



ADULT LEARNER SUCCESS STORY

Maira Marroquin | Illinois



Adult education gave Maira the language skills she needed to begin her pursuit of higher education in the United States. Maira came to the U.S. at the age of 24 from her home country of Colombia with nothing more than her own determination to succeed. She states, “I came here with no money and didn't know the language, but I was determined to create a better life for myself and my son back in Colombia.” Leaving behind a past of domestic abuse and civil strife, Maira now found herself alone with no support network. She had to work long hours to make ends meet.

While she was always willing to work, Maira knew her education and career progress would always be limited by her lack of English if she did not take steps to improve it. She decided to enroll in adult ESL classes at one of the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC). These classes allowed her to develop her English abilities while still giving her the flexibility to work full time. In two years, she progressed from a beginner level to enrolling in English 101 and being able to participate in academic English at a university level.

Six years later, Maira now holds an Associate of Arts degree and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology. She is currently researching pancreatitis cancer cells at Northeastern Illinois University. She hopes to obtain a Ph.D. in neuropsychology. As she continues her academic journey, she finds time to advocate for adult education, including participating in a podcast to share her experiences and motivate other migrant women to find success and achieve the American dream. ■

Inspiring educators so adults succeed and communities thrive