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Interviewer: Chloe Brown
Interviewee: Sophia Nasato
Date: April 5th 2017
Topic: Women's March

Sophia Nasato Interview

CB: This is Chloe Brown. It's April 5th, and I'm interviewing Sophia Nasato. Alright, so, Sophia, before we get started, I just want to double check that you offer your consent to participate in this project.

SN: Yeah, for sure.

CB: Okay, and also, so the information that I collect will be archived in the WKU Special Collections, so you consent to that?

SN: Okay. Yes.

CB: Cool. So, can you give me just a little bit of brief information about yourself?

SN: Well, okay. So I was born in New Jersey, and didn't live there for too long, and moved around. I moved to Bowling Green when I was in middle school, so I was 13. And I've been living in Bowling Green with my family ever since. And I'm studying psychology at Western. I'm 19. And, yeah.

CB: That's good. So first of all, where did you attend the march?

SN: The march? I went to Washington, D.C. for the march.

CB: Why did you decide to participate in the march?

SN: Well, the whole, like, this whole presidential election has been crazy, and obviously, I was not for Trump, and I heard, and like-I thought the Women's March would always be a really cool thing to go to, and whenever I heard it was a protest against Trump, I thought that was even better, and so I thought it would just be a great opportunity to go, and I guess let my voice be heard, and be with other people-be in an environment where we all understand each other, I guess, but yeah.

CB: Is there a reason that you decided to go to D.C. instead of a local march?

SN: Well, I actually got the invitation to go to D.C...I think it was through Western? I'm really not sure still how. But one of my friends messaged me, and she was like, "Did you get the email from one of the departments to Western about taking a free trip to D.C.?" And I said no, I didn't. And she was like, "Well, email this lady, and maybe you'll have a spot." And so, her name was-I forgot her first name, but her name was Ms. Darst, I called her. I emailed her and she said that there was a spot for me. And they had like 12 spots open for students to go that were for free,

and so I was like “Why not? It’s free.” So yeah, but if I didn’t have the opportunity to go to D.C., I would have had the opportunity to go to a local-a more local location.

CB: Yeah. Do you know what department that was through?

SN: I can check again for you. Do you want me to check right now?

CB: No, we can look at it-

SN: Later?

CB: Yeah, we’ll do that later.

SN: I think I still have an email.

CB: Okay. I’m just curious. I didn’t know that that had happened. Cool, so, you took a bus, I’m assuming? Who else, what other type of people went on this trip?

SN: So it was funny, I thought it was just going to be other Western students. But it turns out, it was like a lot of just locals from BG. There was even one kid that was a senior in high school, that goes to Bowling Green High School. And there was also a lot of older women that are just Bowling Green locals. And I guess the email wasn’t just for students. I guess it included anybody. And then, so 12 students-12 people got to go for free. And if anybody wanted to go after that, they had to pay a fee. I think it was around \$100 or something, just for the gas to get there.

CB: So you, okay, I know other people that took the bus. I just didn’t know that anyone got to take it for free. So that’s really great.

SN: Yeah, it was really cool that-I was surprised because when I messaged her, I didn’t think I would have a spot, but she told me I emailed her fast enough, so I was like “okay, cool.”

CB: Nice. So how-how would you describe your march experience?

SN: It was incredible. I’ve never, ever had-been to something like that. I’ve never been to a march or a protest or anything, so I kind of had an idea what I was gonna expect, and my parents, before I went, they said to be careful, don’t do anything dumb, and watch out and stuff. But it was honestly-I felt so safe being in that environment. Just because everybody was so nice, and they were all here for the same reason, I guess. And so I just felt really comfortable a lot of the time. And it was-it was just so great to be around all of those people that I guess have the same feelings as you do, and opinions. Because whenever-after the whole election, you feel like you’re kind of-like you don’t feel like there’s a lot of other people that can relate to you, I guess. But being there, you just saw how many people really cared. And it was amazing to see the turnout. But yeah, it was just great, doing all the chants and stuff. It was just exciting, it was fun, and everybody was so nice, and you just knew you were doing-like you felt you were doing something good.

CB: Were you very politically active before the election?

SN: I keep up with it a lot, but there are times when I-I try to be very active when it comes to marches and protests or meetings and stuff, but I just haven't because school's got in the way and stuff. But whenever, if I hear something and I'm free that night, I for sure try to go.

CB: Okay. So how-how would you describe your-how do you identify politically?

SN: I'm a democrat.

CB: So you're a registered democrat?

SN: Yeah.

CB: So would you consider yourself a liberal, or a feminist, or any of those terms?

SN: Yeah, I would consider myself a liberal and a feminist.

CB: Okay. So can you just walk me through-I know that-I was also at the D.C. march, and it did not-the route was not as planned. And so it was very hectic. So can you just walk me through your day? What that was like?

