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JB: I'm originally from Trinidad and Tobago, two islands in the South Caribbean just nine miles west of Venezuela. On a clear day on the southern side of Trinidad you could see the coastline of Venezuela. That's where one of the beaches down there is where I grew up, more or less our home beach, Quinam Beach. As a boy growing up we'd always be on the beach with my brothers and cousins and family. On a clear day you could see the coastline of Venezuela. So we're that close to Venezuela. With that being said, some people say we're connected to Venezuela through the oil and gas that we've got. I was born there in 1978 with my mom and my dad and two brothers. I spent most of my life in Trinidad until I moved up here in 2008. That's when I first came up here to Canada, Edmonton.

Q: What made you come to Canada?

JB: Through work. I'm a pipefitter. A company up here was looking to get foreign labour because they were short of pipefitters to fill the jobs.

Q: How did you find out this information?

JB: Through word of mouth, through guys I was working with I heard about it. A company up here was connected with a company in Trinidad to source their labour.

Q: What was the company?

JB: Here it was PCL.

Q: PCL was connected with a company in Trinidad?

JB: Yes.

Q: What was the company in Trinidad? [Kentzs-OJ's (DCM)]

JB: I can't remember the name right now. It'll come back to me. So you've got to send in your qualifications and your experience more or less into the companies. It was more or less in 2007 when the call went out looking for guys to drop their resume and all that stuff and their qualifications. But then there was a lull in between for months, like six or seven months I didn't hear anything about it. Guys said it was a scam; it was this and that. We didn't have to pay any money to do it, but for like six or seven months there was no response. After we got to realize that in Canada a labour board was doing investigations to make sure everything was legit, to make sure everyone was qualified enough to come up here. So, after we kind of forgot about it, we got a call one day asking if we were still interested. We said yeah.

Q: How many of you?

JB: In the application process there could be 100 to 200 guys. But with it all said and done, more or less it was just six of us that came up.

Q: You all came together?

JB: Yeah, we came together.

Q: To PCL?

JB: Yeah, PCL took us. We came to PCL, direct to PCL in Edmonton. It was end of August 2008 when we first came.

Q: How did you train for the job you were doing in Trinidad?

JB: We did it through the government. They had a new training program; they call it WITA, through a secondary school. After school hours in the afternoon between 5 to 8 we'd go and train there, do our practical to learn to weld and all that. After that there was an advanced course which was done by WITA also but it was a full-length course instead of just part-time. So I applied for that but I got chosen to go work in a shop with a company that was Demos Limited. I started there and that changed the rest of my life when I started learning to be a pipefitter. It was Monday the 16th of June '97 is when I first started that. I'll never forget that day. That was the day that the superintendent took us under his wing with all the guys in the shop that taught us everything we needed to know about pipefitting and fabricating.

Q: So you were an apprentice?

JB: Yeah, I was an apprentice for a couple months.

Q: When you finished training, you received certification in welding?

JB: Yeah, more fabricating we call it in Trinidad.

Q: What did you fabricate?

JB: Any sort of metal stuff, from tanks, vessels, piping, pipe structures, steel structures, plates. The shop used to produce all different things.

Q: When you say plates, this is industrial?

JB: Industrial plates, metal plates. If you're building a shelf, they make it out of steel. So you'll make different components to construct the shelf or the structure or the tank or whatever.

Q: Did you focus mainly on tanks and vessels?

JB: Different parts of the vessels we would build. The tanks and the vessels you see when you're driving by: its different parts. We gotta cut different sections to put it together on site. In the shop we'll cut them and make everything, and they'll ship it out and construct it on site. So that's what we were doing.

Q: Was it ocean-going?

JB: Most of it was on land. Some of the pipe will go offshore.

Q: Did you build pipes for transporting oil?

JB: Yeah, oil and gas. We did a project when I was an apprentice that was the Atlantic LNG in Point Fortin; I worked on that.

