

Interview with "Sophia" on March 27, 2023

0:00:03.340,0:00:13.970

Hello, Sophia! Good afternoon. Good evening. It is so nice to have you here today. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and to talk about your experience.

0:00:14.080,0:00:15.400

Thank you.

0:00:15.720,0:00:30.180

We are using the name, Sophia. I know that you prefer to use a pseudonym and to have your camera off to protect your identity. A little introduction: Sophia, you are originally from Caracas, Venezuela,

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and you now live in Silver Spring. You moved to the United States in 2016. You have been a student at MC since the fall of 2018. I had the great pleasure of having you in one of my classes.

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And you are currently majoring in nursing and preparing to become a physical therapist. So, thank you, again, for taking the time to tell me your story.

0:00:56.340,0:01:04.069

As you know, my name is Heather Bruce Satrom, and I teach in the English Language for Academic Purposes Program at Montgomery College.

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This project is called History in The Making: Documenting Stories of

0:01:09.450,0:01:12.480

Immigrant and Refugee students at MC.

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The goal is to help others better understand experiences of immigrants in the United States, especially here in Montgomery County. I am so grateful for your participation today. Thank you!

0:01:23.890,0:01:31.310

You had a chance to read these questions in advance. But of course, if at any time you do not want to answer a question,

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just say, I would like to skip that question, or I prefer not to answer. That that is no problem, and we'll take about an hour. Today is Monday,

0:01:40.330,0:01:48.650

March 27th, 2023. Let me begin by asking you, do I have permission to record this interview?

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Yes, you can.

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Thank you! All right, so tell me, please, where and when were you born?

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I was born in 1990 in Caracas, Venezuela.

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Go ahead. I'm sorry.

0:02:07.150,0:02:13.420

Yes, I grew up in a village and then I moved to the city

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when I was 14 years old.

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Can you tell me a little bit about the village where you grew up? You spent, I believe, the first 14 years of your life in a small village. What was the name of it?

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Yes. It was Miranda. It was a small village. I really loved my life over there. I learned how to plant and grow food. I have my friends, and I really.. I was very, very happy

0:02:46.810,0:03:00.860

when I was young.

-Can you describe the community in that village and your family? What was it like growing up in this rural area of Venezuela?

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It was beautiful, because you understand, in a better way, that if you take care of the plants, you can have food in your plate, for example, and you can feel that everybody is like a family.

0:03:18.900,0:03:28.740

So your friends are kind of family, because you grew up with them. This is kind of what you feel living in a village.

0:03:28.860,0:03:30.580

What kind of

0:03:31.080,0:03:45.350

vegetables and fruits did you plant in your garden growing up?

0:03:45.370,0:03:47.440

I plant plantings, actually.. papaya, black beans, yuca, and

0:03:49.060,0:03:51.140

potatoes.

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We used to have something very similar with another name, Tamarind trees.. mango trees. It was really good, I loved it.

-And how big was your family?

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My family is small. We are only my mother, my father, my brother, and I.

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And tell me a little bit about the house where you grew up.

0:04:12.460,0:04:23.070

It was a small house. It was only two rooms, one restroom and the kitchen. It was okay for four people at that moment.

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Do you have any memories of when you were a child of special holidays that were important to you, or special foods that were important to you?

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Well, holidays at all, I remember it's like Christmas, but we don't celebrate Christmas. Because my family doesn't have a lot of money for the gifts and things like that. But we used to prepare food at home and visit family and relatives

0:04:50.460,0:04:53.850

around, and share food with the neighbor.

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You mentioned to me earlier that your parents taught you some important values when you were younger. Can you talk to me a little bit about that?

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Yes, of course, the most important is what I've got in your heart. That was.. that's always the most important thing in my life. And also, other values, I can say, is love.

0:05:18.600,0:05:27.420

Love and family, honesty... Yes, basically that because everything else go after.

0:05:27.580,0:05:42.050

And then, when you were 14 years old, your family decided to move away from the small village to the capital city of Caracas. Can you talk a little bit about why they decided to move? and what that change was like for you?

