



IN THE SHADOWS

A Project by
Yamileth Martinez

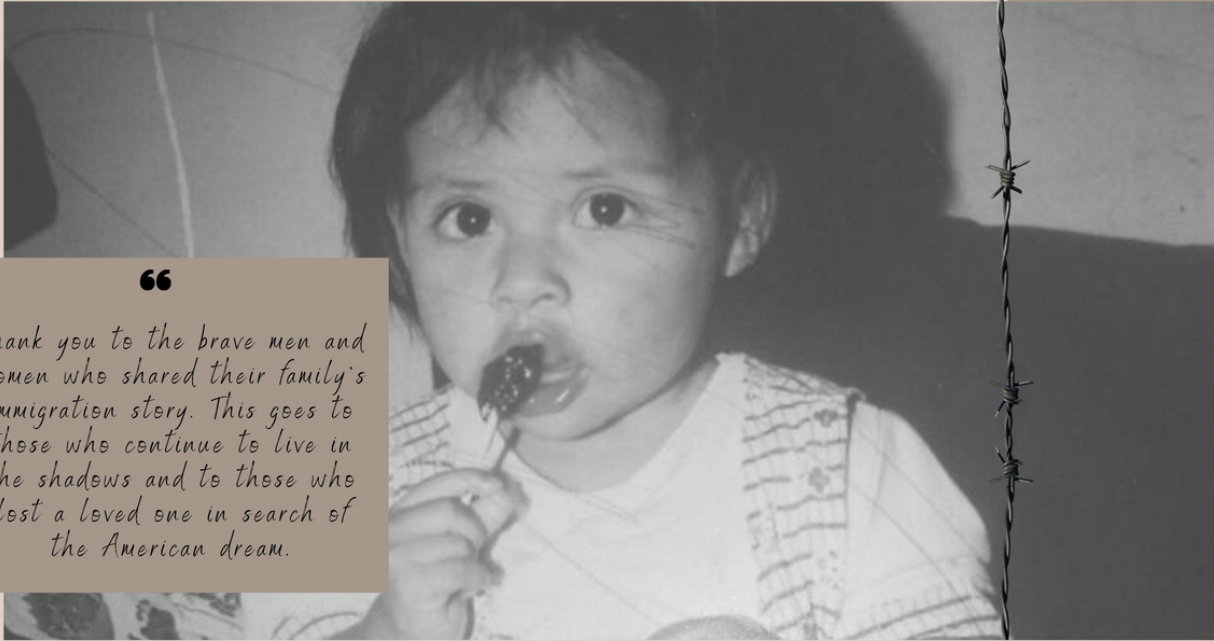


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IMMIGRATION

STORIES: *to the parents who sacrificed it all and never looked back.*



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Thank you to the brave men and women who shared their family's immigration story. This goes to those who continue to live in the shadows and to those who lost a loved one in search of the American dream.

**EACH STORY IS SPECIAL. EACH STORY IS DIFFERENT.
EACH STORY BELONGS TO SOMEONE WHO SURVIVED.**

A PROJECT BY *Yamiloth Martinez*

When I arrived to the United States as a young girl I did not know about foreign countries. I believed we lived in a world where people could travel wherever they wished. It wasn't until I reached high school that I began to notice differences between my life and my friends' lives. There were things I could not do and there were things I was forced to do. I could not get a driver's license, I could not hang out with friends, and I could not do sports because I was forced to live a low life. One of the things I was forced to do was translate for those who did not speak English. Not only did I do this for my family, but I also did it for family and friends. If there is something I have learned from living in the U.S. as an immigrant, is that immigrants do not fight over money. They care about surviving in a place that is still unknown to them, in a place where they do not know when their last opportunity to support their family will be. Every Immigrant's story is different; we all have different journeys and live different lives. Unknowingly, our parents have taught us what sacrifice looks like. It is time we tell their story. All the stories you are about to read have been given an alias name and are based on real life and were written by college IU and Purdue students. Thank you to the brave men and women who shared their family's immigration story. This goes to those who continue to live in the shadows and to those who lost a loved one in search of the American dream.