Q: Is that an American company?

JB: Atlantic, yeah, I think it's a couple different oil companies that own Atlantic actually.

Q: International oil companies benefitted from your labour?

JB: They did, yeah.

Q: Anything else you want to add about that experience?

JB: Not that I can think of.

Q: You were involved in pipe parts production, and the assembly would take place elsewhere?

JB: Yes.

Q: You didn't have to weld any of the parts together?

JB: We'd weld parts of it in the shop, like 20 feet long before it goes out, different components.

Q: Are you a welder?

JB: No, I'm not a welder. I'm the one who sets it up for the welder to weld. I put it together and the welder will weld it up.

Q: So what was it like coming to Edmonton?

JB: Six of us came. Most of us had families. I was married just a year before in 2007. I left my wife and came up here and worked for six months straight before we stopped work for Christmas. We came up in August and it was four months before... but we didn't go back home; we stayed there. First Christmas was 2008.

Q: How was that?

JB: It was hard. I got homesick and all that, missing the family, missing home.

Q: What was their reaction to you living here?

JB: It was tough; it was challenging at times. One thing we all know living here is the cold. The cold weather is something everyone can't take. It's one thing that some guys weren't ready for. Two of the guys ended up going back home because they said it was too cold. They told us it was going to be cold, but we never thought it was going to be this cold. Two of the guys went back home. So it came down to just four of us.

Q: Where were you placed?

JB: Initially we were working in Nisku but we were living in Leduc. We got a condo there where we were all staying.

Q: And you were working for PCL?

JB: Yeah, we were working for PCL.

Q: What were you doing for PCL?

JB: Same thing, pipefitting. They were doing modules at the time in the mod yard.

Q: What is a module?

JB: A module is where they're constructing modules so that when they're building the plants for the refinery they will. . .

Q: When you say mod yard. . .

JB: Modules, they call it a mod yard, a modular yard.

Q: In Nisku?

JB: In Nisku, yes. Basically the ironworkers before us will go and construct the supports or the structure for the pipe. Once that's done, we will go and install with the use of cranes all the equipment and install the pipe into the structure where it needs to be. In years gone by, when they were first building oil refineries, they would do everything on site. But over the years they decided that it will be much faster and more economical for them to do some of the work off site. So that's when the mod yards came into existence. They'll build it off site and then they'll ship the structures by trucks and trailers to the site. Once they get on site, most of the heavy work is done. So just install it, so it'll be faster getting the construction done.

Q: Where was the construction going in?

JB: The project we were doing I think was out in Fort Saskatchewan at the Shell site.

Q: So you worked for PCL and it was attached to different oil companies?

JB: Yes. The oil companies, when they wanted to expand--some of them already had existing sites. That job we were on was an expansion of the existing site. So we were doing new pipe and new structures to send to the site for them to build a new site and expand their site.

Q: Are you still employed with PCL?

JB: No, I'm not. From there, once a job is done you'll look for another job.

Q: Is PCL a contractor?

JB: Yeah, they are a contractor. I'm not at PCL anymore. I'm at a different company altogether.

Q: Does PCL have a division that deals with oil and gas, or is that all the company does?

JB: They have a division. They do other stuff too, like they do buildings and highways and stuff as far as I know from years ago. Most of the companies have different divisions, but I work in the oil and gas division.

Q: Because of your experience?

JB: Yes, before coming to Canada.

Q: At this point is your family still in Trinidad?

JB: No. In 2011 my wife and I moved up here. How it initially went is that in 2008, when we came up in August, we worked until Christmas. Then we were off for Christmas and came back in January. We were off for two weeks or ten days and came back in January. If you guys

remember, 2008 was the Wall Street crash; 2008, there was an economy crash. When everything crashed, they shut down all the projects. So they sent us back home; maybe in February of 2009 is when we went back home. So we went back home for a couple of months.

Q: Did you get unemployment insurance?

