

EXODUS Project

Interview of Henrie Marcus

January 17, 2017

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EXODUS

Henrie Marcus.mp4

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Lynn timervis: I'm Lynn timervis. I'm here with Henrie Marcus, and it is January 17, 2017, and we're interviewing for the Exodus Project. So Henrie, just tell me... tell me your full name and when and where you were born.

Henrie Marcus: My name is Henrie Marcus and I was born in Birmingham, Alabama.

Lynn timervis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And I'm married to my high school sweetheart.

Lynn timervis: Oh!

Henrie Marcus: And we've been married 49... 48 years, almost 48 years.

Lynn timervis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And we came to Memphis in 1974, and I went to work for Jewish Family Service in December of 1989.

Lynn timervis: Oh.

Henrie Marcus: And my first family that came from the former Soviet Union was **Victoria and Noam Shalen**, and their son, and that was my first experience, and there were still families that had come in the fall, and so I sort of had to hit the ground running and try to help people find jobs because obviously that was...

Lynn timervis: Yeah.

Henrie Marcus: The most important thing was for the husband and wife to find a job, and they were very sophisticated, spoke... she spoke fabulous English. She taught English in the former Soviet Union, and she was really, you know... adapted very well...

Lynn timervis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: To the American culture, and Noam was an engineer, so we worked really hard to get people... we tried as hard as we could to help people get jobs that sort

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of led to their careers, but of course, depending on their English, it wasn't always so easy to do that.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: Sometimes we'd just explain to people "you have to start somewhere."

Lynnie Mirvis: They... yeah.

Henrie Marcus: And so that's what we did. We... we tried. We... our community, the Jewish community, and the Memphis community were fabulous. They saw very quickly how smart our families were, how motivated they were...

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: That they were going to work very hard and do whatever they could to be successful, and so who wouldn't want somebody working for them...

Lynnie Mirvis: Right.

Henrie Marcus: Who is that motivated?

Lynnie Mirvis: Right, somebody that would... how did you get there? What made you become part of this?

Henrie Marcus: Bob Silver.

Lynnie Mirvis: Yeah.

Henrie Marcus: Greatest boss ever. Called me and said "I have a job opening."

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: "And I'd like for you to come in and talk to me."

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: Several people on the board had given him my name, and Bob and I had known each other since we came to Memphis around the same time, he and Judy and Norris and I, and so we had known each other, we had worked together at the JCC when he was the assistant director, and so he called me up and we came in and we talked and then I went home and talked to Norris about it, and we decided that it was probably... would be a really challenging...

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: Interesting job for me, and goodness, it certainly was. It certainly was.

Lynnie Mirvis: Yeah.

Henrie Marcus: It was... I would say it was a life-changing experience for me. My husband's parents were... grandparents were... had come from the former Soviet Union,

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and... and/or Poland at the time, and so I had heard their stories, and they were all very compelling, and of course they came at the turn of the century and certainly there were not so many things in place to help them, as we did in Memphis. We had a terrific... we had a terrific base to bring people here, and maybe about five or six years into my job, I went to a conference in New York, and it was all people who had some resettlement, and in the middle of the conference, the guy said, you know, finding a job for everybody is the most important thing we can do, and he said certainly we can use Memphis, Tennessee as a role model because everyone there has a job.

Lynnie Mirvis: Hmm. That's amazing.

Henrie Marcus: And... but it wasn't me. It wasn't me. It was our community.

Lynnie Mirvis: Right.

Henrie Marcus: And people calling up and saying "I've got a job" and "do you have somebody that can do it?" Or "I heard so-and-so was really good at doing something. Would you bring them in to...?" And volunteers.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: Working, because all the synagogues had adopted families, because we couldn't possibly get everybody where they needed to go by ourselves.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: So all the synagogues had adopted families, and they worked so hard. They really loved their families and had a really close relationship with them, and they were... really advocated for the families and tried to help them get jobs and of course, the first thing we did was put the children in school.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And of course then that freed the parents to be able to look for a job because they knew their children were in a safe, secure environment. All the schools took children...