ANDRÉS

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**... I AM INCREDIBLY HUMBLLED
AND HONORED TO BE A
PRODUCT OF THEIR SACRIFICE.**

My mother migrated to the United States when I was only two years old, and my father migrated soon after I was born. Growing up, I truly remember only my grandparents and not my actual parents because of their absence in my early childhood. After my third birthday, I reunited with my parents in a foreign country filled with people that spoke a different language that shared a different culture. At the time, I did not understand the sacrifice that my parents made for my future. I did not understand how difficult their story was. I had so much taken for granted. It was now time for me to understand my parent's story. To understand the intensity of sacrifice that my parents made, imagine leaving behind your entire family, friends, home, and everything that you know for an opportunity to provide a better future for your family. Please note that this is an opportunity, not a guarantee. That is terrifying for me to imagine. I am very fortunate that my parents persevered and found success. My mother took the risk and migrated to the United States in July of 2000. She arrived to be reunited with my father in northern Indiana where he was working. She was happy to reunite with her husband after almost two years but also incredibly sad because she left me and our family behind. However, she had the hope that through hard work and dedication, she could create a path of success and better living for her family here in the United States.



A different language, a different culture, a different mindset, and a different land were all obstacles that she had to overcome. Her hardest obstacle was the language. She knew zero English and could not understand or speak it. With this disadvantage, she had to work in a factory where working conditions were not the best and the working hours were awful. She was blessed to have encountered many people who were good at heart and wanted to help. With small things like translating or showing around different areas, they helped in more ways than imaginable to my mother. Throughout the years, my mother has always expressed her gratitude to being healthy and happy with her small family that included her, my father, my younger brother, and myself. She was able to overcome so many struggles through the help of friends, neighbors, and good people that were generous and selfless. My mother and father's goal for me is to become a professional, graduate college, and make them proud. Their upbringing and love have formed me into someone that is very close to meeting all those goals, and I am incredibly humbled and honored to be a product of their sacrifice. I hope to continue to make them proud because I know that I could never repay for the sacrifice that they have given for me.



ITZEL

Coming from an immigrant family has been tough but it all goes right later. There's always a story behind everyone's life, and I will be writing about my parent's story of how they made it here and why they came. My parents have always been the best part of my life because they have helped me through everything and supported me in what I do. Both of my parents are from San Sebastian Coatán, Guatemala. They have always told me their stories of how they met and how it has been a bumpy ride since they met. Their story about meeting each other is funny and cute. My dad had come to the village, where my mom lived at, to sell some coffee made from the ground. That day my dad had seen my mom from the top of her house cleaning the roof. She noticed him and heard that he was going to come down that day. My dad had also noticed her from the roof and when he was about to leave the place, he looked back to look at her and she looked back too, causing them to smile at each other. A couple of months go by and my dad comes to ask for my mom's hand, which is a tradition that we do for respect to the lady and parents. A year goes by and in August 1995, they got married. They have been married for almost 15 years now. My dad came to the U.S. by himself on September 20th, 1991, as a young teenage boy but had come back and forth three times.

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ONLY I KNOW WHAT I AM CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING...

In 2003, my mom, two brothers, and I came to the United States for the first time. I have a little memory of that day which is me on the shoulder of a "coyote". A "coyote" is a guide or leader that gets paid by the people wanting to cross the border. I remember peeing on his shoulder; when I asked my mom, she said it was true. The man had to handle the smell throughout the whole night because we couldn't stop. Throughout this interview with my parents, they told me once again to do my best and make them and myself proud. I was the only girl in the family growing up with only four brothers. My parents always had the fear that I would run away, get pregnant at a young age, or get married. But I proved to them I wasn't going to do that. In my life, I have family members that do not believe in me. Many think I will not be able to graduate from college. My wish is to prove everyone wrong! Only I know what I am capable of achieving and I know I will do everything to succeed in my career. The amount of support I get from my parents is overwhelming. My status in the United States does not allow me to work, which limits me greatly. My parents work day and night to help me pay for college tuition, and I will always be thankful for everything they have and continue to do for me.



ELENA

**WE DO NOT COME HERE WITH
BAD INTENTIONS, WE COME
HERE TO PERSEVERE, WE COME
HERE FOR A BETTER LIFE.**

I always see people bashing undocumented people. I see parents attacking other parents who brought their kids here at a young age and I do not understand why. My family came to the United States when I was around six years old. When I ask my mother why she came here her answer solely revolved around us. She brought us here because she wanted to give us a better life. We barely talk about stuff like this but life in Mexico for us was hard, at least from the stories I have heard. My father passed away when I was three and it left my mom to take care of seven kids by herself. The only help she got was from my mother's side of the family, while my dad's side kicked us out of the house and did not speak to us much. Every time I try to understand family conflicts, it just gets harder and harder to hear because you wouldn't expect your own family to treat you so cruel. My mother brought her kids here by herself. She didn't think about herself, she thought about us. I think this is powerful and I admire her for being such a strong woman. It has also taken a toll in her life due to not being with her mother in the last bits of life she had left and being separated from two of her kids. I see her and realize that I have to push hard to juggle work and school because I owe it to her. Getting that diploma is my way of thanks.