JB: No, within a week we were back home. So, we didn't. Back home I went back to Demos. They took me back and I was working there.

Q: You didn't have permanent residence?

JB: No. We were just foreign workers, TFWs, temporary foreign workers, at the time. Once we came back, they called us back. I think in February we went home and maybe in March we came back, within two months. When everything came back up and they started up the project, they sent for us again. So we came back in March; myself and four other guys came back in March. Once we were up here, we moved from the mod yard in Nisku to a site at Fort Sask. So we were working on site then. While we were there, with our experience, PCL encouraged us to apply for residency. So we sent our papers in 2009 to start to get our residency. My papers got approved in 2011, and that's when myself and my wife moved up here. In 2011 we were permanent residents. So that's when my wife first came up.

Q: As a temporary foreign worker, did you have any medical coverage or any benefits?

JB: Yes.

Q: And you have permanent residence?

JB: Yes, since 2008 I became a citizen myself, and my wife Paula became a citizen in 2017. When we came back up in 2011, I came looking for work, and I got work in Nisku again with Ledcor. Ledcor is another construction company. They have different divisions and they do have the oil and gas industry also.

Q: What did you do for Ledcor?

JB: Same, working on modules for different sites. They have different projects.

Q: You built different kinds of modules?

JB: Yeah, different kinds.

Q: Were they still shipped off site?

JB: Yeah, they build it on site and it's shipped; build it in the mod yard and then it ships to site.

Q: Are you still with Ledcor?

JB: No. I've been with different companies, because in construction it's more or less when the job is done you're going to look for other jobs.

Q: So your employer is changing all the time?

JB: Yeah, it's changing.

Q: Did you work through an agency?

JB: No.

Q: Have you ever used to the union to help you find employment?

JB: No.

Q: You're on your own?

JB: Yeah, I'm on my own. With the company I work for, CLAC is another like a union. So I have medical coverage and stuff through CLAC, Christian Labour Association.

Q: How long have you been with CLAC?

JB: Since 2013.

Q: They sent you to Ledcor?

JB: No, I sent in my resume to Ledcor and they called.

Q: So you find your own employment, and if the jobsite has CLAC then you join CLAC?

JB: Yeah, that's basically it.

Q: How long were you at Ledcor?

JB: From 2011 to 2013. From there I left and went to another company at Lac la Biche at a small outfit out there and worked a couple months out there through them. Out there we were installing pipe on site. The modules came to site and we attached everything and did the welding and put everything together.

Q: Did you do the welding?

JB: No, I worked with welders as part of the crew.

Q: How is employment continuing for you?

JB: It's good. It's been constant and steady. Once you're a good worker and know what you're doing and keep your head on, there's always constant employment. Right now the industry is pretty good; it's steady. It's got lots of work going on right now. So I've been able to keep steady.

Q: After Ledcor where did you go?

JB: After Ledcor I went up to Lac la Biche.

Q: With Ledcor?

JB: No, with a different company. I left Ledcor at that time. At Ledcor the work was slow. So I ended up leaving. I ended up with another company up in Lac la Biche and worked up there for ten months also.

Q: So your work is generally temporary?

JB: Yes. In construction you're always building something, building equipment or a refinery. I was working myself out of a job, because when it ends completion, you've got to look for your next job. Most of the companies have continuity where you go from job to job, but sometimes it's not always like that.

Q: So you're building yourself out of employment?

JB: Out of a job. If you're building a house and the house comes to completion, you have to go to another house to go build. So that's in construction what it is.

Q: Do you describe yourself as a construction pipefitter?

JB: Yeah, construction pipefitter, oil and gas pipefitter.

Q: Where are you now?

JB: I'm up at Shell site. One thing I forgot to mention is when we did come up here, while we were working with PCL, we did a couple months course and then we had to sit our journeyman pipefitting to make sure we were qualified with Canadian qualifications as a journeyman pipefitter.

Q: Was that a two-month course?

