. We all laughed together. It was funny, but it didn't take too long after that for me to figure things out.

[00:19:40]

Was it a good school? Was it a good environment?

[00:19:42]

It was a good environment. You didn't have to worry about, am I going to get bullied? Am I going to have to watch my back because somebody might try to attack me at school? I didn't have to worry about that at all. It wasn't that type of community. A lot of peers of mine were like myself, Latino, Black-American. It was very easy for me to get along with other people. It was, honestly, if I could go back to high school and just experience the moments where I interacted with my friends, I would do it all over. Forget the schoolwork, but I would go back just for those moments.

[00:20:19]

It's interesting because of the misconception, because of the towns that you are describing, you are talking about Dorchester, Mattapan, or there is another one nearby, Roxbury.

[00:20:30]

Roxbury.

[00:20:31]

There is always this, the first thing that people can think about these communities because they are predominantly African Americans or brown, people of color.

[00:20:41]

It was a bad connotation. They are dangerous.

[00:20:43]

If you go to schools. Exactly. I'm glad that you have that same feeling and have that same experience as well. After high school.

[00:20:52]

After high school, it's funny because before I graduated from high school, we had one month where we could do internships and go and intern for whatever we wanted to do, as long as it aligned with what we wanted to do once we got to college. I was one of those students that like to procrastinate on their assignments.

[00:21:19]

That explains missing the bus stop.

[00:21:23]

It's not that I was a bad kid in school. I was never in any trouble for any of my teachers whatsoever. I was actually a very exceptional student up until, I got to high school. I got to high school, and that's when the laziness kicked in and the procrastination. I don't know what it was, but just I don't know.

[00:21:43]

Was friends, was girlfriends who hang out full time.

[00:21:47]

There's a lot of those things, a lot of getting carried away with friends. Chasing the girls. In high school, you go through that. That's the whole.

[00:21:56]

Changes everything.

[00:21:57]

I want to say that's the whole point of high school, but it's what everybody goes through. A lot of those played a factor in my time management throughout the day. During that last month before graduation, while everybody was doing internships and working cool jobs, and getting experience, I'm in school writing a 10 page research assignment that was due a month ago. But I got it done. I got my presentation done, and I was able to cross the stage on time with everybody else. But that, worked itself out. I ended up getting into a college out in Western Mass. North Adams was the town I was staying in because it was a far drive. Like, I wouldn't have been able to just go back and forth. It was a three hour drive to the campus. Before then, and after I graduated, I applied for my first job, and I started working at Primark there's a few of those, but the one I worked at was in downtown, that was my first working.

[00:23:06]

Primark is that European brand.

[00:23:09]

Yes, it's Irish.

[00:23:10]

It's Irish.

[00:23:12]

Ireland. I don't know if it still holds the same name to this day. But I learned through the job, of course, that it's called Pennies in Ireland. The reason why that name didn't get brought over cause of JC Penney. They would have got a trade mark.

[00:23:29]

That's why it changed for Primark. Because I have heard that name because I have been there. I have friends in Dublin that we go to visit once in a while. I have been there three times. I don't remember. My friend there talked about Primark. Never told me about that being Irish, but told me about Pennies. Which is interesting that is a store that you can go there and buy, in a very good deals there, but I never make the connection out there were saying that, that's what it was.

[00:24:01]

That's the parent com the parent story. Before I left to Western Mass, I was working there temporarily. I had applied to a few other jobs before landing the job with Primark, and a lot of them weren't really looking to hire somebody for a seasonal position at the time. I had to go bouncing back and forth between a few different interviews. Then luckily, I was able to land something with Primark, worked there for a few months during the summer before getting ready to leave for college.

[00:24:36]

You worked in Primark before you went to college. I thought that you had finished college then come here.

[00:24:40]

No, that was right after I graduated high school.

[00:24:44]

When you went to college, you have to live in the dorms there. You said 3 hours drive. How was experience being there? Is a different environment?

