

## Oral History Transcript

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**Narrator:** Sara Meadors (2005-)  
**Interviewer:** Julia Zile  
Ashley Donaldson  
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[Julia Zile] Okay. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this oral histories project. I want to remind you that this may be published as a part of the oral history Archives project for Dr. Gloria Lopez in my Ethnic Studies Methodologies class at Chico State University Chico. And I need your permission to publish this transcript in its part or its entirety. Do I have permission to record this interview?

[Sara Meadors] Yes.

[Julia Zile] Okay. So hello. My name is Julia Zile. Today is Tuesday, November 5, 2024. It is 6:37. At night. I am conducting this interview in the Miriam Library Podcast studio in Chico, California. And I am here with Sarah Meadors.

[Sara Meadors] Hey, guys.

[Julia Zile] So today, we're going to start with Sarah introducing herself. So, just tell me where did you grow up? How was your high school experience? How diverse was your setting, your biggest role models, things like that.

[Sara Meadors] Okay. I grew up in the East Bay, a little small town called Martinez. So my high school experience, I thought it was great just because I grew up with all the kids that I ended up going to high school with. So everyone was like, my friend and it was just like a good time. I'd say, my school was pretty diverse. I wouldn't say it was like anything special, pretty much. And it was just average, I guess. As for my biggest role models just in life, I would definitely say my mom. She is one of the strongest people I know, and she just encourages me to always chase my dreams, and do the best that I can. So yeah.

[Julia Zile] Ah. I love your mom. So now, tell me about why you chose to come to Chico State, and you can also talk about, like, your major and why you chose the specific major.

[Sara Meadors] Okay, so one of the main reasons I actually chose to come to Chico State was because my older cousin came here, and she always talked about how much she loved the Small Town vibe, and, like, It was just reminded her of a lot of our hometown, which I really loved. She actually took me up to visit here and I feel like she had a different perspective as an alumni. So that was really cool to see that, and I just fell in love with the campus and the town, and the people are super cool here. Also regarding my major, I was a pre nursing major. That's why I came here. Chico is a really great nursing school. I just recently changed it to public health, but I also know they have a lot of good professors

and classes for that major as well. So Yeah.

[Julia Zile] And I feel like both of those coincide with each other, too. I know a lot of people who have transitioned from public health to nursing and the other way too. So I feel like it's a good program

[Sara Meadors] Definitely

[Julia Zile] And they bounce off of each other.

[Sara Meadors] And just another thing, like, I also, this kind of also regards to my cousin a little bit. She was in Greek life here. So, she always talked about being a sorority, and I always wanted to be in a sorority

[Julia Zile] So what sorority are you in?

[Sara Meadors] I'm in Sigma Kappa.

[Julia Zile] A one life one way.

[Both] One heart way. On heart one way. One heart one way.

[Julia Zile] Yeah. Okay. And then did growing up in the Bay Area influence your career path?

[Sara Meadors] Um, I don't I don't really know, honestly. Maybe. I don't know. I don't really have an answer for that one.

[Julia Zile] Do you have, like, any, like, family members or, like, people you know in, like, nursing or public health back home?

[Sara Meadors] Not nursing. My aunt is a surgical tech, though. So she works at UCSF in the city. So she's actually told me that I can sit in on a surgery. So I don't know. I haven't done it yet. I'm a little. I don't know. But

[Julia Zile] You don't know if you're ready for that yet.

[Sara Meadors] Yeah. I don't know if I'm ready for that.

[Julia Zile] Nice. Okay. And then before we get started and get into why we're here today. Let's talk about what events you are involved in on campus. And like, like, clubs, anything you're involved with, like on campus.

[Sara Meadors] So, majority of my time that I'm, like, involved with with stuff here goes towards my sorority, just because we do a lot for the school and then other organizations, obviously. So that's definitely, like my main thing I'm involved in, but I am also a part of the nursing club. Yeah, we meet, like monthly and just kind of talk about strategies for getting into the nursing program and kind of just a profession in general. I also have this is, like, kind of a very specific one. I like, they have, like, little booths that are like, for bone marrow transplants or something like that. So I always try to get involved in actually Yeah, I don't know. I just do the cheek swabs that they asked me to do.