JB: Yeah, a two- or three-month course we had while we were working. We were working nightshift in the mod yard with PCL.

Q: What happened to the other guys you came with?

JB: One guy is back home in Trinidad. Besides the other two that left, one guy didn't actually do up his papers. He didn't really want to stay; so he's back home in Trinidad right now. But the other two guys are here. One's a welder and one's a pipefitter like myself, but he's in supervision. He's up north. Shame; he came up with us.

Q: You have no connection to Trinidad Oil Company?

JB: No.

Q: That was a different oil company in Leduc?

JB: Oh yeah. Some guys before us came up a couple years before us. I know some of the guys that came up with Trinidad Oil Company. We didn't come up with them. I don't think any of those guys ever stayed that came up with that; they went back home. I worked with a few of them, actually. Some of them were giving me pointers before I came up. One guy, Ross is his name, Harold Ross, he came up and he was telling us about Nisku and different sites and stuff.

Q: So you were learning about Canada in Trinidad.

JB: Yeah, from guys who experienced it before.

Q: You're currently working at Shell?

JB: Yes, for Graham Construction. That's the oil and gas division; they have different divisions too.

Q: Have you encouraged any other family members to join you here?

JB: My two brothers. One's in the bank and one's in the power plant back home, but they didn't really want to come up and follow suit. They're more comfortable back home. But in the past I encouraged a lot of workers who I worked with at Demos to come up and stuff, like pipefitters and stuff. I was never successful to get any of them up here actually, but I encouraged them over the years. Sometimes it's kind of difficult to get guys with the qualifications and paperwork and stuff. It's not the easiest thing to do, to meet the criteria.

Q: Is there anything else about your work history that you'd like to talk about?

JB: In 2013 after I left Ledcor I worked up north a bit. Then in 2014 I came back to Ledcor back in the mod yard and worked there for another two years until 2016.

Q: Where did you work up north?

JB: Conklin, for a Lac la Biche company. I worked at Jackfish 3.

Q: Is that in Alberta?

JB: It's at Conklin. That's the name of the site, Jackfish 3. But it's up at Conklin. I think jackfish is actually the name of a fish or something in the river close by. So they named it after that.

Q: So you went back to Ledcor in 2014?

JB: Ledcor, in 2014 until 2017.

Q: By now you've accumulated plenty of experience.

JB: Yes, I can take anything they throw at me right now.

Q: Have you had any promotions in terms of the structure of your crews?

JB: For the last year or so I worked supervision, foreman, and have a crew working for me doing different activities on the site.

Q: How is the crew structured, and how many people?

JB: Anywhere from three up to five or eight guys. I'll have a couple pipefitters with me and a welder or two.

Q: Do you ever have females employed with you?

JB: From time to time, sometimes pipefitting and sometimes labourers.

Q: How is that integration for you?

JB: It's good. I treat everyone the same, same respect.

Q: Have you seen more women getting into the industry over the ten years?

JB: Yes, not much but there's a steady increase of women in the industry.

Q: Is your crew accepting of them, and it's operations as normal?

JB: It is normal, yeah.

Q: Have you ever thought about how much you've contributed to the industry or the economy?

JB: Yeah. The majority of those sites I worked on, you helped put it where it is today. You contributed to the wellbeing or the upkeep of the economy. So I do from time to time think about it.

Q: And feel proud?

JB: Yeah, I feel proud. A boy from Trinidad comes up here and has contributed on the world stage and represents our country and myself and the family to be a productive member of this society. So yeah, I feel proud of that.

Q: Are you glad that you took that plunge?

JB: Yeah, it was challenging and I'm glad I did.

Q: What challenges did you face? Did you ever experience any racism?

JB: No, I can't say that I have. Personally I know there are stories around, but I never had anyone come up and discriminate or make any comments towards me personally. For the most part, I have a relaxed and open relationship with everyone.

Q: Do you have a mixed crew working with you?