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Well, the change was because of my studies. They knew that it was better to finish my studies at the city instead of in the village, because life in the village is totally different. At the beginning, it was very shocking, and I picture away, even though I was in my own country. It is different, because when I was little,

0:06:09.760,0:06:17.290

I was told that when an adult is talking to you, you cannot look them in the eye.

0:06:17.320,0:06:23.510

When I went to the city all the kids were so disrespectful.

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In my eyes it was disrespectful, because when they speak to adults, they always see to their eyes. For me this is disrespectful, but I just learned with time, that it was the proper way

0:06:37.320,0:06:39.490

0:06:39.730,0:06:42.680

to just show self-confidence in the city.

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And you mentioned also that sports became very important to you when you were in high school. You played volleyball?

0:06:58.580,0:07:10.950

Yes. I played volleyball since I was five years old. I love so much this sport. This is one of my loves!

And I stopped playing volleyball when I decided to come and emigrate to the United States because of time, because of everything. But the sports are very, very important in my life.

0:07:11.400,0:07:16.050

and they continue to be very important in your life.

-Yes. I think it's going to be forever.

0:07:16.680,0:07:32.360

You also mentioned to me that you had to start working at a very young age. So you, when you were a teenager, you had three jobs. Is that right?

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Yes. My first job was when I was 16 years old. It was in a mall, and I used to wrap the gift for Christmas, so, I was working seasonal.

0:07:39.940,0:07:56.010

I was doing the wrap for the Christmas gifts for kids. And then the year later, I got three jobs, one in the museum, the other one was that one at the mall, and the other one is as a cashier.

0:07:56.530,0:08:09.730

-And you are doing that to help support your family. Is that right?

-And also to pursue my independence. I want to be independent. I want to provide to my family and also for me. I want a very life..

0:08:10.350,0:08:24.180

So you decided to become a physical therapist when you were in Venezuela. Can you talk a little bit about the training for that there? How long you went to school? What it was like to go to physical therapy school?

0:08:24.420,0:08:31.410

Yes, well, in Venezuela, in order to have the degree as a physical therapist, you have to

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study for seven years. It is very similar to study as a doctor. But the main difference is that our focus is in the biomechanics of the body, the physiology, and the prescription of exercise.

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It's very different, but kind of similar in the same way.

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That it really took me time.

0:08:50.950,0:09:03.700

I really like physical therapy.

-Was there a particular population that you especially liked working with, like children, or senior citizens, or athletes?

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I enjoy to work with athletes. I really enjoy that because I play volleyball, I run marathons, so I really like the mentality. It is very different.

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So you..

0:09:17.970,0:09:27.320

After you finished physical therapy school, and you worked in a hospital, and you got your degree,

0:09:27.980,0:09:44.610

you started your own clinic? Is that right?

0:09:44.620,0:09:48.800

Yes. And then I just emigrated to the United States.

0:09:48.890,0:09:53.660

So tell me a little bit about what happened in Venezuela

0:09:53.880,0:10:04.660

that made you decide that you had to leave your country and come to the United States. Can you talk a little bit about the situation in Venezuela and what you..you felt that you had to leave?

0:10:05.270,0:10:07.890

Yes, it was basically, because the

0:10:07.960,0:10:21.300

safety, and the thing that the politicians where doing. The politicians are just playing their games, and at that moment, in 2015-2016,

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We had a lack of food, a lack of medicine. And so,

0:10:25.470,0:10:31.780

even though you had your own business, you always feel scared that

0:10:31.830,0:10:33.230

you can be kidnapped.

0:10:33.380,0:10:43.860

For so many, this is something that happened a lot. Every day if someone find out that you had your own business. So, it really pushed me

0:10:44.010,0:10:49.010

to just figure out, how can I have a better life? I want to, anyway..

0:10:49.070,0:10:55.570

So I used all the steps that I had to do, in order to get a visa and come to this country.

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Did things change very rapidly, very quickly in Venezuela, from stability and democracy to this situation of living in fear and not being able to find food and medicine? How fast were those changes?