[Julia Zile] Oh, really?

[Sara Meadors] Yes, and I've donated blood here before, so just like little things.

[Julia Zile] Yeah I heard you guys win Greek week.

[Sara Meadors] We did win Greek week. We did

[Julia Zile] Exciting. Yes. Well, nice. Okay, so that's a good transition into what our main topic here, which is the Alzheimer's walk.

[Sara Meadors] Yes.

[Julia Zile] So how did you get involved with the Alzheimer's walk? And did you have any personal reasons, like, did this, like, affect your major or your time here? Like, tell me about that?

[Sara Meadors] So I actually didn't know about the Alzheimer's walk until I joined Sigma Kappa, because one of our well, it's we have five philanthropies that we kind of work to raise money for, but our main one is Alzheimer's. So this was like a huge thing that we do every year, and we raise money for it, and we kind of helped set up, take down, like, do anything that the walk needs to kind of make it run smoothly. And also, a lot of the girls in our sorority have a really, really deep connection to Alzheimer's, whether they have a family member that's living with it or have lost someone from it. So Yeah, that's kind of the main reason I did the Alzheimer's walk. I have no family members, thank goodness that have been affected by this. So I just go and support.

[Julia Zile] Nice. I feel like that's such a big thing that the need to, like, for the walk is that support helps a lot.

[Sara Meadors] Yes. And then did you help to create it at your organization, or was it already created when you arrived?

[Sara Meadors] It, it was already created. So yeah, I just kind of you know, joined and then got kind of put into it. So it was good. It's a good thing.

[Julia Zile] Nice. And then did, like, what kind of stuff do you guys do at the Alzheimer's walk? Like give me like a rundown?

[Sara Meadors] So, pretty much, like I said, we helped set up. So a couple of the girls that are part of our philanthropy committee went and they set up and, like, helped with, like, all the different tents and making sure people had water and, like, putting chairs out and like I said before, just making sure everything runs super smoothly. So yeah.

[Julia Zile] Okay. And then why is this impactful to your organization?

[Sara Meadors] Um Sorry. I just have to think about this one. Oh. Sorry. I just had a little mind blank.

[Julia Zile] No, it's okay. Take your time.

[Sara Meadors] That's been a long day. Sorry. As I said, it's our main philanthropy, and basically, we nationally raise money for it each year to donate to research to help to end it. Yes.

[Julia Zile] That's cool. And then did you have any presumptions before the Alzheimer's walk?

[Sara Meadors] Honestly, if I'm being honest, I'm not a morning person. And so when I heard that I had to wake up early after a long weekend, I was not super excited for it, and I did think it was going to be super

long and kind of not fun. But I ended up actually having a really great time. Like, I felt like I was going to do something that was, like, good for I don't know, the world, I guess, I don't know.

[Both] Yeah

[Sara Meadors] I actually had a great time, great little stroll.

[Julia Zile] So how early was it?

[Sara Meadors] Okay, well, a lot of people wouldn't think it was early, but it was 9:00 A.M. And that's early for me.

[Julia Zile] I don't know. That's early for me, too.

[Sara Meadors] Really early for me. So, yeah, it's a really nice 1 mile walk, so

[Julia Zile] At least it's only 1 mile.

[Sara Meadors] Yeah. You have to get fun little flowers to carry. Each flower is a different color, and represents something. So. Yeah.

[Julia Zile] What do you remember what they represented?

[Sara Meadors] I believe blue represented people that were living with Alzheimer's, Purple was someone that was, like, caring for someone with Alzheimer's. Orange was just like, if you were in support, like, you wanted to be there, so that was the color I held. And white is the kind of main goal. There was only one of those flowers, which would be the first Alzheimer's survivor. So

[Julia Zile] That's so sweet. And then let's see. What was your contribution towards the Alzheimer's walk?