JB: Yeah, for the most part, a mixed crew.

Q: You're the foreman, and are you the only person of colour on your crew?

JB: On my crew at the time, right now I'm not foreman. On my crew there was one guy from the Philippines, a Filipino guy.

Q: Anything else you want to add?

JB: No, that's about it.

Q: Were you instrumental in your brother-in-law coming up?

JB: No, he - Keron is his name... He's the one who actually told me about the job when we were both in Trinidad. He's the one that encouraged me to send a resume and stuff. He's working in oil and gas too. He works up north.

Q (Don): Can you describe what you do as a pipefitter?

JB: For the most part, we're setting up pipe. We prep the pipe for them. We mark, cut, grind, use a grinder and grind it and make sure it's clean and ready, and make sure it's square and everything's good to go. Then we'll work with the welder to put it together, like tack weld it for them to come after and do the final welding. We do the cleaning for the most part. Sometimes the welder does it himself, but we do it also. Welding pipe is not the only aspect of it.

Q: Do you line it?

JB: Yeah, we line it up. But also as a pipefitter you do a lot of other things. Once the pipe is welded and X-rayed to make sure the weld is up to standard. . .

Q: Do you X-ray it?

JB: No, there's another company that comes and X-rays and does heat testing, non-destructive testing. We'll do a hydro test to make sure the whole system is sound and ready to take whatever pressure they're going to put in it. So that's another aspect we do in it.

Q: Is a hydro test just like running water through it?

JB: Yeah, we bring it up to a certain pressure. It's a pressure test called a hydro test. There's two different types of pressure test we do – hydrostatic test and pneumatic test, which is air.

Q: One of the other guys was explaining how many different pipes there are.

JB: Yeah all different materials. It can get very intricate if you get into the specifics of everything – the structure and texture and the chemical content of everything. The specs, you've gotta make sure everything is what they require. Different elements require different pipe. Some require stainless pipe; some require regular carbon steel pipe. In the industry there are lots of different chemicals they use. In the oil and gas sector there is a lot of different stuff they use to treat the petroleum to get what they want out of it and all that. So a lot of different grades of pipe and stuff we need, that goes from the smallest half-inch pipe all the way up to 48- or 60-inch, five-foot or four-foot pipe.

Q: As a pipefitter, it's your job to make sure all those pieces of pipe line up.

JB: Yeah, we've gotta measure and make sure everything fits, make sure it's square and plumb and level. . . That's a hummer drill; they're drilling into the concrete. We use that too. There's a wide range of stuff. It's not as straightforward as you would think. There's always something new in pipefitting, even though you've worked for years in the business. It's always evolving and changing as certain technologies and different standards change. There's never a dull moment in pipefitting; there's always something new to learn in it. It's a nice industry to get into. You've gotta make sure you're always thinking and looking ahead at the job and all that too.

Q: When you were initially working nights as a TFW with PCL, were the working conditions different from that of the dayshift?

JB: No it's the same, because I worked both. It's basically the same. Obviously, nightshift was less visibility, but you've gotta be aware of your surroundings and make sure all the work was well lit so you could see properly. That was the only challenge more or less with working nightshift. In the winter, nightshift tends to be colder than days most of the time. That's if you're out in the mod yard. Also on sites I worked nightshifts as well.

Q: As a temporary foreign worker?

JB: No. As a temporary foreign worker we worked in the mod yard and then we worked on site on the new construction. In the mod yard we were building the modules and on site we put them together.

Q: On your team, were you all temporary foreign workers?

JB: There was a mix. We were working with guys from here, from Edmonton and stuff. So there was a mix. One thing I should mention is we weren't the first set of foreign workers. There were guys from India, there were guys from Philippines, there were guys from South Africa that came up years before us to work as foreign workers in the industry. So we met most of them here.

Q: What was the pay like? Did you get minimum wage or did you get industry rates?

JB: It's on par with our fellow workers.

