

**Interviewer:** Say and spell your full name.

**Madeline Arredondo:** Madeline Arredondo. M-A-D-E-L-I-N-E. Last name's A-R-R-E-D-O-N-D-O.

**Interviewer:** Where are you from again?

**Madeline:** I'm from Fort Bidwell, California.

**Interviewer:** Fort Bidwell?

**Madeline:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay. What tribe are you in?

**Madeline:** I'm Northern Paiute and Klamath.

**Interviewer:** Northern?

**Madeline:** Paiute.

**Interviewer:** How do you spell that?

**Madeline:** P-A-I-U-T-E and Klamath. K-L-A-M-A-T-H.

**Interviewer:** Okay got that. How did you choose-- how did you end up at Eastern?

**Madeline:** Well two of my aunts came to Eastern. One of my cousins is here now and she's working on her masters, which she'll actually be graduating this summer. She also has a son. So she was letting me know how good of a place it is to raise her son, how they have family housing here at Eastern, and the Indian studies program is really supportive. So it was one of the best options that I had coming from rural California.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So tell me about the program and how supportive it is. Tell me about some of that.

**Madeline:** So when I first got to Eastern or even wanted to come to Eastern, you call and they set you up with an advisor, but what they did is they sent me to Nicole De Von She's the advisor for the native American students. Even just that, even having her as someone that can understand coming from a small reservation and being nervous and afraid of the whole process.

**Interviewer:** We're going to come back to that. Why were you in college? What are the reasons?

**Madeline:** I'm in college because I have a daughter, she's seven years old right now, but more because I'm from a small reservation and our tribe doesn't really have too much to offer. We don't have-- you know just a regular convenience store that our tribal members

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can go to, just small things like that. I used to work for them. So it was like, you get to see it from the inside and you get to see exactly what they need. And I was ready to do that. I was ready to go to school and come back and help them. That's still my goal. But now that I'm in urban and regional planning, I feel like I have more to do. [chuckles]

**Interviewer:** So on the reservation you came from, did a lot of the kids want to go to college? Was it talked about much? What was kind of the attitude?

**Madeline:** On my reservation, there's not too many kids that go on to college. If they graduate high school, that's a plus. Me, personally, I went to a boarding school in Southern California for Native American high school students. And that was one of the main reasons I was able to graduate high school and even have an opportunity at college. It's pretty hard on my reservation for students to reach higher, you know, just coming from a small, small place, you don't have too many options.

**Interviewer:** What's the value of higher education to the reservation or to your tribe or whatever?

**Madeline:** Well higher education is very valuable right now because we don't have it. There's a lot of our members, council members, committee members, that you know could use more education, that helps our sovereignty strengthen, and to be able to define our own values and our own goals on our reservation for our people.

**Interviewer:** Start off by saying Eastern offered me the opportunity to blank, or Eastern offered me, maybe it's support. Maybe it's understanding.

**Madeline:** Eastern offered me support through the American Indian studies program. They offered me support through family housing, and they also offered me support through scholarships.

**Interviewer:** Tell me about your scholarship.

**Madeline:** The scholarships that I got from Eastern. One was the Rural American scholarship fund. So it serves students from rural America, which is where I'm from. And then I just got the general scholarship also from Eastern.

**Interviewer:** How does scholarships help you?

**Madeline:** Scholarships help me-- I don't know. [chuckles]. They helped me pay school, but like, but I don't know. You need them, that's as much as I know.

**Interviewer:** You have a daughter, right? So what do you want to show your daughter? Is your daughter- what grade is she in?

**Madeline:** She's in the second grade.

**Interviewer:** Oh so she's pretty little?

**Madeline:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** What does you having a college education, how's that going to influence your daughter?

**Madeline:** Having a college education would influence my daughter by just her knowing that college is an option, not only an option, but a given, like she's going to college. She's going to see all the hard work that I've done and that I've done for her. And she's watching me go through school. We sit down at night and do our homework together. She's going to have more open doors for her. Like she'll be able to reach higher than she's ever wanted, because coming from my reservation, I was happy to just graduate high school. Now I'm looking at a master's. So it's pretty amazing.

**Interviewer:** Tell me about the degree you are in? I'm studying blank in Eastern.

**Madeline:** I'm studying urban and regional planning at Eastern.

**Interviewer:** What do you want to do with that degree?

**Madeline:** I want to be able to do community development and, you know, work with communities to build exactly what they need.

[background machinery]

**Interviewer:** That's good timing.

**Madeline:** I know [laughs]

**Interviewer:** They must be doing something next door. That's all I can think of. How does-- Why is it important for your culture and your heritage? I mean like knowing about the work that Lucy did and what that meant. Is that even taught or do kids know about that? Do they have any--

**Madeline:** No.

**Interviewer:** That's a shame because they're losing their heritage.

**Madeline:** So in history books, you'll learn about the termination policy, but you won't hear about Lucy Covington restoring the tribes that got terminated and using her own money and her own resources to go all over the state to fight for these tribes who were terminated. So, you know, that's something that isn't- we don't learn in high school. We don't learn it from history books or even in college.