[Sara Meadors] I set up my own donation page and I sent it to my family. And I raised \$100 towards the walk and kind of obviously, that money goes towards trying to and Alzheimer's, so that's my main contribution, and I also helped up helped out at the walk.

[Julia Zile] That's amazing. Did you send your link to, like, all your family members and stuff?

[Sara Meadors] Yes, I did.

[Julia Zile] I know a lot of grandmas loved donating to that

[Sara Meadors] Yes, lots of grandma's.

[Julia Zile] And then. So in what ways was that walk advocating for a different future for the participants. And I know you talked about the white flower. Do you want to talk about that more in depth?

[Sara Meadors] Okay, so yes. So this walk is obviously advocating for the patients and people that are having to care for the patients with Alzheimer's. Obviously, that's not an easy thing whatsoever. It gets completely life changing towards someone. So this walk it's really just advocating towards the goal of hopefully in the near future, someone surviving Alzheimer's and getting over it and finding a cure or any way to just genuinely help these people

[Julia Zile] Mm hmm. And then, given how emotional, like the topic of dementia is, especially for Alzheimer's, since it's an early onset dementia, did you find it challenging like to participate in a discussion on such a difficult topic? Was it hard for you to, like, be involved, was it emotionally draining on your part?

[Sara Meadors] Um, I'm not the most emotional person. So talking about it and kind of listening to it. It's like, obviously, yes, I got a little emotional just because I can feel for those that are being affected by this. Excuse me. But yeah, it wasn't a super difficult subject for me to talk about. I actually like talking about hard subjects because I think that they need to be talked about more in order to actually make a difference and a change. So yeah.

[Julia Zile] And then let's talk about the atmosphere. So how was the atmosphere when you first arrived for the walk? Like, did it change throughout your time there? Were you getting any, like, senses or what were your thoughts on that?

[Sara Meadors] Okay, so when we got there it was so much fun, like there was so many fun music. There was, like this lady and like this fun little tinsel outfit taking pictures of everyone. The Chico State Expressions dance team actually performed. They did a really great job. Shout out Fran. She's in our sorority. She did a great job planning that. Yeah, it was super super fun when we first got there. We got like little refreshments, things like that. It was really chill. Then it got a definitely a little bit more emotional. They had speeches and kind of just talked about what the walk was like supporting and

kind of thanked everyone there. So that was definitely The mood definitely went a little obviously down a little bit, but it picked right back up when we went to go walk. And yeah, it was just a really it was a really great day.

[Julia Zile] Nice. And I know it's like it's really hard, especially for me because I am such an empathetic person. Like, listening to people, talk about that would so make me cry.

[Sara Meadors] Yes

[Julia Zile] I hate that cause I get so sad. But I feel like just being there and listening to all of that is definitely a good way to support and participate in the community, you know?

[Sara Meadors] Yes. I do.

[Julia Zile] Okay. And then moving on, what was it like to interact with the people who were participating?

[Sara Meadors] Honestly, I didn't really interact with a lot of outside people besides the girls in my sorority. So I had a really, obviously a great time. I know all of them pretty well. They're all I'd consider, some of my pretty good friends. So yeah, I was that's kind of all I interacted with to be honest. But a few of the ladies when I went up to, like, all the booths, because I wanted to check everything out. There was, like, I think the vet was there, a few other people that have, kind of their own donations going towards Alzheimer's. They were super kind, super sweet. So yeah, everyone was really, everyone there was really really kind. It was there obviously for a great cause, so good people.

[Julia Zile] How many people do you think showed up to the walk?

[Sara Meadors] I don't, like, 200, probably.

[Julia Zile] Yeah. That's a good number. And then where was it?

[Sara Meadors] It was at Lower Bidwell Park, so super pretty area.

[Julia Zile] It's so nice to walk there.

[Sara Meadors] Yes. So nice. And the weather was so nice. It was

[Julia Zile] Yeah, at nine in the morning?

[Sara Meadors] Yeah, it was a little chilly at first, but the sun came out, and it was good.