Q: Was the rental you shared in Leduc arranged by the company, or did you find it yourselves?

JB: They gave us a few suggestions, but we sourced it from Trinidad. I think my wife did; Paula did. She got in contact with the owner of the condo here and she organized everything and printed out the paperwork and contract. I came up with it, and that's how we got it. But PCL did give us suggestions of different locations that would be best to rent. We had no idea of the geography of the place. They told us how far Nisku is from Leduc, and that's why we got the place. So they kind of helped us out, but they didn't actually get a place for us. When we first landed here in August, they did put us up in a hotel for a few days for us to get everything in order. They took us to go get our safety gear, open bank accounts, and they put us up in a hotel for four or five days.

Q: How did you get from Leduc to work in Nisku?

JB: We used to use a taxi. We had one special driver used to come get us. He had a minivan so he got all of us. We all chipped in and paid him every day.

Q: Did you have much contact with the people in the town of Leduc?

JB: No. We were close to Walmart, just behind Walmart. So we used to go to Walmart and that area, but not much contact. We were working nightshift most times. One thing I should mention too, that's when we first met Donna at the Trinidad and Tobago Association. When we came up, they all chipped in and donated stuff and gave us different things we needed, like pots and pans and plates and stuff and cutlery and stuff just to set us up. So thank you for that, Donna. Trinidad and Tobago Association, we got a lot of stuff from them; so they helped us out a lot. When we got here, that's one of the guys that left because it was too cold. His brother was here. His brother was Nevil Alexander. He called his brother and his brother came, and that's when we ended up meeting everyone from the Trinidad community up here, because his brother was up here.

Q: When you went back, was that because the contract had finished and the economy had turned down?

JB: Yes, initially that's when the 2008 meltdown happened and everything crashed. We went home but within a few months it kicked back up. So they did call us back up. We worked from 2009 to 2010 up on site up at Fort Sask. The contract did complete; so I did go back home in 2010. But my papers for my permanent residency were already submitted. So in 2011 it got approved and myself and my wife came up together in 2011 as permanent residents. We corresponded with them back and forth and we sent stuff from Trinidad to the consulate and different stuff. It was a tedious process but it was worth it in the end. Sometimes you won't get a reply for months. On the website it said they had a waiting period and there's a scheduled time each document will take. So it was a bit tedious. But it was worth it in the end. But I was working back home. One thing I should mention too is while working at Damus is where I met my wife. Her dad was a superintendent with Damus, and he's the one who actually helped fill out some of the paperwork for us to come up.

Q: Talk a bit about Damus and what it is.

JB: It's a company back home, a construction company, oil and gas also. So I worked with a lot of the oil companies back home and constructed different parts of refineries and stuff: tanks, vessels, pipe.

Q: Were they unionized companies?

JB: Yeah, they were unionized companies.

Q: Where you're working now, is that through CLAC or independent?

JB: It's through CLAC; it's a CLAC company.

Q: Does CLAC post jobs?

JB: It's mainly up to myself, but CLAC does the same thing. If companies are looking for workers, they will call you and ask you if you're looking for work. They don't do it like 488 does it, where you go down to the hall and pull a slip. They don't do it exactly like 488.

Q: But they have officers who call you?

JB: Yeah, sometimes if they're looking. It's not a regular occurrence. But if Ledcor or whoever is looking for workers, CLAC may call and ask you if you're looking for work. They do job postings too, but you send in your resume and apply for it. It's not the same system as the 488 system; it's different.

Q: So, as you're finishing up a job, do you just ask around and find where the next job will be?

JB: Yeah, there are always guys talking about the next job. So you gotta keep your ears out and listen or go online and see what's coming up. That's how it goes.

Q: Have you had periods of unemployment?