Lynnie Mirvis: Who were the schools that...?

Henrie Marcus: Well, the schools were the JCC, Temple Preschool, the JCC Preschool. We had kids at Solomon Schechter. We had kids at the Hebrew Academy. The... even the programs for the teenagers after, you know, all the different youth groups had all the kids belong to those groups.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And there was... there was no money. There was no talk of money. There was no money, and so we... the federation tried to help underwrite some of these things with scholarships.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

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Henrie Marcus: Tried to help the schools as best they could, but it was a huge... a huge thing for our community.

Lynnie Mirvis: Absolutely.

Henrie Marcus: Based on the number of Jews we have in Memphis.

Lynnie Mirvis: Yeah. How many do you think you resettled?

Henrie Marcus: We resettled probably maybe in excess of probably a hundred and... maybe 125, 150.

Lynnie Mirvis: People?

Henrie Marcus: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm, and so you know, some of them stayed, some of them left.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: People would get upset and say "we've done all this thing, all these things for them and why did they leave," and I said "my goodness, it's just like when your children grow up."

Lynnie Mirvis: Right.

Henrie Marcus: And they're spreading their wings and they find a job in Chicago or they have family in Los Angeles, or...

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: You know, we have to feel good about the start they got here, and you can't hold on to anybody.

Lynnie Mirvis: Right.

Henrie Marcus: And we have to be happy that their next step, where they go next...

Lynnie Mirvis: Yes.

Henrie Marcus: They'll be successful and that we will have had a small part in that success.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm. So tell me, is there a story that stands out for you that was really special that you could share or something? You were telling me of a family before... where the children were really successful.

Henrie Marcus: Well, we had... we had a... we had so many kids that were bright.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

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Henrie Marcus: One really cute story. CBU was always excited to get our kids.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And it's a private institution, and of course we couldn't give them...

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: Private tuition, so they just accepted the kids, and one of my kids went there, young man, and he was interviewed, and his English was very good, and the dean of admissions said, "well, of course you're admitted," and there were a few courses that he was missing because, you know, most kids, when they go to college, have American History, and they have the History of Communism, and whatever, so they said "we won't worry about that, we'll get all of that worked out," and so two months later, the professor, one of his professors, goes out of town, and he chooses this young man to teach the class.

Lynnie Mirvis: Oh my gosh.

Henrie Marcus: And so it was an advanced math class, and so he was very successful, did very well, a very, very brilliant young man, and ended up marrying a girl that he had known previously, and their family had gone to Australia.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm.

Henrie Marcus: And so they retouched, and you know, got married and had children, lovely, lovely family.

Lynnie Mirvis: Did they move to Australia?

Henrie Marcus: No. No, no, no.

Lynnie Mirvis: They're here.

Henrie Marcus: They lived here, but at... I don't know if they live here right now.

Lynnie Mirvis: Tell me about the one who became the valedictorian. Will you tell... is he...?

Henrie Marcus: Well, he was accepted. He was accepted to... this was early on in my career. He was accepted in to CBU under the same circumstances. They said "don't worry about what you don't have, we'll work that out," and he went, decided he wanted to go into engineering, and was, you know, just made wonderful grades all the way through his four years at CBU, and his family invited me to his graduation and we were sitting there, and at the end of the graduation, they had graduations by school, and this was the School of Engineering, and they announced that the engineering student of their class, and it was this young man, and we all just burst out crying. The parents, the grandmother... it was really an unbelievable... and the whole class stood up and gave him a standing ovation.

Lynnie Mirvis: Oh, what a moment.