[Julia Zile] Nice. And then follow up. So I know you talked about doing nursing in public health. Did this experience, like, change the way you will go about your career? Like, I don't know what specialty you were thinking about, but like, would this make you go towards older patients and people with dementia, or would you want to steer clear of it?

[Sara Meadors] So I want to be an ER nurse. So I will be working with people of all ages, probably actually a lot of the time, older patients, just with random emergencies, whatever. So this didn't really, like it didn't really have an impact because I wanted to become a nurse to help everyone. So it's like, to me, I'd never like felt like, Oh, I want to stray away from the older audience or a younger audience. I just want to help everyone. So this honestly, it opened my eyes to, like, think about other things I would have to be dealing with rather than just like stitching people up.

[Julia Zile] Mm hm. Yeah. That's a That's a good way of putting that. Yeah, especially as a nursing major myself, I worked with a nursing home over the summer, and I think that basically confirmed

me not working with older patients.

[Sara Meadors] Really?

[Julia Zile] Yeah. It was a good experience. I definitely wouldn't change it. But like hearing about the walk and my experience over the summer definitely makes me not want to work with older people.

[Sara Meadors] Yeah. They are, I mean, they can have a lot of a lot of things, a lot of things.

[Julia Zile] It requires a big heart.

[Sara Meadors] Yes, definitely. Definitely.

[Julia Zile] Okay, moving on. So looking at the people who attended and thinking about our project, which is preserving voices. Are there communities that this event didn't reach, that you think could do a better job reaching?

[Sara Meadors] Honestly, I think, genuinely, like, the students of Chico State, like, 'cause I know before I joined a sorority first semester, I had no clue what it was, didn't even know that it was a thing. And a lot of like other, because I lived in the dorms, a lot of other girls and guys on my floor, didn't even know it was a thing either. So I definitely think that we could bring it onto campus more just because it's such a big cause, and it's obviously a worldwide issue. So I think everyone should know about it and know of different ways you could donate and help out. So I don't know, maybe having a booth or flyers, because I really I didn't see anything about it anywhere, but at my sorority.

[Julia Zile] Mm hmm. Yeah. Definitely, before our pre-interview, I did not know anything about the walk. But it's so great that you could come on and talk about it and help inform others as well. I feel like those ideas you said about doing like a booth and flyers would definitely help because I feel like the students here, they love like, stopping on all the booths and looking at everything. So I feel like if maybe they try to include the students, they could get a better turnout too and have more donations and things like that. So those are definitely great ideas. Thank you for throwing those out, Sara.

[Sara Meadors] Of course.

[Julia Zile] And then just, like, personal, I know you said you didn't really talk to anyone besides your sorority sisters. But do you know of anyone who has been affected from, like, Alzheimer's that you could tell a story about, or did you just meet someone?

[Sara Meadors] Yes. So actually, my big and the sorority Julia, her grandfather just recently passed away from Alzheimer's. So, I know that was super super hard for her. He was one of her, like, favorite people, and just talking to her about it. It's really, I think the hardest part, obviously, losing someone is awful. But watching them slowly just forget who they are, as a person, forget the people that they love around them was super super hard for her, which it really makes me feel for those who have to deal with it because it truly it's awful.

[Julia Zile] Yeah, not only is losing a grandparent hard, but watching them lose them self too.

[Sara Meadors] Yes.

[Julia Zile] Very challenging. And I know you talked about the different color flowers. How many people were holding the blue flowers at the walk?

[Sara Meadors] There was actually quite a few. I want to say there was five or six, all older folks, which I wasn't expecting because I don't know if this is just a me thing, but I really don't take into

consideration the amount of people who really are living with Alzheimer's. When I think about it, I only think of like maybe one or two people, but that's just it's not the case at all. There's so many people that are affected by this. So, seeing all those flowers, again, it was just eye opening to see that because you don't even realize the people around you who are being affected by it.

[Julia Zile] Would you, out of the colors, what would you say was the most like, what would you say had the most flowers there? Like what color?

