

**Staff Training to Support Scholarship Essay Workshop Series  
October 6, 2022**

**Sample Essays from Migrant Students**

I couldn't sleep due to the hunger that I felt and the cold that seeped through the one sheet me and my parents shared. I had sat up on the reclined red seat and smelled the van's gasoline and musty smell. The bright signs and lights were mystical and only made me sleepless with the sounds of cars rushing by and - the most dangerous part - the people outside. My parents and I were worn out from living inside of the van. But I stared out the window and hoped maybe it would all change.

My parents are from Guatemala, they have no formal education. I am the oldest out of three children, and we live through our parents back breaking field work. We support our ill family as well as ourselves, as we try to flee from constant poverty.

I started out homeless, making it by slowly. Constantly moving and never escaping the grip of alienation and poverty. You can't control what you're born into but I believe you can choose to get out and do better. Despite the poverty I will disprove all the people who want me to fail. I am a compassionate and tolerant person with great endurance. In a society where you must crush other people to get to the top, I will get to my goal and help others along the way.

In my time I've done a lot to help my community by tutoring kids and volunteering in church and social events, but the most important to me was an art mural. It helped me give back to the community and signify Immokalee's American Indian roots and how the town has developed with our Hispanic culture, coming with new ideas and hopes. Through this I had a sense of fulfillment knowing I had inspired others and expressed my ideas through art.

My life purpose is to create and to inspire other people. I love art and its ability to reach people, break stereotypes. In the future I will study the arts such as painting and graphic design. This will help me reach across the barriers of language and culture. I will use my love for my family, culture, and music to inspire my art.

Through my love of family and art I have found I can endure anything as most great artists and people have done before me. The difficult circumstances of poverty I was born into will not prevent me from reaching my dream, but in fact has given me the skills to pursue my dream. My hard experiences are a part of me, through this I'll prove that you can break stereotypes and go beyond what others expect of you.

I could taste the frustration in my mouth. The people around me were talking to each other and having fun, and there was just me, my heart beating harder and harder in desperation. I did not know any English and could not understand a word of what others said to me. It was my first day of 7th grade in the United States. In spite of all this, I believed in myself and I became determined to learn English and then enjoy the sweet smell of success when I finally achieve my objective.

I was born in a small town called El Moral in Guanajuato, Mexico. My dad went to school to become an electrician, but he couldn't afford to continue studying what he wanted to become. Even though she didn't graduate, my mom was very fortunate to go to school; with eleven siblings my grandparents didn't have the funds to send them all to school. When I was little my dad supported us by working at a factory in the United States. It was difficult for us because we could only see him around 15 days per year. When I was almost thirteen he brought us to the U.S and started to work on farm labor, picking apples, pears, peaches, or vegetables. His work is so hard because he has to carry very heavy loads and work outside in the winter, which is very arduous. My mom has also been working in farm labor packing apples. Now that we live in the U.S., we don't have too much time to spend with our family in Mexico.

Apart from missing my life in Mexico, the hardest obstacle for me has been coming to the U.S and not knowing English. That was so frustrating because I love to go to school and be an active and contributing participant in all the activities with other students. It really bothered me that I couldn't be involved because of the lack of language. I had to believe in myself and persevere in my daily studies. This obstacle caused me to develop increased patience and faith towards life's challenges. It made me accept difficult situations without giving up. It has taught me to believe that with persistence and devotion, I can overcome any obstacle.

When I am not at school, BOCES, or working with my parents, I like to help my family, friends and neighbors. I helped a church to organize clothes for people without enough resources. When my family and friends need assistance with the language, I translate for them. I feel that's a responsibility on my part because I experienced that once as well. I also help my elderly neighbor to mow her grass. I feel commitment to help her doing that because I remember my grandmother doing hard jobs by herself, but I couldn't help her because I was little. My goal is to be there for those people that need me.

