



adventure risk challenge

a leadership and literacy program

2010 University of California Berkeley and Merced | Sagehen Creek Field Station



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cintya lopez

I Have Been Reborn

I am the thundering river
That rages along these granite mountains
I am just waiting for the time I lose control
When the waterfall comes
When I become a part of
The big sapphire sea
When I become
The person I
Expect to be

I started out as a creek
Swiftly gliding through the peaks
Gentle to the rocks beneath my body.
I was the kind of creek
Nature did not know about
No problems,
No arguments and,
No anger
I was naïve to my world but
In a snap of a finger,
My world changed
I changed.

I am filled with problems,
They make my heart stone,
My father's alcoholic problems
Make my fury rise
Seeing my mom fight with him
Shatters my heart into rocks.
I can't control myself
This rage makes me
Silent, secretive, and immune

Little by little, day by day,
Hour by hour, minute by minute,
I keep getting filled to my rim
Waiting for the time I spill
Ruin what I cherish the most,
My parents my friends my family
Ruin the special relationship we have
Arguments with my loved ones are difficult
There are incidents
When I tell my mom
I would be better off alone than with here
Times when I talk back
When my parents need help
Times when I raise my hand to them.
I know people say
there are no if ands or buts in life,
But if I had a chance to take it all back
I would in a heartbeat and
Never think twice.

There are times when
Not even the mountains I slither through

Can handle me,
I can't even handle myself
Sometimes when my mom
Asks me to help her
I become a whirlpool
an unrecognizable thing.

My mom and my dad are
The reason for my birth
They are my creators
My sea in life
That's why they deserve better
They need a daughter
They can depend on



They need a daughter who is grateful
For what they do
My sister is a small river
Who glides next to me
When she needed help I would never
Be there for her
She has been growing up without
The sister she needs
This is why I have changed

Imperfections can mean many things
It means that's everyone has flaws
And everyone have made mistakes
Living in the moment is the best thing
You can ever do
I now cherish what I love the most,
My family and friends,

They mean the world to me
I treasure them.
I treasure them like diamond rocks
That lay beneath the sea I'm heading to
Looking back at my imperfections
I realized it was time for a change
Like the bible says
"There's a time to die
And a time to be born"

I have been through a renaissance
In a short time of 40 days
From a raging river to
The sapphire sea of a new beginning
I have passed the luminous waterfall
I have been reborn
I have been reborn into a new person
A new daughter
A new sister
A new friend and
A new individual.

I came to appreciate what I have
I have changed
The love and support of everyone
I have been reborn into a new person
A new part of the sea
I have changed

I have fallen
Down the crystalline waterfalls
Achieved what I want the most
To be the person I want everybody to see
I am gliding into unknown doors of the sea
Following unknown labyrinths
The labyrinths that lead me to my
Destiny
Dreams will be accomplished
Accomplished to finish high school
High school that will lead me
To a better future
A future with
Love, promise, health and going to college
This will lead me to the person I want to be
I have been reborn into a new person

Now I am part of the sea
I once dreamed of
Doors and new paths are open to me
Now the last thing
To do is follow where I want to go
I have changed into a better person
I am no longer a raging river
I am part of the sapphire sea
I once dreamed

What I Was and What I Have Become

Beads of rain clashed against my face. As I turned to my right I could see the smooth glass surface of Gilmore Lake. I was irresistibly captured in that moment. I wasn't thinking about the mountain we were supposed to climb, but the beauty of the scene. I wasn't physically or mentally ready to pursue the challenge that stood before me. My group started to proceed slowly uphill and I became more nervous with each step I made. I wasn't in the greatest moods but I had to deal with it sooner or later. We were a couple of feet up and I was already tired. "How am I supposed to do this?" I asked myself trying to convince my mind into telling me that I could do it but failing for the most part. I continued upward not thinking of what the future might bring to me but of the mistakes I have made. With every couple of feet the hike became harder, like my past, but as we reached the top, it made me realize that I could accomplish anything I set my mind to. My journey hiking up Tallac became a metaphor for my life. I started thinking about not putting my best effort into school or not helping around the house or not finishing what I started, and I began to understand that these things are essential for my future.

If I were to just go a couple of feet up the Mountain I would have been satisfied but I pushed hard and kept on going. Unlike how I was back at school I pushed myself to go further than I have before. If I would have done this hike in the past I would have just turned around, not even halfway. For example, during school I usually didn't finish homework that I didn't think was important, but my perspective of it has changed here at A.R.C. I wouldn't do my homework or if I did, it meant that I copied. There was rarely the teacher who pushed me into doing better but not even they could overcome my stubbornness. I knew that I could do better in school and get good grades but I just wanted to ignore everything that involved work. My demeanor in school wasn't the worst. For example my last ten years

in school I have never been suspended or have had a referral, yes there were the times I would be told to be quiet or to move to another seat. For the most part I'm a good teen. Here at A.R.C I finally understood why we need to work. At first I wouldn't understand why I had a lot of essays and projects, but now that time is ending. I realized that in the process of learning there comes hard work. I will take advantage of school because it will lead me in the right direction that I'm heading to. I also learned that if you pursue what you want the most you will be able to do anything else. At this point of the hike I have accomplished the first three hundred feet of height without noticing it. I'm pleased for what I am about to do with this mountain and my life.

Working as a team, hiking Mount Tallac, supported me even more because you always have someone to help you when you try to give up. Not only did they support me but I supported them too by not giving up and helping them carry the backpacks. "Cintya do your room!" this are the exact words my mom repeats through out the day. Not once, not twice but at least ten times. I never really got the idea of order or



rules, it makes you follow the life you want, and it makes your life a happier and cleaner place to live in. I'm still climbing to the top I'm still learning the route which I'm going to take later on. Now I understand why my mom taught me order and neatness. It makes life easier.

Were almost to the top of the talus, the top to my understanding of finishing what I start without giving up. When I start something I usually don't finish it. It's because either it's too hard or just plain boring to continue. At first I can be excited and amused, but by the time I'm halfway through I don't bother finishing. In my fifteen years of living I've accomplished about two things that made my parents proud. One was graduating from middle school and the other was passing both of my Cahsee exams. That was it, nothing more have I accomplished. Pathetic, yes I do agree, and that's why I came to A.R.C to make a change and try to finish what I start. I also came to A.R.C to become more independent, responsible, improve my English skills, and mature. This has prepared me for what the future might bring to me after this program. At this point of the hike I could see the top talus cover each corner, but they won't stop me until I reach the top of the mountain.



neatness but after being away from home for 40 days I learned the value of it. Being the oldest child of two I knew I had greater responsibilities than my sister, but I lack in them. In the morning I have to do chores, wash clothes, and take care of my sister. It seems harmless but in reality it takes way more energy that you might think. I thought that keeping a house clean is not important but I was definitely wrong. Order and neatness is a really good quality to have. It makes you follow the

I reached the top of Mount Tallac and the view was impeccable. I snapped out of my reverie and realized that I had made it all the way to the top, one thing I could have never imagined doing. I couldn't believe my eyes and mind. I was literally on top of a mountain and this is where I knew I could do anything I set myself to. From that moment on I knew that the mistakes I've made have made me the person I am today. Doing my work has helped me improve the responsibility I have for my own education. Supporting others and not just thinking about myself is very rewarding at the end. The message that I have received through this experience is to take in everything you have learned and put it into practice back home. It will help lead you to the future you want the most. Embrace what you have the most and never let it go. I have changed for my own good and I am proud of what I have accomplished.

cynthia santana

The Family I Wished For When I Was Little

I am a white cloud
Moving in the sky
Traveling everywhere
Sometimes I don't know what's next
Always being pushed by the wind
Of bad influences

I disappear quickly
To hide my problems
My negative attitude
Making fun of others at school
Always getting in trouble

My mom expects me to be a better cloud
Always trying to go the right way
But it is difficult
There are many people
Who try to confuse me
Blow me the wrong way
I know that my mom
Will always be there for me

I am a white cloud moving in the sky
Always moving to a different place
And trying to forget my past

I know my life isn't easy
I will try my best
To make it easier
Along with what I want to be

Many people assume
I am a wispy cloud
Breaking apart easily
Because I don't make good decisions
any breeze can push me around

Tired of listen to negative rain clouds
Saying I'm not going to accomplish my goals,
That I should give up
And let someone else do it for me
Because I'm not good at it
Or I'm not that strong

Facing a problem
That I can't run from
Not seeing my dad

Thinking about
If he cares about me
I feel that I don't need my dad
And not feeling anything for him
Not seeing him as my father

When I was three years old
My parents separated
Since then I haven't been close to my Dad
I feel sad because
I didn't have a chance to know him,
Sometimes I am upset with god because
I don't have my dad with me
To hug me
When I'm happy or sad

Then I started a new life
With a new family
The family I wished for when I was little
I know it's not perfect
But I feel amazing having a new father
Who cares about me
Who gives me a home and a family



Now I'm not the only cloud in the sky
And I feel surrounded by other clouds
That will help me

This summer I have learned
To not be shy
That my negative attitude
Can get me in trouble
To be more confident
To experiment with new things
And to never give up

My life will get better
There are many things I will do
The most important to me is
Helping my parents
The other clouds surrounding me

The wind will never stop me
From reaching my goals
My life will not be easy
I will never give up
My dreams

No one can stop me!

Crystal clear water swayed beneath my red kayak. The blistering sun burned my skin making beads of sweat spill along my forehead. Our destination, Eagle Point, is where we would camp for two nights. I was afraid because it was my first time kayaking and one of my challenges is not knowing how to swim. As I sat with my partner in our red kayak I was anxious. Seeing how immense and beautiful Lake Tahoe was, I felt secure. I convinced myself that everything was okay because I was with my ARC family and I knew that everyone would support me, and wouldn't let me give up. At the end of the kayak expedition I was sure that if I could accomplish this, I could accomplish other challenges. Now I know that if I try I can do whatever I want to do, and be who I want to be. ARC has helped me to appreciate the support of my family at home, has made me stronger, and supported me to believe in myself.

The forty-day ARC program has helped me to appreciate all the things that my family has given me. Now I understand that my family cares about me, and loves me more than I can imagine. At home I was always depending on my mom and my sister to do my chores. I hated when my mom used to nag me all the time to clean my room and do my laundry. Now I realize that all the things that my mom used to say to me, she said because one day I would need to know how to be by myself. In ARC I have learned how to be more responsible and to take care of myself and my chores. I know that I'm ready to go back home and help support my family around the house. I'm ready to show my mom that everything that I did in ARC, like cooking my own meals, being a group leader of the day, and always helping everyone without being asked, that I'm now independent.

I'm stronger now than I used to be. Before starting ARC I was less confident. I remember when I was going to try out for softball, my friends made fun of me and said that I was not going to make it, because I didn't even know how to play. In those days I didn't feel confident that I was not going to make the team and was worried that my friends would

of heights. Later when we had to jump for someone that we love, I stopped thinking about my fear and just thought that I was doing it for my little sister who I missed. I had enough courage to jump. This experience has made me a more confident and stronger person. I have to fight for whatever I want and never give up.



Through all the support that my ARC family has given me, I have started to believe in myself. I used to want give up in everything. I used to think I was going to fail and that some things were not made for me. The day of rock climbing I first didn't make it to the top of the cliff. I just didn't trust in myself, and I gave up. But when I saw that everyone was doing it and some of my friends were there to support me, I started to believe in myself more. I said to myself that I can do it. I stood up and went to try again. It was a hot morning, my hands were sweating, and I was tired and wanted to give up again. I heard my ARC family cheering for me that I can do it. I forgot everything and I started to believe that I was going to make it to the top of the cliff. When I got on the top I felt more confident that believing in myself will help me to accomplish my goals. Now I'm ready to go

back home and start a new life. I'm new person who believes in myself.

ARC has shown me to appreciate what I have in life, that I'm a strong person and I can do all the things that I want to do in life. In ARC I have had experiences that I couldn't have imagined before this summer. Hiking, rock climbing, river rafting, a ropes course, and kayaking have shown me how to be confident and to not give up in anything. I'm ready to go back to the real world, and start my new life. No one can stop me now.

joke about me even more if I failed. Even though I got selected for the JV softball team I wasn't confident that I would be a good team player because I was the only Mexican, I didn't speak English as well as the other girls, and I had never played softball before. Half way through the season I almost quit. In ARC I have discovered that I'm stronger than I thought. I have learned to not give up in anything. The day of the rope course in our last obstacle, The Leap of Faith, I was afraid to jump of the high platform to reach the trapeze. I wasn't confident enough to overcome my fear

I am a hummingbird
Useless and unable to open my wings to fly
Always depending on my parents
To put food in my mouth
So I can survive

I am a hummingbird
Scared of the outer world
Feeling lonely
Depressed
Waiting for a friend to come
Hiding, closely watching
Other birds open their wings
With the dream that someday
I can open my wings as well

Raised by my mother
When my father was away from our nest
Working with my brother in another place
My mother was kind
She never left my side

My father tried the best for us
He wanted to take us with him so we could
Live together, like a family
I barely knew my brother
He lived with my father and he came to visit us a few times
I was happy
My family would finally be together
But I had to fly away from the place I was born
The place I was raised
I had to get used to a new language
A new family
And a new life

I decided to leave the nest and go outside
I decided to come to the world and make friends
Meet new people
But it wasn't how I thought it would be
Everyone made fun of me
Because I was short
I knew they would not stop laughing at me
I felt that my wings were cut off
I decided to hide my feelings
So no one could hurt them again
I buried them away
From my family and friends

I am a hummingbird
Putting on a fake smile
So people think that I am happy.
Being mean to my family

Refusing to take their love.
Not paying attention to them
Trying to pretend that I don't have feelings.