0:11:09.580,0:11:19.890

Well, the changes were very sudden, at the beginning, because the president that was at the moment, Chávez,

0:11:20.060,0:11:33.050

started changing the structure of the education and medicine in my country, bringing people from outside, but doing the things in the wrong way.

0:11:33.360,0:11:40.640

Yes, it wasn't too good. There is a lot of smugglers, and it is very, very bad,

0:11:40.750,0:11:47.340

and it is back. And the changes are always present.

0:11:47.410,0:11:52.950

But he manipulated the population. So people, regular people that

0:11:53.070,0:12:00.230

do not understand what was happening, they just said, "we don't have food, and I'm just waiting for the box."

0:12:00.630,0:12:06.240

It's like socialism. This is not okay, not everybody is the same.

0:12:06.760,0:12:19.060

And I know that you, when you were working as a physical therapist, you had an opportunity to travel to some other countries in Latin America, did you.. You went to Argentina, Uruguay?

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Yes, I also, traveled in South America, but as a player, because I played volleyball. So, I was doing international games. I went Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and I went to Columbia, actually, I was, I forget..

0:12:38.470,0:12:46.540

And yes, I went to different countries in South America. I loved all these countries, but I knew they were

0:12:46.570,0:12:50.150

following our path, in some ways.

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So, you did not consider living in another country in Latin America. You decided you really wanted to go to, either the United States, or Canada?

0:12:59.140,0:13:15.320

Yes, I was thinking the United States, or Canada, because I was looking at what kind of politicians they have, what about their life? This kind of things.. or what about the immigrants?

0:13:15.470,0:13:18.750

So I think it was my better choice.

0:13:18.990,0:13:23.290

So, what year did you first go to the United States?

0:13:23.660,0:13:26.740

The first time when I come here?

0:13:28.530,0:13:40.240

The first place I went, it was in Texas, one friend of mine received me in her house, and I stayed for three weeks right there, and then I just come to Maryland.

0:13:40.680,0:13:55.830

-How old were you when you went to Texas?

-I was 25.

-And so, you stayed with a friend at first? And if I remember correctly, did you go to Miami first, and then to Texas.

0:13:55.920,0:14:14.200

-Yes. I came here by plane. I went to Miami, and then I took another plane, and I went to Texas. I stayed for three weeks, and then I came to Maryland.

-And did you speak English at this point?

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No. I was lost. I was very, very lost, but I knew that my first investment had to be my education.

0:14:18.330,0:14:23.990

So, what made you attracted to living in Maryland, in particular?

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The laws. Because in Texas, the laws related to immigration are very different,

0:14:32.250,0:14:44.650

in comparison with Maryland or Washington, DC, which is more safe in terms of law. If something happened, at that moment to me, I had to be in a safe place.

-Interesting!

0:14:44.790,0:15:02.900

So tell me a little bit, when you first came here, you lived with an uncle for a while? Is that right?

-Yes, I just lived for a couple of weeks with my uncle, but then they just kicked me out. They were not nice at all with me.

0:15:03.250,0:15:10.020

And I just had to be by myself and find help in different way.

0:15:10.440,0:15:17.350

Can you describe, I know it's challenging to talk about, but can you describe a little bit what happened at that time?

0:15:17.720,0:15:36.310

I think you had mentioned to me earlier that it was winter time, and they changed the locks on the doors, and wouldn't let you come in?

-It was surprising to me, because I was working and when I went home, I couldn't open the door, and when I start calling, they didn't answer.

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The day after that, because I had to spend the night in the snow

0:15:41.440,0:15:48.510

with nothing like a proper jacket, or anything like that, just waiting until my uncle

0:15:49.060,0:15:59.910

wanted to open the door. I said, "no worries. I'm okay. It's going to be fine. I'm just going to take my things, and I'm going to go to another place. I don't want to be bothering you."

0:16:00.110,0:16:09.090

And I had to lie to my family telling them that I was okay. Nothing happened. I only want to do my own things.