There are days when I feel as if I am letting her down, but she always manages to tell me she is proud of me. When I do feel discouraged, I sit and think of myself walking the stage, me going through my career, me making it, and I see her, with a big smile on her smile all throughout the way. It's very difficult for us undocumented people, but we are still here giving it our all. There are still so many unspoken feelings and thoughts which I can tell when I speak to my mom about the topic. We are still living in the shadows, but I have a feeling that my mother's story, as well as others, will eventually come to light so that others can really visualize what truly goes on. We do not come here with bad intentions, we come here to persevere, and we come here for a better life. We crossed the border in order to reach the American Dream. I don't remember much of what all happened fourteen years ago, but that day changed my life for the better. I am here to obtain a college education so that one day I can repay my mom. My mom expects me to continue with my education, focus, and continue to get the grades I am currently getting so that I can have a good life. I plan to fulfill those hopes and expectations through perseverance. I came from a strong woman and she has given me the strength to keep pushing forward.

RENATA

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**MOST IMMIGRANTS ARE HERE
BECAUSE THEY ARE IN SEARCH
OF A DIFFERENT WAY OF LIFE.**



It was 1999 when a 20-year-old made the decision to go to a place that was unknown to her. Why did she decide to immigrate? Because she had just lost a husband from suicide, had a newborn and a 5-year-old that needed to be fed and given a life she did not have. Her mother passed away when she was a young girl and her father was an alcoholic and abusive. Meaning, she had no one to lean on for support. If there is something I know from this woman, is that she has always been fearless. When someone makes the choice to come to the U.S. a person does not think about fear. We could die while in the process of crossing, yet we only think about what we will do when we arrive like it's something guaranteed. She spent 6 nights and 7 days in the desert with little to no water and zero food, "we had to walk so much! But In those moments, you have no fear". She also expressed that if fear came upon any of them, it was likely that they would stay behind to eventually die. When crossing, the focus is on surviving. Once in the United States, things weren't as bad. At the time there were already people as interpreters, who spoke Spanish. There were already Spanish communities in place. Although things were nicer when she arrived, she remembers what it was like for friends who had come before her, "they said it was terrible because there was no way to communicate and the only way to work was in houses as maids so cops wouldn't find them. They got paid whatever their bosses wanted to pay them. If the bosses didn't like their work quality or simply didn't want them, they would tie them to trees so they would be found by cops". Another option people had back in the day was working in fields. When amnesty happened, it was for people working in fields. Amnesty was what got many people working in fields illegally, becoming residents and eventually citizens (California in 1986). As she looks back, she believes she was an ignorant 20-year-old. Coming to the U.S. was and was not a good decision. As she puts it, "I did not know the magnitude of the mistakes that one commits. At the time, I did not know I was breaking a law". On the other hand, she felt that it was a good decision because it was here that she came to learn more things. The country gives good opportunities; no matter how much education you have, you can have a job. In Mexico, if someone does not have an education or does not have a medium economic position, the possibility of moving forward is low; finding a job is difficult. In the U.S. even an elderly or disabled person can get a job. With the intent to only be here for a year, she has now been here for 22 years. Immigrants don't come wanting to hurt anyone, they each have their own fights and even though we don't truly know their reasoning, most come in search of a better life. Most immigrants are here because they are in search of a different way of life. This is the story of my mother, a woman who is fierce, intelligent, and full of hope to see me succeed. I can only thank her for all of the opportunities she gave me by making the decision to immigrate to a country that has brought me a better education, better job opportunities, and an opportunity to speak on behalf of those who continue to live in fear. I will always continue to advocate for those who live in the shadows.

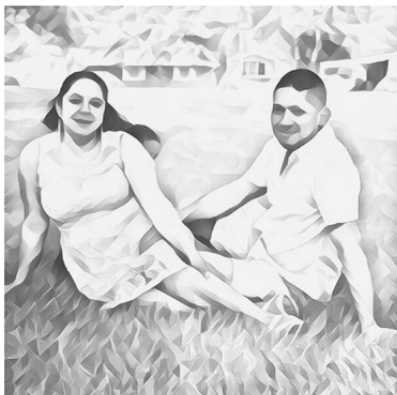


LILLIANA

"CROSSING THE BORDER" IMPLICATED PUTTING YOUR LIFE ON THE LINE AND THE CHANCES OF LIVING BEING VERY LOW.