I realize now
I hurt my family
When they tried to give me their love
By not telling them how much I love them

I don't want to be a powerless hummingbird
I don't want to feel useless
I don't want to be depressed



I want to find birds that don't feel sorry for me
Birds who help me when I fall
Not birds that try to ground me
I need to put my trust in the right birds
And start to share my feelings
And feel again the warm feathers
Of the people who offer their love to me

I am becoming a mature a hummingbird
A small bird becoming stronger day by day
Trying to find true friendship
Realizing how important my family is to me
Opening my wings
Ready to fly
And ready to give all my love to the birds that
Love me as well

I am going to leave the nest again
Fly as fast as I can
Fly as high as I can
Fly as far as I can
To reach all my goals

A New Person

The day had come- the day of the solo. Everyone was scared or nervous about being alone by ourselves. When I got to my spot I was impressed with its beauty. I had a clear view with a green and brown mountain in front of me. I could see the blue endless sky mixed with white clouds. Pine trees gave me perfect shade. I put my backpack down. I saw a small waterfall and a big flat rock above it. I sat on the rock and tried to think about my life, what I want to be, and what things I will do when I get home. I relaxed with the sound of the water, trying to hear every drop that fell. I began to feel the cold breeze of the wind and the mist blowing in my face. I jumped into the chilly water to concentrate. Then I started to think about how I was in the past and the mistakes that I made back in Mexico. I saw the orange sunset disappearing slowly down the sky through the clouds and past mountains. Over a period of time I decided to think about the positive decisions that I had made when I came to the United States. I thought about the things that I have learned in ARC. Staying at ARC has been a wonderful experience because I have learned that I am a strong person, that I am brave and I want try new things, and how to appreciate my family and friends.

I discovered that I am a strong person and that no matter what challenge came to me I always faced it and I always won. I was a child who always thought that he never could decide anything by himself and or do a single thing alone. I wanted to be more like my family, strong and independent with a lot to give to others. The opportunity of ARC came to me and I thought that it would be a great chance to demonstrate how strong I am. I began to discover that I am strong since the second day of my first expedition. I wasn't in shape, and I wasn't strong enough to carry the big heavy backpack. That day we had to walk seven miles. It was a big challenge for me because I had never walked that distance in my life in one day. I only saw big mountains far away from me, with a lot of snow and without the trail. I was exhausted all my body began to hurt for carrying the heavy backpack. I thought that I would fall and stay on the ground and rest. My whole group supported me until the end. I thought that I was the only one who was not giving my best. I realized that I wasn't the only one who was going through this. I could see the faces of exhaustion in all my group. I decided to push the pain away from my mind and force myself to get to my destination along with my group. At the end I was

pleased with the results because I got to my destination and I put in my mind how strong I was in hike. I also discovered how strong my teammates were that day. I was happy because I wanted my family to know that I am a strong person like them. Now I know I can do more in a day by not giving up. I know that if I could walk seven miles in day, set camp, go for water, cook, and do a bear hang, I surely can do more for my family.

ARC helped me discover that I am an ambitious person who likes to try new things even though I don't know how to do them. I was a person who was scared to do things by myself. I stayed away from all the activities that I didn't know. When I came to ARC they showed me that there is a whole world out there full of great experiences and that you can take a risk to try new things. I was content with the hiking and did my best to help lead the team. I began to support my team by cheering them up, by walking at the same pace as my team, and by not whining about the heavy backpacks. When they mentioned that we would do a sport called "kayaking" that involved being in the water in Lake Tahoe my body froze. At that moment, I imagined myself falling from the kayak and drowning and my body floating in the water of Lake Tahoe. I wanted to come to ARC and my fear would not stop me from accomplishing it. I took some swimming lessons so I could overcome my fear of kayaking. When we started the kayaking I was ready to grab my paddle and start pushing the water along with all my fears of drowning. When I started paddling, I thought that it would be really easy but when we got further my arms started to hurt. I only could see an endless lake with dark blue water. I tried to push harder but I realized that I had to work with my partner who was behind me. I was scared but I had this sensation that I wanted to do it and not give up until the end. I saw all my teammates decide to go into the water and not let the fear paralyze them. I saw the motivation in their faces and I felt that I wanted to go with them and have all the fun together. At the end I was proud of myself for not giving up until I reached my goal. Now I am a person who wants to try new things without knowing how to do it.

Being in this program has helped me to understand what I love and what appreciate, my family and my friends. I was I child who was hiding feelings from my family and not

showing them love. During this period of time in ARC I have learned a lot of things with my new family so I can show my family how much I appreciate them. I learned to be more patient by letting others work, by not rushing them with their decisions, and giving them time to think about things before they do it. I learned to be a good listener, to hear other people's opinions, and to let other people tell me the things that I need to improve on. I learned to be more helpful by working with my teammates to accomplish our daily chores and by supporting them more so they could push themselves to accomplish every goal. I learned to be more understanding with my family here in ARC. No one thinks as same as you and you have to understand and not judge them. I will keep all the things that I have learned in this program with me so I can share them with my family and friends. I will be more patient with my friends and listen to them in whatever they need. I will be a good listener to my sister so we can become more united and become friends. I will help my family in all kind of things. I will help my mom do the chores so she can see the new person I have become. I will help my sister with her English so she can become better at it, and help my father to understand things. I will be understanding with my family and friends, and even give them advice.

In ARC I have grown as a person, as a friend, and as a son. Being on the solo was a fantastic idea and perfect timing to think about my life. I enjoyed the blue sky and the gorgeous view of the mountain in the afternoon. I enjoyed the cold water. It was the perfect thing to concentrate. Thanks to this day I have learned new things during the time that I have been in ARC. Staying in ARC with a new family has shown me how you can enjoy every moment in your life in a positive way. I understand now how to put my trust in the right person. I see how strong people can be when they put something in their minds and have decided to accomplish it. Now I am a different person who will accomplish every goal that I have in my mind. I will help my family and friends with all the things that I have learned in ARC. I will listen to them, I will understand them, and I will be helpful so they can count on me. I will take home all the knowledge that I grabbed from all the people of ARC and put it into my family. When I get home I will see the things with new eyes and realize all the things that I need to appreciate.



esperanza toscano

I Am A Young Shining Star

I am a young shining star,
Lost between hundreds of other stars
In the enormous sky.
Trying to make up for
Mistakes I've made
And start a new beginning.

I know it's going to be hard
Because I've waited too long to realize
What I've been,
What I am
And what I want to be,
The North Star who everyone
Admires and appreciates.

I am a young shining star
Who grew up,
The youngest
And only girl
With four older brothers
And two parents
Who did anything for me
They worked hard
To give me everything I wanted
No matter what they had to do,
But unfortunately
I was a selfish star
Who only cared about herself

My life hasn't been easy,
Even though I have friends
And family
Who support me in everything,
Clouds and rain
Have tried to cover me.

Five years ago an enormous storm
Rolled into my life,
Trying to stop me from shining,
I was still too innocent
To understand my dad's sickness
My family tried to protect me
From everything,
I was only a tiny star
Who thought everything was perfect
And only wanted to play with her dolls
And teddy bears

But when I moved to the US.
I heard the worst news of my life
One of my dad's kidneys had failed,
He needed a transplant or dialysis as soon as possible

When I saw him my brightness burned out
And my heart broke into a million pieces,
My father has always been strong,
Happy and hard working,
But this time he looked devastated,
The night covered his sparkle and shine

I couldn't understand why he looked like that
Only four months ago he was perfect.
I tried to find answers or reasons but everything
Seemed impossible,
Like a star without its shine.



Working hard, supporting each other and never giving up
Our family's brightness show as the storm clear.
Now, my dad's good attitude and humor are back,
He's always dancing, singing
And the most important thing
He's always shining
He's my example to follow,
The star I want to become

40 days ago
I thought I was prepared
To start traveling around the world
By myself and be independent,
But thanks to ARC,
I realize that my family is my universe
All the things I've achieve have been for them

I've overcome challenges.
In the wilderness walking
Miles and miles,
Opening my self to people I didn't know

But that now is my family,
Going rafting and kayaking with the fear
Of falling into the water,
Being independent,
Never giving up and
Being without my family.

I've become the North Star,
The star that has made the right decisions
To become stronger and brighter,
To help guide my family
Together we make a constellation
And make the right choices.

I am the North Star
Who is ready to make my family proud,
Start a new beginning
Start shining and sparkling
Like a diamond in the middle of the night.

The Sunrise, My New Beginning

When I saw the rocks we had to climb I thought it wasn't going to be hard, even though they were gigantic. I never imagined that my knee was going to hurt again from an incident seven days ago. One part of me told me to be the first one to climb, but the other part told me to wait until other people tried so I could see how they did it. At the end I decided to wait. When finally my turn came, I felt confident about myself and about how I was going to climb. I started climbing, struggling and fighting through the rocks. I didn't want to stop but at that time the pain was stronger than my soul. I decided to stop. When I got down I felt so angry and disappointed about myself that I just wanted to disappear. I went to sit down and calm myself. I started thinking about all the things I had accomplished in only seven days. I felt devastated and hopeless because I had felt again. The other ARC participants, my second family, cheered me all the time and never left me alone. I kept my head up high and tried one more time. I had my family and my instructors cheering for me and I trusted in myself more than ever before. What else could I ask for to make it happen? With all the support and love they gave me, I had enough to get to the top of the cliff. I struggled through the pain but this time nothing could stop me. Life is like rock climbing, there are times where we are going to find easy ways to continue, but we are going to find hard ways too. We have to pass through the hardest things to realize who we really are and appreciate what we have. The challenges I've passed through these forty days have taught me to be responsible, stronger and to appreciate my family.



I've taken on responsibilities that I never have before. I thought forty days would not make any difference in my life, but I was wrong. ARC has changed me more than I could have ever imagined. Since the first day I got to basecamp, ARC demonstrated to me that this was going to be a summer full of responsibilities. I thought the first day was going to be a relaxing day because only two other boys and I were going to be at basecamp. Again I was wrong. I had to take a test that included some questions and an essay and right after that we had to start cooking dinner. I wasn't expecting this, and even though I was somewhat familiar with the kitchen I wasn't full confidence at all. Back at home I used to help my mom to cook but only rarely, and just to cut vegetables. I have never cooked an entire dinner.

During the first expedition our instructors, Mel and Peter, introduced us to the different jobs we had to do: the leader of the day, house mouse, great eye, aqua bear and journalist. During the first expedition I got to be the first leader of the day. It was the second day of hiking, but the first day that we all were going to do our jobs. The night before when Mel told me that I was going to be the first leader it shocked me because I had never led a group of ten teens by myself. I tried to calm myself down and be positive about it. The second day came as the alarm beat at 6:15am. I woke up the girls and then went to

the boy's tent to wake them up too. I kept reminding them of the time so they could be on time to the stretch circle. At 6:30 we all were stretching. So far everything was going pretty well. Everyone was doing their job and each time I was feeling more and more confident about my job and myself. After we ate breakfast, put down our tents, packed up all our equipment, and swept the area, we started our hike for the day. I had times when I didn't know what to do but I never let it show. I just put my head up high and took the responsibility to guide the group for the entire day. When we got back to basecamp from the first expedition my responsibilities increased. I thought I wasn't going to be able to accomplish these duties. I knew I had to cook for the entire group and wash the dishes and I thought that was too much. But to my surprise, even more responsibilities came into my schedule. I had to wash clothes, wake up at 6:15 to do fitness, attend science, English, group reading and leadership

class. I had never had a schedule as busy as this, but if I thought it was too much I was wrong because while the days passed more and more tasks added to my schedule. Now I have to read a book by myself, read a map, attend first aid class and clean the bathroom. At first I didn't think I was going to be able to keep up with this schedule but ARC has taught me to be responsible not only for myself, but for my group.

My strength began to show as the days past. Forty days ago the word strong wasn't in my dictionary. I tried to find it but the only word that came out was weak. Before coming to ARC, everybody told me I was too weak to do dangerous and tough things. I always agreed with them because I was too scared to try new things. It's amazing how during the first expedition I could demonstrate to myself that I can do anything as long as I try. My first day hiking was really hard, but I never thought it was going get harder each day. The second day was one of the most difficult of the whole program. Twenty minutes after we started hiking I fell and hit my knee. It started bleeding but I didn't think it was going to be a big deal. I got up, put my backpack on, my head up high and stared walking. During that day I fell five more times on the same knee. I felt like every step I took the pain was increasing more and more but I knew I still had a long way to go until we arrived at our destination. I decided to stop thinking about the pain and concentrate about not giving up and making my family and myself proud. Each day I overcame a new challenge. The definition of the word strong started to come out word by word. The last day of our first expedition we hiked down the hill for forty minutes until we arrived at the rock we were going to climb. In our second expedition we had to kayak across Lake Tahoe and then go white water rafting. Even though we had life jackets I was terrified because I didn't know how to swim. I thought to myself about how I came here to overcome fears and demonstrate to myself that I can do anything I want. With the help of my second family and my instructors I just went for it and tried to give my best.

I've learned to appreciate people who love me. I used to think that if someday I didn't have my family it wouldn't matter because I was almost always in my room by myself or out with my friends. The challenges that ARC gave me to fight through helped me realize what family really means to me. When I first got this opportunity to come to ARC for forty days I was really excited. Back then I felt too much pressure from school and family. I wanted to escape my life and forget about everything that was going on around me. As the time for me to leave got closer, I became more scared and sad. However, I was still excited to live in a different world without my family, friends, school and problems. I knew this experience was going to help me in many ways including with my family life, but I never thought it was going to impact me this much. It had been thirty days already - thirty long, challenging, sad, happy, excited, amazing and unforgettable days of my life during which I've been away from my family and civilization. I thought my family would always be by my side, helping me get up and showing me the right path and to not make mistakes. To always have my head up high and demonstrate to the world and to myself that I am a strong girl. Even though right now I don't have my family with me there is nothing that can push me down. I know I have made mistakes by not listening to my parents and brother, by not spending time with them, not helping them through challenges and problems, leaving them alone when they most needed me and by not showing them how much I love them and care about them. But thanks to all the challenges I've been through, I've accepted my mistakes. I know it's not too late to make up, so I'm ready to start my relationship with my family from zero and demonstrate to them that I can change, I changed for myself but especially for them. I'm going to be the amazing and perfect daughter and sister they always wanted by expressing myself with them and telling them how much I love and appreciate them.