0:16:09.100,0:16:11.040

But it was really hard

0:16:11.060,0:16:14.670

that your own family just

0:16:15.410,0:16:16.430

kicked you out.

0:16:17.040,0:16:24.230

That must have been such a challenging time for you. Where did you go? What did you do? How did you find help?

0:16:24.510,0:16:35.610

Well, at the beginning, I just went to the church. I think it was the best place to go. I found some food and also a jacket. I was so cold.

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It was really, really hard. And then I started asking

0:16:39.710,0:16:43.280

for a place to live. I don't want to be

0:16:43.360,0:16:56.040

in the snow. It was so cold. I just spent one or two nights around the church. And then I just figured out a place,

0:16:56.050,0:17:08.690

to rent a room in a basement, and I just did a deal with the owner of the house, that "I'm going to pay you this much money this week." And then I just,

0:17:08.819,0:17:11.280

just work hard. I had to work hard.

0:17:11.510,0:17:13.950

How many people were living in the house?

0:17:14.319,0:17:17.119

Only in the basement, we were five people.

0:17:17.390,0:17:18.760

And did you know them?

0:17:19.140,0:17:19.930

No.

0:17:22.270,0:17:28.020

It was very, I can say now, it was very dangerous for me.

0:17:28.660,0:17:32.780

I can imagine as a young woman that that would have been a dangerous situation.

0:17:33.050,0:17:33.950

Yes.

0:17:34.290,0:17:42.950

It's very difficult, and you have to think about it. But if it's the only way you can have a space to live,

0:17:43.010,0:17:44.730

in order to avoid being

0:17:44.920,0:17:47.350

at the street with the snow.

0:17:48.210,0:17:52.680

You can do it, but it was really hard. I do not recommend it,

0:17:53.170,0:17:56.520

because many bad things can happen.

0:17:57.320,0:17:59.280

I'm so sorry you went through that experience.

0:17:59.670,0:18:08.000

I know that you had mentioned to me that there was a time when you were homeless. You did not have a place to stay.

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Can you tell us a little bit about that experience, and how you coped with that?

0:18:11.970,0:18:16.090

Well, after the days I spent in the church,

0:18:16.210,0:18:25.080

I was by myself, with a little bike with my things, my passport, and the papers I had to have with me always,

0:18:25.090,0:18:27.240

looking for a place.

0:18:27.250,0:18:36.830

It's difficult, because people don't know you, so they cannot trust you. If you don't have money to rent there "oh, can I spend the night in this room?"

0:18:37.020,0:18:42.620

You have to be on the streets? It was really hard.

0:18:42.810,0:18:47.430

Besides, being homeless is not to have food.

0:18:48.110,0:18:57.630

That was hard. But then I just started working and at the work, you can always find rice and beans. Rice and beans.. I'm grateful for rice and beans.

0:18:58.160,0:19:09.980
So you found food by working in restaurants?

0:19:10.020,0:19:13.180
Yes! One of my first jobs was cleaning houses and cleaning the restrooms of the restaurants. I can take always rice and beans.

0:19:13.580,0:19:20.820
And then, when I started learning learning English, I can just figure out how to be a server, because servers can make more money.

0:19:21.330,0:19:24.380
It was hard.

0:19:24.430,0:19:31.460
It was hard, but I'm so grateful I can communicate now, because at the beginning, I only spoke Spanish.

0:19:32.620,0:19:50.060
Can you tell us a little bit about when you got really sick? What happened?

0:19:50.060,0:19:53.000
Yes. I was cleaning, and yes, I received help,

0:19:53.230,0:19:55.130
but, I had to pay the bill later.

0:19:55.670,0:20:10.100
It was so hard. It was \$5,000. How can you pay that in that situation? But I've paid it. I just worked in three different places, and I did the money and paid the bill.

0:20:10.310,0:20:15.950
You worked at three different places and paid off your \$5,000 hospital bill..

0:20:16.090,0:20:30.240
-And at this point you were taking English through the church classes.
-Yes, there were some days that they had ESL program, something like that. Very basic, but it helps a lot.