This Lucy Covington center would bring a lot of awareness, not only to what her legacy is, but also to what the American Indian studies program at Eastern means, because it's been here, like longer, or I think it's been one of the first American Indian studies programs

in the country. I could be wrong, but it's like up there. It was pretty impressive. I'm surprised that they don't have more for the American Indian studies program.

**Interviewer:** What does it mean to just-- Like the history of just your culture, of being, what it means to be an Indian and why-- I can't imagine like, African-Americans without knowing Rosa Parks. What does that do to your tribe? I mean, what does that do-- I'm trying to formulate some sort of coherent question. [laughs] Why is it important that students learn about Lucy Covington? I mean, maybe from your perspective as a native student, but also just everybody in general. Why would something like that be important?

**Madeline:** Well I think learning about Lucy Covington as a native student is important because she was one of the warriors for our tribal sovereignty, you know. We are federally recognized tribal nations and in order to stay sovereign, you have to fight for it because it's always been that way. So Lucy Covington is important and she brings light to native issues past and present. Even though she's not here with us today, her legacy lives on.

**Interviewer:** Lucy could kind of be a vehicle to open up dialogues. If you have the center, it's a way to get- because when school kids come in and all that, it's like that's a way to educate. It's a way to explain how it was and that would make a huge impact. Do you think? I'm trying to paint a picture of what having the Lucy Covington Center, how much impact that would have on just history, but native American history, history in general for kids to learn about and why that would be important. I'm kind of making this up as I go along.

**Madeline:** Well, I'm trying to formulate something also. I don't really know what the Lucy Covington Center is going to look like or what it's going to have. I don't really know how to answer.

**Interviewer:** It's just going to have artifacts-- Stuff about her, information about Lucy and what she did and that whole termination process and stuff like that. It's an education. Think of it that way.

**Madeline:** I would feel like the Lucy Covington Center could be like open pages of a history book where you like immerse yourself in her history and her legacy and everything that it's brought to light today, but also all those native students that are attracted to the Lucy Covington Center would be the same ones that are attracted to the American Indian Studies program. They're looking for that community and they're looking for peers that are native and that come from rural America or maybe a reservation, or maybe, you know, some small place where, I don't know, like the small reservations out here where they just have little high schools here and there.

Then they go on to college and there's not really a group that you can come to for support. So I don't know-- When I came here, I went straight to the American Indian studies program. Me having a child, you look for that community too. So you look for meetings, gatherings, feeds. The powwow is a big thing. So it's just coming together. I don't know. I feel like I'm just like trailing off.

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**Interviewer:** With your reservation, your tribe that you came from, what's one of the bigger problems you have there today? Is it like people coming back? Do people leave and not come back?

**Madeline:** There's so many small issues that make a big difference from where I come from. So like-- I don't know. That's a really hard question-- I don't know.

**Interviewer:** Well, maybe how does higher ed help address some of those? It could be a way to turn, if we had more kids going to college, would that have a positive impact? Would that trickle back down, whether it's being a role model or breaking a cycle or something like that? Inspiring other kids to want to go to college.

**Madeline:** So much pressure.

[laughter]

**Interviewer:** This is your opinion.

**Madeline:** Yeah, but there's so much in those questions I would like to say. So coming from my reservation and having a diploma or having a degree is helpful to our tribe because most native students want to go get a higher education and come back to their community, but specifically for my tribe, we would need economic development. We need better roads. We need a convenience store. We need a youth center. We need so many things with our environment and landscape.

We need to take care of our land, ourselves, our water, our children, our elders. There's just so much we don't have, and that we should have. And with native students going to college, you come back and you help, or you're a role model to other students to go. You don't have to be stuck on the reservation living in poverty or around drug and alcohol abuse or any other type of abuse that we face on reservations. But, you know, college opens doors and I want other students to know that.

**Interviewer:** How has Eastern since you-- how has it helped just like with that transition? Because it was probably pretty scary.

**Madeline:** Well kind of. I used to live in Southern California for high school so that was already a change, that was already being out of my comfort zone, which is the reservation, small rural area. And moving down to Southern California, it changed my perspective. It let me know that there's more to life than the reservation. There's so many more other tribes out there. There's so many other opportunities that you would have never seen just being stuck in one place. So Eastern's helped me when I moved here, Eastern helped me to know that there's support. There's a lot of resources for you. There's community resources, you know, resources for your kids. I don't know, it's different. So I don't really know how to explain that.

**Interviewer:** So you take classes through the Native American studies, is that right?

**Madeline:** Well, Nicole was my advisor. So when I first got here she would help me. She got me through my [unintelligible 00:17:14] and now that I'm in urban and regional planning, I have a different advisor, but I'm a work-study there so I'm still there. I'm still involved with the Native American Student Association. So we meet every Tuesday and we try to get something going for us too.

**Interviewer:** Tell me a little about that. Are you involved? Are you an officer in there?

**Madeline:** I just became, yeah--I just became the secretary at the Native American Student Association here at Eastern, also known as NASA. We put on our powwow every year. We do feeds and gatherings during the holidays. You know, we look to do more. So in NASA we would like to start having more cultural activities for our students because right now our NASA group is pretty small. We have about six people that come every week and, you know, we'd like to get and retain more NASA members. That would help out the Indian studies program. That would help out our native community as a whole, just to have somewhere and something to do.

