



# SAVES



## Miami-Dade County Public Schools

MDCPS

### Colombian Student Completes Nursing Program

For many of our asylee students, adjusting to life in the U.S. is something they could have never imagined. Case in point, the story of Luz Marina Restrepo, another S.A.V.E.S. success story. To fully grasp her story, we need to look back at her life four years ago.

According to Ms. Restrepo, coming here has meant a tremendous sacrifice. To begin with, she had to leave her family, all her friends, a very good job, and the knowledge that comes from living in your native city all of your life. On top of that, she is a single mother of a ten year old daughter.



Luz Marina - A Proud Graduate

Once in the U.S., Luz Marina began working as a housekeeper in order to make ends meet. At this point the realities of many asylees change almost overnight, and where determination and desire will help them get ahead in a new country, a new culture, and a new environment.

Almost a year later, in September 2004, Ms. Restrepo joined the S.A.V.E.S. program at American Adult Education Center. She enrolled in ESOL Level II. With the help and guidance of Isabel Perez, Tatiana Patarroyo, and the rest of the S.A.V.E.S. staff, Luz Marina Restrepo completed the ESOL program, while going on to complete the nursing program at the same time.

Ms. Restrepo was born in Medellin, Colombia. Known to many as "The city of eternal spring", this city also carried the dubious distinction of being considered one of the most dangerous cities in the world during the 1990s.

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Ms. Restrepo graduated from the Nursing Program. The S.A.V.E.S. team was there to help her celebrate her tremendous accomplishments.

After graduating from high school, Luz Marina pursued a career in agricultural engineering. All was going well, but then the wave of violence that has affected so many in her native city, caught up with Luz Marina, and she was forced to seek asylum in the U.S. This is where her arduous journey begins, and when she realizes that we must learn from yesterday, live for today, and hope for tomorrow.

Luz does not plan on slowing down. Her next goal is to complete a Licensed Practical Nurse degree, which will provide her with the opportunity of landing a better job. It also proves to her young daughter that hard work and determination pay off at the end.

On behalf of every S.A.V.E.S. Program employee, here's a toast to the graduate.

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If you know anyone else who would like to receive future newsletters, please send your request to [Jtravieso1@dadeschools.net](mailto:Jtravieso1@dadeschools.net).