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Henrie Marcus: And it was just... it was incredible. It was incredible, and well deserved, well deserved. He was really a brilliant kid, and he was a wonderful person. He helped his parents so much. I mean, he realized that in a lot of our families that had older kids, the kids were kind of the parents when they first came. If the kids spoke English, they sort of were the ones that helped navigate things for their parents, because the parents were... you know, many of them in their 40s, and not only didn't have a job and were starting over and their English wasn't so good, but they had children to take care of. It was a very overwhelming situation, and many of these kids advocated for their parents, and they were just marvelous, and quickly saw that they could play a part in helping their family have a smoother transition and did, and did, and all the schools were incredible. I mean, believe me, every day there was something that, you know, didn't go right, and I'd get a phone call, and somebody was sick, and I would go to school and pick the kids up so the parents wouldn't have to leave work, and they would sleep in my office on the... on a couch, or I would take them to Joe Parker, or many of the other pediatricians and doctors that were so absolutely incredible and just welcomed these children with open arms, and he would give them medicine and then he would tell me what to do and I would take them home and a couple of kids I took home to my house and put them in bed and then took them home to their parents when they got home from work because their parents had hourly jobs.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And for them to miss work was a big deal.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: A big deal. So it was really a whole community effort, and so many people were so generous. Warren Wurzburg, he never turned me down when I called him up and said somebody needed a job.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: He said "I can find them a job in the warehouse. I can..." He had a woman who had come in the '80s and she had been working for him for 20 years, and she was in their accounting department, and so he absolutely knew how smart everybody was, and of course, having her there, and having her able to translate for people to help them get started, he was a wonderful employer, but we couldn't have done it just with the Jewish community.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: The broader Memphis community was wonderful.

Lynnie Mirvis: Can you think of a story about what that was like to place somebody, something else...?

Henrie Marcus: Oh, my goodness. Another place that was great about hiring people was **Marmalin**, and so we would take the families to their business, and we had... it was just an entry-level position. It was mainly people that didn't speak English well, and they were doing filing, and you know, basic things like that, and how excited each of them were when they got there to see somebody else there and know that they had somebody to talk to and someone that they could relate to, and so we had... you know,

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we had a lot of instances where... I had a woman who was an engineer, very, very bright woman, and she went to work for an engineering firm, and she was interviewed by the president of the company, and he said "we'll start you out in, you know, a basic, you know, engineering thing. Well, let's see what happens," and she worked for them for years, and she was very, very capable and smart, and once her English improved and she got, you know, more comfortable, she really did well.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And of course we have doctors, and we had a young woman come who had gone to medical school in the former Soviet Union but she had to pass her... pass all the medical boards and everything to be able to practice in the United States, and she had a fabulous volunteer who... right after she came, she had a baby, and her son was our first American citizen, of that wave, and so this volunteer just went over and helped with the baby and helped her with her English, and she eventually passed her boards and is a very successful doctor, and we have a lot of people like that. We had a man that was resettled in... I believe it was Omaha, Nebraska, and he came here to be the head of ER at Le Bonheur.

Lynnie Mirvis: Hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And he came to me and said, you know... he eventually brought his mother and father and sister and her son here, but he was my right hand. Whenever he was free, he was at Jewish Family Service, and we have had a family come in and we would sit at the table and he would translate and he would help me understand whatever medical problems they had and certainly very private issues that people have with their lives. He was just absolutely wonderful, so professional and delicate and just was a tremendous help to me, and that was... a lot of the people at Plough Tower couldn't have done without them. The people at Plough Tower were volunteers. They were translators. They went with me to the doctor to take the new group. They helped with the children. They were just remarkable, and we had somebody from the City Schools come and teach English as a second language, and we wanted them to come to us to teach the class instead of our people leaving, so they came to Jewish Family Service and taught English, and we had just a wonderful group of women that came, one after another, that taught English, that were just terrific.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And of course, you know, that was just the most important thing was for them to have English, and it didn't matter if you were 40 or if you were 70. You still needed to speak English, and so they would say "Henrie, why don't you learn Russian?" I said "I would love to learn Russian, but it's so much more important for you to learn English," so now I wish I could speak Russian, but at the time, it was more important to speak English.

Lynnie Mirvis: Well, would you share, if you can think about the first time you met a family at the airport, what that was like?

