

Collection #
SC 3479
DVD 1463–1465

**MARIA LUISA TISHNER
INDIANA LATINO HISTORY PROJECT INTERVIEW
4 NOVEMBER 2016**

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Processed by

Nicole Martinez-LeGrand
August 2018
Edited by Paul Brockman
August 2018

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 folder, 3 DVDS

COLLECTION DATES: 4 November 2016

PROVENANCE: Maria Luisa Tishner, 1 August 2018

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ACCESSION NUMBER: 2018.0240

NOTES: This forms part of the Latino Oral History Project

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Maria Luisa Cavassa Mesías was born in February of 1956 in Lima, Peru, to Laura Mesías Montero and Alberto Angel Cavassa Petraglio. During her childhood, she and her mother lived mostly on a sugar cane farm called La Hacienda Chiclin in Trujillo, Peru, with her uncle who was the farm's accountant. She attended parochial primary and secondary schools while in Peru. And attended *Instituto Superior Tecnico Particular* in Trujillo, Peru, and later became an executive secretary and administrator at Honda Peru S.A. and *Galletera de Norte* Company in Trujillo. *Galletera de Norte* produced a variety of cookies.

In the spring of 1982, she met an American engineer named John Tishner, who was from Indianapolis and worked for the Thomas L. Green Company. John was to oversee the installation of a new oven to produce a new line of crackers at *Galletera de Norte*. Maria and John continued to court long distance after Maria went to live with her sister in the New York area in the fall of 1982 to learn and practice her English. While in New York area, she was employed by the world renowned pianist, Victor Borge, and his wife Sanna in Belle Haven, Connecticut. Within a year of her employment with the Borge's, John and Maria married in September of 1983. Maria joined John in Indianapolis in December of 1983. She and John had one child, a daughter named Marisa Laura Tishner, in 1986.

Tishner entered the workforce in the late 1990s by becoming a community health educator for Wishard Hospital (now Eskenazi) for Latino youth, to educate them about HIV and AIDS. She later expanded her community health career by working with the Indiana Latino Institute, Inc. with statewide education program on the effects of smoking. This led her to work with a coalition that lobbied and eventually influenced the banning of indoor smoking in public places like restaurants and bars in the early 2000s.

At the time of this interview, Maria worked for HealthNet as an Outreach and Enrollment Specialist and navigator for the Affordable Care Act, colloquially known as Obamacare, within the underserved and Latino communities of Indianapolis. On the day of this interview, Maria is 60 years old.

Sources:

Information in Collection

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

In this interview, Maria recounts what it was like to live in both Jamestown, Indiana, and the city of Indianapolis as a Latina in the 1980s and beyond. She talks about her Peruvian roots and how she had been able to maintain those traditions through an organization named, Peruvian Association of Central Indiana (PACI).

This manuscript was transcribed from a digitally audio recorded interview conducted on November 5, 2016, at the Eugene and Marilyn Glick History Center in Indianapolis, Indiana, by Nicole Martinez-LeGrand, Indiana Historical Society's (IHS) Multicultural Collections Coordinator for the project. The transcription has been lightly edited, in January 2018. The interview, which includes the audio recording and the transcript, is housed at the William H. Smith Memorial Library, Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center, Indianapolis, Indiana. Readers of this oral history interview should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word. Although the transcript has been lightly edited, IHS has diligently sought to preserve its informal, conversational style, as well as the integrity of the interview's content. While some attempt has been taken to explain through footnotes some of the facts given by the interviewee, IHS is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the interview's content or for the views expressed within. The audio recording remains unedited.

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Oral History Interview and Transcript (user copy)

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