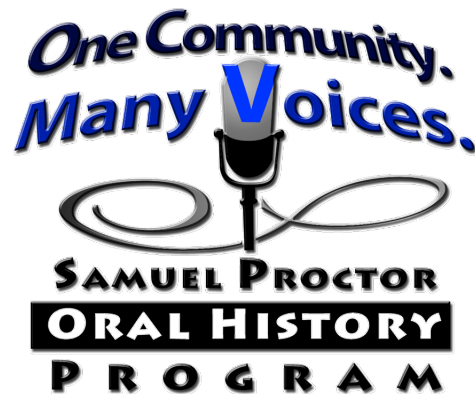


Jimmy Jim

**Southeastern Indian Oral History Project
MISS CHOC-060**

Interview by:

**Howard Dixon and Carl Isaac
September 26, 1979**



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MISS CHOC 060 Jimmy Jim
Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)
Interviewed by Howard Dixon and Carl Isaac on September 29, 1979
8 minutes | 5 pages

Abstract: Jimmy Jim talks about his education, starting with Choctaw Central High School. He traveled to both New Mexico and New Jersey to study before studying industrial arts and teaching in Choctaw City. He explains his future plans and shares his thoughts about discipline and teaching at Choctaw Central. He then talks about sports in the community.

Keywords: [Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; Mississippi-Choctaw; Education; Sports]

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MISS CHOC 060

Interviewee: Jimmy Jim

Interviewers: Howard Dixon and Carl Isaac

Date of Interview: September 29, 1979

U: We are interviewing Jimmy Jim on industrial arts today, September 26, 1979.

Interviewer are Howard Dixon and Carl Isaac. Jimmy, could you tell us about your background?

J: Well, I attended Choctaw Central High School, graduated from here, then I went to art school in New Mexico for two years postgraduate. From there I went to technical school in New Jersey for about year, come back home and then I went to Meridian Junior College. I went there about year and a half. Then I got married. Then after I got married, started back college, finally finished it.

U: What made you decide to take industrial arts as your career?

J: Well, I was really wanna go in electrical engineering. Then, you know, programs they had on the reservation, it's students in education only. So that's why I went on and instead I changed to industrial arts.

U: Have you taught anywhere else besides Choctaw Central?

J: No. Been here since—it's going on my third year here.

U: Since you've been here, how have the students progressed in their work?

J: For my class I've started with the basics. Basics in drawing, metal working, and woodworking, and electricity. Start off with the basics, then we go up from there.

U: When you started teaching, did you have those machines?

J: You mean the one we have in there now?

U: Yeah.

J: When I got here it was already here, yeah.

U: Do you know how to work with all those machines?

J: Yes.

U: How long did it take to learn all those machines?

J: For me? Or for students?

U: Students.

J: For students? It wouldn't take very long. 'Cause we have some students that are eager to learn, you know. When you have students like that, it don't take long.

U: What's your opinion if you want to take industrial arts as their career?

J: Go into industrial arts vocation, you mean?

U: Yes.

J: I think that would be a nice **thing** for anybody nowadays, you know.

U: Was there many opportunities when you first started?

J: Oh, in vocation education?

U: Yes.

J: I wasn't aware of it, really.

U: How was it like going away from the tribe to own community?

J: Going away and coming back here?

U: Mhm.

J: What was it like ... Coming back home, working with the people here? I think I'd do better working with my own people than go somewhere else, working. But since I've been to other places before, seen what it's like.

U: Did you feel different from other people?

J: While I was away?

U: Yes.

J: No.

U: How did the people treat you?

J: Like, you know, just one of them.

U: From your experience, what advice would you give to a student finishing college and looking for a job?

J: Join back to Choctaw Central and work here in education. We need more Choctaws in the reservation. In education as well as in Tribal **folk**. I'd like to see more Choctaws in here.

U: What are your future plans for industrial arts?

J: As of now? I'm not really sure yet. I like what I'm doing right now.

U: What do you mean?

J: Maybe in the future I might think of something else, but as of now, I like the way it is.

U: What about your—

[Break in recording]

J: I don't have any obvious **paths**. I'm just doing a little bit of everything.

U: What do you think about students' discipline in school?

J: I think we need strict discipline here at Choctaw Central, with more help from the parents like we used to have in the old days.

U: What happened to someone who skipped class?

J: We didn't have anybody skipping class during my time.

U: You mean back then?

J: Yeah. Right. While I was going to school here. Nobody skips class or cuts class either. 'Course, our parents sent us to school to stay in school. We didn't **know what's coming** back home.

U: Was the discipline changed since you've been here?

J: Right. Very much. 'Cause I've seen plenty of students walking around here every day not attending class. We need more stricter ...

U: How do the students cooperate in class?

J: In my class? We get along alright [inaudible 6:24] I like it. Some students are still not asking questions, some of them, **they're really not involved**. I think we're really improving **Choctaw**. Especially comparing to the first class I ever had when I first started working here.

U: Plan on going somewhere else to teach?

J: To teach? No. [Laughter] Definitely no. [Laughter] To teach—maybe for other jobs, different jobs if I like to go, you know, different jobs open but I could go somewhere else and work. I might [inaudible 7:08] not to teach.

U: [inaudible 7:11]

J: **Tribal program teaching or school? Which one?**

U: Tribal.

J: Tribal? Well from what I heard, it's all right, I'd say. I don't participate in all the sports they have going on here. I participate in basketball. That's about the only sport **in the league**. We had a team here last year. This year we plan to have another one with my former classmate. [inaudible 7:53] Supposed to have a team this year. Won some trophies, too.

U: What about the school recreation?

J: School recreation? I think we got a pretty good program here comparing to the time I was in school here. A lot better cause we didn't have any. [Laughter] If we did, well [inaudible 8:22]

U: Y'all had pretty good opportunity in sports and football to get scholarships to go to—

[End of interview]

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