Forty days ago I didn't have any idea of who I was and what I was doing in this world. I used to see myself in the mirror and I couldn't recognize myself. Thanks to ARC, I finally found my way. Now I can reflect on myself in the clear and blue water from Lake Tahoe. I know who I am and what am I doing in this world, and I'm proud of it. I am a totally different person, not the girl I used to be before. I've discovered how responsible and strong I've become and how important communication, love, and support from my family, friends and community can be and I am ready to go home and take on the responsibilities that I didn't take before. I am determined to help my parents and brothers in everything they need, open myself and tell them how much I love them, get more involved in my community by doing community service and help the people who most need it benefit from my actions. I learned that life is like a mountain that has ups and downs but if you really fight and give everything you will get to the top and have the most meaningful feeling you have ever had in your life. During these past forty days I've failed, cried, laughed, learned, experimented and overcome challenges. The ARC program and my two families have taught me to never give up, no matter what happens. "Failure is the key to success." This saying has been my angel in my mind throughout the summer. It made me unstoppable.

gabriel marquez

I Will Never Stop Learning From My Mistakes

I am a growing oak tree
Always learning
Always making new mistakes and learning from them
As I continue through my life
Passing all the seasons
Always changing

When I was a seedling
I was easily convinced and tricked to do bad things
By my so-called friends.
I was a growing oak tree always learning

I learned bad things
Thinking it would make me a bigger oak tree
I began to steal and ditch school
It made me feel like I belonged

To my surprise it actually kept me down, dry and apart from others
Other trees were growing bigger and stronger
As I shriveled into almost nothing
I felt like I was no longer a growing oak tree
But a pathetic excuse for a twig

When the other trees were caught
I realized that what I had done was not the right thing
For me, and my morality
I remembered that I would always be
A growing oak tree always learning good and bad
I had learned from the error of my mistakes

I convinced myself that there had to be a remedy
Because all the things I did only hurt me and no one else
I only did it hoping my roots would grow as deep in the ground
As everyone else's, because I felt that
I could be pulled out of the ground at any second

After realizing what I had done
I no longer felt like an oak tree
But, like a pile of firewood waiting to be burned
I would find a way to fix what I had done
As a growing oak tree I could not give up

I wrote apology letters
I went to people who I hurt and read them the letters
And I offered to work off what I had done
In order to let go of all my dead brown leaves
And continue to grow through the seasons
As an oak tree that is always learning

Everyone accepted my apologies
And let me work off the bad leaves
As spring arrived
I began to grow all new leaves, green and healthy
Continuing my life as a growing oak tree that is always learning
I felt very happy and relieved knowing it was all behind me

Soon enough my parents heard what I had done
They talked to me and grounded me
As a growing small tree

Who was starting to sprout new leaves
But not before saying how proud they were of me
For owning up to my mistakes without being told to do so
And continuing as a growing oak tree that is always learning

I insisted on growing bigger than before
Getting closer to being the tree I know I am destined to be

Unlike my so-called friends
Who are still shriveling out and, dying slowly during the winter
And not reviving again during the spring
Like they always have
They are so used to doing it, as small trees fighting for survival
Trees that are not big enough to get their own sunlight and water
When I changed and decided to be
A growing oak tree that is always learning
They chose not to follow

I continue growing and learning
Because I am still an oak tree who is not yet done
And always learns from its mistakes

I die out during the winter, shedding my old leaves
Along with my mistakes
They teach me more about what I should not do
I start over in spring with a new beginning
And a chance to grow new leaves

I continue to learn and grow wiser
And bigger as an oak tree
That will never stop learning and growing
As the seasons change so do I



As I become
The best tree I can be
In this jungle of opportunities
Just waiting for us
To learn and move on
From all our mistakes
As we place them in our past

I am a growing oak tree
That is always learning
I know I will never be perfect

But that won't stop me from trying to get as close as I can

As an oak tree that will never stop learning
I will continue through life making a good future for my self
By going to college and getting an education
Assuring a good future for my family and me

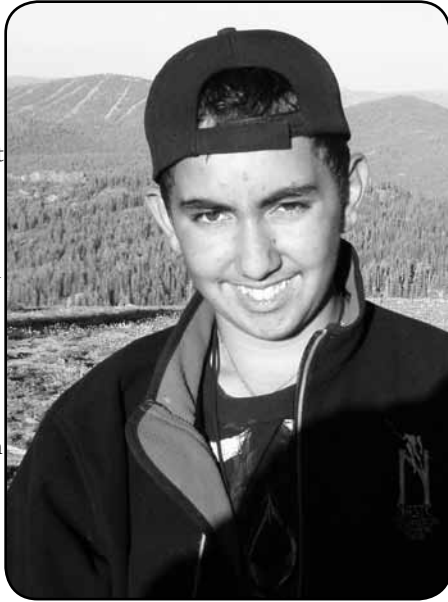
I will prove that I have learned from my mistakes
And have worked hard to end them
For the benefit of my friends and family and myself

I will continue being
A growing oak tree
that is always learning.

I Have No More Limitations

Life is full of surprising challenges that aren't easily overcome. For example, when I was rock climbing, it was a hot day and the sun was hitting my face as I reached for the next rock to pull myself up. Thoughts were rushing through my mind about me slipping and falling to my certain death. I began to ask to come back down but my belier would not hear of it. He kept telling me to go a little father. I wanted to quit as sweat was rushing down my face and with every second that passed I became more and more nervous. Soon I began to hear all my friends cheering me on chanting my name. I knew that I was not going to make it, but I did not want to disappoint my friends. Putting a fake smile on my face I continued through it thinking that I had to do it. I could not give up, I had to make it so I pushed myself and soon enough I reached the top and I thought that the worst was over. I realized that I was wrong when the instructor told me to lay back off the edge. I got a knot in my throat, and I couldn't stop thinking that I was going to fall. The whole group began cheering again and I looked back and gave them a quick grin as I slowly backed off the edge. Letting myself go little by little, soon I was jumping down faster and faster and before I knew it, I was on the ground at ease. It was important for me to come to ARC this summer. It taught me how to become a better problem solver, how to face up to my fears, and to power through any mental or physical challenge's in my way. In ARC I learned that my mind sets my limits for me mentally and the only one who can change them is me.

My physical and mental limitations are set by my mind. When I was going through various ARC challenges I realized that my mind has a lot to do with my limitations. As I hiked and did morning fitness, I realized that the more I thought about the distances the more tired I got. I would tell myself that I was too tired to continue any further but I knew that my body was no where near



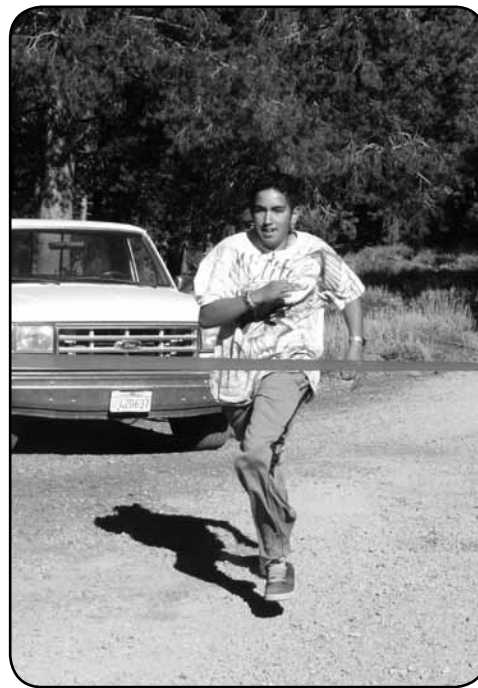
exhausted. On the other hand, when I was distracted or thinking about other things, I could go for hours on end without as much as loosing my breath. The more I practiced and the less I focused on the distance the further I got, telling myself that it was just a little further and that there was no need to look up. When it came to writing, I just focused on writing the requirements for the paper, and not on the quality of it. I was working as little as possible on them so I would not have to work as long. With all the extra time we had to write the essays, I was encouraged to revise it, so I decided to do just that. In doing that, I caught myself in many small but vital mistakes, which changed my thinking about my limitations in my writing. They revolve simply around the time I had to work on it and nothing else, thus teaching me that limitations are meant to broken and improved. ARC also showed me the way to make it happen. Now I am prepared to go through school and write as many essays that come my way. I will also go further in my athletics, pushing myself as physically possible and continuing through my life breaking all of my limitations.

ARC has taught me that nothing worth getting is ever easy, and you have to work for it in order to receive it. Quitting might be the easiest thing to do, but you must push yourself in order to reach your goals. ARC also showed me that the path in your life will have a lot of up's and down's, but you should not stop no matter how uncomfortable you are. If you're going for something that is worthwhile you will have to get out of your comfort zone in order to

achieve it. If you do quit, you will regret it for the rest of your life until you go back and see it all the way through. If you stick to it through the end, you will be proud that you had the opportunity of quitting, but you stuck to it. Care Bears say, "Were there's a will there's a way," and to me this means that if you believe that you can do it you will succeed. I learned this when I was rock climbing and I wanted to quit but I knew that I had to keep going.

ARC showed me that a family has to support each other so that you can overcome your mental limitations. We did everything together. Things like household chores should be divided up between every one living there equally. When I get back home I will help my mom with washing dishes and clothes, along with cooking. These are responsibilities that don't really do on a normal basis that I will start doing on a regular basis when I get home. I will help out more with my little brother's homework in order to help him improve his English the way that I am in ARC. In my family's restaurant I will use my newly acquired problem solving skills in order to accomplish things more quickly and efficiently. This will show that I am a person who is willing to pull his own weight in order to continue with our happy relationship as a family.

ARC has taught me many valuable skills, which I will never forget. Nothing worth getting will ever be easy. As a person you must learn to overcome all challenges that come your way, quitting is never an option. I also learned that in order to help yourself you must learn to



help others. These experiences will help me in the future to become closer to my family and friends and to be more prepared to overcome my limits when needed, in order to move forward in life.

gustavo cabrera

Slowly Making It to the Ocean

I am a raging river
With a lot inside of me
That I am scared to show
My raging rapids hide the rocks
That hurt me when they roll
I hide them deep inside
Because they are easier to ignore
Rocks that have been there since the beginning
And some that are new
My water is dark
Darker than any of the rivers around
I want to hide
The rocks that I can't leave behind

You might see me and see nothing wrong
But if you really take your time and look deeply
You will find old wounds
Formed by the rocks
I won't let anyone see
And how they still haven't healed

Wounds from my dad leaving for seven years
He came to the US to give my family and me
A better life
For half of my life he was gone
For half of my life I didn't know what a father was
Now we try to make up for the lost time
By trying to spend more time together
But the more we do
The more I figure out how different we are
He feels like a stranger

I'm a raging river
More mad at myself than anyone else
I think I hate myself
Because of my haunting past
I have a wound so deep inside of me
I haven't told my family
I was a river that didn't
See the point in existing
And wanted to dry out
And now I am finally bringing it to the surface
I thought it had vanished under the mud
But it's always in my mind
I want to start over
And learn how to forget
Be strong enough to finally deal with it
I know it will be hard to do this
But I have people that love me
And will always be there

I am a raging river
That has been getting filled
Way too fast
I wait for the moment
In which my banks will overflow
I know it's getting closer
And I'm scared of whom I will hurt

My water is dark,
Filling fast
From stress at home
Knowing I am hurting my mom
Regretting the time I told my dad I hated him
I don't know what happened to me
I didn't mean it
Thinking I am always right
Trying to make everyone proud
It's a lot of pressure
But I never complain
I know it is my job
I just have to concentrate

Leaving everyone behind
I left myself too
My family and friends are in the past
I want them to be my present
I'm scared because I don't know when it happened
And I don't know how to stop it
All I want is to make it to the ocean
So I can find who I am

I am a raging river
That is desperate to calm down
My water is dark
And I wish it would clear up
I wish some of the water would come out
So I won't be full
I will listen to my mom
And tell her I love her
I will tell my dad that I am sorry
Acknowledge my mistakes and learn from them
Learn how to accept that I can't be perfect
And hope my family understands that
I will learn to share my feelings
With my family
They won't worry about me anymore
I want them to be a big part of my life
I want them to know my problems and concerns



I am a mature river
I will keep growing strong
With my family and mistakes
Coming together to form a wider,
Clearer and calm river
I will go to college
And live my life as it comes
And finally make everyone proud

I am a mature river
Calm and clear
Finally letting my rocks come out
Having no fear
I know that with my family's support
I will find the right path
To slowly make it to the ocean
And find who I am

Finally Found Everything I Needed

I laid under a tall shady tree that divided into two strong brown trunks. Looking at the clear blue sky closing my eyes, feeling the breeze gently rubbing my face, taking away the entire wall that had kept me from thinking about my life. Melting into my surrounding by listening to the conversation of birds, thinking of my last week at home. "I can't wait to get out of here!" I use to tell myself, "I can't wait to leave everyone for a long time so I won't have to deal with my family anymore!" Now that I looked back at that moment, I couldn't comprehend how I could have had those thoughts. All I wanted to do at that was to be with my family at home. As time kept moving I later found myself swimming through an undiscovered place in my ocean of thoughts. I opened my eyes and noticed it was slowly getting dark; the sky that was once blue was now a soothing mixture of purple and pink. Thinking, I did not want this moment to end. As I kept thinking, I slowly started to realize that for the past year I have been someone who is not me, that I slowly left myself behind without noticing it. Melancholy filled me at that moment and made a promise to myself that I would try my best to be me again. I am tired of hiding my feelings and always trying to fit in. This experience has made my life take a 180 degree turn. Through ARC I have changed the way I think about myself and the way I see the people around me.