[00:24:52]

It's way different. Like I said, before, I live in Dorchester, and that's what you envision when you think about the city of Boston. Like, for folks like us, when you think of the city of Boston, you think of like the Roxbury, the Mattapan Dorchester. Those are the areas we grew up in. That's the city for us. When I moved out there, it was a complete difference. I've never seen mountains behind buildings before until I started living over there in North Adams. A lot of the buildings are a lot more separated. There's a lot more room in between. It's not like how the apartment buildings are. I think one right next to the other one. Even like their downtown area, which was, like, a 10, 15 minute walk from campus, it was not as lively, I'd say, as, like, if you go to downtown Boston, you see folks everywhere. Sidewalks are crowded, streets are crowded, especially if they have something going on in downtown like events or a parade. You can't even see the floor. Whereas North Adams, you don't see many people.

[00:26:07]

Quiet.

[00:26:08]

It's very quiet.

[00:26:09]

Isolated and nobody here and there. Probably people drive more or whatever they need to than anything else.

[00:26:14]

Exactly. A lot of the things over there are pretty far apart. I'll give you an example. First day there, a friend of mine wanted to go to Walmart. We drove there 5 minutes away from campus. A few days later, I'm like, I forgot to buy something. I look up the address for Walmart. I'm thinking, I'll just walk over. Can't be that far. We drove and got there in 5 minutes. How bad could it be?

[00:26:42]

When I tell you Edgar, it was an hour walk.

[00:26:46]

An hour walk?

[00:26:47]

An hour walk because it was right off the highway, and I didn't realize that on my first day when I was coming in that we had to get off the highway to just get to Walmart before coming to the school. Never went to Walmart again after.

[00:27:02]

No that's not an hour to get that an hour to get back. You would be exhausted.

[00:27:06]

That would not be fun.

[00:27:10]

Can you tell us about the interaction in school at the time that you were there or not.

[00:27:16]

It wasn't hard making friends there. Everybody was very easy to speak to. Most of us were first year students. A lot of us came in on the first or second days. You see in all these new faces, and you're wondering, well, let's wait it out. Let's see how is this semester is going to turn out? How are my classmates going to be or potentially the people that I'll be graduating with. But honestly, they were some of the coolest people I met in my life. Some of the most down to earth people I met. Everybody from different locations, there was actually a few people from Cambridge that had went to Cambridge High School as well. There was a few people from, the Hyde Parks, and then a lot of the other students were coming from out of state or from neighboring Western Mass areas.

[00:28:15]

That's a good mix there.

[00:28:16]

Good mix like. The Pittsfield and the Springfields. We had students from New York, all over the place.

[00:28:22]

Question for you because you have told me some stuff before in other conversation that you had. The friends that you travel nowadays, are friends from college or friends from the groups that you school middle or in high school?

[00:28:36]

The friends that I will travel with and that I have traveled with, they are my high school friends.

[00:28:43]

Well, the high school.

[00:28:45]

We stay in touch, even though, we could go two, three months without saying a word, but every time we catch up or every time we call one another, it's always, like we were just with them yesterday. It is never any loss of love. It's always whenever we come back around each other.

[00:29:06]

It's interesting. I asked you that question because some people have a great time in high school, hate college, keep most of their friends from high school, which for me is, I don't know. Sometimes high school have a feeling because I think it's the first time that you feel like an adult. Is still not an adult, but feels like it, like a little bit more freedom.

[00:29:27]

In all of it. It's still something with some people there.

[00:29:30]

You start daring a little bit more. You start being, paying attention more and other things, music or whatever patties or whatever it is. Whether sometimes when you go to college, it can be amazing because then you are, completely age exactly. Now I can drink, now I can party on night, that kind of a situation.

[00:29:51]

Stay up, nothing, no homework.

[00:29:52]

Exactly.

[00:29:54]

It depends very much, but it's interesting that you kept your friends from high school more than whatever you had in college.

[00:30:01]

Those are some of the closest people to meet to this day, honestly. There's not a single thing that goes on in my life that these guys aren't up to date on. Even though, like I was saying before, we could go a month or two, three months without speaking, but whenever we meet up again, everything comes out. All the updates.

