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Sharyl Cubero



My family came to the United States from Costa Rica when I was 2 years old. My parents spoke no English, had never finished college and they moved us into a poor neighborhood on the wrong side of the tracks. Even as a child I was embarrassed and felt my parents and I were “stupid” because of our background.

I soon became the translator for the family, as my young mind picked up language quickly, but that really only embarrassed me more. I did all I could to pretend I was just an American, not from Costa Rica, not from a family that could hardly get by financially and couldn't speak English.

The whole situation was challenging, because those in the Hispanic community thought I was too American and the Americans thought I was too exotic and foreign. I felt like my sense of belonging was merely patches sewn into the American flag.

Recently I began to realize what a sacrifice my parents made for me. Despite their disadvantages and the prejudices they have faced, my parents motivated me to follow my dreams. They sacrificed much to put me in an Adventist school from preschool, now to university, and that has only been a positive experience for me.

My experience in Adventist education has helped me forge not only deep personal relationships but also a love for God. It is so good to be able to pray freely. God has a lot to do with beating stereotypes.