

THE PROMISE



MISSION PROMISE
COMUNIDAD PROMESA DE LA MISSION
NEIGHBORHOOD



Johnatan, Elena and Darwin

CHANGE OF STATUS AND WAY OF THINKING

Mrs. Elena has lived in San Francisco since 2001. Elena, like many immigrants, left her native country of Guatemala in search of a better future for herself and her family.

In 2010, her political asylum application was accepted and she became a U.S. resident.

Elena knew that after five years she would be able to apply for citizenship. Fear coupled with a feeling limited by her level of English prevented her from applying. Around 2017, she met Luis Ostolaza, Family Success Coach at Bryant Elementary, where her two children attended school. Ostolaza helped her with various services for her and her children.

Eventually, Elena decided to tell Ostolaza about her opportunity to become a citizen. Ostolaza began by encouraging her, teaching her how to communicate via email, and making a referral to El Centro Latino to take classes. Elena and Ostolaza met from time to time to help her study. In 2021, Elena applied to take her citizenship test; however, due to the pandemic and the immigration department's delay, her appointment was scheduled for June 2021.

Elena continued to study during the limited free time she had and became more nervous as the day of her appointment approached. Ostolaza continued to motivate and assure her that everything would be fine. Thanks to everything she was able to pass the exam and receive her citizenship.

Elena advises all those who have the opportunity to become citizens to do so, "because you have to renew your residency and there is a price for doing it. You can do it – you only have to try and change our way of thinking."



Madeline, Sandra, Ana Avilez (Parent & Youth Engagement Specialist), and Cynthia

THE POWER OF OPPORTUNITIES

This year, Mission Promise Neighborhood partnered with Opportunity For All and the fiscal agency JCYC to allow MPN to have an internship opportunity for youth. MPN this year hosted three interns for the first time, it was their initial workforce experience. MPN, with the support of the youth, co-created a Youth Leadership Development Program. Learn more about the youth that participated in the internship.

My name is Madeline, I'm in the 9th grade in Leadership high school. I made myself apply because it seemed like a great opportunity to learn more and meet new people. I have improved my skills, created a community with people, and showed them respect. Everything seems difficult at first, but it gets easier as you go on. It's hard to decide if I actually want to go to college. But for sure I want to learn more about English Literature.

My name is Cynthia, I am 14 years old. I will be attending this upcoming school year ICA Cristo Rey Academy. I applied to this internship because I wanted to learn and experience new things, meet new people, and be in a new environment. And I get a stipend that I will save for my future. One of the things I learned is how we could use our voices to help change the world. I do see myself in an office setting because in the future I am going to study hard to become a lawyer.

My name is Sandra and I'm 13 years old. I will be in the 8th grade attending James Lick Middle School. My mom signed me up for the internship and I am thankful for it because I have learned about different job opportunities I can follow when I'm older. I'm not sure if I would work for a nonprofit, but, if I end up in one, it would be a pleasure if I land in an organization similar to this.

MPN's model is to harness the power of our community so every family succeeds and every student has the opportunity and tools to go to college.



Dannhae Herrera Wilson (in the center), Family Child Care Specialist Coach with AP graduates at Casa Doulas Training Center, San Francisco

TOGETHER WE'RE STRONGER — CHAMPIONS FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

Since 2018, MPN has been collaborating with a growing number of Spanish-speaking Family Child Care Providers (FCCPs) as part of our network. These women, men and their families have survived not only the most challenging years of the COVID-19 pandemic, but they have emerged stronger than ever. As we know, FCCPs have been playing a crucial role in San Francisco's economic recovery post-pandemic.

This summer, for the first time our group of 21 family child care providers, including their teacher assistants, came together for a change opportunity to participate in the Abriendo Puertas parenting and advocacy program. Typically, these classes are provided to families with children ages 0 to 5 years old; however, all FCCPs wanted to experience the classes themselves as a professional development opportunity and to better understand why AP is so successful among our Latino parents. At the end of the program, they were eager to put into practice all the lessons and tips that Abriendo Puertas offers in its culturally relevant curriculum of ten sessions. Each lesson is guided by a popular saying.

In addition, what made this cohort of AP participants more special was the fact that we were able to align MPN summer programming around Early Literacy and Kindergarten Readiness and Transition activities to its curriculum. We had one of the FCCPs co-facilitate our "Family Portfolio Workshop" and we collaborated with San Francisco librarians in the distribution of 146 bundles of books to families as part of their "Summer Stride" reading program.

As we celebrated the last session and successful completion of the program, a popular saying came to mind: "It takes a village." That is because as the lead facilitator, I realized that need for the

collaboration and cooperation of the entire group of FCCPs, their family members, librarians, and the guest speakers, which included a speech therapist and two newly trained Abriendo Puertas facilitators, and birth doulas named Ruth Galvez and Martha Franco. In addition, thanks to the generosity of Casa Doulas Training Center, where Franco is the Director, our FCCPs were able to meet in person and build a stronger sense of community among the group. In the words of two FCCPs who completed the program:

"As a new family child care provider, I really enjoyed meeting and sharing with my colleagues and learning from their experiences."

"I am grateful for having attended Abriendo Puertas because it's a program that helps us grow and become knowledgeable and better advocates for the families we serve."

Finally, if there is a saying that embodies the spirit of the Family Child Care Providers' sense of camaraderie and resiliency moving forward, it is "Together We Are Stronger"!



THE PROMISE COMMITTEE

Clockwise from top left: Magali, Ana, Liz, and Alejandro. Our mission is to share stories of students, families, and partner organization accomplishments and stories across our network. The Promise newsletter will be published quarterly, so the next one will be in Fall 2022. If you have an idea or would like to share your story, contact Alejandro at (415) 857-2834 or abautista@medasf.org.