I had just turned three when my parents handed me over to a stranger that would take me to the United States. I was taken on an airplane under a different identification and as the lady's daughter. She left me with my aunt, who'd already settled, while my parents were on their way. Most people think "crossing the border" is some type of joke you can make on TikTok or vines. "Crossing the border" implicated putting your life on the line and the chances of living being very low. There's a fifty percent chance you'll get to any destination. That's like saying that the airplane you're about to board has a one-of-two chance of crashing and burning. With that in mind, my parents took that chance for me and for them. Their only goal was to achieve a better life than what they had in Mexico. My dad worked overseas for months on end, and it would be a long period of time before I could see my dad again. That job was giving us a home, food, and clothing. This was very exhausting for my mom because she wanted him home to help raise me and not miss important moments in my life. This was only one of the main reasons they both decided to risk their lives. Once they'd arrived and I was finally with my parents it was long before he could get a job.

I remember he got a job picking tomatoes from a very long field for hours and he'd come home all sunburned and his hands would have a bunch of wounds. My mom worked as well because she wanted me in school as soon as I was able to. I thank my mom so much for getting me into school because I learned both English and Spanish very quickly and easily. I owe a lot to both of them because they left behind their family, their friends, and memories. My mom couldn't take care of my grandma during her last days but she constantly sent money for her medical bills and made sure to call every day. I can't imagine the feeling of being miles and miles away from my mom and not hugging her or kissing her for more than sixteen years. My parents' story is the biggest reason why I keep going every day. It is almost impossible for me to imagine what they had to go through to rebuild their lives in the United States. Their story makes me feel like I can achieve my goals with effort and sacrifice; it is an impulse to do the best I can in any aspect of my life because they did the same for me and my sisters. They want me to be a successful person, they have always instilled in me that success is having a career through my studies.



SELENA

July 2000, is a very important month for my mother. July was when my mother, a nineteen-year-old at the time, decided she was going to leave her 2-month-old baby with her mother. Also leaving behind the rest of her family. My grandma was the only person she trusted the most with her child. "Para tener un futuro mejor para mi y mi familiar. To have a better future for myself and my family", these are the words she says when she is asked why she decided to move to the United States. When she arrived to the United States of America, her biggest fear was being unable to communicate with others because she did not know any English. At the time there was no help for the Hispanic community where we lived so she really did not have any form of English education. My mother had to learn the basic English she needed in order to work at a factory.

My mother did not have much communication with people then, because of this same reason. The only people she would interact with the most would be the people living in the same house as her; they all looked like her and spoke the same language as her. I arrived at the age of 2 and then went to grade school where I learned

English as my second language. Learning English has given me the opportunity to help my mother. It has allowed me to translate for her at my younger sibling's parent-teacher conferences, doctor's appointments, and her basic language barrier needs. Before she was unable to fully understand people who tried to converse with her, and this at times became very embarrassing for her. My mother has always wanted me to have a higher education, as she was unable to finish high school because of economic reasons. As I reflect upon all this, I think about all the sacrifices she had to go through daily for me to have a life where all my basic needs were met; for our family to have food at the table every day, and not be cold at night. It really makes me proud to know that all these barriers did not stop her from giving me the life I have now. As a DACA recipient, I will continue to pursue my career until I finish it because I know there are enough reasons to do so and to make her feel as proud as she makes me feel when I call her my mom.

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I THINK ABOUT ALL THE SACRIFICES SHE HAD TO GO THROUGH DAILY FOR ME TO HAVE A LIFE WHERE ALL MY BASIC NEEDS WERE MET



Michoacán, Mexico



Michoacán, formally Michoacán de Ocampo, officially the Free and Sovereign State of Michoacán de Ocampo, is one of the 32 states which comprise the Federal Entities of Mexico. The state is divided into 113 municipalities and its capital city is Morelia.

Zamora, Michoacán



The city of Zamora is an important economic center of the state and the most important population center between the cities of Morelia and Guadalajara. The city is located on the Tarascan Plateau in the northwestern part of the state, at an elevation of 1,567 m (5,141 ft) above sea level. Zamora is surrounded by the fertile Tziróndaro Valley, which is an important agricultural area that exports large quantities of products to the United States.

Videos

City Zamora

Zamora's streets

Tianguis en Zamora

Music from Michoacan (violin).