The biggest change toward the perspective of people around me was the way I look at my family now. I've always heard the quote, "You don't know what you have until it's gone," but I never understood the full meaning of it until I came to ARC. Back at home I always thought I had the worst family anyone could have asked for. Even though deep inside I knew that wasn't true, that's how I felt about it. But I realized really fast how wrong I was. On the fifth day of the program we were in our first expedition, it started out as any other day that week, until we got to the top of Dicks Pass. We began to slowly hike our way down the very steep, snow covered pass that lead to a beautiful, half frozen lake. The beginning was easy, no problem at all and as we started to get closer and closer to the lake I began to grown more confident, until I became the head of the single file line we have always walked in. I thought I could do it, that it would be easy but I was wrong. We got closer to the lake, the snow got more steep and slippery, and I began to get scared. Not wanting to fall, afraid of falling and not be able to stop; that I would fall into the ice cold lake and drown with my 30 pound backpack. "I can't do it!" I told Esperanza, who was behind me, "It's too hard and I'm going to fall!" I felt my eyes start to water out of frustration,

and I was glad I had sun glasses that cover half of my face. "Yes you can! I trust you!" she told me looking straight at me. Finally, I managed to get the courage that I needed and kept going. When I was ahead of everyone else so they couldn't hear me I said to myself, "I want my mom." If she was there with me at that moment she would hug me and told me that if I didn't want to do it that I didn't have to, that everything was going to be okay. At that moment I realized how lucky I was to have the mother that I have and the family anyone would want to have. I began to notice things I never had noticed before like, how they have always supported me and have always tried to give me the best that they can. Being alone for 24 hours made me notice that my family is the most important thing I have. That I still need them now and that I always will.

Now I am positive not only with the people around me but also with myself. I have had qualities my entire life without knowing that they are the qualities for a good leader. Thanks to ARC I have been able to strengthen these qualities. I have always thought I was a lazy person that was too scared to be independent and always following everyone as long as I fit in because I'm too scared to try anything new. But for the time I have been here in ARC I've had to learn how to be independent. I am doing my own laundry, washing dishes and sometimes even cooking my own food. In the past 40 days I have noticed that I am a natural leader. Since here I don't have anyone looking out for me, I had to become a lot more responsible with my own things. Having to be organized in order to be everywhere I need to be on time and to do everything by myself to make it through a day. Not being scared of trying new things made me realize that I am more outgoing than I ever thought I was. When we were at the ropes course I wasn't scared to try any of the challenges, I was up to trying anything they would tell me to do. Being more outgoing with new people; I have realized that if I am shy no one will remember me. So, I try to talk more to people and overcome my shyness because that has been holding me back for a long time. Now that I know I have these qualities I will use them in my everyday life, be more organized and responsible will help me be better in school and get better grades. Now I know that I am independent and that I can rely on myself and not my family to do my things. I am a natural leader, this will help because people naturally see me as a leader and if I do something they will follow my example.

ARC made me notice that people have always been right, and that I am the only person getting in my way to accomplish anything. Back at home people have always told me that I can do

many things, and that I am capable of achieving anything I want. All I would do was thank them and walk away thinking they are crazy. I didn't believe enough in myself to think I was capable of a lot but in the past forty days I have noticed that I am capable of reaching any of the goals I set for myself. The moment in which I had this realization was during the ropes course. During Pipe Dreams, I was scared in a way I've never been before. As soon as I got up there I wanted to get down and be safely on the ground. Standing on a wire holding hands with my partner, Santana, knowing I needed to get from pipe to pipe keeping my balance. I took a deep breath, took two steps and fell, but my team was not going to let me give up that easily, so they made me get back up on the wire and try again. With all the might I had left in me I got back up on the rope and gave it my best try. When I finished the challenge I felt something I had never felt before. It was a rush that went through my entire body; it was happiness, accomplishment, and adrenaline all at the same time. At that moment I made a promise to myself that I would never give up on a challenge because I would miss out on a lot, not only in ARC but also in life. I also noticed that if I give up I would take people down with me, like my partner, Santana, who was really excited about the activity. It wouldn't have been fair for me to end that experience for her just by me giving up. I have given this a lot of thought and now I am determined to no matter how hard challenges in my life will get I won't give up on any of them.

I always had the family I wanted I just had to look deeper, I always had the ability to not be scared and to be outgoing as well as the capacity of achieving anything I wanted. The ARC program helped me realize these things before it was too late and I couldn't have changed them anymore. Also for all the people here who helped me have the most important realization I will have in my life. Becoming aware of the facts that I have the family I have always wanted, that I can be the person who I have always wanted and that I am able of finishing anything that I start. I don't know what I would have done without all of these experiences changing me to become the person I have always wanted to be. For the rest of my life I know I will take every single thing I have learned here and apply it to everything I do. I will try to share all of it with as many people as I can, so they can have at least a little part of this huge recognition I have had in such a sort amount of time. My goal is to teach them that family is the most important thing anyone could have, that they shouldn't take them for granted, and that they shouldn't give up on anything because sooner or later they will regret it. I hope that people notice the new me that I have been putting in so much effort to form, that people will notice the way I act differently and how I think of things from a completely new perspective. I hope they notice how I respect my family a lot more, that I think about what I do twice, and how I am not afraid to be noticed anymore. I have finally come out of my shell and I am ready physically and mentally to face any of the challenges that come in the future.



The Growth of a Warrior Tree

I am an inexperienced tree.
Growing indoor since I was seed
Because my parents were afraid I couldn't
Survive in the open
Getting light from a lamp-my father
And water from a sprinkler-my mother
I feel faint without any lamp or sprinkler
And not knowing how to get any nutrients
Except from my parents

When I was a small tree
My parents did everything for me
I became selfish and heartless
Escaping from responsibility
Like a tree that doesn't release oxygen for people
And doesn't make the earth fertile

I am an inexperienced tree
My parents brought me to the U.S.
Moving a tree from fertile ground
To dry desert
There were no friends for me in the U.S.
As a tree living far away from the forest
I thought
I didn't deserve friendship
Because nobody can understand
The young tree
Who speaks broken English

My parents thought I would do better
By reading more English books and
Making more friends by speaking English
But I went the opposite way
The tree is dying instead of living
Doing things in the wrong way
Like reading Chinese books in class and
Speaking Chinese all the time

Suddenly, I got a chance to participate in ARC
The tree got a chance
To live in the forest
It was hard to tell
If it would nourish me or not during that time
Because I haven't known much
About being outside

At first, the ARC forest was hell
Almost nothing I could handle
The tree doesn't know how
To get energy by photosynthesis
The rock climbing was as hard as learning English.

I always stayed shorter than the other trees
And every step seemed impossible
For me to arrive at the sky
Homesickness became a tool for me to surrender

I began to topple down from these challenges
My roots didn't grow deep enough
I thought every little thing was
The end of the world
Like not getting to top of the rock climb and
being late for a meeting
I was fighting with myself in my mind
I knew that if I lost the fight
I would lose everything
Crashing down to the ground



But I realized I had many more important things
To accomplish
Like English and science lessons
Physical training, and being independent
It wasn't the end of the world
I must win the fight

I still hear the sounds of support
From my teammates
As a tree suddenly gets water from heavy rain
From that time,
I understand teamwork and support
After the rock climbing
I felt unbeatable

I am an inexperienced tree

There is no reason for me to surrender
Because it isn't only my own fight any more
My parents, my friends, my teachers
And my teammates
All of their minds are with me
That helps me to fight
They want me to stand strong and tall,
Grow firm roots
I don't want to disappoint
Those who I care the most about
Their hope and support changed me,
The cold-hearted boy I used to be

They will see
Like a warrior tree
I stand until the end

Through my strength
I make a better day for my future

Like graduating from high school
Going to college
Doing things that will
Make everybody take notice
Helping make a better world
Making all the people
Who support me proud
I know it isn't too far to get to the sky
I think I can almost touch it
Like a redwood tree

Someday I will become
The mastermind
Who can make the positive angels
Scream how amazing I am
And the negative devils

Cry at their failure to bring me down

The inexperienced tree
Will be dead
The most powerful and useful tree
Will be reborn
Brave enough to climb the rock
Presenting my ideas and thoughts
Confidently to people
Using English to help my family and community
To have a better life
Helping new immigrants to adjust their life

That is me
The tallest tree standing in the forest
The boy who shall never surrender

A Warm Heart and Soul Can Change My Destiny

“No sacrifice no victory,” I kept thinking this quote in my mind when I stood at the top of the tree to get ready to jump off the platform to grab the swing. I heard lots of support voice from my teammates. I took a deep breath and told myself, “I will rock out this place.” Then I used all my strength and focus to jump off. I still remember the time before I came to ARC when my relationship with my family wasn’t good. I argued with my parents about doing housework a lot. I didn’t trust my friends at all. I hid indoors because I didn’t want to take time to recover when I got hurt from outside. Fortunately, here at ARC I had an opportunity to be true to myself. After I grabbed the swing, I realized everything was changed: my life, my future and my destiny. I have discovered the true meaning of teamwork, the behaviors I want, and the importance of my family and my friends.

The ARC program has taught me how useful teamwork is. Working as a team was one thing that I never did before I came to ARC. I thought teamwork wasn’t very important because it would waste time to do silly things like discuss other people’s ideas, decide what to do, and plan how to do it together. In the beginning of the ARC program, I had a lot of challenges and I overcame most of them on my own. I used my strength and my mind to do it. Teamwork wasn’t as useful as the instructors said. I even hated that sentence of support “come on, guys, you can do it, we’re almost there.” I thought this sentence was just like trash; how can a little sentence affect people to overcome challenges. I kept this thought until I had a very big challenge that changed my mind. “Let us help you,” my teammates kept repeating when we were doing an activity at the Ropes Course. “NO, I can do it by myself,” I said, even after I failed several times. I felt tired and hopeless at that time. I was trying to ignore everything my teammates told me. Finally, I had no idea how to overcome it, so I decided to work with my teammates. I wanted to let them know how useless teamwork is so that they would close their mouths and wouldn’t have those noisy conversions planning how to deal with the activity anymore. But I found out I was wrong when I put my hand on my teammate’s shoulder. The activity became much easier than before. We overcame the challenge faster than I thought we could. After this experience, I realized teamwork is one of the most useful and important things in the world. It doesn’t waste any time. Oppositely, it will save more

time than working by oneself. Hard things can be done successfully and smoothly even if some of them seem impossible. It also makes me think a lot because I need to discuss and give ideas to my teammates. Teamwork taught me: “two is better than one.”

Throughout the last forty days, my behaviors changed a lot by overcoming challenges. Before I came to the ARC program, I often quit when I faced something difficult because I was afraid I would get hurt, mess up and get in trouble. For instance, I used a lawnmower to cut grass around my house, but too much grass got stuck in the engine and it broke. My parents got mad and yelled at me. After that, I never wanted to mow the lawn anymore because I was afraid I would break it again and get in more trouble. During the time I was in ARC, I had to try many new things and face lots of challenges. Namely, I had to hike with my teammates for five miles through millions of mosquitoes. At first, I tried to do the same thing as before - quit. But I realized there is no way for me to quit; I had to overcome it. When I started to push myself to continue hiking, I noticed how powerful my ability is. I felt happy and successful when I arrived at our destination. Now, although something may seem too hard to finish, it doesn’t mean I will give up. I will just take a rest and I will keep doing hard things to improve myself. Now, I feel more brave and confident. I see my challenges in front of me as a wall that I will keep trying to climb over, even if I don’t make it the first time. Because of this, I trust the quote: “failure is the mother of success.”

I began to think about how could I pay back my family and friends when I return home. I still remembered my family and my friends and how they supported and helped me to fix the problem when I got in trouble. But I just thanked them a few times and never I paid them back. When I was in ARC, my teammates and I always helped each other to do the hard things. This made me think a lot. The students with me for forty days support me in the same way my family and my friends did, so why couldn’t I do give back to them. I

was very puzzled when I spent the free time to find out the answer. Finally, I figure out the problem was my heart. If I have a warm heart, I will help everybody even people I don’t very know. But if I have cold heart, I won’t help anybody, even my family. ARC changed my heart. I began to have a warm heart to help others instead of the cold-hearted boy I used to be. My mother used to tell me, “People don’t realize how important things are until they lose them.” At that time, I didn’t know the meaning of the quote. Now I finally recognize the meaning that my mother wanted



to express to me. I have to try my best to keep the important things I have such as family and friendship. Fortunately, it isn’t too late for me to keep these important things. My family and friends still belong with me and trust that I can be a better person. So why don’t I make them proud of me instead make them disappointed? I made a promise to myself that I will use all the lessons that I have learned to pay back my family when I return. For instance, I will teach my family how to speak

English and how to protect the environment, help my family to do housework, etc. Also, I will stand behind my family and friends when they get confused and troubled. No matter how hard it will be.

If you think my transform is incredible, then ARC must be a fantastic program. All the positive things I am doing I learned from my teammates, instructors, and activities in these forty days. I got the knowledge about how to work as a team, be brave and confident to try hard things, and trust and love my family and my friends. I really appreciate that I am not too late to gain this knowledge. From teamwork I learned a person couldn’t live without community. I need their support to reach my goals in better and faster ways so that my future will be more perfect. Also, my behaviors will change my destiny. I will keep doing the hard things because it will make me stronger. I am ready to start a new life with my family and my friends. I will share all my feeling with them because they will encourage me throughout my life no matter what happens to me. Now, I realize how good a person I want to be with a warm heart and soul. This is the real me who is ready to jump for the next swing.

heidi jimenez

Nothing Will Keep Me From Reaching the Top of the Trees!

I am a caterpillar,
I admire the smooth, chilly breeze
Lake Tahoe has to offer.
I relax on a beautiful Lupine
As I wonder how I will reach my goals
I have set for myself.

I felt like a useless and ungrateful caterpillar
when it came to participating and agreeing
with my father.
I never helped out around the house
Which caused problems for other caterpillars
and the butterflies.
I was so ungrateful
to my family members;
I would not commit to anything that involved
getting up and squirming around
to make every one else happy.

I ignored everyone
I wouldn't help out my dad,
the father and mother
butterfly of the cocoon.
He cooks, cleans,
and washes his own clothes
My dad relies on himself.
Despite the fact that he has more
important things to do.

I am a caterpillar,
Here in my cocoon
At ARC
I mature and realize
family will never disappear
I will have support
in every direction I turn.
However,
I may take a wrong turn.
I still have my family behind me
to push me back on track.
They strengthen me
and show me right from wrong,
I struggle through my wall
until I am free.
My family will help me
pread my wings.
Once I'm a butterfly
I can be strong and powerful.