Henrie Marcus: Oh, my gosh.

Lynnie Mirvis: What the feelings were, and...?

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Henrie Marcus: It was incredible. First of all, I was so overwhelmed. My husband said "I have never seen luggage that size in my whole life." It looked like people were bringing in refrigerators. These huge duffel bags, and we got to the house with this particular family. We got to the house, and of course we... not every community, I would say probably a minority of communities did what we did, but our families came to a rented apartment, where the apartment was completely furnished, and there was food in the refrigerator, and there were toothbrushes in the medicine cabinet and toothpaste, and sheets on the bed, and so nobody came to a home that they couldn't at least start, you know, setting up housekeeping, and many of the families explained to me, when we got home, you know, they said "you see what a ridiculous amount of things we brought. We didn't know what to bring," because many of the families came, and they didn't have family in Memphis.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And they were considered free cases, and so those people had been sort of stalled in the system because they didn't have a family to sponsor them to come to this country, so every community was asked to take free cases, which we absolutely did, and so to set them up was a little bit different because we didn't have a family member there and we had to sort of create that, and we had apartments that we put our families in. We felt like it was really important. They had done it before with the last wave, Jewish Family Service.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: We felt it was very important for our families to live together so that they could help each other, they would have someone to talk to, they would have friends, so the Epstein family was very generous and helped us with our rent at their apartments on Cherry Road.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And then later on we had another apartment complex on... off of Summer on Berclair.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: But they really were totally overwhelmed because they didn't expect that people would be at the airport, that there would be volunteers there, that the next morning somebody would be there to take them somewhere. You know, we had to take them to Social Security, we had to take them to the Department of Human Services to get Medicaid. We had to get their children to school. We had to see if they had the correct clothing. We had to go clothes shopping.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: Someone... the Loewenberg family donated a van so that we could transport everybody where we needed to take them, and so it was a huge... we had to really coordinate all of these things so that people felt... they weren't pressured and they weren't anxious because they came here nervous and worried, so we tried to do everything we could to put them at ease and to make them feel that they were loved and

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welcomed and that we were going to take care of them, and I will always believe that no one that I know of, that I had contact with, was ever not taken care of.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And we had many people that came here that needed surgery, that they got surgery. They were astounded at the American medical system. They just couldn't believe that you could have cataract surgery and go home that day, where they would lay in a bed in... for two weeks flat on their back and they were told that that... if you didn't do that, you'd go blind, and we had children whose sight was terrible and was restored, and we couldn't have done without **Mike Hughes-Day**, and he saw anybody and everybody, and if they had a problem, he made sure they got to the right person and they were taken care of, and so we just had doctors, Jewish and non-Jewish, that were so remarkable, and you know, we had people going to have their wisdom teeth pulled and threw up in Gordon Gruen's office, and... and he was such a sport about it, and didn't say "Henrie, I'm through, we're not doing this anymore," and we had people that walked out of surgery and people that were diabetics that had been... never had their diabetes managed, that probably... I had one man who the doctor said to me "if he lives another year, we'll be lucky," and he lived about eight or nine years.

Lynnie Mirvis: Oh.

Henrie Marcus: So anybody that says that the... that we don't have a good medical system in this country is wrong, because what they came from was just awful.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: Awful. And I think we sort of restored their faith in a community because so many of them... of course, many of them, the older people, had gone through the war, and it was so horrible, and they had been... they had experienced terrible antisemitism all their lives. They were mistreated. Their children... I had one young woman who was just brilliant, and they told her that she... she... her grades were flawless... that she couldn't go to the best medical school which was in the city that she lived in. They sent her somewhere to Siberia to medical school.

Lynnie Mirvis: Hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And another family that she came here pregnant and they purposely separated she and her parents so when the baby was born, he was born here, and her parents came later. They weren't here when the baby was born.

Lynnie Mirvis: Hmm.

