



Youth receives university scholarship and seeks to break the stereotypes about foster care.



Guadalupe Carbajal, 19 years old, is getting her Bachelor's in Sociology and her goal is to become a Social Worker. (Soudi Jimenez)

By Soudi Jimenez-Contact Reporter

September 21, 2016 4:36 pm – Los Angeles

Since she was a young child she had to go against the tide, but Guadalupe Carbajal has drawn strength to excel; when she received a scholarship, which will allow her to advance her university education, she affirmed that once she graduates her objective is to help children in foster care, a system she knows well.

“Everyone sees foster care as a statistic, where [children] do not graduate, they don't go to college, I don't want to be one more”, Carbajal said with conviction, of 19 years old, before receiving a \$1,000 to continue to her Sociology degree.

The youth, of Mexican descent, whom from the age of three had to learn to adapt to live alone. “For a long time, I felt I needed a father or a mother”, she said. An emptiness which had to be filled by a social worker from the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

She met her father at the age of sixteen, she said. Her mother was sick and traveled to Mexico. The day she arrived, her mother died. “For me it has been more difficult, because I haven't had anyone”, admitted the sophomore student at Antelope Valley College, in Palmdale.



At the end of August there were 18,000 children in foster homes in the county, 60% of them are Latinos. At least 2,000 of them are between the ages of 18 to 21, who are in the extended foster care program (AB12) where they are offered resources to support their education and professional training.

Social Worker, Lili Romo stated, that each month the youth are seen. The problem she sees is when they are about to exit the program. “There’s a shock when they are going to be 21 years old, they get scared”, she asserted, they fear they will not have any support.

The County offers housing up to the age of 24, for those that have a job, if they don’t have one they need show that they are looking for one.

In 1995, Supervisor Michael Antonovich created an annual fundraiser to help DCFS, these funds help to provide clothing, dental services, beds, eye glasses, teams, sport uniforms and extracurricular activities, amongst others.

This time, at the dinner organized for this event, 10 scholarships were granted. Danny Trejo, the main character of the “Machete” movies and “Runaway Train”, received an acknowledgement for his trajectory. The actor stated that the best things these youth can do is to stay away from drugs and alcohol.

“Education is the key, to do whatever you want to do, you need an education,” Trejo said.

According to Dominique Robinson, manager for DCFS Children’s Trust Fund; these funds are insufficient; the goal is to provide more scholarships, so she invited the community to visit the web page where donations can be made.

We want to do more, provide educational support and for their dreams to come true, the official assured.

For her part, Carbajal, appreciates the support she has received from social workers. Once she gets her Sociology degree she plans to become one of them.

“I want to help those in foster care like me”, assured the youth who proclaims herself to be courageous and she believes that, she can conquer obstacles without the assistance of her father by her side. “Honestly I believe in God, he supports me and I’m happy with that.”

Donations for youth in foster care.

Web site: chidrenstrustfund.net

Copyright © 2016, Hoy Los Angeles

Translated by Rita Eustaquio, MSW Intern

Link to original article:

<http://www.hoylosangeles.com/noticias/local/hoyla-loc-joven-recibe-beca-universitaria-y-busca-romper-el-estereotipo-sobre-los-hogares-de-crianza-story.html>