My purpose for going to college is to be successful in life, and make my family proud of me. I want to make them proud because I've seen how hard they have worked to give me a good education. I plan to attend NCCC for Welding Technology. To reach my objectives I am prepared to do my very best, and I am willing to overcome any obstacles that would hinder my efforts.

Even though my family works so hard to give me the best education, it is impossible for them to fund my college education. This scholarship is of critical importance for me to achieve my dream. My goal for the future is to complete my education and become an outstanding professional in my field of work. By doing this, I will show my family and friends that all of their efforts in helping me in the past helped me to succeed.

I will never forget the day when my brother came up to me when I was returning to school from BOCES, telling me our mom was in the hospital. When getting to the hospital, I could smell medications, disinfectants, and a sterile atmosphere. For a moment I could almost taste the alcohol in my mouth. I could also hear medical monitors, nurses speaking with each other, and patients calling for help. Entering the lobby, pushing the door opened, I held on to the railing leading to the nurse's station towards my mom's room. Coping with the hospital's environment, I saw several busy nurses trying to help various patients. I could also see several patients on stretchers waiting to go into different areas of care. Being at a hospital is an amazing experience for me.

My parents are from Oaxaca, Mexico and have Aztec ancestry. My parents both came to the United States under very adverse conditions when they were in their early teens. At first they changed jobs constantly, moving all around the country, in search of farm work, until they finally found a permanent job picking apples, peaches, pears, strawberries, and cherries. During picking season my parents work from sunrise to sunset no matter what the temperature is, but in the winter they struggle more because there isn't enough work. I will never forget how hard they have worked trying to support my two brothers and I, along with their parents in Mexico. The hardest thing about living in this country for them was being away from their family members for several years. During that time my dad lost both of his parents and my mom lost her mother, and neither had the chance to see their parents and say goodbye. They had suffered so much, in order to offer myself and my brothers a better life for the future in the United States.

The hardest obstacle I had to face while growing up was that I had the constant responsibility to help my parents and brothers because I was the only Bilingual member of my family. Throughout my childhood I felt like a parent to my entire family because I had "grown up" obligations. For example I had to translate, fill out taxes and school forms, and get my own work permits, as well as passport and license applications. This tough experience has made me a more responsible, resilient and a dedicated person who never gives up. Even though passing my Regents Exams was a huge challenge for me, I pushed myself until I accomplished my goal on passing all my exams. My focus and determination will help me graduate high school, go to college, and achieve my dream in becoming a nurse.

For the last month or so I have been working weekends at a Nursing Home. I intend to continue working there full time this coming summer. This opportunity gives me first hand experience in my field of choice, and I value it greatly. Throughout my years in Middle School I volunteered in several projects such as Builders Club and various food drives to help the needy in my local community. In addition, I like to attend my church and I have in the past volunteered my time caring for animals.

My dream for the future is to be independent, supportive and to play a vital role in my family. My biggest goal is to become a Registered Nurse. When I achieve my goal I will be able to help treat and comfort those who are sick, lost, and alone. My experience helping patients has made me stronger and reinforced my dedication to this occupation. After graduation I plan on going to

college, continuing with my nursing education. I want to be the first person in my family to accomplish something very meaningful by graduating from college.

Without this scholarship I will not be able to attend to my college studies and or able to pursue my dreams. My parents work so hard for my brothers and I so we can have a good education. They work very hard but unfortunately don't earn enough money to pay for college. I know I can achieve my dream because I have faith that I can succeed in anything I set my mind to, especially on something that means a lot to my family and me. I am determined to graduate from college and realize this dream, believing that a nurse dedicates her entire life to assisting others in the community.

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The tall silver gates which separated Mexico from the United States were just a few feet away from my parents, my sister and I. I could hear cars and people shouting in the streets, all kinds of vendors scattered throughout. There was a putrid smell from the garbage and exhaust from the bus terminal, it worsen as time went on because it became very hot and humid. Just a few moments before, my family and I had been enjoying the time we had left together before facing the most difficult thing, saying good bye to my parents for an indefinite amount of time as we were separated at the border.

- CL (Introduction only)