**Interviewer:** Is it important to hang onto your culture, to pass your culture on, to educate about your culture?

**Madeline:** It's important to pass on my cultural knowledge to my daughter and to my younger community members, the ones who may look up to me. And it's important because-- I don't know. It's really important but it's just like, how do you say it in one thought?

**Interviewer:** Well, you can say it in a few thoughts, it's okay.

**Madeline:** Let's see. I don't know. I don't know why that one's so hard.

**Interviewer:** Huh?

**Madeline:** I said, I don't know why that one's so hard.

**Interviewer:** Well, probably there is a lot of different--

**Madeline:** Well, yeah, I mean it's extremely important.

**Interviewer:** What does it mean to you as a mom that your daughter- because now she's up here going to school in a totally different environment. She could easily lose that and not understand where you came from, or her origin.

**Madeline:** I mean she may lose, but right now she's growing up in it. She was five years old when we came here, so she's been in powwows, she's dancing. She is starting to do beadwork, you know. She's watched me do a cradleboard before and, you know, it's just continuing on. We have a little bit of our language. We don't know all of it, but it's important to keep it going. It's important that she knows where she came from and where she wants

to go. I don't know, for me, it was like, coming to school wasn't just for me. It wasn't just for my daughter. It was for more than that.

It was for my community and my tribe, and I'm going to go back and I'm going to help and I'm going to make a difference and it's going to be awesome. So, and I want her to feel the same way, you know, and to always have that sense of community, even when we're not home. We're far from home, but Fort Bidwell will always be our home no matter where we're at and we'll always want to go back and visit and help.

**Interviewer:** That's cool, that's cool. You went to school in California, so was college, was that more predominantly talked about where you went to high school than it would be like on a reservation-- your reservation?

**Madeline:** Well, yeah. Going to Sherman Indian High School in Riverside, California, they really do focus on that path to a college, that path to higher education. And I just went to a small school. It wasn't on my reservation, but it was just a school like maybe 30 minutes away. And they did advocate for, you know, higher education and stuff like that, but it wasn't like-- I don't know how you would say. For native students, it's harder to even think about moving away from your family, from your community, and, you know, going to get a higher education so it takes more-- it takes more convincing, it takes more of--

You have to know that the resources are there. It's a scary move. So you have to know where you're going to stay. It was just more specific in Sherman Indian High School than it would be in my other high school. So my other high school-- in my hometown high school, they would say something like, "Apply to these colleges." Otherwise the Sherman Indian High School would say, "These are the programs that they offer. This is the American Indian studies that they have. This is where you would be staying. This is what kind of scholarships are out there for you, you know, we could help you." Stuff like that. It was just more hands-on with the native students, which is kind of what I needed. Even when I got here, that's why I went straight to the American Indian studies program.

**Interviewer:** So when I got here--

**Madeline:** I'm totally lost my track of thought now. [laughter] Oh okay. When I got here I went to the American Indian studies program and I met with Nicole and she was everything that I was looking for. She gave me the resources, she, you know, took her time with me and let me know that everything's going to work out and helped me through my classes, helped me pick out my next classes, you know, and now I'm a junior here at Eastern. I'll be graduating next year with a bachelor's in Urban and Regional Planning. And my next goal would be to continue on for a master's and who knows what comes after that? I can reach for the stars. I can do what I want to do.

**Interviewer:** Good. Good. Just a couple I think more about Eastern in general. How has your college experience been at Eastern? Outside of just going to class and meeting people, stuff like that.

**Madeline:** Having classes here at Eastern has been interesting. I don't know if I want to start it like that because had some crazy experiences here.

**Interviewer:** You did?

**Madeline:** Well, you can never get away from prejudiced people or even professors. Your work is looked at differently because of what you study or what you research. So it's not been all good. There's been sometimes where I disagree with a professor's, you know, choice. I don't know, I don't want to say bad things about them because they're professors.

**Interviewer:** Why Urban and Regional Planning? I want to touch on that again.

**Madeline:** Urban and Regional Planning for me, I don't really know. Like okay, let me think this through. I came for an MBA but it just wasn't what I wanted. When I looked into the classes it wasn't-- it wasn't what I was looking for because it didn't work with the community. I was introduced to the Urban and Regional Planning here at Eastern because I worked with one of the students who's in the program and she was telling me what kind of project she was doing and it was involved with the community.

I never knew that Urban and Regional Planning would be something that I wanted to do, but when I figured out that you would work with the community to build something that they want, or you would get something going from the ground up. Starting from your problems and what you don't have to something that can make a difference in everybody's lives. It was just the aspect of working with the community and getting things done and like the whole behind the scenes type of stuff. I'm just starting so I still don't really know exactly what everything is for the program, but I'm excited.

**Interviewer:** Good. Do you have anything else you want to add?

**Madeline:** I don't think so. I don't really know.

**Interviewer:** I thought you did great.

**Madeline:** Okay.