

If you want to help for a day, give them rice;
If you want to help for a while give them a tree;
If you want to help for an eternity, give them an education.

My Autobiography

By Cinthia Vanessa Quiroz Padilla

(Note from DavidLynch. This is an amazing story. Cinthia Vanessa is the daughter of our preschool teacher Felipe, a former child scavenger of the Tijuana municipal dump. Her grandmother, who is illiterate, scavenged the city dump right up to a few years ago. Now she bags groceries for tips at a market. While Felipe started school around the age of nine, his daughter started at the age of three. Felipe was Vanessa's first teacher.)

At 3 years of age I started school at the Responsibility Kindergarten where we all had fun learning and playing with our teachers. My preschool was the first step of my education that was filled with joy, thanks to my teachers.

(Pictured right: Vanessa, age 4, receiving an award at the end of the preschool year from Director David.)



After preschool/kindergarten, I entered elementary school at the age of 6 which started a new step in of my life. During my time at this school I performed and participated in many things and I enjoyed it all. I had an unforgettable experience in third grade when I participated with other classmates in a public speaking competition. We were given topics to research and then present to an audience. Twice I participated in singing competitions and once won a medal. I was also in the school chorus. We participated in competitions against other schools and we won several times. I graduated from elementary school having won various school competitions, and I graduated second highest of the entire school. I have very fond memories of my years in elementary school.

I entered junior high school when I was 11 years old. While attending junior high I was named "Queen of the School." I still have my crown and gown. I was also the school's student government vice president. I graduated valedictorian with a 9.9 average out of 10. *(Pictured right: Vanessa with her godfather, David, at her 15th birthday party.)*



At age 14, I entered high school. While in my first year, I represented my school in a state art and academic contest. I won first place in the state. The next step was the national competition in the state of Michoacan. Here I met many people from different parts of my country. (Vanessa was a sophomore competing against seniors.) I also competed in a regional public speaking contest and won second place. I competed in a physics and mathematical word problems solving completion and a photography competition which my group won. For one of the public speaking competition, I was selected the leader of my school group. We chose to speak on violence in the family, and we researched our topic by interviewing various government officials and the department of social services. We won this competition. With much effort and having earned many awards, I graduated valedictorian of my high school with 9.9 (out of 10) rating. I achieved this honor with the help of my parents and those who supported me and believed in me.



Now I am moving on to the next step in life: I am going to medical school. This is a dream I have had all my life, ever since Responsibility built a medical clinic in front of my house. I saw how the doctor helped and worked with the people who worked in the garbage dump, and I admired her work. That is where I got my idea to become a doctor.

My career goal is to own a clinic that would be accessible to all people. In order to do this, I must always have a positive attitude and not let anything destroy my

dream. *(Pictured left: Vanessa's proud family – her brother Cristian who also graduated, Vanessa, her dad Felipe, mother Rosa, and the newest member of the family Adriana Elizabeth who was just adopted. Pictured right: Vanessa and David. This is one of the proudest days of my life.)*