I am a strong caterpillar
Ready to take the next step.
Ready to burst from my cocoon
Ready to become the most beautiful butterfly
I know I am.
Nothing will keep me from reaching the top of the trees!

My cocoon
has shown me the path
The path I want to follow and
The path I need to walk away from.
Here I recognize
team work and family
are very important in my life.
ARC has shown me it is okay to take everything step-by-step
like crawling up a stem reaching the lupine
as long as I don't give up
and pursue my goals and dreams.

Being in my cocoon helped me realize
the world is big, beautiful
and there are many challenges.
I need time to conquer my fears.
Time to depend on the strong, inspiring, and supportive butterflies
I have around me.



I was once a caterpillar
now I am a butterfly,
I have found the path
I have been searching for
for sixteen years.
My wings have burst
I am ready to experience the real world,
I am ready to become the helpful,
amazing daughter my father has waited for.

Now I can fly away,
I will be a leader
Since day one
I set a goal for myself
To go through the whole program,
pushing myself
fighting for my team and my second family.
No matter what challenge hits me
I will wrestle through it.
Nothing will keep me from reaching the top
of the trees!

I am a butterfly
I will challenge myself at everything.
I can do anything I put my mind to.
Years and butterflies have flown by –
Its time I fly too.
I will be there for my family, friends, com-
munity,
and most importantly my father.
I will help other caterpillars
break through their cocoons
and succeed.

I will reach my goals
I am ready to take on more challenges.

The Courage to be Myself

It hit me when we sat down for our evening meeting and Peter and Mel told us that our solo was tomorrow. I was scared and nervous about this experience because I was afraid to be by myself. Peter asked us if we had any questions. I didn't know where to start. I was speechless. We were about to spend the night in the woods by ourselves with no shelter and a limited amount of food. My spot had a stunning view of the mountains and I could hear the sound of the waterfall streaming down to a lake. Even though it was peaceful, I had hardly slept that night because there was fear streaming through my body. I was so worried about how I would live for a whole twenty-four hours by myself with no one to talk to. In my spot I thought about how I transformed myself into a new person. I love the new me because now I have the courage to sit down and listen to what others have to say and I am more energetic, proud, and surprised in myself from overcoming these challenges. Little did I know, ARC would transform me into a woman who is capable of being comfortable with myself, relying upon others and giving my support to friends.

ARC has allowed me to be more comfortable with myself and who I really want to be. Before my experience at ARC, I was selfish, often moody and angry with everyone who tried to help me with decisions. ARC has helped me experience my fears and helped me fight through them. If it was not for ARC, I would not have had the chance to prove to myself that failure leads to success. For the past month I faced many obstacles, yet I have not given up. I have learned much from the expeditions. I am fine with failure because I have learned that when I fail, I can learn from my mistakes. Without facing an obstacle I would not get the chance to see what is in front of me. They have helped me be myself. I can walk around with no makeup and talk the way I want to talk with out being judged. I now can do things I have always wanted to do but never thought I could.

ARC has shown me that dependence is not always a bad thing. Working with my team can be more powerful than trying

to do things on my own. I have been through many challenges during ARC where I learned this lesson. When we completed the ropes course I realized how much I needed people to support me. I got up on the ropes and I was supported by the sound of my ARC family. They were motivating me and cheering me on, encouraging me not to give up. The "Leap of Faith" was our next challenge in the ropes course. As I climbed up to the top I yelled down, "this is for my family and I am going to grab this bar for them." I then jumped. Then I missed it. I was so hurt I had let them down. My ARC friends belayed me down and when I reached the bottom it was in complete silence. I was very upset for failing. I took



off my harness and said I had to go to the bathroom. That was just an excuse to go cry in shame. I knew that walking away from my problems was not the right way to go, but at the time I felt it was the right solution. When I returned my ARC family came up to me and cheered me up. They told me others have also missed the bar and they were also upset, however, that has not kept them from getting back up and trying again. I realized it all made sense. I can fail but if I keep trying I will reach the bar. Then, our instructor, Mike, had me put the harness back on and I tried again. I had

more confidence the second time than I did the first. I yelled down to my belayers and said, "I'm doing this for you!" I took a big jump and when I opened my eyes I was holding onto the bar. I had the biggest smile on my face. I felt proud of myself for getting up and trying it again. I could not have done it with out the support I had around me.

If I give support to others I will eventually get it back. My team becomes part of my soul and I cannot live with out it. My ARC family opened my eyes to this. All the support my ARC family has given me, transformed me from a young selfish and ungrateful child to this intelligent, risk taking young woman. I used to think support meant to stay behind someone, give them a shoulder to cry on, and help them up from a fall. I was right in a way, but throughout ARC I learned that support is much more than that. It means being mature, kind and open minded. I have learned that there is a time when messing around can be okay to support people, but when it is not that time it is important to sit down and listen to them. I am good at giving advice. I choose not to leave anyone behind no matter the situation. Running early in the mornings is a challenge for many of the ARC participants. If I am able to run, I will run beside those who need support to get through the morning. I know if I was hurt and I could not run I would really appreciate someone on my side.

Winston Churchill once said, "courage is what it takes to stand up and speak, and it takes courage to sit down and listen." This quote means if you talk without listening to others you do not have the courage. It's important to give others a chance to break through their shell and speak up. It's also important to speak up because if you have an idea someone who is listening will be glad hear you. I plan to take my experiences home and help my younger cousins and the neighborhood kids see how meaningful family is. I plan to start a club or a mini ARC to help kids enjoy their childhoods. All people are welcome. Activities we would do are: prom, "a-what" game, kayaking, rafting, ropes course, and rock climbing.

The Heavy Load

I am an ant
Working hard every day of my life
Sometimes knowing the right from wrong
And what the consequences
May lead to.

I feel like an ant balancing on a leaf next to a river
Balancing on the edge
I never know
What way the wind will push me
I hope it will blow me the right way
And open my eyes to the sun that has always kept them shut.

My parents remind me daily to think twice
About what I do before I do it
Once I made a very bad decision
It made my parents heart drop
All the way to their feet
Like an ant dropping into the strong current
Hard for them to know
If they made a mistake raising me

Waking every day last summer
Going to work with my dad
And knowing how to do the job right
Now that I am far from him
I feel like an ant who is lost
Far from its colony
I just want to go back home and hug him
And say that I love him

Everything a know till this point is thanks to him
I don't even want to think
Or dream
Of him leaving my side
That would be like a big raging river
Washing me away with its
Strong curent.

Working with my dad
I realize that pain and sweat
Will get me where I need to be in life
Like an ant working hard
Day and night

I am an ant
Sometimes feeling one step behind
Going way for the summer



Leaving my colony
I carry a big load on my back
My dad is working alone
With no one to help him
And I am having fun with new friends
Sometimes I want to go back home.

But my family keeps me going
It makes me sad
Seeing them suffer
Not getting paid
What they deserve for their valuable job
Because they don't have an education
Or professional training.

That has been the biggest load on my back
Like an ant
Carrying a massive leaf across the forest
Seeing them suffer
And feeling I can't help in anyway.
I am growing up
They are hoping for me to have a good education
So I can go further in life
Like an ant
Working its way to build a new colony

I want to make a difference
In my family
Knowing that education is my path to my future
Going to college can open doors for me
To move on
I can, I will and I am becoming a stronger ant
The load that once was very heavy for me
Just got lighter.

The Real World

I shivered as we hiked up the side of Mount Tallac on a chilly morning. When we got to the top the fog started to surround us and I felt like I was dreaming. It began to rain and all of our stuff got wet, but I still enjoyed being up so high and having a great view of Lake Tahoe and all of the mountains overlapping each other. During ARC I had many moments like this where I saw new things that I didn't even know existed. Being away for this summer, I have realized how meaningful my family is, recognized the beauty around me, and I have discovered how important it is to express my ideas.

I have learned how to value my family more because they are the only ones who will be there for me whenever I need them by my side. My dad always told me that he would support me and be there for me. Those strong words that my dad told me many times I will keep in my mind. During my solo I was by myself without anything around me so I could think about everything I have done in my life. I thought about all the things that my dad had said to me about how he would always be there. My dad's words got bigger for me and now I appreciate them lots more. I used to always talk back to my parents and brothers. My parents would tell me to help around the house because they would not always be there for me. Now that I am away I recognize why they told me to help around the house. ARC has helped me open my eyes a little bit more than they were. If I look in my future I will never know when I will be moving out of my parents house and then I will not have anybody to depend on: someone to do my laundry, cook food for me, and clean my room or make my bed. I will have to do this all by myself. All of the things that I have learned throughout these 32 days I will always keep in mind everywhere I go. But the most important thing I have learned is to appreciate all of your loved ones because you never know when they are going to leave your side at any time. Once something or someone leaves your side it will be too late to value them.

Before ARC every time I walked out of my house I saw mountains 360 degrees around me, and they were just ordinary mountains for me. But during these 40 days I have participated in the ARC program and during all of the expeditions we have

done in the backcountry, I have hiked up and down mountains and experienced so many great views that I would never have seen in my life. Now I know the meaning of the mountains outside my house. When I go back home I will see things and people that surround me differently. I will respect people in my life more and have more open conversations with them. When I have struggles in life I will always picture myself on a mountain and remember all the hard things I have done in ARC in the past. The most challenging thing for me was rock climbing because I was a little bit scared of heights and I thought that I could not do it. I said to myself, "I am going to fall halfway and I am going to die" because I did not trust the person that was belaying me. But in a blink of an eye I was on top of the big rock, and I could not believe the great view. At that time I valued the world a little more then I used to. I can now say to myself, if I have done hard things before in my life, then I can go through it one more time and I will make it through.

When I was back at home living my normal life I did not let other people know how I felt about things, and I did not ask many questions. Back at home I was the type of person who stays quiet and didn't talk about my feelings. But in ARC these past 30 days being surrounded by other people who express themselves the same way I do has made me feel comfortable enough to do be more open. I have been asking more questions about everything and I tell people what I think, to make things different or even better. I think that I have done a good job at that because not too many people like to ask questions, and I think that if I set the example of asking questions and giving suggestions to the group, they will feel comfortable doing the same. Putting out my ideas and suggestions has made me feel comfortable and proud, because I know that my new family is paying attention to me and supporting me in what I say.

I have also learned that making new friends and a new family sometimes may be challenging. But knowing new people is always good because I can learn how to communicate with them and understand the way they think or see things in the world. I might see things differently from other people, but I know now how they feel and think. This ARC experience has also made me recognize errors I have made in my past. Now I will fix them for the future so I don't commit the same errors as before. For instance this summer there was a separation in our group, but then we all gathered up and we fixed our problem by talking about it. History does not lie, if you don't fix your problems they come back at you.

As Ronnie, the person I interviewed this summer said, "When you stop learning, you stop living." That is true because you never get too old to learn new things; you stop learning because you give up on yourself. What I have learned

throughout this summer is that my parents don't say things to bother me, but for my own good, and no one else is going to tell me those things. Now I value them much more. Making new friends has been a good thing to do. It has taught me what types of people are in the real world. The



more I learn about others, the more I learn about myself. It is okay to make mistakes at some point in life if I learn from them. Now I will try to relate all of these things that I have learned throughout these 40 days in my life, and share my ideas and my dreams and the way I see the world so that I can change things for the better in my life and become a different person.

sonia blanco

The Wind Taking Me to My Path

I am the sky
Changing every day,
Passing through darker days,
Remembering
The bad storms I weathered to get to the shining sunny day
That I am now

My first storm
I had to walk for days and nights,
Hiding in the rocks
So we could get to my new home.
Moving from one place to another
Without knowing what the future might bring
Letting the wind blow me to my path.

Another storm came.
I was here with no friends
No one to support my family.
We worried because we didn't have enough money
To pay the bills.
I could see the rain coming out of my parents' eyes
I wished that I was older and could work to help them.
I hoped time would pass as quickly as a thunder clap.

The storms stabilized.
Everything was sunny for a while
I was happy with my life



Then a hurricane came
That lasted for many years
My parents were unhappy with each other
We weren't a normal family
The time had come
For everything to change in my life.
No more mom or dad together.
This depressed me and my older brother,
My two sisters were too little to understand.
My life went upside down.
I felt like dying
When I knew I wasn't going to have a normal family.
I felt
Embarrassed because the people who knew
Asked me why they separated.
Every time someone asked that
I felt like they were taking my energy

As days passed I started to feel better.
I realized that God had caused these storms
Because he wanted to challenge me,
He wanted me to be stronger.
I finally understood

Nine years of storms have passed
I am starting to settle down.
Even though they're separated
My two wonderful parents encourage me to go far in life
To fight for what I want
To never give up
That the stars are always by my side
Protecting me and guiding me all the time.

I am a bright new blue sky
These past forty days I haven't cared
How I look what I wear
All I care about is being true to me,
Expressing what I'm thinking
Excited and proud
Of what I have accomplished
Controlling my mood and not getting angry,
To value the people that love me and care about me.

The Diamond Shining Day and Night

My ARC family and all my experiences this summer have helped me face my problems. I came here not to face my problems, but to forget the past and begin a new life. I didn't know what I was getting into. Now I can say that ARC is a great program and it has helped me to be a stronger positive person and to believe in myself. I learned that it's not good to run away from problems like homework at school or climbing basin peak. At the beginning of this course it was really hard for me. I thought I wasn't going to make it through the 40 days. I felt that I



was a weak person that couldn't do anything. I have seen a huge change in myself. I learned that working together in a group of people is good because they support you when you think you can't do it; they make you want to do it. This summer we have been through many things together that I never thought I would do. My ARC family supports me and encourages me to go higher than I expect. This has shown me good things like how to support others when they are about to give up. I came here thinking nothing was going to change now I am here supporting my ARC family to face new challenges like hiking uphill. I opened myself to them to show they can count on me. Now I see myself as a strong, positive leader that can learn new things each day.

