



SAVES

Dedication and Determination Describe SAVES Student

My name is Alexis Martines, and I was born in Colon, a small town in Matanzas, Cuba. My family has lived there since the 1800's, but the current government made some of us leave the country, and we are now living in different places.



Alexis Martinez - From Colon to Miami

I had a happy childhood with my parents and grandparents. During those years, I practiced sports such as swimming, jogging, chess, and water polo. I continued my education until I finally earned a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from the University of Havana. Upon graduation, I began working in the Cuban government's civil aviation department, recruiting, selecting, and developing course material for new employees. At first, I was happy with my work. I had good relationships with my co-workers and I enjoyed going to work; nevertheless, I realized that the possibilities were not enough because creativity was ruled by politics. I always wanted to contribute to the development of my society, but I realized that it was not possible according to the existing

government rules, so I escaped to the United States where I plan to live, grow, and start a family. The economic situation, the low salary, and the few opportunities to succeed are among the reasons that made me leave Cuba.

With the help of some friends, I left Cuba and went to Mexico. I tried to help my parents leave the island to re-unite with me, but it did not work out. I worked in different places until I finally decided to migrate to the USA. I arrived in the USA on August 12, 2006.

Some friends recommended that I visit The English Center. I contacted the school before the end of the month in which I arrived, and I found a wonderful group of people that helped me create a professional plan to resettle myself in this society. Ms. Mirella Perez, Ms. Maria Ramos, Ms. Yusnelis Gonzalez, Mr. Miguel Soto, and the rest of the SAVES staff at The English Center gave me a wonderful welcome.

I enrolled in ESOL 5 with a dynamic teacher, Mr. Green, and I am very happy with my improvement. After two weeks, I took the TABE Test and started the PC Support Services program. The teacher for this course is Mr. Antonio de Leon, who has an extraordinary knowledge of the entire program that he teaches, and he has taught me valuable things for my future career.

I am grateful to the SAVES program because I have found caring people and many opportunities in this new start. They have helped me to believe that it is possible to work, study and accomplish one's goals in this country.

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