[00:30:24]

That's the real friendship. I have a couple of friends. I don't have too many, but I have a couple of friends from Brazil, and I just go there once a year. Now with the technology, WhatsApp, and all this kind of thing is easy. Sometimes you go for a long time without saying anything. But when you catch on something, when you start, hey, did you see this or did you hear this or it comes back like nothing changed. Like the same conversation. We pick up where you left, and it's just cool. That's really true friendship. I like that too. You finish college. What happens? You do not?

[00:31:03]

No.

[00:31:03]

How many years you stayed there?

[00:31:05]

I stayed at that school just for the first year, and I transferred out. But I'll tell you why. After my first semester, I don't know. Mentally, I was starting to feel alone. When I started my first semester, there was a few buddies of mine from high school that started to go there with me. We were there, mood catching breakfast together, splitting up for our classes, meeting up again for lunch, dinner. We always made time for each other. After the first semester, they both decided this college probably isn't for me is not in my best entrance. There's definitely better opportunity out there. There's something else I could do with my time, whether it's working or continuing their education, whatever the case is. They saw that as a way out, and they took it and left, moved out, I came back for the second semester, and I still had some of those buddies that were around the campus, but it just didn't feel the same. Like, I felt like that piece of home left because that's all I had left from home. We pretty much came in there together, and a few months later, they're gone. I was having a little bit of a hard time just readjusting myself to that and staying focused on my course as a staying focus and trying to embrace the other people around me. I was shutting myself out just because I felt like I was missing something.

[00:32:44]

That was when you were telling your story, I feel like, was that you mostly that make that happen because of your inner feelings and everything? Was also you didn't find opening where you were to be more connected to people. Did you block them from getting to you or you didn't find a space to get to them? How is that?

[00:33:11]

It wasn't necessarily that. Those guys that I made friends with that didn't come from Boston with me, they were very good people. I have to say, got along with them very well, and I didn't mind their presence. I didn't mind being around them, going out with them, whether they go to a party or going to the gym or grabbing some dinner with those guys. I don't know. I really felt so connected to my friends from home that I felt like a piece of me was no longer there. I don't know. Mentally, it it shut me out, not that I shut them out from my life but I just didn't want to be in this environment anymore after they left. It was hard to want to come back for the next fall semester. That's what led to me putting in my transfer and moving back home, and I continued my education at Bunker Hill. I took some classes, first semester went well, second semester, which was start of 2020. A few months into the year COVID starts.

[00:34:23]

Exactly.

[00:34:24]

Everything shifts to virtual. From my perspective, I'm like, well, screw that. I'm not going to do all my courses online. This is the whole reason why I wanted to be on campus to be face to face. It was impossible to do at the time due to the what was going on at the time due to the pandemic. I completely closed the lid on that, and I said, I would not go back if they're expecting us to pay for tuition, take courses from home. I just didn't think that made sense. I didn't reapply for the following fall, and I just left it at that and got back into working.

[00:35:04]

Now after that, you got into your first job or heads.

[00:35:10]

I tried out a few different jobs. One of them was a small company under the branch of Markets Live or something like that, something of that name. Basically, you're going around as a sales representative, and you're trying to go door to door getting families to buy these sets of kitchen knives. Man, that job didn't last too long for me. I felt like a robot after the first few days because they give us a script that we have to strictly go by. It wasn't something you can go off script and try to make it fun for the customer. They will literally tell you stick to the script. Honestly, I did not like it, I felt like a robot. It felt repetitive. Then again, I live in Dorchester. No one in Dorchester is buying $2,000 kitchen knives. I promise you nobody is going to buy it. All those factors made me quit the job.

[00:36:14]

I would have quit. That's not for me, either. Sales, that thing, I don't know. I totally understand how that would work, because when you said, I have to go door to door, and there is a script that I have to read of saying. When you have your natural way to deal with life and people, engagement and that thing. Then you have to read a script and be like, a robotic way to say, here. No, it doesn't work. Anyway, so that didn't work.