I wasn't feeling the support from my teammates the first two weeks, but when we went to the ropes course everything changed. The ups and downs of the ropes course were like living our lives. Life is just like a game, you have to play it right, be focused and try your best to get to the finish line. The first game of the ropes course we played was a piece of cake. All we did was walk, lined up on a log. Then the

games got harder, we played games like the octopus and climbing and swinging up high that was like living our lives. We had to work as a team to accomplish them. When I saw that people wanted to give up, I cheered them and we finished all the challenges like winners. Through ARC, I have learned that support is a big part of life and you can't do everything by yourself. When you need help you need to ask for it. I also learned that when you fall down like in rock climbing you can climb up until you make it to the top feeling strong. By the end of the ropes course I felt amazing. When I jumped into the air to get the trapeze, I felt

the bar in my hands and felt proud of myself. I never thought that I could be a positive person that shows the best of me. I feel that I am strong each day by learning and doing different activities, like camping in the woods, living forty days with a group of people, and running for thirty minutes in the morning. This summer I have challenged myself a lot and I am proud of coming to ARC. Now I can see that am going to try my best all the time and always encourage myself to stay strong like I am now.

"My next game" is when I leave Sagehen. This time I am going to start strong with a lot of energy with positive and helpful people, but mostly I am going to believe in myself that I want to start at a flat area and go up the rocky, pointy hill. In the future, no matter how tired I am or how bad I am feeling I will always remember this great experience that I had and I'll remember everything I went through. ARC has changed my life. I see that everyone is different but equal and it's up to each of us if we want to make a good choice. Everyone has a voice and has the right to put out what they believe in. ARC is about being able to

work as a team, not one person dictating the others. ARC has helped me to get along with a new group of people. I have enjoyed the time I spent with the other members here since they see me like one of their family. I started to understand the importance of my family and my friends back home.

In our final expedition our group had a big challenge. We were lost; it was hot with a lot of mosquitoes. The group was going crazy and they were getting mad at each other. Some people were giving up, but I felt strong and I helped the group. At base camp, the instructors and the group nominated me to be the guardian angel. I felt honored, but at the same time I felt pressured. The guardian angel is a special person who takes care of the group. When we were lost, I told the group to look at the map and that they should follow me. I reassured them we were going to get there, but that they needed to relax and think positively. I felt great that people listened to my advice and we made it! Before I came to ARC I never thought I could be a leader, but now I know that I am one. Now I know I can help others get to our destination.

I am a new person that is ready to shine, ready to start from the beginning. Today I am the shining, sunny person that I always wanted to be. Finally, I know I have the support and trust of others that allows me to go through obstacles in life with my family next to me. This experience has changed the way I view life. I appreciate and will continue to appreciate what I have. I am ready to start my new life with my family and friends and share with them how I feel because they will always be there for me. I have woken up ready to chase the sunrise of tomorrow. I care more about others and their feelings. I hope people see how much I have transformed in such little time, just as I see it in myself. Now I, Sonia Blanco, am a leader that can do anything I put my mind to.

community interviews

On July 10th, halfway through our summer course, ten community members volunteered their time to be mentors for our participants. These are excerpts from the narrative biographies students wrote about their partners.

The Day Finally Came



Overwhelming nervousness invaded my head since the early morning. As I sat on the green stool listening to the birds serenading me into a calm state, I watched mule ears

sway in the breezy morning. I became more anxious as the minutes ticked by. Then I saw her walk into our circle. She had on a denim skirt and soft green blouse. Dark sunglasses hid her blue eyes, but as she uncovered them she had a strong and confident gaze. Vicki sat a couple of stools down from where I did. I hoped that I would be her interviewer and when Jen said my name and hers I was relieved.

- *Cintya Lopez*

A Person Who I Admire

I see Joani as the most simple and understanding person because she doesn't judge them, and she is also a woman with a lot of



experience and with amazing advice. She said to me, "Always do your best, don't give up, believe in yourself and don't be scared to ask for help." I think that my problem of trust in people can change by finding people like Joani.

- *Edgar Medina*



I Can Do Anything I Want

Teresa's goals are to help people, to create more opportunities for everyone so they have equal access and can succeed in life. She does not have fancy goals, she just want to finish what she started and make her community better. She never gave up thanks to the support that she received from her family, friends, people that educated her, and especially her husband.

- *Cynthia Santana*



Time Changes And So Do I

We introduced ourselves and Jen started calling out the partners. At that moment my heart wanted to jump out of my chest because I didn't know what to expect. After waiting for a while, Jen said my name. I felt like every second she took to say my partner's name was an eternity. All the work and time we put into preparing was worth it because I got to interview an amazing woman. During our one hour interview we got to know each other and had an unforgettable time. Danielle's challenges and accomplishments have made her an amazing, brave woman and passionate about the community and youth.

- *Esperanza Toscano*



Following The Right Path

Nicole's life as a child was a happy one because she was a very active child. Her main hobbies were collecting things like rocks, and shells; she also liked to swim. Nicole had a lot of family interactions as a child, since her parents believed in families being together outdoors. They went on family road trips all throughout her childhood. Our childhoods are similar in many ways. As a child I too collected things for fun, and I also like swimming.

- *Gabriel Marquez*

An Inspiration



Everyone dreams about finding the perfect job, and Lindsay is living that dream. She works in a foundation that helps a lot of programs like ARC, and also gives scholarships to people who want to go to college. She loves this job, because she loves to help people and enjoys knowing that she makes a difference in people's lives. Lindsay loves to help because she likes to see the "before and after" of the project to which she contributes. -*Gustavo Cabrera*

The True Life of Nicole Sayegh

As I walked towards the meeting area, butterflies in my stomach fluttered around. I noticed a group of adults walking towards us. I saw a woman who shined like the stars in the sky;



her hair was as bouncy as a bouncy ball and curly as if she had just got it done at a saloon.

As I waited for Jen to call our names I was thinking in my head, "I can do this, I know Nicole is my partner, I know it". My heart started ticking like a clock when my name was called. Then Jen called out "Nicole Sayegh...you're partners with Heidi." We were both relieved.

- *Heidi Jimenez*



It is awesome to hear that people like her love to help us experience new things that I never thought I would do.

- *Sonia Blanco*

Be True to Yourself

After I talked with Jeff, I found out we had some challenges and goals in common. I realized that Jeff's childhood, his challenges, and his career have shaped him to be a successful person today. I appreciate him for taking some time to share his life with me. In brief, the most important lessons

I learned from Jeff are being the person that I want to be, being happy everyday, and enjoying everything I do..

- *Hao Xian Xu*



Deep in Life

Ronnie's biggest challenge in life was going to college. His family could not support him economically, so by the age of 15 he started to work at a golf course. That is how he paid for two years of college. For eight years he worked and went to school. During that time, he had to read two to three books a week and write essays about them. All of his hard work paid off because now he is succeeding in life and he is proud of it. - *Ozje Lopez*



The Strong Shiny Star

Goals have been a big part of Jamie's life. Jamie's goals were to finish high school and also to go to college. She worked hard to make her dreams come true, and that is why I admire her. Jamie is a brave woman who goes for what she wants and there is nothing that can stop her. She is also an experienced woman who knows how to give supportive ideas. Jamie taught me a good lesson that I will never forget: to always be positive. More advice that she gave me is to take many opportunities because they are not that many in life. Jamie helps ARC and many others organizations through her job at the S.H. Cowell Foundation. It

las poemas



He Vuelto a Nacer por Cintya Lopez

Soy el río estruendoso
Que ruga por estas montañas de granito
Solo espero la hora en que pierda el control
Al llegar a la cascada
Cuando formo parte de
El gran mar zafiro
Cuando me vuelva
La persona que espero ser

Comencé como un arroyo
Deslizandome ligero por las cumbres
Delicadamente con las rocas bajo mi cuerpo.
Yo era el tipo de arroyo que la naturaleza
no conocía
No tenía problemas
No había discusiones,
Ni tampoco enojos
Era ingenuo en mi mundo pero
En un tronar de dedos,
Mi mundo cambió
Yo cambié

Tengo muchos problemas,
Estos vuelven mi corazón de piedra,
Los problemas de alcohol de mi padre
Hacen que aumente mi furia
Ver a mi madre pelear con él
Hace que mi corazón se vuelva rocas.
No me puedo controlar
Esta rabia me vuelve
Silencioso, secretivo e inmune

Poco a poco, día a día,
Hora por hora, minuto a minuto,
Me lleno hasta el borde
Esperando la hora en que me derrame
Arruinando lo que más quiero,
Mis padres, mis amigos, mi familia
Arruinar la relación tan especial que tenemos
Las discusiones con mis seres queridos
son difíciles
Hay incidentes
Cuando le digo a mi mamá
Que estaría mejor sola que con ella
Ocasiones en que contesto cuando mis
padres necesitan ayuda
Ocasiones en que les levanto la mano,

Sé que dicen que no existe el quizás o los
peros en la vida,
Pero si tuviera la oportunidad de hacerlo
de nuevo
Lo haría en un momento
Y nunca lo pensaría dos veces.

Hay ocasiones en que ni las montañas por
las que me deslizo me soportan,
No puedo manejarme a mi misma
A veces, cuando mi mamá me pide ayuda
Me vuelvo un remolino
Algo irreconocible.

Mi mamá y mi papá
Son la razón de mi nacimiento
Ellos me crearon
Mi mar en la vida
Es por eso que merecen algo mejor
Necesitan una hija en quien puedan
depender
Necesitan una hija que agradezca
lo que hacen
Mi hermana es un pequeño río
Que corre junto a mí
Cuando necesitaba ayuda yo no la auxiliaba
Ha crecido sin la hermana que necesita
Es por eso que he cambiado

Las imperfecciones significan
muchas cosas
Significa que todos tenemos defectos
Y todos hemos cometido errores
Vivir el momento es lo mejor
que puedes hacer
Ahora lo que más aprecio
es lo que más quiero,
Mi familia y amigos,
Son lo mejor del mundo para mí
Son mi tesoro.
Como un tesoro de diamantes
bajo el mar al que me dirijo
Viendo mis defectos
Me dí cuenta que era tiempo de cambiar
Como dice la Biblia
“Existe la hora para nacer y la hora para
morir”

He pasado por un renacimiento
En un corto tiempo de 40 días de un río
estruendoso a
El mar zafiro para comenzar de nuevo
He pasado por cascadas luminosas
He vuelto a nacer
Soy una nueva persona
Una nueva hija
Nueva hermana
Nueva amiga
Y una nueva persona.

Aprendí a apreciar lo que tengo
He cambiado
El amor y apoyo de todos
He nacido y soy una persona nueva
Una parte nueva del mar
He cambiado

He caído
Por las cascadas cristalinas
Logré lo que más quería
Ser la persona que quiero que otros vean
Me deslizo por las puertas
desconocidas del mar
Siguiendo laberintos desconocidos
Laberintos que me llevarán a mi
Destino
Mis sueños se realizarán
Llegaré a terminar la preparatoria
Preparatoria que me llevará
a un mejor futuro
Un futuro con
Amor, promesas, salud e ir a la universidad
Esto me llevará a ser la persona
que quiero ser
He vuelto a nacer, soy otra persona

Ahora soy parte del mar
Que un día soñé
Puertas y caminos se abren para mí
Ahora lo último
Que debo hacer es seguir a donde quiero ir
He cambiado, soy una persona mejor
Ya no soy un río estruendoso
Soy parte del mar zafiro
Lo que un día soñé

La Familia que Deseaba Cuando Era Pequeña por Cynthia Santana

Soy una nube blanca
Me muevo en el cielo
Viajo a todas partes
A veces no sé que pasará
Siempre empujada por el viento
De las malas influencias

Desaparezco rápido
Para esconder mis problemas
Mi actitud negativa
Burlándome de otros en la escuela
Siempre metiéndome en problemas

Mi mamá espera que sea una nube mejor
Siempre yendo por el buen camino
Pero es difícil
Hay mucha gente
Que trata de confundirme
Me llevan por el camino erróneo
Sé que mamá
Siempre estará a mi lado

Soy una nube blanca moviéndome
en el cielo
Siempre yendo a diferentes partes
Tratando de olvidar mi pasado

Sé que mi vida no ha sido fácil
Trataré lo mejor posible
De que sea más fácil
Con lo que quiero ser

Mucha gente asume
Que soy una nube tenue
Que me deshago fácilmente
Porque no tomo buenas decisiones
Cualquier brisa me puede empujar

Cansada de escuchar a las nubes negativas
de lluvia
Diciéndome que no llegaré a mi meta,
Que me debo dar por vencida
Y que alguien lo haga por mí
Porque yo no soy buena para eso
O no soy lo suficientemente fuerte

Enfrentando un problema
Del que no me puedo alejar
Sin ver a mi papá
Pensando
Si le importo
Siento que no necesito a mi papá
Y no siento nada por él
No lo veo como un padre

Cuando tenía tres años
Mis padres se separaron
Desde entonces no estoy cerca de mi papá
Me siento triste porque
No tuve la oportunidad de conocerlo,
A veces me enojo con Dios porque
No tengo a mi papá
Para que me abrace

Cuanto estoy contenta o triste

Después comencé una vida nueva
Con otra familia
La familia que deseaba cuando era pequeña
Se que no es perfecta
Pero me siento increíble con mi nuevo papá
Quien me quiere
Quien me dá un hogar y una familia
Ahora no soy la única nube en el cielo
Y estoy rodeada por otras nubes
Que me ayudarán

Este verano he aprendido
A no ser tímida
Que mi actitud negativa me trae problemas
A tener más confianza
A experimentar con cosas nuevas
Y nunca darme por vencida

Mi vida mejorará
Haré muchas cosas
Lo mas importante para mí
Es ayudar a mis padres
Las otras nubes que me rodean

El viento no me detendrá
De llegar a mis metas
Mi vida no será fácil
Nunca daré por vencidos
A mis sueños

Como Volar por Edgar Medina

Soy un Colibrí
No sirvo y no puedo abrir mis alas para volar
Siempre dependiendo de mis padres
A que me alimenten
Para poder sobrevivir

Soy un Colibrí, temeroso del mundo
Me siento solo
Deprimido
Espero que llegue un amigo
Me escondo, observando de cerca
A otras aves abrir sus alas
Con el sueño de que algún día
Yo también pueda extender mis alas

Educado por mi mamá
Cuando mi padre estaba lejos de nuestro nido
Trabajando con mi hermano en otro lugar
Mi madre era buena
Nunca se fue de mi lado

Mi padre hizo lo mejor que pudo por
nosotros
Nos quería llevar con él para que pudieramos
Vivir juntos, como una familia
Apenas si conocí a mi hermano
El vivía con mi padre y vino a visitar algu-
nas veces
Yo era feliz
Finalmente mi familia estaría junta
Pero tuve que volar del lugar en donde nací

El lugar en el que crecí
Me tuve que acostumbrar
a un nuevo idioma
Una familia nueva
Y una nueva vida

Decidí dejar el nido y salir
Decidí salir al mundo y hacer amistades
Conocer gente nueva
Pero no fue como pensé que sería
Todos se burlaban de mí
Porque era pequeño
Yo sabía que no dejarían de reirse de mi
Sentí que me cortaban las alas
Y decidí esconder mis sentimientos
Para que nadie me lastimara otra vez
Los enterré
De mi familia y amigos

Soy un Colibrí
Con mi sonrisa simulada
Para que piensen que soy feliz.
Soy malo con mi familia
Me rehuso a aceptar su amor.
No les pongo atención
Pretendo no tener sentimientos.

