

What is your name?

My name is Paulina Rivera.

Paulina, can you tell me about yourself, your family, memories, and favorite moments?

I was born in Quito, Ecuador. Quito is the capital of Ecuador. I come from South America. Its a very diverse country and very beautiful. I am the first sister of three men. My memory of my family is that we are very united. We really enjoy eating together. And as the older sister, I was always responsible and watching over my brothers at all times.

What was your profession in Ecuador?

I am a Lawyer and I liked to serve people who were more poor, and the minority classes, and the indigenous people.

Can you describe the first job you had in the United States?

My first job in the United States it was in New York, in a resort club, in some cabanas where I did Housekeeping. We had to clean a record of 12 to 13 big cabanas for tourists who would come to the beach. That was my first job.

Did that job pay good or no?

That job did not pay well. They contracted me for \$15 an hour and they started paying me almost \$11 an hour. But they were charging me for living, and in the beginning I understood that I was earning a little bit more than in my country but that I needed to learn skills. I focused on learning what I came to do.

Can you describe the living situation provided by your job at the time?

Well, it was something that I would have never imagined in my country. I had no idea what a basement was, and here I learned that there are places that are not suitable to live in. They put us under some pipes in a very small space where everything would fill with mold and since I would work all day, and only went home to sleep, at first I did not notice. But it had an impact on the health of my coworkers and it was a very unsanitary place to live in.

How long did you work there?

I worked there for eight months in one year.

When you arrived in Minnesota, did you bring your daughter with you?

When I first came, I arrived by myself because I had to work to save up for the trips, look for a place to live, and three months later I arrived in May she arrived around August, give or take. I didn't think of many things, the things that would follow, but it was important for me to bring her here.

What were some of the things that followed?

After that? Came the sadness and depression of my daughter as a result of me taking her away from family, from friends, and her language. I believe it was very impactful, what she went through at 12 years old. When I thought that she would be better off, she had to jump a part of her life that now including herself, it makes her feel sad.

To think about those moments, in those moments when you worked, where was your daughter?

I didn't think that a place to take care of her worked there wasn't a space for her to be okay at. So when I came the only possibility that I had to be with her was at my job , in a car. So then when I worked on the beach, she had to stay sometimes in the heat, in the car, get out the car, walk around the car, because the parking lot of the restaurant where I began to work at and she practically spent the whole summer in the car and outside the car because she couldn't support being alone in the room we lived in

Do you think in this moment that you made the correct decision to move your daughter to the United States, away from your family?

I will never regret it