[00:36:43]

That didn't work out. It's funny because I tested myself. I practice and did my demo with my grandparents at home. I pretended to be that salesperson and stopping by their door, and they let me in, and I performed the demo in front of them. One part of the demo is grabbing these shears that are supposed to be these ultimate sharp shears. You will never need another pair of shears to cut with because these shears are so sharp. In the demo, you have to take a penny and cut it in half. That first time, me doing it, I'm like. I'm trying to get the right angle. I don't know if it's a trick or something that doesn't appear to the naked eye. I didn't know if there was some technique to how they cut it to get that perfect right in the middle cut. I struggled embarrassingly. It took me a few snips to get it all the way through.

[00:37:41]

But you cut it.

[00:37:42]

I cut it ultimately. It was a complete difference from.

[00:37:47]

Your parents are watching.

[00:37:49]

Grandparents watching. They're just sitting there with the smile on their face is this is what he wants to do with this.

[00:37:55]

It's going really well.

[00:37:59]

Ultimately, the gig didn't work out. I gave it up. Next gig I tried for was a security starting off at TD Garden, so I applied there. This was actually in between the time frame when I left North Adams to transfer over to Bunker. I started working in TD at the end of that summer right before the semester started. I would go to classes in the morning and go to work at at night.

[00:38:35]

It was a cool gig. I enjoyed my time there. I was employed by TD for two years.

[00:38:41]

Two years? Nice.

[00:38:42]

Two years before transferring over here. I tell you, it's a nice part time gig. Especially if you're working the events, like the concerts, the games, and everything else they host there, it's nice to do as a part time gig. I would never recommend to somebody looking to get into security, to take it up as their full time job, because you're either going to want more hours or you're going to get tired of what you do there, because a lot of it is just stationary standing. Me personally, I can't do that. There's some people that can. There's people that like those behind the desk jobs. I just can't do it. I like moving around, I like being busy, I like seeing people. I like speaking to people. I can't be isolated, like not necessarily isolated but I can't be stationary.

[00:39:35]

Yeah, stationary is the best word.

[00:39:39]

When COVID started, I was still employed, but I wasn't picking up hours for the safety of my grandparents. At the later end of that year, I was visited by a salesperson who works for Ready Refresh. I don't know if you've seen them around.

[00:40:00]

No.

[00:40:00]

Because they come here for water delivery as well. I noticed this during my first year here. They'll come around and make deliveries at Griswold and Austin Hall, those other buildings over there. But he comes to my door, trying to get me to buy these cases of water because during COVID, everybody was losing their mind, buying up everything in the stores. They capitalized on that time period to really push this out, like, there's no waters in the stores, but we can get you waters directly from Poland Spring. This is all you have to do, just sign up and get these reoccurring deliveries every once in a while. It sounds like a great idea.

[00:40:45]

For how long you stayed there?

[00:40:47]

I was there for about two or three months. I want to say between 2.5-3 months. That was from late August till October, maybe early November was when I finally left the job. They let me go. I was fine. No hard feelings.

[00:41:07]

Relieved?

[00:41:07]

Yeah, I was relieved, honestly. I didn't want to do that anymore.

[00:41:11]

I think saves, that should be people who really are into it. [OVERLAPPING] That's something that I can't do it. I tried before. Yeah. [LAUGHTER] Then?

[00:41:21]