Ahora me doy cuenta
Que lastimo a mi familia
Cuanto tratan de darme amor
Al no decirles lo mucho que los quiero

No quiero ser un Colibrí sin poder
No quiero ser inservible
No quiero estar deprimido

Quiero encontrar aves que no sientan lás-
tima por mí
Aves que me ayuden cuando caigo
No las que tratan de tirarme
Debo confiar en las aves buenas
Y compartir mis sentimientos
Y sentir de nuevo las alas tibias
De la gente que me ofrece su amor

Me estoy volviendo un Colibrí maduro
Una pequeña ave mas fuerte día a día
Tratando de encontrar amistades verdaderas
Dándome cuenta lo importante que es mi
familia
Abriendo mis alas
Listo para volar
Y listo para dar mi amor a las aves que
También me aman

Dejaré el nido otra vez
Volaré lo más rápido que pueda
Lo más alto posible
Lo más lejos que pueda
Para llegar a mis metas
Porque ahora sé
Cómo volar

Soy Una Joven Estrella Brillante Por Esperanza Toscano

Soy una joven estrella brillante,
Perdida entre cientos de otras estrellas
En el cielo enorme,
Tratando de corregir
Los errores que he cometido
Y comenzar de Nuevo.

Sé que será difícil
Porque esperé demasiado
para darme cuenta
De lo que he sido,
Lo que soy
Y lo que deseo ser,
La Estrella del Norte que todos
Admiran y aprecian.

Soy una joven estrella brillante
Que creció,
La más joven
Y única mujer
Con cuatro hermanos mayores
Y dos padres
Que hacían lo que fuera por mí
Trabajaron mucho
Para darme todo lo que quería
No importa lo que tuvieran que hacer,
Desafortunadamente
Yo era una estrella egoísta
Que solo se preocupaba por ella misma

Mi vida no ha sido fácil,
Aunque tengo familia y amigos
Que me apoyan en todo,
Nubes y lluvia
Han tratado de taparme.

Hace cinco años una enorme tormenta
Llegó a mi vida,

Tratando de impedir que brillara,
Yo era aún muy inocente
Para comprender la enfermedad de mi papá
Mi familia trató de protegerme
De todo,
Yo solo era una pequeña estrellita
Que pensaba que todo era perfecto
Y solo quería jugar con sus muñecas y
Ositos de peluche

Pero cuando llegué a Estados Unidos
Recibí la peor noticia de mi vida
Un riñón de mi papá había fallado,
Necesitaba un trasplante o diálisis lo más
pronto posible

Al verlo, mi brillantez se apagó
Y mi corazón se rompió en mil pedazos,
Mi padre siempre fué fuerte,
Feliz y trabajador,
Pero ahora se veía devastado,
La noche cubría su chispa y brillo

Yo no entendía por qué se veía así
Solo hacía cuatro meses estaba bien.
Yo trataba de encontrar respuestas
o razones pero todo
Parecía imposible,
Como una estrella sin brillo.

Trabajando mucho, apoyándose mutua-
mente y sin darse por vencidos
El brillo de nuestra familia regresó cuando
se fue la tormenta.
Ahora, mi papá está bien
y regresó su buen humor,
Siempre bailando, cantando
Y lo más importante

Que siempre brilla
El es mi ejemplo a seguir,
La estrella que quiero llegar a ser

Hace cuarenta días
Pensé que estaba lista
Para viajar por el mundo
Yo sola y ser independiente,
Pero gracias a ARC,
Me doy cuenta que mi familia
es mi universo
Y lo que he logrado
es gracias a ellos

He superado obstáculos,
Caminando por el monte
Millas y millas,
Abriéndome a gente que no conozco
Pero que ahora son mi familia,
Flotando en balsas y kayaks con miedo
De caer en el agua,
Era independiente,
No me dí por vencida y
Estuve sin mi familia.

Me volví la Estrella del Norte,
La estrella que toma buenas decisiones
Para ser más fuerte y más brillante,
Para ayudar a guiar a mi familia
Juntos somos una constelación
Y tomamos buenas decisiones

Soy la Estrella del Norte
Lista para que mi familia
se sienta orgullosa de mí,
Comenzar de nuevo
Comenzar a brillar y destellar
Como un diamante a la media noche.



Nunca Dejaré de Aprender de Mis Errores por Gabriel Marquez

Estoy creciendo y soy un Roble
Siempre aprendiendo
Siempre cometiendo nuevos errores
Y aprendiendo de ellos
Mientras continúo en la vida
Pasan las estaciones
Y siempre cambiando

Cuando era una semilla
Era fácil de convencerme y engañarme
para hacer cosas malas
Por aquellos que se decían mis amigos

Era un árbol que crecía un Roble
siempre aprendiendo

Aprendí cosas malas
Pensando que me haría
un Roble más grande
Comencé a robar y faltar a la escuela
Sentía que pertenecía al grupo

Para mi sorpresa, esto me hizo daño,
Seco y aparte de los demás
Otros árboles crecían más fuertes
y más grandes
Y yo me volví casi nada
Me sentí como un Roble que ya no crecía
Una patética excusa para una ramita

Cuando los otros árboles fueron atrapados
Me dí cuenta que lo que hice no estaba bien
Para mi
Y mi moral
Yo recordé que siempre sería
Un árbol que crecía, un Roble siempre
aprendiendo lo bueno y lo malo
Aprendí de mis errores

Me convencí de que debía haber un remedio
Porque lo que hice solo me hirió
a mí y a nadie más
Solo lo hice deseando
Que mis raíces crecieran hondo
en la tierra como los demás
Porque yo sentía
Que podía ser arrancado en cualquier
momento

Después de darme cuenta
de lo que había hecho
Ya no me sentí como un Roble
Pero, como un montón de leña

esperando a ser quemada
Encontraría la forma de arreglarlo todo
Siendo un Roble que crece no podía
darme por vencido

Escribí cartas para pedir perdón
Fui a ver a aquellos que había lastimado
Les leí las cartas
Y ofrecí trabajar para pagar
lo que había hecho
Para poder dejar ir mis hojas marchitas
Y continuar creciendo a través
de las estaciones
Como un Roble que siempre
está aprendiendo

Todos aceptaron mis disculpas
Y me permitieron trabajar
por las hojas muertas
Al llegar la primavera
Comencé a tener hojas nuevas,
verdes y sanas
Continuando mi vida como un árbol que
crece, un Roble que continúa aprendiendo
Me sentí feliz y aliviado de saber
que todo quedó atrás

Muy pronto mis padres supieron lo que hice
Hablaron conmigo
Me castigaron
Como un pequeño árbol que crece
Y que tenía nuevas hojas
Pero no sin antes decirme lo orgullosos
que estaban de mí
Por aceptar mis errores sin que alguien
me lo tuviera que decir
Y continuar creciendo como un Roble
que siempre está aprendiendo

Insistí en crecer más grande que antes
Más cerca de llegar a ser el árbol
Que estoy destinado a ser

No como los que se decían mis amigos
Que aún se deshojan, y mueren despacio
durante el invierno
Y no pueden revivir de nuevo
en la primavera
Como siempre lo han hecho
Están acostumbrados
Como pequeños árboles,
luchando por sobrevivir
Arboles que no son lo suficientemente

grandes para recibir sol y agua
Cuando cambié y decidí ser
Un Roble que crece y siempre aprender
Prefirieron no seguirme

Yo continúo creciendo y aprendiendo
Porque soy un Roble que no ha terminado
Y siempre aprende de sus errores

Yo muero en el invierno
Me deshago de mis viejas hojas
Se van con mis errores
Me enseño lo que no debo hacer
Y comienzo de nuevo en la primavera
Con esperanzas nuevas
Y la oportunidad de tener hojas nuevas

Continúo aprendiendo
Y adquiriendo sabiduría
Y grande como un Roble
Que nunca dejará de aprender y crecer
Mientras las estaciones cambian yo también

Mientras me vuelvo el mejor árbol
que pueda ser
En esta selva de oportunidades
Esperando que aprendamos y avancemos
De nuestros errores
Mientras los dejamos en el pasado

Soy un árbol que crece,
un Roble siempre aprendiendo
Sé que nunca seré perfecto
Pero eso no dejará que continúe tratando
Y acercarme lo más que pueda

Como un Roble que nunca dejará
de aprender
Continuaré por la vida
Creándome un buen futuro
Iré a la Universidad
Y obtendré una educación
Asegurando un buen futuro
Para mí y mi familia

Probaré que he aprendido de mis errores
Y que he trabajado duro para terminarlos
Para el beneficio de mis amigos,
mi familia y el mío

Continuaré siendo
Un árbol que crece, un Roble
Que siempre continúa aprendiendo





Despacio llegando al Océano Por Gustavo Cabrera

Soy un río estruendoso
 Hay demasiado dentro de mí
 Lo cual me da miedo mostrar
 Mi estruendosa fuerza esconde las rocas
 Que me lastiman al rodar
 Las escondo muy adentro
 Porque es más fácil ignorarlas
 Rocas que han estado ahí desde el principio
 Y algunas que son nuevas
 Mi agua es oscura
 Más oscura que la de otros ríos cercanos
 Quiero esconder
 Las rocas que no puedo dejar atrás

Al verme no ves nada malo
 Pero si tomas tu tiempo y ves muy adentro
 Encontrarás viejas heridas
 Formadas por las rocas
 Que no dejo que nadie vea
 Y como aún no han sanado

Heridas de mi papá al irse durante siete años
 Vino a EU para dar a mi familia y a mí
 Una vida mejor
 Durante la mitad de mi vida se fue
 La mitad de mi vida no supe
 lo que era un padre
 Ahora tratamos de recuperar
 el tiempo perdido
 Pasando más tiempo juntos
 Pero mientras más lo hacemos
 Más cuenta me doy
 de lo diferente que somos
 Parece un extraño

Soy un río estruendoso
 Más enojado conmigo que con nadie más
 Creo que me aborrezco
 Por mi inolvidable pasado
 Tengo una gran herida muy dentro de mi
 No lo he dicho a mi familia
 Yo era un río que nunca

Vió para que existía
 Y quería secarme
 Ahora finalmente lo llevo a la superficie
 Pensé que se había desaparecido
 bajo el lodo
 Pero siempre está en mi mente
 Quiero comenzar de nuevo
 Y aprender a olvidar
 Tener la fuerza suficiente para hacerle frente
 Sé que será difícil
 Pero hay gente que me ama
 Y siempre estará a mi lado

Soy un río estruendoso
 Que se ha ido llenando
 Demasiado rápido
 Espero el momento
 En que me derrame
 Sé que está por llegar
 Y tengo miedo a quien voy a lastimar

Mi agua es oscura,
 Llenándose rápido
 De problemas en el hogar
 Sabiendo que lastimo a mi mamá
 Lamentando cuando le dije
 a mi papá que lo odiaba
 No sé lo que me pasó
 No lo quise decir
 Pensando que siempre tengo la razón
 Tratando de que todos estén orgullosos
 Es demasiada presión
 Pero nunca me quejo
 Yo sé que es mi trabajo
 Solamente me debo concentrar

Dejando a todos atrás
 También me quedé yo
 Mi familia y amigos están en el pasado
 Deseo que sean mi presente
 Tengo miedo porque no sé cuando sucedió
 Y no sé como detenerme

Todo lo que quiero es llegar al océano
 Para saber quien soy

Soy un río estruendoso
 Desesperado por calmarme
 Mi agua es oscura
 Y deseo que se aclare
 Deseo que un poco
 de mi agua se derrame
 Para no estar tan lleno
 Escucharé a mi mamá
 Y le diré que la amo
 Le diré a mi papá que lo siento
 Aceptaré mis errores
 y aprenderé de ellos
 Aprenderé a aceptar que
 no puedo ser perfecto
 Y espero que mi familia lo entienda
 Aprenderé a compartir mis sentimientos
 Con mi familia
 No se preocuparán más de mí
 Deseo que sean una gran parte en mi vida
 Quiero que sepan mis problemas
 y mis preocupaciones

Soy un río maduro
 Continuaré creciendo fuerte
 Con mi familia y mis errores
 Iremos juntos a formar
 un río más ancho y calmado
 Iré a la universidad
 Y viviré mi vida como llegue
 Y al final todos estarán orgullosos de mí

Soy un río maduro
 Sereno y claro
 Finalmente dejando que salgan las rocas
 No tengo miedo
 Sé que con el apoyo de mi familia
 Encontraré el buen camino
 Para llegar lentamente al océano
 Y saber quien soy

El Crecimiento de un Arbol Guerrero Por Hao Xian Xu

Soy un árbol sin experiencia
Creciendo en el interior desde que
era una semilla
Mis padres tenían miedo de que
no sobreviviera al aire libre
Recibiendo luz de una lámpara –mi padre
Y agua de una regadera – mi madre
Me siento débil sin lámpara o regadera
Y no sé como obtener nutrición
Excepto de mis padres