Michoacan is Magical

Typical Costumes



People

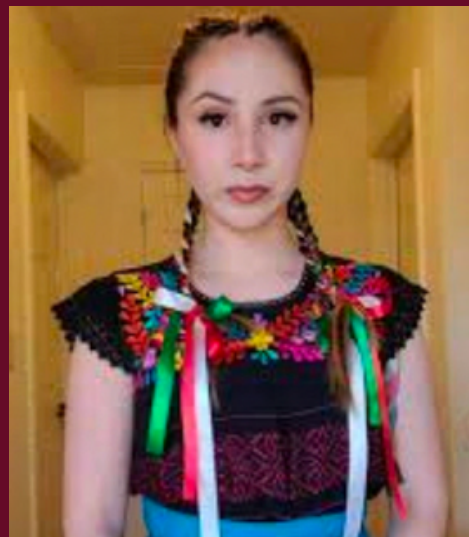


It's very typical to see women with aprons.



Wearing blue rebozo.

Hair



Music and Dances

La Josefinita with violin

La Josefinita with banda

Music from Michoacan (violin).

Pirekua Michoacana

Old men dance

Michoacán Dances



Old Men Dance



Fish Dance



Dance in a Pot

Michoacán Crafts

Virgin of Guadalupe/Virgen de Guadalupe



Guitarras/Guitars



Paracho is well known throughout both Mexico and elsewhere in the world as a hub of lutherie. This is because the town's craftsmen are reputed to make the best sounding guitars and vihuelas in all of Mexico.[1]

The town is full of music shops that sell handmade stringed instruments.[2] Some instruments that can be found in Paracho are: ten-string mandolins, armadillo-backed guitars (concheras) and mandolins, and acoustic bass guitars, as well as regular classical guitars and mandolins, bajo sextos, vihuelas, guitarrones and many others.[3] Many of the stores and workshops allow visitors to watch the guitar-making process directly.

Sombreros/Hats



Batea



Clay



Artwood



Sewing

Clay



Flowers

Copper



Paper mache

Food and Desserts

Michoacán, which is Mexico's largest supplier of avocados, also ranks third in the production of chickpeas and lemons and fourth in sesame and sorghum crops. Sugarcane, corn and wheat are also important staples, as are fruits such as mangoes, strawberries, papaya and limes.

Livestock production is another source of revenue for the state, with pork, beef and poultry being chief commodities.

The state is also known for its production of milk, eggs, honey and beeswax. The lumber and fishing industries also provide significant income for the state.

Chongos (candy with milk)



Food and Desserts cont.

Chongos (candy with milk)



Food and Desserts cont.

Carnitas (Pork meat)



Food and Desserts cont.

Carnitas Tacos



Food and Desserts cont.

Tamales/Uchepos, Tamales/corundas



Food and Desserts cont.

Tarasca soup, Vegetables soup/churipo



Monarch Butterfly



Day of the Dead



Day of the Dead consists of two distinct holidays: The Day of the Innocents ("Día de los Inocentes") or Day of the Little Angels ("Día de los Angelitos") on November 1, dedicated to infants and children. AND, Day of the Dead on November 2, when the adult spirits return. Mexicans view it not as a day of sadness but as a day of celebration because their loved ones awake and celebrate with them. This holiday also coincides with the ancient Celtic seasonal festival Samhain to mark the end of the harvest and to remember the dead.

Artists and Athletes



Juan Gabriel

Artists and Athletes



Marco Antonio Solis

Artists and Athletes



Rafa Marquez

LOCAL and/or NEARBY RESOURCES:

The Indiana Latino Institute
Indianalatinoinstitute.org

Hispanic Latino Minority Health
317 N. New Jersey
(317) 972-4564

Indiana Latino Expo
1300 E 86th St
(317) 762-4599

La Plaza Inc
Laplaza-indy.org

Indiana Commission-Community Services
302 W Washington St # E012
(317) 232-2504

Latino Coalition
Indianalatinocoalition.org

Obra-Hispana
obrahispana.org

WEDJ-FM - Radio Latina 107.1FM
1800 N Meridian St Suite 201
(317) 924-7755

Indiana Youth Institute
iyi.org
603 E Washington St
(317) 396-2700

Indy Chamber
indychamber.com

Latinos Count
<https://latinoscount.org/>

Su Casa Columbus
<https://sucasacolumbus.com/>

Amigos the Richmond Latino Center
amigoslatinocenter.org

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