

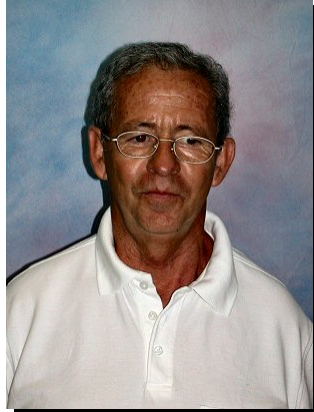


SAVES



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

SAVES Student Today, Bilingual Author Tomorrow



Mr. Hoyos—New Language, New Opportunity

The SAVES program has helped over 30,000 refugees and asylees in their process of resettlement in Miami-Dade County. We provide our clients with regular ESOL classes, and in most of our SAVES 15 school sites, we have SAVES Targeted ESOL Classes, which are small classes taught by top qualified and certified educators. Our clients also receive free textbooks, free bus passes, free childcare, free job referrals, and they are also eligible to receive a year of free vocational courses. Because our program is given through Miami-Dade County Public Schools, our clients can select from over 80 different vocational programs. We like to think that we provide the tools for our clients to make a better life in this country.

One of our current clients who is taking advantage of what we have to offer is Mr. Rodrigo Hoyos. One can describe Mr. Hoyos as a traveling library, full of knowledge and experience. Rodrigo is a Venezuelan asylee of Colombian descent who has been living in the U.S. for two years. This man has done it all, from being a professional cyclist, to owning a construction business, to being a rancher in the plains of Venezuela.

Today, Mr. Rodrigo Hoyos is a SAVES ESOL student at American Adult Center. He has benefited from the support offered by the SAVES staff, the free textbooks, and from the ESOL laboratory, which he describes as his favorite place in the school, where he can learn English by using the visual and audio programs.

Rodrigo admits that the first couple of months in the U.S. were very difficult. He realized that one of his first priorities was to learn English in order to have more opportunities in this country. It's never too late to learn a new language, and Mr. Hoyos, along with his wife who is also an asylee, are doing just that. One of Rodrigo's goals is to learn English well enough in order to write novels and short stories, which brings us to his current endeavor, writer and author.

For the past couple of years, Mr. Hoyos has been busy writing a book. The title of his book is "La Virgen de La Ladera" (The Virgin of the Slope), which is a semi autobiographical story of his life. Mr. Hoyos calls it a project that forms a piece of a life long experience. He also claims that in the future, he will begin writing about the experience of being an asylee in the U.S. His book has been featured in various newspapers around the world, from "La Nacion" in Argentina, to "Norma" in Colombia, and it is currently part of a writer's contest in Barcelona, Spain titled "Concurso de Novela Fernando Lara". Mr. Hoyos is very proud of his work.

Rodrigo would like to urge all other refugees and asylees living in the U.S. to learn English. He feels that it is essential in order to resettle in this country. We at the SAVES program wish Mr. Hoyos all the luck in the world with his book, and we are proud that we can help this author in his endeavor of one day being able to write in a second language.

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If you know anyone else who would like to receive future newsletters, please send your request to Jtravieso1@dadeschools.net.