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And then I was just looking for help in order to change my status and go to the college, and I found the help, and I started going to college.

0:20:41.460,0:20:42.830

0:20:43.080,0:20:46.100
And then, you are still working.. working hard.

0:20:46.500,0:20:52.650
Tell me a little bit about in the beginning. Did you apply for a student visa?

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No, actually, I came as a tourist, and then I changed my status. But through that time of changing status, I was just in limbo.

0:21:04.680,0:21:08.380
It was protective in some way,

0:21:09.110,0:21:23.910
until immigration decided to tell me yes, or no, and they decide to let me study here. So then, when I changed my status as a student, the school is

0:21:24.170,0:21:26.810
difficult to pay, so I had to work hard.

0:21:26.830,0:21:38.770
-How much was the tuition when you first started as an F-1 student?

-It was around \$7,000-\$8,000.

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So in order to make that money, to pay by periods of payment plans,

0:21:45.930,0:22:05.040

you had to work really hard. I worked during the whole night. I remember. Yes, dinner shift, and also late nights. I used to work really hard, so I had to lie to my professor that I was just studying. I wasn't studying, I was working.

0:22:05.100,0:22:20.990

So I was doing in a little time my homework and things. I used to go to the Writing Center. The Writing Center is the best place. I found so much help right there. I love the Writing Center. I just made my schedule work

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and always find help in the Writing Center, because it's a quiet place. The room where I used to rent, that room, it wasn't a quite,

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because they were five or four more people living around me, and they were so noisy. They did parties and things like that. It was very dangerous, so I don't feel safe even in my room.

0:22:46.420,0:23:02.190

I only go there, change my clothes, take a bath and that's it. Just trying to keep going and work hard and trying to learn English. It was the first one. If you know English, you can get a better job.

0:23:02.710,0:23:12.490

Did you start with the Workforce Development ESL program? the program before ELAP.

0:23:12.520,0:23:15.330

Yes. I started from zero, and I love those days.

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I really enjoyed. It was difficult, but I found many people saying like me that, we didn't know how to communicate, and we learned together the words and the phrases and the places, and we met people from everywhere

0:23:31.810,0:23:36.870

around the world right there. It was really good.

0:23:36.920,0:24:02.520

-Where there..

-There were international students too.

-Tell me about the friendships that you have developed with people at Montgomery College.

-Yeah. Well, I met people from Africa and from different countries. I really got along with them, because they share similar values with me about family, and how we take care of our elders. They share the same values.

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And also had friends from Mexico and Peru.

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We're still texting to see how we're doing. One of my friends he just graduates from Montgomery College. He's from Columbia, and I feel so proud of him. He's right now doing a manager in a place. He's a manager. I feel "Oh my God, you did it! and we started together. I'm so proud of you!"

0:24:26.620,0:24:29.420

So you found a community. It sounds like.

0:24:29.850,0:24:30.580

Yes.

0:24:30.640,0:24:45.350

-Tell me a little bit about.. you mentioned that there were some professors that were particularly important to you at Montgomery College. Do you want to talk about them?

-Yes. Well, they are, the three main for me, of course, you, Professor Satrom,

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Professor Zemen, and Professor Lott.

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With you, it was the most difficult classes, but I learned, I learned, so I succeed.

0:24:58.600,0:25:09.610

So It was a huge change for me, because I can get a better job, I can have a better life because I can communicate.

0:25:09.640,0:25:13.650

People take me seriously, because as big two languages.

0:25:14.530,0:25:21.350

So you felt prepared to take your credit level classes, as a result of those classes that you took in ELAP.

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Yes, I just want to continue. I want to be a nurse, in order to have my green card.

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This is one of the best ways to have a green card to be paying this country, and also to validate my degree from my country.

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Then I will have two degrees.

0:25:39.450,0:25:53.510

When you were my student, I had no idea that you were facing problems related to homelessness, to not having enough to eat, to living in dangerous situations. I had no idea.

0:25:53.550,0:26:00.330

You you didn't tell me that, and I I wish that you had.