SN: So we got to the bus station and already it was crazy seeing how many busses were there, and you knew that there was going to be so many people. So we all planned to stay together, but then immediately after we all got off the bus, everybody just started going, and I didn't-it was a little crazy at first. And we were trying to take the Metro, but we saw on Twitter or something-we saw a video of the Metro and how crazy packed it was, and so we decided to just walk. So we walked to-we walked to where the march was, and going there you could just hear-you started to hear all of the screams of the people and stuff. It was awesome. And we just hung out. I'm trying to remember. We hung out at the monument a lot of the time. And then when the march started, or when we heard it was starting-it was kind of weird, I guess, staying together with everybody, because I feel like everybody was doing something different, I guess, because they didn't know what to do, or something. But we just kind of went where the crowd went, really though. And we tried going to where the march was originally planned, but then they had us get out. And so then we just took an alternate route. And we ended up making it to the White House, and somehow we got to the very front-not the very front gate where the yard to the White House is, but it was a couple-I don't know how long or far, but we got to the very front gate to where I guess the limit was, but that was really cool. And we just hung out there for a while and then we did some chants, and we were part of the crowd and stuff. And that's-and at the end of that, that's when it started getting late, so we headed back. But, yeah, the entire day was just walking and chanting and always being in a big crowd. It was so hard to get to free space, I guess, but yeah.

CB: What was the bus ride like?

SN: The bus ride? So we left the night before, around, I think 8:00, and we drove all through the night, and everyone was so excited, so we didn't get much sleep. And it was also kind of hard to sleep on the bus because it was cramped and everything, but it was fun. And we did meet a couple of people on our bus, and that was fun. And then we got there the next morning around, I think, 10:00. And yeah, that was bad because we didn't get to stop and eat. And so not eating or not getting anything in your system, and then going to the march and walking all day was very weird. But it was for sure worth it, I think.

CB: So did you go with a friend, or did you just go on your own?

SN: I did go with a friend. Her name's Jordan Frodge, and she's the one that told me about the email. And so, yeah we sat together on the bus. And also another one of my friends went with me. Her name's Taylor Frint, and so we stuck together most of the time.

CB: So what-so, I know that you have talked about feeling kind of alone after the Trump election, and I know that you didn't like his policies, right? But do you feel like you marched for any specific reasons, or do you think it was more of a total rejection of Trump?

SN: I think it was a little bit of both. Definitely a total rejection of Trump. But I guess one of the biggest-it was also a women's march. So it was for women, and for equality and stuff. So I think the main reason was just gender equality as a whole, and racial equality and all that. But, yeah, I think it was definitely both.

CB: Did you wear anything that was special for the march?

SN: I did have a t-shirt on and it said "Raise boys and girls the same way," and then on our way to the march, there was a woman and she was giving out the pink hats, and so we all got one. And yeah, that was fun. But I really wish I had-I didn't have time to make a poster or anything, but I really wish I had had time to do that. Because there was a lot of really cool, interesting ones there. Really creative ones.

CB: Some were very funny, too.

SN: Yeah.

CB: So do you consider yourself to be part of the broader resistance movement? There's no right or wrong answer.

SN: Yeah, I think I do. I just-I mean I do, definitely, for sure. I do support them. It's just like I feel bad that lately I haven't really been active with all of the campaigns and stuff, just because of school, but if I had more time I would definitely be more involved with it. But yeah, I would definitely consider myself to be part of that.

CB: Do you think that the march fulfilled its purpose?

SN: For sure. Just because it was so big. And it wasn't only D.C. It was so many other places, and even countries across the world cared enough to do it, which I think is incredible. And I think it really hit-definitely sent a message out, so I for sure think it did.

CB: If you were Trump, what do you think that the message you heard would be?

SN: The message that I heard?

CB: Yeah. If say you're in his position, and you're seeing this march, what do you think he took from it?

SN: I think that he-he probably thinks more people care than he thought, which I think is an awesome message for him. Because we do need to show that we care, and yeah, I think he thought that not that many people cared. But then when he saw that he was like "woah, this is crazy." But yeah, I think that was awesome.

CB: So maybe "I need to be more careful about what I'm saying."

SN: Exactly. Yeah.

CB: So I'm assuming you were impressed by the march? Not underwhelmed?

SN: No, not at all. Yeah, I was definitely impressed. It was awesome. I knew that a lot of people were going to be there, but whenever I look back at the numbers and the videos of all of the marches across the world, I was seriously like "Oh my gosh. I just made history. This is awesome."

CB: So, talking about the pussy hats, what do you think that they-what do they mean to you, and what do they symbolize?

SN: I think they-I think they symbolize just-it's just-I don't know. I'm trying to think. They definitely symbolize the feminist movement, and just how-just to embrace, I guess, equality? Honestly, I didn't know that much about-I didn't really know it was a thing before, and then I learned about-that it's a statement at the march, so. Yeah, I definitely think that it is just a message to just embrace who you are, as anybody, and stand up for your rights, I guess.

CB: Do you plan on keeping your hat?

SN: Yeah, for sure. Forever. And just the fact that somebody else gave it to me? I just thought that was so nice. That she was just handing out free ones for the people that didn't have it, so yeah, it was awesome.

