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*“Con Pasion, Anything is Possible”*

People who move from their country to the United States seek a better future. But not all the people who move to the United States are well-educated. People who move from their countries want to seek a better life because their country does not provide them with health care or social security, therefore they are provided with little or no opportunities to become educated. Furthermore, when they arrive to the United States they encounter many challenges, for example finding a job. They tend to look for jobs that are not back breaking but these jobs require them to know the basics in writing and reading English. Therefore immigrants with little education find jobs that require little skills, but less pay or low wages, such as agricultural work. Working in the fields is back-breaking labor, where the workers don't need to read or write anything almost all the time. Education is one of the most important things you can seek to become successful or you will struggle financially all your life.

The video showed us that people who had to leave their country and move to a different one in order to seek better opportunities for them and their families. Juanita Sanchez, one of the interviewees in the video, “Camp to Campus,” moved with her family from Los Angeles to Tulare, to work in the fields. They lived in a small house which was the only thing they could afford at the time. Ms. Sanchez's family were in such need of money, they all worked in the grape fields, including her sister who was two years old. She was the water girl, and her job was to take water to the cuadrilla (a group of people who worked in the fields). Ms. Sanchez also had a four year old brother who laid the paper on the ground, then the cuadrilla placed the grapes on top of the paper to dry with the sun heat.

Much like Ms. Sanchez, my father wanted to go to school, but he did not have the opportunity. Both of my parents had to work at a young age as well, but mostly my father. My father started to work at the age of four years old; he had to plow the ground with horses and plant corn, squash, and beans. More than once my grandpa went to the field where he and my father worked to see my father, but he did not find him there working. My grandpa knew that my father had gone to school instead of working. My grandpa used to get very upset when my father was not working, so he grabbed a rope or a small tree branch to punish my father and show him that he needed to obey and do what he was told. My father, at the age of sixteen, abandoned the house because he could no longer stand the way he was treated. My father left the country and went to the United States with a group of people. Once in the United States, he found a house ranch where he worked in the grape fields for many years. After that, he met a beautiful woman, and he had to leave the United States; he went back to Mexico to start his own family with my mom Maria. After he married Maria, he stayed in Mexico for three or four years.

Then he decided to go back to the United States to seek a better future for his family. While he was in the United States, he used to go to Mexico every two or four years to visit us. When important holidays approached, he planned the trip to Mexico, but one day he took the decision to bring his family to the United States. He wanted to give us a better future in a country with better opportunities. We moved to the United

States when I was six years old. At the age of six, I was learning how to read and write in my first language. The new language was a challenge for me. When I was in elementary school, I was placed in classes for students who had trouble writing and reading English. It seemed to me that I was taking the same material in my elementary years over and over. On the other hand, in high school I noticed a difference with the new instructions I was receiving, and I excelled in all my classes.

Today, I still have trouble reading and writing in English but that does not halt me.

As I had trouble learning a second language, Mr. Andres Rico also had trouble in school reading and writing English because his family went to Mexico for extended periods of time during his childhood. When Mr. Rico returned to the United States, school had started and he was behind. Mr. Rico was so far behind in math, he gave up, but not in reading or writing. In twelfth grade he started to read more and more, and during weekends when he had to work, he took his books with him and read them during his break time. Mr. Rico was also behind in school because his counselor placed him in basic classes assuming he would not seek higher education. In his last year of high school, his counselor asked him if he was going to college, but he did not know anything about college or how to get started. His counselor helped him sign up for college, and he enrolled at San Jose State University for higher education. As Mr. Rico faced many difficulties in school, I faced different challenges than he did.

In my last year of high school, my counselor advocated for me to enroll at Taft College. She set up a meeting with me and asked me about my expectations in life, and as a college student. When I graduated from high school, my first choice was Taft College, but my parents could not afford to buy me a car. Since the college is 42 miles away from where I live, it was impossible to attend without transportation. Not only did I need reliable transportation, but I also needed to find a job to pay for all expenses related to school. I first started to look for a job in order to save money. In two weeks, I found a job in a mechanic shop, but I did not like working there because of the low wage. As soon as I quit that job, I applied for another job in fast food restaurants, but they asked for experience, so I did not get it. I started to lose hope because school was going to start in three weeks and I was not ready. I visited one of my friends from high school and asked him if he was working. He told me that he found a part-time job, so I asked him if he could help me get a position there, too. He told me to apply and put him as a reference. Not one week passed before I was hired, and I started saving money to buy a car. I spent all the money I earned to buy myself as a small car for school.

I am the only one in my family who is attending college. To be the only one is a challenge because I have to be independent with school. My family has no idea of the challenges, how students deal with the assignments or homework given to us. Furthermore my extended family members use me as an example to motivate their children to become independent, by attending higher education. Attending higher education opens more doors for us in life. Mr. Rico's education helps him a lot because he could spend more time with his family than those who do not have education like his parents. They had to work in order to provide the family with a house and food. Mr. Rico was very fortunate to attend college because he has a job he enjoys so much. It is important to find a career that you will enjoy because it is something that you will do the rest of your life. Like Ms. Sanchez said, she has never gotten up in the morning and said, "I don't want to go to work." Instead every day it's different. Therefore those who

have the chance to obtain higher education are blessed because they don't have to work in back-breaking jobs, earning a low income like those who aren't so fortunate in life.