JB: During the pandemic I was home for four months. I was on EI for that. At the time, I was working at Conklin doing maintenance. At the time, oil price tanked and went down to zero. So they told us to stay home. At the time, we were doing fly-in and fly-out. They were flying us in and out. I was home on off days and then I got a call that they didn't need us anymore. So I was home for four months. In the 20 plus years I've been doing it between Trinidad and Canada, that was the longest I was ever home for being unemployed.

Q: During that time, did you keep your place here or did you just go home?

JB: I kept my place here. My wife was working too. Paula was working still; so we kind of depended on that. The pandemic was a whole different scenario. No one expected that. It was challenging and frustrating. I kept looking for work, but everyone was just trying to figure out the whole pandemic stuff. But some jobs didn't shut right down; some jobs kept going. After four months I got a job in Fort Sask at IPL and that job kept going.

Q: Were they taking special precautions during the pandemic?

JB: Yeah, well everyone had to be masked up. Usual precautions, and when they're sitting, everyone is separate, separation like plastic glass and stuff. You wash your hands every time and make sure you're sanitized and everything. So that was it.

Q: As a pipefitter, what type of protective gear do you have to wear?

JB: There's basic PPE they call it, protective gear: your work boots with safety toe, steel-toed boots, gloves, safety glasses, hardhat, safety hats, and earplugs. That's basic. Once you're on the

job, you gotta have that on. Then there's special extra PPE, like when you clean a pipe or grind a pipe, you've gotta wear your faceshield. If you're in an area where there's extra noise, you've gotta wear double ear protection. So, besides your ear plugs you've gotta put on ear muffs. Sometimes, instead of wearing steel-toed boots, you'll wear steel-toed rubber boots, because it's muddy or wet or different chemicals you're using. Then at some point if you're going inside a vessel you might use a rubber suit for extra protection so you won't get anything on your clothes. We have oxygen tanks and air supply tanks. We do that too. Certain lines or systems you're working on will have certain gases that they don't want you to inhale. So you have to pack up before you touch anything.

Q: Do you work inside tanks?

JB: I personally don't, but [53:57] does. They go inside some vessels. Sometimes some of the guys gotta go in and clean. If you're working on a tank, whatever hazardous material or chemical are in there--sometimes there are pipelines that go into it--so if you gotta work on the pipeline, you gotta make sure to have your air pack on to work on that.

Q: You call it an air pack?

JB: Yeah. It's a SCBA - Self-Contained Breathing apparatus - supplied air apparatus.

Q: Who sets the standards on the site?

JB: The owners – Shell or Suncor or whichever company owns the site – they will know exactly what they have and what hazards. There are different standards and regulations for each system. When you go to them they will tell us exactly what's in it and what precautions need to be taken before we touch anything. There are some things that are in place before you actually get to the jobsite.

Q: Are you required to have tickets?

JB: Safety tickets? Yes, there's a lot of safety tickets you've gotta have. They'll have training for that; everyone's gotta be trained before they get on site. You have to be competent enough to be able to use the safety equipment that they give you.

Q: When you first arrive on site, does the company talk you through all the hazards, etc?

JB: Yeah.

Q: If somebody ignores the safety precautions, who calls them on that?

JB: Well yourself, your coworkers, and there are safety guys on site that will be there too. Even the owners of the site will be there, especially if there's hazardous material. They'll be there

watching to make sure everything's good. With those hazardous and deadly materials, they don't want anyone to skip any step or ignore anything. Your life is at risk with yourself and your coworkers. So you don't want anyone to do that at all.

Q: Did you buy your own house in Edmonton?

JB: Yes, south side Edmonton in a community south of South Common. In 2014 we bought a house. So next year it'll be ten years. I moved into the house on my birthday.

Q: It sounds like you spent quite a bit of time away. Is your work still like that?

JB: No, right now I'm working in Fort Sask. So I'm home every night. It's the longest period I've been home since we bought the house. It's two and a half years that I've been working out in Fort Sask. So it's nice. But before that, after I left Ledcor and stuff, I've been up north for the most part. That was hard working up there on site, because you'd be up there for 14 days straight or 10 days straight or sometimes 21 days straight. So it's a bit difficult.

