

StoryCorps Interview from New York Hall of Science (NYSCI)

Myrna Tinoco and Delia Meza

Myrna Tinoco: I have a five year old and a twenty-month baby. And from the first time we entered this space it seemed welcoming, engaging, interesting. My kid could run around get his hands on stuff and he enjoyed it.

He has speech delays; he's on the spectrum. I have taken my son to other places and he always likes to come here. He thinks every museum should have, you know, hands on exhibits and a playground right next door.

Delia Meza: Absolutely!

Myrna Tinoco: It's all age appropriate from age one and half, or two. They can just get their hands dirty and gooey and that's great.

Delia Meza: That's really awesome that you say that because it is my personal belief that the messier you get, the more fun you're having, and the more that you're learning about what it is that you're doing.

Do you remember the very first time that you came here?

Myrna Tinoco: I do. I came with my son, and on the spot I just got the membership. It had to include the playground. And I had him next to me and I was going through the second floor level that had all the little science exhibits. It seemed like a huge science fair. And I just really enjoyed it and then the very next day I brought my husband. And then we were both so distracted we kind of lost track . . .

Delia Meza: It was like you were the child all over again! I love it.

Myrna Tinoco: But it was fun for all.

I'm very happy when I see the diverse families. You see white families, you see African-American families, you see Asian families well-represented and then you see Latino families that maybe it's a little bit of a sacrifice to put the money out, but you know, you get a membership and it makes up for it. It's an investment that pays.

My older son, if I want him to clean up his room, I'll say, "you better clean up so that we can go to the museum!"

Delia Meza: Nice!

Myrna Tinoco: There's a wonderful program, it's concluded at this point, the ASD program.

Delia Meza: Keeping my fingers crossed . . .

Myrna Tinoco: If it gets more funding, but it's just been amazing when you can see how a child sits, looks at an adult in front of them, maybe takes in the concept of the lesson with a song, with a hands on activity. All of that is helpful for you later on to advocate for a better teaching experience or a learning experience in the classroom for your child. And that's me getting to know my child more intimately. Those opportunities have been invaluable to my son, to myself, and to my family. So I thank you for the opportunity.

Delia Meza: Absolutely! Is there anything else that you want to tell the word about the impact that NYSCI has had on you guys?

Myrna Tinoco: Take your kids out, turn off that TV, just have fun with your kids.