0:26:01.190,0:26:06.160

I think.. when I think about the struggles that students go through,

0:26:06.240,0:26:10.890

it's really important to me to keep your story in mind.

0:26:12.610,0:26:22.550

What resources did you find at Montgomery College to help you through this challenging time? You mentioned that the Writing Center was a quiet place for you to study

0:26:22.740,0:26:30.460

and where you had access to computers. Was there anything else that helped you at Montgomery College?

0:26:30.740,0:26:39.860

Yes, I found some food that they bring to students, so everybody can take some food and take home and cook, you can cook.

0:26:40.070,0:26:41.600

0:26:42.340,0:26:47.280

-Was that through the mobile market or was that a food pantry?

0:26:47.400,0:26:55.810

Both, food pantry, and mobile market. I joined both. I took food from those

0:26:55.840,0:27:07.800

kind of things that they do at the school. I took vegetables.. something like that. It really helped a lot. At that moment, I was just struggling with food, and also water, clean water, filtered water.

0:27:07.830,0:27:19.930

I don't feel safe taking water from the sink. Even though here people say that it's safe for me. It's not safe. I feel.. it's scary, because if I get sick it's going to be expensive again.

0:27:19.980,0:27:21.340

I don't want to be sick.

0:27:21.390,0:27:25.100

I can imagine, absolutely.

0:27:26.050,0:27:31.580

You also mentioned that eventually you were able to

0:27:31.840,0:27:39.390

become a residence of Montgomery County, and then tuition became more affordable. Is that right?

0:27:39.510,0:27:48.680

Yes, right now my life changed totally. If I compare at the beginning, now it change.

0:27:48.820,0:27:59.050

Since the TPS, the permit to work for Venezuelan people is approved. Part of that program..

0:27:59.340,0:28:11.450

-That you have a "protected status"?

-Yes, so right now I can work in a regular basics. I have a better job right now. I can make more money. So I'm paying in county tuition, which is

0:28:11.570,0:28:26.180

very.. it's okay, it's a really good money. So I can be focused on school instead of trying to make \$7,000 in two weeks. I did it, but right now, my goal, in order to be on nurse,

0:28:26.370,0:28:28.850

I need to spend more time in school.

0:28:29.410,0:28:30.960

Tell me..

0:28:31.760,0:28:42.530

Even during those most difficult times, you were still sending money back to your parents, right?

0:28:42.570,0:28:51.000

Yes. I am always going to support my parents and my brother. Though the extended family, I cannot help. Because most of the time this is something very common with immigrants.

0:28:51.030,0:29:01.400

People think that because you live in the United States, it's easy, no, it's not easy, it's difficult. As an immigrant, if you are by yourself, it's very difficult.

0:29:01.690,0:29:14.310

And yes, I was going to support my family and send them money and making them to have food at the house, making them to have proper clothes, shoes.. everything.

0:29:14.990,0:29:24.250

When you were going through these very difficult times, when you were sick, when you were trying to pay your debts, when you were trying to find a safe place to live,

0:29:24.330,0:29:30.760

what helped you get through those challenging times? What gave you the strength to keep going?

0:29:31.380,0:29:37.960

The faith in God. That's the most important. If you have God in your heart,

0:29:38.810,0:29:43.700

you can reach everything. You can have everything in your life.

0:29:45.270,0:29:53.830

And it sounds like the church here also helped you with practical things as well. You had some English lessons,

0:29:53.970,0:30:05.430

you found a warm coats, I believe..

-Yes, they're very advocate. I found a church around here in Silver Spring. They're Christian Seventh-Day,

0:30:05.790,0:30:15.230

and they are advocating for immigrants. They brought me a jacket. They gave me food when I was in need.

0:30:16.760,0:30:23.050

I am very grateful because they helped me, and they didn't ask me for anything.

0:30:23.870,0:30:27.870

But now, when I have, I always try to

0:30:28.410,0:30:53.100

return the good things. Because I love people who really advocate for good good things.

-Tell me a little bit about your life now. You're in a much better place. Can you talk a little bit about.. I think you recently got married.. Tell me about your life now.

