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(in Spanish) Hello, My name is Saray Molina Quiroz and I am originally from Mexico.

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It's hard because you are making your life away from all the things that you know and

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you come here and begin, like, from zero. You are like a baby. You are learning another language.

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Like you, you're like, you're learning every single word, you know. You come

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here with other culture. And also you find, as I said, you find people who understands that and

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they are willing to help you. But there's other people that, they are just there to judge you,

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you know. And you're not pronouncing this correct or you are not doing this correctly.

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And they don't figure out that everything's new and you're nervous and you don't have anyone.

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So it's not like you are like, um, a victim of this because you you decide to do this. But

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it's just life. You find family. You just, sometimes you choose your family and it's not like

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necessarily blood family, and now I have like a lot of people, like that you know,

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family that I keep, I've been like making on the road and now that's how how I live,

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you know. And how I like, deal with day to day. Sometimes, I um, I just can't. I just want to run,

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take a flight and go to Mexico but my family is here and part of my heart's here.

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It's awesome to see the other side. That you can share your culture and you can share all the

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experiences that you have from your country. And there's people that they are interested in that.

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It's, it's funny like um, you you are right there and ask like, "oh so where

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are you from?" because obviously you notice that they speak Spanish. And they tell you,

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"Oh I'm from this part. I'm from this part." And I'm like, "oh I live like 20 minutes from there,"

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and they have been here like almost their whole lives. Like some people have been here for

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20 years, 30 years, their life is here you know. I've been here like, only for three years and

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i'm getting used to it. Even if I love my country with all my heart, I know that the situation, like

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the jobs, the violence, all that, it's not the best situation to raise a child. So even if I

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miss my, part of my heart is there you know. My friends, my my parents, my, i'm an only child,

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so the fact that sometimes I get the like phone call from my mom and she tells me "I'm sick,"

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and I'm not there and I know that she doesn't have anyone else. Because now my parents, they are

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not together. So, the fact that my mom is there alone and I cannot do anything, it's really hard.

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Like, at the end of the day, I need to think about that. This is the decision that I made

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and now I have like, um, the other part. I have a baby. I have husband. And i'm not

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saying that one is more important than the other. But the baby needs me more. Here you find good and

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bad things. That's, that's for sure everywhere. But sometimes, the main problem is in your head,

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you know. Because you are like so nervous. And you are like, and what if this happened?

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And what if I cannot do it? And you block yourself. And you you think that you you

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are not going to be able to do it. So, sometimes that happened. Like people were like trying to

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talk to me and I was like just freeze. So I decided to go to a meet-up in the Mean Mugg

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Coffee. It's a coffee shop here in Salisbury. So, I arrived there, and the the meetup was um,

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How to Learn Spanish. So, I was like, "all right! I cannot fail here." And everybody was so nice. And,

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and not because like, the owner is a Latin person, but like, the people who was there, they were from

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here. And sometimes you, you expect sympathy for from person, from people that they are from Latin

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America, you know. Like, you find your, you're trying to go to that part of the community. You go

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to like the Latin community because you think that you are gonna feel like, accepted.

Just there,

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and after you figure out that no like, nobody cares. Like, at some point like, no matter,

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like it doesn't matter if you are blue, purple, tan, black, white. They are there and they just

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want to hang out with you. They are fine with you and, and at the end of the day, the problem was

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in your head. After I made, made friends with them you know. And so that's pleasant.

And after,

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like those people referred with me, like um, with other ones, and was like, "oh you know what,

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she was a journalist in Mexico! Maybe you can use her. Maybe she can write in your stuff. And

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maybe you can use her she can translate. She can do this. She can do that," and I was like,

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that's good. And to see that someone is trusting in your capability to go with things you know.

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I feel that um, a lot of the stuff, like I let all the bad experiences just get in my head and,

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and think that everything was gonna be like that. And after I, I met like people. I'm gonna

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just talk about like, the first person that I began to have contact with.

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It's and Evelyn. She's the owner of the Mean Mugg Coffee and um, she was the first one.

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Like a really happy person. And she told me like, you know what, you should come here and

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take like, take a cup of coffee with us. And after my baby was born and I didn't figure out,

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they were there with me at my house. And they brought me food. So, stuff like that makes

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you feel so good. And even if you know that they have their own problems, their own life,

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their own responsibilities. And probably like, you know, if you're in a bad situation you can

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call them and they are gonna be there you know. And after, because of her, I met other people.

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And also, I, I became good friends with them. And now I'm able to do all those things and um, it's

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what I was saying, like normal stuff that I was doing in Mexico. To come here and go to the gym,

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go to the store, like being nervous because you don't understand what they are saying.

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It was stressful. It was bad. But now I can tell that I can make my life and if i make a

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mistake I just ask and if I don't know how to translate them I ask and there's no big deal.

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So if I make a mistake, it is what it is you know. And I feel so much happier. I feel so

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much happier now. I have a family of blood in Mexico and I have family of heart here.

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Here's My Story is funded in part by the Z Smith Reynolds Foundation. To share your story,

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please contact Rowan-Cabarrus Community College by emailing heresmystory@rccc.edu