Q: In Conklin was it 21 days?

JB: That was ten days. Sometimes if you're working different projects, you'll work 21 or 24 days. On average it'll be 14 days on and seven days off average, but there are different schedules for different jobs.

Q: What is your shift now?

JB: I work four days on and three days off right now. Sometimes if the job picks up, according to what job you're on, they might go five or six days a week.

Q: How long are the shifts on the four days you work?

JB: Ten hours--so 7:30 to 5:30 I work right now. Sometimes there's 12 hours.

Q: In Fort Sask?

JB: In Fort Sask, at Shell.

Q: When you're working away, does that put stress on your family?

JB: I don't have any kids. My wife and myself don't have any kids. So it's just my wife and I. But yeah, it is tough. Even when I was working here as a foreign worker and she was back home, I was six, seven, or eight months away. So that does put a strain on the relationship. A lot of long phone calls, a lot of stress. Long distance relationship--so you have to put extra work in when it's that. Then working up here, even when she was in Edmonton and I'd be up north working 14 days on and seven days off, it's a bit strenuous. I know guys with kids. They've got the kids

growing up and they're not there most of the time. So it's a bit strenuous, yeah. That's why some guys will say they've had enough and go back home.

Q: Have you ever encountered drugs on the site?

JB: No, I can't say that I have. But sometimes the owners of the site bring in the drug dogs; they have drug dogs. Those drug dogs are pretty good. So, even if you're not using but someone touched your bags or anywhere, the dogs will smell it. The drug dogs come and it's not scheduled; so from time to time drug dogs will come in. For the most part there's not much drugs on there; there's no drugs on the site. They haven't caught that much. And there's always drug testing too. So, if they get on site, they've gotta do a drug test. The alcohol and drug test we gotta do. That's a prerequisite on any site in the industry. You've gotta do a piss test and breathalyser before you get on site, so you gotta be clean to get a job.

Q: Have safety requirements changed over the course of your career? Do you feel like you would be supported if you had an injury?

JB: Safety wise in the industry the safety standard is number one priority. So safety-wise they don't take any chance or leave you wanting for safety. It's your obligation if you feel unsafe to stop work or refuse work. With that being said, they make sure everything is in place safety-wise for you to succeed on the job. That's across the board in the industry. Most sites don't play with their safety; safety is number one always. Over the years it's been pretty safe, pretty good. You hear stories in the past in the early days when things weren't as safe. When you look at other industries too, you hear some stories. That being said, there are always injuries on sites. Not my site per se, but in Canada and the U.S. you hear about a fatality here or injury here. Some guy got cut here also. There's always an unguarded moment when guys will take things for granted. But, for the most part, safety standards are pretty high in the industry. There's a lot of dangerous stuff we're dealing with. So you can't put safety for granted at any point. With WCB, the companies have things in place where they support the workers if an injury does occur and you need extended time off. They will support you and make sure everything's in place for you to succeed in that regard. Also we do have through CLAC and 488 health coverage and stuff to back you up.

Q: How do you stop work if you smell or feel there's something in the atmosphere that's unsafe?

JB: In that case, you put down your tools and get away from the area. That's one thing I didn't mention. When you're working on site, you always have a personal monitor to read the gas. So they will have that. That's part of your PPE and it will monitor different gases. You will smell it, but your smelling might be too late. So your monitor will pick up at lower levels and give you a warning that something's in the area. On sites too, besides the personal, there are different monitors on different locations on site too. So they will pick it up and sound the alarm and all that. But in the case of if you're smelling something off, you will have to down tools and go away

from the area and call your supervision or safety and let them know. In the case you smell something you're not accustomed to smelling, you've gotta put everything down and stop what you're doing and go to a safe area just to ensure that everything is good.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?

JB: No, that's about it.

[END]