Henrie Marcus: So we had a lot of situations, and you know, you hear about it. People say "oh, you know, that's just, you know, not even true," or whatever. Believe me, it was true, and they were courageous, and you know, I'd heard in other communities that there were incidences that were unpleasant, and we just didn't have that. I'm not saying everybody was a breeze, but our families were honest and true and good and the ones that really didn't want to be in Memphis left.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

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Henrie Marcus: And that was their prerogative.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And that was the way it should be, that they should be able to have a second growing up and choose where they wanted to go and be... you know, have their life. One of my young women said to me, "Henrie, when I get married, will you come to my wedding?"

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And I said "absolutely," and so she called me up and she said "I'm engaged, and I'm getting married, and you promised me you were coming to my wedding," and so I flew to Los Angeles, and I went to the wedding, and I had always wanted to go to San Diego to the zoo, and so I told her ahead of time. I said, you know, "the day after the wedding, I'm going to go to San Diego." She said "well, then we'll go to San Diego too," so the honeymooners and another couple met me in San Diego, and they... we spent the first few days of their honeymoon together, going to SeaWorld, and I had already gone to the zoo, and I took them out for a celebratory wedding dinner in San Diego, and so, you know, I just have so many happy memories, and of course we lost people, and that was heartbreaking, and you know, we... of course, older people are now leaving us, and that's always the sad thing, but many of my families said "at least they'll be buried in a cemetery where we won't have to worry about their grave," whereas in the former Soviet Union, many of the graves were defaced, and you know, terrible things. They were afraid to go to cemeteries.

Lynnie Mirvis: Because they were Jewish?

Henrie Marcus: Yes, for what would happen if they went, even to visit, you know, just to visit the grave, so the funeral homes were unbelievable. Canale, I can't even tell you how many people they buried, literally, where they, you know, had to absorb the cost. We would do everything we could which, believe me, wasn't much, because we had so much to do, but our whole staff was incredible at Jewish Family Service. Everybody, the social workers. Alla Olswanger worked for us. She was our accountant, and of course she would sit in when families would come and help us translate, and if there were problems, she would help us, and Bob was... always had an open-door policy, no matter what, and the social workers. I think probably every day at lunch, I sat there. I used to tell people it was the greatest job because I didn't have to pay for therapy, because at lunch, I would say "I've got a problem with this," and everybody would help me solve the problem or at least listen to me, and we just had a great staff. Everybody chipped in. They were, you know, really wonderful, gave me great advice when I needed it, and of course all the agencies. Gosh, Federation. We couldn't have done without Federation. They were unbelievable. The JCC. They absorbed all the memberships of all the families. They fed the older people lunch. They gave everybody an opportunity to come to a Jewish Center and swim and visit with other people and have contact with Americans their age, and then of course all the schools were just remarkable, and the synagogues. The synagogues were just fabulous, and their volunteers. It was truly Memphis at its finest. I always felt like, you know, everybody... you know, we may have our differences.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

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Henrie Marcus: But when it came to our families, everybody really sort of put those things aside and really worked on the greater good to make sure that our families got off on the right foot, and they had... that we gave them, you know, a chance to be successful.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And of course, you know, within two or three years, everybody had a house.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And so I said to one of the families one time, I said, "gosh, you got a house so quickly." She said "well, Henrie, we don't do what most Americans do. We don't go out to dinner, we don't go out to the movie, we just save everything we have, and that's how we have a house."

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm.

Henrie Marcus: And they paid taxes from the day one, and they were proud to be Americans, and when it came time for them to become American citizens, they were all, you know, standing there, taking the oath of citizenship, and I have to say that I thought the first time would be, you know, the most meaningful, but every time I saw someone become an American citizen, it was a truly transformative... it made me realize how important it is that we live in a democratic country that takes people in and puts their arms around them. It's certainly what our country was based on, and we gave them all the tools that they needed to be American citizens, and for them to be proud of themselves and for us to be proud of them.

Lynnie Mirvis: Hmm.

Henrie Marcus: [laughter]

Lynnie Mirvis: Thank you. It's beautiful. Henrie, before we close this, I was just wondering, what was it that made you realize that this was the job for you? What was your background? Can you just tell us a little bit about that?