After that, I waited because people from the garden had reached out, sending emails, saying, the season will be starting up soon, starting late December. If you guys are interested, feel free to pick up the hours, and we'll see you here. I waited until the end of December, season started back up, because it was a very late year due to COVID for the NBA season as well as the NHL season, which is the hockey. For the first few weeks working after COVID had started already, I worked consistently all the Celtics games that were home games here. There were no Bruins games until mid January. All there was for us at the time were just those few Celtics games a week, and you'd be lucky if there were two a week. Sometimes it was just one game and you'd have to wait until next week for the next game. It wasn't a great time to be employed. But they saw my consistency, they saw that I was showing up for every event that they had, and they offered me full time hours. Problem was, I would have to give up my weekends now [OVERLAPPING]. I ended up switching from just showing up for the events, and the events are usually in the evenings. You come in at 5:30, game ends at 10:00, 1030 the latest. You're out of work by 11:00, you go home. Now my hours shifted. I had one shift on the weekday, which was in the middle of the week. I worked 8:00-4:00. Then I had Friday, Saturday, Sunday. I was stuck in a booth watching the parking garage from 4:00 to midnight for nine months, Edgar. Those nine months, I wouldn't say they were rough, but it was annoying to work those hours. A lot of my friends worked during the week. While I was free, they were always busy, and then when they were finally free, I had to be busy unfortunately. It was not ideal, but we got through it, and by the end of August, they were letting us know that, hey, everybody has to get the vaccine if they wish to continue working here. I was one of those people early on that was like, no, It came out too soon. I'm not getting it. I was very skeptical. I knew either I had to leave security as a whole, or I had to transfer to a new location. I called human resources, tried to see what they have available. No answer. I'm like, shoot, what do I do? They didn't answer me. But not even minutes later, Edgar, I got a call from the account manager that was here at the law school, and he told me the account manager from TD Garden sent him a list of guards and needed to be placed elsewhere. He's looking at this list. The garden is a very big big place, so they have to have a good amount of guards to cover all the floors and all the different sections. If they're understaffed, that's a problem. [LAUGHTER] There was always a lot of guards employed at the garden. I could imagine he's looking at this list, and he spots me out. I know this guy, because he worked with me at the garden. I was a supervisor before he became a manager before COVID started. He spotted me out, gave me a call immediately. He's like, I hear you're looking for a new location to work at. He offered me a position here, gave me X hours, and before you knew it, near the end of September, I was already starting my training here, and now it's been almost three years that I've been here.

[00:45:34]

That's awesome. How things work, how easy was a connection that made a difference. Someone that you met in the past there, somewhere, casually, whatever it was, that ended up making a difference. How do you feel about work here? How is the environment? You like it?

[00:45:54]

I do like it. It's very different from the garden.

[00:45:57]

Yeah.

[00:45:57]

I prefer it over there.

[00:46:00]

I believe that is the difference. Yeah. Not say regardless of because sports fan, one thing, well.

[00:46:08]

They're very passionate. Boston fans are very passionate.

[00:46:11]

But also, I think, because of the nature of the event, sports. I believe that it is a different crowd in terms of the connections.

[00:46:22]

It's just the energy of the people that year around is very north and south.

[00:46:31]

One quick question. Don't feel that you have to answer this. You still think about going back and finish your college at a certain point someday?

[00:46:39]

When I was going to college, I was going for art, which I feel like now looking back at it, I don't need a degree to say that I can make art. That's how I feel about it. If I was to go back, which I won't go back to college. But if I was to go back, I would go for something that will lead into a more secure career whether that's business or with technology, something that's more for sure.

[00:47:15]

But is it art related or only business or technology related?

[00:47:20]

Business and technology. But what I do want to do as of now, not just as of now, I've been trying to pursue this over the past couple of years now. I've been trying to apply for this electricians union. I want to get into a trade. Their union provides schooling. I would get my certificate and move up the ladder over the years. That's something I want to get into, and something that will really make me feel that sense of security. You have to want to make more money if you want that comfortable life for yourself.

[00:48:00]

Yeah, that's true.

[00:48:02]

I just don't want to feel like I'm living paycheck to paycheck my entire life. That's why a trade would be something ideal for me.

[00:48:12]

I think that's a good idea and it's a good plan, too. I'm glad that at least you have that in mind in terms of what future holds, and how to pursue what you need to do. I think you have talked quite a lot here.

[00:48:27]

Think so? It feels like we haven't been here long enough.

[00:48:33]

Edwin, thank you very much for accepting to participate here and being part of this project.

[00:48:40]

My intention is to keep having more folks that I know my custodial. I wish I could bring someone from trades here to chat you.

[00:48:50]

That would be nice.

[00:48:50]

Because I want representation from all sides of this community, so people get to know who they are and where they work. It's just to have a conversation and record the stories for your staff, they know that we don't have a chance. As many as we can have would be cool to add to the conversation. That's the idea, anyway. Thank you very much again. For everybody out there listening, until our next time, bye bye.

[00:49:18]

See you guys.

[00:49:19]

[MUSIC]