Cuando era un árbol pequeño
Mis padres hicieron todo por mí
Me volví egoísta y descorazonado
Escapando de mis responsabilidades
Como un árbol que no da oxígeno a la gente
Y no hace a la tierra fértil

Soy un árbol sin experiencia
Mis padres me trajeron a Estados Unidos
Moviendo un árbol de tierra fértil
al seco desierto
No había amigos para mí en E.U.
Como un árbol viviendo
Lejos de la selva
Yo pensé
Que no merecía amistades
Porque nadie entiende a un árbol joven
Que habla mal Inglés

Mis padres pensaron que sería mejor
Si leía más libros en Inglés y que tuviera más
amigos hablando Inglés
Pero fue lo contrario
El árbol se muere en vez de vivir
Haciendo mal las cosas
Como leer libros en Chino durante la clase y
hablando Chino todo el tiempo

De pronto, tengo la oportunidad
de participar en ARC
El árbol tiene una oportunidad
De vivir en la selva
Fue difícil decir
Si me nutriría o no durante ese tiempo
Porque no sé como vivir afuera

Al principio la selva de ARC fue
como un infierno
No podía manejar nada
El árbol no recibe energía por fotosíntesis
Escalar las rocas era tan difícil
como aprender Inglés.
Siempre me quedé más abajo
que los otros árboles
Y cada paso parecía imposible
para mí de llegar al cielo
La nostalgia por mi hogar fue un arma
para darme por vencido

Comencé a ser derrocado de estos desafíos
Mis raíces no crecieron
suficientemente profundas
Cualquier cosa pequeña era el fin del mundo
Como no llegar a la cima de la roca
o llegar tarde a una junta
Yo peleaba conmigo mismo en mi mente
Sabía que si perdía la lucha
Perdería todo
Callendo en la tierra

Pero me dí cuenta que tenía muchas otras
cosas importantes que lograr
Como lecciones de Inglés y Ciencia,
educación física y ser independiente
No era el fin del mundo
Debo ganar la lucha

Aún oigo los sonidos de apoyo
de mis compañeros
Como un árbol de repente recibe agua
de la fuerte lluvia
Desde entonces, comprendo lo que
es trabajar juntos y el apoyo
Después de escalar la roca
Me siento insuperable

Soy un árbol inexperto
No hay razón para darme por vencido
Porque ya no es solamente mi lucha
Mis padres, mis amigos,
mi maestra y mis compañeros
Todas sus mentes están conmigo

Eso me ayuda a luchar
Ellos quieren verme firme y alto,
crecer raíces firmes
No quiero desilusionar a aquellos
a quienes más quiero
Su esperanza y apoyo me hicieron cambiar,
Del muchacho de corazón frío
Que antes fui

Ellos me verán
Como un árbol guerrero
Me levantaré hasta el final
Con mi fuerza
Haré un mejor día para mi futuro

Como graduarme de la preparatoria
Ir a la universidad
Haciendo cosas que todos notarán
Ayudando a hacer un mundo mejor
Haciendo que aquellos que me apoyan
se sientan orgullosos
Sé que llegar al cielo no es muy lejos
Creo que ya casi lo toco
Como un árbol Secoya

Algún día seré el cerebro
Que puede hacer ángeles positivos
Gritar lo increíble que soy
Y los diablos negativos
Llorar porque no me pudieron derribar

El árbol inexperto
Estará muerto
El árbol más poderoso y útil
Renacerá
Suficientemente valiente para escalar la roca
Presentando mis ideas
y pensamientos con confianza a la gente
Utilizando Inglés para ayudar a mi familia
y comunidad a tener una vida mejor
Ayudando a nuevos inmigrantes
a ajustar su vida

Ese soy yo
El árbol más alto en la selva
El muchacho que nunca se dará por vencido



Nada me Impedirá que llegue a la Copa de los Arboles!! Por Heidi Jimenez

Soy una oruga
Admiro la brisa suave, fría
Que el Lago Tahoe ofrece.
Me relajo en un hermoso Lupino
Mientras me pregunto como
llegaré a las metas
Que me he puesto.

Me sentí como una oruga
inservible e ingrata
Cuando tenía que participar
y estar de acuerdo
Con mi padre.
Nunca ayudaba en la casa
Lo cual causaba problemas
para otras orugas
Y las mariposas,
Era tan ingrata
Hacia los miembros de mi familia;
No me comprometía en nada que implicara
Levantarme y retorcerme
Para hacer feliz a los demás.

Ignoraba a todo el mundo
No ayudaba a mi papá,
El padre y madre
Mariposas del capullo.
El cocina, limpia y lava su propia ropa
Mi papá depende de él mismo.
Aparte del hecho de que tiene otras cosas
más importantes que hacer

Soy una oruga,
Aquí en mi capullo
En ARC
Maduro y me doy cuenta
Que mi familia nunca desaparecerá
Tendré apoyo en cualquier dirección
a la que vaya.

Sin embargo,
Puedo dar una vuelta mal.
Aún tengo a mi familia atrás de mí
Para mostrarme el buen camino
Ellos me dan fuerza
Y me enseñan el bien y el mal
Lucho adentro de mi pared
Hasta que me libere.
Mi familia me ayudará a volar
Una vez que sea una mariposa
Podré ser fuerte y poderosa.

Soy una fuerte oruga
Lista para el siguiente paso.
Lista para salir de mi capullo
Lista para ser una hermosa mariposa
Se que lo soy.
Nada me impedirá llegar
a la copa de los árboles!

Mi capullo
Me ha enseñado el camino
El camino que quiero seguir y
El camino del que necesito alejarme.
Aquí reconozco
El trabajo en equipo y la familia
Son muy importantes en mi vida.
ARC me ha mostrado que está bien
ir paso a paso
Como preparar por el tallo de un Lupino
Mientras no me dé por vencida
Y persiga mis metas y mis sueños.

Estar en mi capullo me ayudó
a darme cuenta
Que el mundo es grande, hermoso
Y hay muchos desafíos,
Necesito tiempo para conquistar
mis miedos.

Tiempo para depender de las mariposas
fuertes, que me inspiran. que me apoyan
A mi alrededor.

Una vez fui una oruga
Ahora soy mariposa,
He encontrado el camino
Que he estado buscando
Durante dieciséis años.
Mis alas se han extendido
Estoy lista para experimentar el mundo,
Estoy lista para ser la ayudante,
Increíble hija que mi padre desea.

Ahora puedo volar, seré líder
Desde el día uno
Me puse una meta
Terminar el programa,
Empujarme a mí misma
Pelear por mi equipo y mi segunda familia.
No importa cual sea el desafío
Lucharé por él
Nada me impedirá llegar a la copa de los
árboles!

Soy una mariposa
Será un desafío todo lo que encuentre,
Puedo hacer cualquier cosa
que tenga en mente.
Años y mariposas han volado –
Es hora de que yo lo haga también.
Estaré al lado de mi familia,
amigos, comunidad,
Pero mas importante, al lado de mi padre.
Ayudaré a otras orugas a que rompan sus
capullos
Y a que tengan éxito.
Lograré mis metas
Estoy lista para más desafíos



La Carga Pesada Por Oziel Lopez

Soy una hormiga
Trabajando duro todos los días de mi vida
A veces sé lo que es bueno y malo
Y cuales son las consecuencias
Que puedo tener.

Me siento como una hormiga balanceán-
dome en una hoja junto a un río
Balanceándome en la orilla
Nunca sé
En que sentido me empujará el viento
Espero me mande por el buen camino
Y abrir mis ojos al sol que siempre
los ha mantenido cerrados.

Mis padres me recuerdan
diariamente a que piense dos veces
Lo que quiero hacer, antes de hacerlo
Una vez tomé una decisión muy mala
Hice que el corazón de mis padres cayera
Hasta sus pies
Como una hormiga que cae en la corriente
Difícil para ellos saber
Si cometieron un error al educarme

Despertando todos los días
el verano pasado
Yendo a trabajar con mi papá
Y sabiendo como hacer un buen trabajo
Ahora que estoy lejos de él
Me siento como una hormiga perdida

Lejos de su colonia
Solamente quiero regresar a casa
y abrazarlo
Y decirle que lo amo

Todo lo que sé hasta ahora es gracias a él
Ni siquiera quiero pensar
O soñar
De que se vaya de mi lado
Eso sería como un gran río furioso
Llevandome lejos con su
Fuerte corriente.

Trabajando con mi papá
Me dí cuenta que el dolor y sudor
Me llevará a donde necesito estar en la vida
Como una hormiga trabajando duro
Dia y noche

Soy una hormiga
A veces siento que voy lento
Alejándome durante el verano
Dejando mi colonia
Llevo una carga pesada en mi espalda
Mi papá trabaja solo
Sin nadie que le ayude
Y yo me divierto con nuevos amigos
A veces quiero regresar a casa.

Pero mi familia me ayuda a continuar
Me pone triste

Verlos sufrir
Sin que les paguen lo
Que merecen por su buen trabajo
Porque no tienen educación
O entrenamiento profesional.

Ese es el mayor peso en mi espalda
Como una hormiga
Llevando una gran hoja a través de la selva
Viendolos sufrir
Y sintiendo que no los puedo ayudar.
Estoy creciendo
Ellos desean que yo tenga
una buena educación
Para que vaya más lejos en mi vida
Como una hormiga
Trabajando para crear
Una nueva colonia

Quiero ser diferente
En mi familia
Sabiendo que la educación es el camino
a mi futuro
Ir a la universidad puede abrir puertas
para mí
Para seguir adelante
Yo puedo, lo haré y me estoy volviendo
una hormiga más fuerte
La carga que antes era muy pesada para mí
Ahora es más ligera.

El Viento Llevándome Hacia Mi Camino Por Sonia Blanco

Soy el cielo
Cambiando todos los días,
Pasando por días oscuros, recordando
Las tormentas que soporté para
encontrar el día brillante y soleado
Que ahora soy

Mi primera tormenta
Tuve que caminar durante días y noches,
Escondiéndome entre las rocas
Para poder llegar a mi nuevo hogar.
Cambiando de un lugar a otro
Sin saber lo que el futuro traería
Dejando que el viento me llevara
hacia mi camino.

Llegó otra tormenta,
Aquí estaba sin amigos
Nadie que apoyara a mi familia
Preocupados porque no teníamos
suficiente dinero
Para pagar las cuentas.
Yo podía ver la lluvia en los ojos
de mis padres
Yo deseaba ser más grande para trabajar
y poder ayudarlos.
Yo deseaba que el tiempo pasara rápido
como un rayo.

Las tormentas se estabilizaron.
Todo era soleado por un tiempo
Era feliz en mi vida

Entonces llegó un huracán
Que duró muchos años
Mis padres no eran felices juntos
No eramos una familia normal
La hora llegó
De que todo cambiara en mi vida.
No más mamá y papá juntos.
Esto me deprimió a mí y
a mi hermano mayor,
Mis dos hermanas eran muy pequeñas
para comprender.
Mi vida se fue boca abajo.
Tenía ganas de morir
Cuando supe que no tendría
una familia normal,
Me sentí
Apenada porque la gente que lo sabía
Me preguntaba por qué se separaron.
Cada vez que alguien preguntaba
Sentía que perdía mi energía

Mientras pasaban los días me sentí mejor,
Me dí cuenta que Dios causó
estas tormentas

Porque me quería desafiar,
Quería que fuera más fuerte.
Finalmente lo comprendí

Nueve años de tormentas han pasado
He comenzado a calmarme.
Aunque están separados
Mis dos padres maravillosos me alientan
a ir lejos en la vida
Pelear por lo que deseo
Nunca darme por vencida
Que las estrellas estan a mi lado
Protegiéndome y guiándome
Todo el tiempo.

Soy un cielo brillante, azul y nuevo
Estos últimos cuarenta días
no me ha importado
Como me veo o lo que me pongo
Solo me importa ser la verdadera yo,
Expresar lo que pienso
Animada y orgullosa
De lo que he logrado
Controlando mi humor, sin enojarme,
Valorar a la gente que me quiere
y se preocupa por mí.

For our loving parents,

In hard times you stand beside us no matter what happens, cheering us up and making us happy. We appreciate your hard-working jobs and the way you have always taken care of us. You are patient when it's needed and firm when we do bad or when things go wrong. Loving us is the greatest thing you can give us. We are sorry for the way we treated you in the past. We've changed and we promise you from the bottom of our hearts that we will try harder to make you proud, giving our best in school, sports, and pursuing our dreams. We have learned the value of family, of love, and of appreciation. You, our parents, have always been protecting us and have always been there to listen and understand what we say or do. During these 40 days we have learned to support each other and have also promised to take what we have learned back to our homes. Thank you for giving us this opportunity. We love you.

Team Xing Xing, ARC 2010

Para nuestros queridos padres,

En tiempos duros siempre están juntos a nosotros. No importa que pase. Dándonos ánimos y alegría. Nosotros apreciamos lo duro que trabajan para cuidarlos. Nos tratan con paciencia cuando es necesario, y son firmes cuando hacemos mal o las cosas están mal. Amor es la mejor cosa que nos pueden dar. Les pedimos disculpas por la forma en que los hemos tratado en el pasado. Hemos cambiado y prometemos del fondo de nuestras corazones que vamos a respetarles y hacer lo mejor que podemos, y hacerles orgullosos por el resto de nuestra vida. Esforzarnos en la escuela deportes y perseguir nuestros sueños. Hemos aprendido a valorar nuestra familia y apreciarlos. Ustedes, nuestros padres, siempre están protegiéndonos y siempre están escuchándonos y comprendiéndonos en lo que decimos y hacemos. Durante estos cuarenta días hemos aprendido a apoyarnos a los unos a los otros y hemos prometido llevar lo que hemos aprendido a nuestra casa. Muchísimas gracias para darnos esta oportunidad. Les amamos mucho.

Equipo Xing Xing, ARC 2010



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