Henrie Marcus: Well, I had a degree in education.

Lynnie Mirvis: Yeah.

Henrie Marcus: But I hadn't worked because... since before our children were born, because I wanted to be with them when they were growing up.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And it was just sort of a time in my life when I thought, "okay, my kids are in junior high school and elementary school, the end of elementary school," and you know, I would... I could leave to pick them up from school and then go back to work, or you know, work my day around whatever, because Bob always said the most important part of Jewish Family Service was the "Family" part, and he... when people had family issues or anything like that, he was always so understanding about, you know, any kind

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of problems that anybody had, and you could always tell him, and you always knew it was confidential, and he was just a terrific human being, and so, you know, having background, I don't know that I really had... I don't know what your background would be. I mean, I know a lot of people that did this job before me had degrees in social work, and maybe that brought a different perspective, but I think to do something like this, you have to love people, and you have to have a positive attitude. You have to be resourceful. You have to be able to really think on your feet, and Bob Silver used to say that the motto of resettlement was "ready, go, set," he said, because you don't have time to wait. You just have to go, and so... so we found out a lot of things. We learned a lot of things. We made mistakes. We... they... after I had stopped working for Jewish Family Service, they asked me to come back and help them with all the families that had come from New Orleans after Katrina, and strangely enough, although I was dealing with fully American people, a lot of the parallels were the same.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: People that, you know, had lost everything, and people that were just, you know... just didn't know what they were going to do next, and I think it's just having respect for your fellow man and I always felt like I was the recipient, that I was the lucky one, because it made such a difference in my life. My children went with me to the airport. My son helped me hang curtains. My daughter went with me to the grocery store, and I felt like they understood, you know, in some small way at their age that this was really a big deal, and that these people were courageous. They were leaving everything behind. I mean, somebody said "gosh, I brought pots and pans and all this kind of stuff because I didn't know what kind of apartment I would have or if we would have pots and pans, and I left behind my grandmother's clock."

Lynnie Mirvis: Oh...

Henrie Marcus: And so they had to make those kinds of decisions, which they said "we would have brought our grandmother's clock and left the other things," but they didn't know what there would be waiting for them, so, you know, people left behind a lot. It wasn't just material things. I often said when people... when volunteers... when I would talk to volunteers and we would give them an orientation that you have to understand that they came to this country and nothing looks the same. Nothing feels the same, and everything that their whole life was built on is now gone, and they've lost language, they've lost their... sort of their sense of pride of who they were, because you know, people would say "oy, another engineer," and you know, that always hurt me when I heard people say that because, you know, it was like, you know, them being an engineer because many of them were forced to become engineers, by the way. They wanted to go to medical school, and the former Soviet Union said "nah, we need more engineers, you'll be an engineer."

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: And so people would say it in sort of a demeaning way, and I would think "this is who they are, you can't talk that way, you can't say those things, and they'll get where they need to get, and they'll be what you consider to be an engineer very soon, if that's what they choose to do," and so I thought that, you know, people... it was very hard for people to understand, except many of the older generation here, you know, who had come from, you know, faraway lands and realized what these families had given up, and most of it was emotional. It wasn't so much the tangible things. It was just

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their sense of who they were, their sense of security, and even though the former Soviet Union was not an ideal place to live, it was still their home.

Lynnie Mirvis: Mm-hmm.

Henrie Marcus: So all the sights and the smells and the... you know, you knew when you got in your car, you knew where you were going. You weren't lost, and your friend was going to meet you for coffee, and you could walk everywhere, and certainly you can't walk everywhere in Memphis. That's not the way our city is set up, and so they had to redefine themselves, and that was what was so remarkable to me is that these families were able... they had the strength and the courage to redefine themselves and become successful and make sure that their children were successful and, you know, what a wealth of experience and just great people we were lucky enough to receive.

Lynnie Mirvis: Thank you so much. Thank you.