-Yes. I got married. He's a good guy.

0:30:53.100,0:31:00.950

A better place. It's safe. It's an apartment with one room, so it is him, my dog and I.

0:31:01.050,0:31:05.330

I'm very happy,

0:31:05.790,0:31:12.350

because I have a better life. I feel safe. I feel.. I feel love. I feel support.

0:31:12.430,0:31:23.960

We share the most important.. the same value of God. He has God in his heart. And this is the most important for me. We share very similar values.

0:31:24.460,0:31:31.060

And tell me a little bit about something that you.. I think you wrote about in my class..

0:31:33.660,0:31:41.730

How physical exercise and nutritious food are two things that really help you to feel better,

0:31:41.800,0:31:45.920

and how you want to teach others about that. Can you talk a little bit about that?

0:31:46.200,0:32:04.640

Yes. Well, since the background I have about education, I know if you just struggling with anxiety or depression, the best way to get rid of that kind of energy is through exercise. If you work out, you start running, doing exercise in general,

0:32:04.640,0:32:24.000

you can fight that feeling.. those feelings that prevent you to succeed, and you can avoid taking bad decisions. When I say bad decisions, I'm talking about drugs and alcohol. It really ruins life. That ruins life. I see every day.

0:32:24.060,0:32:25.180

0:32:25.630,0:32:31.750

I know.. I was working in places that I see people doing bad things.

0:32:31.780,0:32:42.610

That really made me feel sad, but I said, I'm going to take care of me. I'm struggling. I'm going to do.. I'm going to be proud of me. And my family is proud of me.

0:32:42.640,0:32:44.270

So I know what I'm doing.

0:32:44.520,0:32:54.260

And you now enjoy running half marathons?

0:32:54.520,0:32:58.960

Yes. I enjoy it so much. The feelings of endorphins running in my mind. That's amazing. That's an amazing feeling.

0:32:59.210,0:33:10.060

I want to promote in some way that other people, including children, they should start doing sports, and if they like to run,

0:33:10.070,0:33:14.770
why not introduce and try to promote that kind of activities?

0:33:17.790,0:33:23.100
Tell me where you see yourself five years from now. What are your goals?

0:33:23.670,0:33:36.620
My five years, I'm pretty sure I'm going to be doing investigations related to physiology and women that like to run. I really see myself doing that

0:33:36.750,0:33:48.300
because I love all the biomechanics. I know the feeling as a woman. All the cycles we have. Everything that happens, we are like a perfect machine.

0:33:48.420,0:34:03.040
And when you study that, you can teach others in a better way, so you can bring reasons. You can bring.., you should do this if you want, and you can enjoy, and you can have a a lot of advantage.

0:34:03.130,0:34:13.270
So you can avoid being sick, and for that reason you don't have to spend money by trying to have your health again.

0:34:13.500,0:34:26.989
So you're hoping to focus on health related to women and women athletes in particular?

0:34:27.409,0:34:33.840
Yes. Can be athletes, or.. try to bring people for life, so people can be seen and avoid taking bad decisions. They're saying good things.

0:34:35.120,0:34:46.510
One last question for you. We talk for a long time, and I'm really grateful for everything you've shared. How do you feel talking about your story today? What emotions are you feeling?

0:34:46.690,0:34:50.010
I feel proud, Professor. I feel very proud of myself.

0:34:50.139,0:34:56.179
I know I'm an example of a person that knows a plan.

0:34:56.760,0:35:05.210
You have to have a plan when you come for whatever country. My case is the United States. This is the country I chose.

0:35:05.520,0:35:14.440
But if you have a plan, follow your plan, follow your dreams and work hard. If you work hard and work smart, you can have everything you want.

0:35:15.260,0:35:16.810
I really believe in that.

0:35:17.460,0:35:25.630
You are an inspiration to me. I am proud of you as well, Sophia. Thank you so much for sharing your story today.

0:35:25.840,0:35:28.280
Thank you for the opportunity, Professor.

0:35:28.800,0:35:30.740
I'm gonna pause the recording now.