[Sara Meador] Definitely orange, just people there in support, which is still super awesome. I'd say the other one, I can't remember what color it is right now, but the ones that are caring for people with it.

Which it makes sense because those caring want to do as much as they can to help because they're really the ones doing a lot of the super super hard stuff.

[Julia Zile] Yeah. Over the summer, I worked in a nursing home and a lot of the residents that lived there had some form of dementia. And it's just hard to see people live with that. And like the people who care for them on a daily basis are one of the most strongest people I have ever met.

[Sara Meadors] Yes.

[Julia Zile] Like, they exist to help another person, and that's just something that I can't fathom as a person, like putting someone who is deteriorating over yourself is just amazing quality.

[Sara Meadors] Yes, for sure.

[Julia Zile] Okay. And then Um, would you participate again in the future?

[Sara Meadors] Yes, definitely. As I said, it's my sorority's main philanthropy. We do the walk every single year. My hope is that next year, I can raise even more money now seeing how many people are affected and just going there. It truly, it just made me I don't know. It was such an amazing experience. That I would encourage everyone to do it if they can. It's, like, maybe two or 3 hours out of your day, but it's for such a great cause that it's I mean, you can't pass it up. It's really great.

[Julia Zile] Yeah. And then do they do this every year at, like, the same place like?

[Sara Meadors] I'm not 100% sure on that, just because this is my first year doing it, but I think that they do it in the same place every year.

[Julia Zile] Nice. And then so I know you said that you are in Sigma Kappa. Do other Sigma Kappas across the nation also do this for their philanthropy?

[Sara Meadors] Yes, they do. Just because, again, it's our main philanthropy. I keep saying that, but yeah, we have raised \$4,000 just in Chico alone, which is insane. So, if we combine everyone's, it's truly making a huge impact.

[Julia Zile] Yeah, and I feel like anything, like, any donation, any support, like, any advertisement or just, like, even talking about it makes a huge difference in bringing up awareness for Alzheimer's, too, cause just like this interview with you, I'm learning so many things I didn't know. About Alzheimer's and how the students at Chico State just these girls are making an impact. How many girls would you say are in your chapter who participated?

[Sara Meadors] Well, actually, it's actually a requirement in our chapter, just because it's a cause that really you really should participate in, and it being our philanthropy, it's really, really important that Sigma Kappa shows that we really do care. I mean, being part of a sorority is so much more than just hanging out with, like, a ton of cute girls and just doing fun things. Like, there truly is, like,

such a good. There's such good things that help raise and help do. And yeah. So, everyone is really, really, really encouraged to do it. There was a ton, a ton of girls there. It was like a sea of purple sweatshirts because our merch girl Genevieve. She did a really amazing job. She made these super cute Purple Alzheimer's crewnecks and everyone that bought it, those funds went towards the organization, which is really great.

[Julia Zile] Nice. Did you get one? I did get one.

[Sara Meadors] It's super comfy, Super ce. It's again, for a great cause, so.

[Julia Zile] Nice. And then just expanding on this a little bit more. What would you tell other students that would like what would you tell other students to encourage them to participate in the walk?

[Sara Meadors] Sorry.

[Julia Zile] Like in a walk similar to this. Like, how would you, ow would you encourage other students to, like, be active in service?

[Sara Meadors] Honestly, my main encouragement, is that truly even the littlest things can make such a big impact on those affected by Alzheimer's, obviously caring for it, living with it, whatever. Even \$5 can make such a big difference towards a huge organization. So, I feel like if you have the time to go out and help raise money, or even if you can't attend the walk, set up a donation page. It's so helpful.

[Julia Zile] Yeah. And then, did your sorority participate in any other fund-raising activities this year, like any other things that students could get, like, who could participate in?