CB: Do you know where yours came from, other than the person that gave it to you?

SN: I don't know, honestly. Yeah, I'm not for sure, but she just had it in a bag.

CB: Do you remember-do you have a favorite sign that you saw at the march?

SN: I'm trying to think. There were a lot. Ones that I really liked were all the ones with Carrie Fisher, as Princess Leia, that were like "A woman's place is in the resistance." I thought that was so cool, just because also with her death and everything, I just always thought she was so cool. And then I also, there was one girl that, who-I saw her, and I was like "I love her," because she was wearing a sign that-she had it on her body, and it said-it was the lyrics to one of the songs from Mary Poppins, and "our daughters' daughters will adore us, and will sing in grateful chorus, well done," and Mary Poppins was my favorite movie as a little kid, and seeing that I was like "Yes! This is awesome!" And I even went up to her and told her I loved her sign, and we even started singing the song together, and we got other people to sing, and it was so cool. So I think that one was one of my favorites. But, yeah.

CB: So, I only have a couple more questions. Do-so you told your parents that you were going to the march? Did that cause any friction, or did that create good conversations?

SN: Well my parents, both of them are registered Republicans, so I knew when I told them that I was going to have to expect something. They didn't vote for Trump though, that was the thing. So when I told them, I wasn't really scared to tell them, but I was thinking "maybe they won't let me go, because it could be dangerous. But when I told them, at first, I could feel that they were a little hesitant about it. I think, just because of the whole safety thing, but-after I went, my mom called me on the bus ride home and she was like "I'm so proud of you. Looking at the outcome of these marches of is amazing, and you really did a good thing." And I was like, "Thank you!" And that really meant a lot, coming from her and my dad. And then my-I did tell my grandparents, too, and they both voted for Trump, and that did cause a little bit of friction, talking to them about it because they didn't agree with the reason of the march at all. So when they found out I was going, I could honestly see that they were a little disappointed. Which, they're my grandparents and it's kind of sad to see that, but I have to-I do respect their opinions, and I know they respect-they respect mine, so it wasn't too bad.

CB: Did you post about your march experience on social media?

SN: I did. I did put a few pictures on Facebook and Instagram.

CB: What was the reception to that?

SN: A lot of my friends-a lot of my family, they didn't know I was going. So when they found out I was going, they were like "yes!" And they were really proud of me. And same with my friends. The ones that I didn't mention that I was going, they just thought it was so cool that I got to go. Yeah.

CB: So, while you were at the march, did you feel like you were part of a community? And also-

SN: I did.

CB: And also, maybe-do you think that-do you think you would have something in common with another woman who attended the march? If you, let's say that you don't know her. But you met

her, maybe she was wearing a march t-shirt, do you think that that would be the basis of maybe shared values, shared memories, experiences, stuff like that.

SN: Yeah, I think for sure. Just because everybody who went to that march, and the other marches that weren't in D.C., they were all part of something together, and we all strived for a goal. And we did! We definitely succeeded that goal I think. And so, see, if I saw somebody right now in public, and she was wearing a march shirt, I would definitely know that we would have shared-a shared experience, and all of that. Just like everybody at that march was so friendly to each other because I think we all knew that we're just all here together for the same reasons, and that we just need to stick together even when times like this are so bad, and you're worried about the future. You just need to stick through it.

CB: Were you surprised that a march that kind of sprung out of such a negative political climate-were you surprised by how positive it was?

SN: Actually, yeah. I mean, because, I mean, marches and protests, a lot of the recent ones that have been going on have, a couple of them-a lot of them, actually, have been violent, and just not-I mean, they start out peaceful, but then they do end up violent. I did have a small feeling that I was a little worried about that, at first. But whenever we got back on the bus, we were all talking about it, everybody on the bus with me, and we were just so surprised at how nice everybody was. And I think that we knew-everybody at that march knew that it needed to be peaceful. We couldn't let it get out of hand or anything. We need to show that we want-what we want peacefully. And I just thought it was amazing that nothing bad happened, and so it was really cool.

CB: Have you heard any criticisms about the march?

SN: Not too much. I don't-I haven't really talked to anybody that would criticize the march, I think. No not, really.

CB: Okay. So final-final thing I'm going to ask you to do is just in maybe two to three sentences, just summarize your takeaways from the march.

SN: My takeaways? Like my experiences-

CB: Anything that comes to mind. If you have any lasting memories, if you're just really glad that you participated, anything like that. So whenever I ask you about the march, what comes into your head?

SN: Just immediately, I am taken back to being in the crowd and chanting and letting all those people that are against us-like what we are for and why we need this. It's just such a great opportunity to have-to express yourself. And also just getting back on the bus afterwards, when we realized how many people actually went, and how many marches there actually were, we were shocked. And it was the greatest feeling because you actually felt like you were a part of history.

CB: Nice. Okay, so is there anything that I didn't ask you that you think is important to say before we wrap up? Did we cover everything?

SN: No, I don't think so.

CB: Alright. Okay. Thank you. I'll stop recording.