[Sara Meadors] Yes. So, another one of our huge fundraising events is called Sigma Stacks. It goes towards our, another one of our five philanthropies. Which is just our Sigma Kappa Foundation, so it goes towards the sorority and kind of helps it kind of better itself. It goes towards the housing and our events that we're able to put on, which, again, Alzheimer's events, like that money that we raised at Sigma Stacks is super it's super helpful in our chapter. So many people come out to that. It's actually insane. It's a very hectic day, but it's so much fun. It's so worth it, Yeah, so that's like one of our main events. We do it both semesters. So, it's super encouraged we table on campus. So, a lot of people get to know about it. A lot of the other Greek organizations also promote it. We post it on Instagram, we post it really everywhere. And it's just a great way for Chico State students to get involved, feel like they're helping something that's going towards such a good cause. Yeah.

[Julia Zile] And then do you have to be in Greek life to participate or does it welcome everyone? [Sara Meadors] No, it welcomes everyone. So, my roommates, she's not in Greek life. She came. She had a great time. It's unlimited pancakes. I mean, you can't really pass that up for five bucks. I mean, come on.

[Julia Zile] Did, what did you do to participate in Sigma stacks, you said?

[Sara Meadors] Yes. So, I was actually on the committee for that. So, I helped set it up. I actually worked it, so I helped make pancakes, put the toppings on. I also my big lives in the Chapter house where we put it on in our little patio area. So, I helped kind of clean up, cut the strawberries, like it was, like, prep, take down. It was, yeah, so

[Julia Zile] It sounds like a jam-packed day.

[Sara Meadors] Yes, it is.

[Julia Zile] Yeah. Well, nice. And then my last question for you, Sarah, is there anything that you would like to add to this interview that we didn't discuss regarding ways to build community at Chico State?



[Sara Meadors] Not that I could think of right off the top of my head.

[Julia Zile] Oh. Well, here, I feel like that was a super broad question. Let's break that down. Sorry. I just looking at it, I like, I feel like I did not give you any prompts. Well, do you think that like, Greek life, like, sororities and fraternities? Do you think there's things that they could do to help non people who are not in Greek life, like, participate in the community at Chico State?

[Sara Meadors] Um Mm. This is kind of a hard question for me. Um.

[Julia Zile] It's okay.

[Sara Meadors] There are a lot of other events on campus, now that I'm thinking about it that they can participate in. I know there's a lot of sports events, like there's flag football. I'm pretty sure there's basketball. Maybe even Dodgeball, I don't know about. But I know there's events like that on campus, as well as, like, the blood drive was an event on campus.

[Julia Zile] Yeah, I heard about that.

[Sara Meadors] Yes. They do an anti-hazing event. They do so many. There's always boost on campus. So, I would encourage everyone to get out there and, like, actually go to the booths. Yeah. They give you, like, fun things, too. So, it's like it's worth it. It takes like 5 minutes. It's definitely good to go.

[Julia Zile] Yeah no, I feel like everyone loves the booths. Just like walking by

[Sara Meadors] Yeah, I got cotton candy from one today.

[Julia Zile] No. I was looking at them. I know I saw a couple of booths out, but I didn't see any cotton candy, but I did see people like, doing the pie in the face ones on campus like

[Sara Meadors] Yes. Yes, I saw that I saw that too.

[Julia Zile] But I feel like things like that bring like our school together and make like a community, even if you're not in the same sorority or you're not in Greek life. Like things, like that, just in the middle of campus, where they invite people to come and participate is a way to build community. I feel like that better answers that question.

[Sara Meadors] Yes. Yes.

[Julia Zile] Okay. Well, is there anything that you wanted to build off of, or do you have any questions for me?

[Sara Meadors] Um, I do not.

[Julia Zile] Then we are done. Thank you, Sara, for participating in this oral history project.

[Sara Meadors] Of course.

[Julia Zile] I'm so glad that you could come out to the podcast room with me and record this. I had such a great time learning about Alzheimer's and more about your sorority and other service that you do.

Yeah, well, I hope you have a great rest of your day and thank you for joining me.

[Sara Meadors] You too, thank you so much for having me.

[Julia Zile] Alright. Thank you. Bye.

[Sara Meadors] Bye.