



SAVES

The Cobo Family—a SAVES Success Story

Arnoldo Cobo and Monica Izquierdo were teenagers in Cuba when they met, fell in love, and got married. They soon had two sons, Addel and Abel. Together, they worked as artisans, in construction and odd jobs, to be able to raise their family. Last year, Addel was in his third year of medical school. His dream was to become a plastic surgeon—a dream that would have been impossible because the Cobos were not members of Cuba's Communist Party. Abel was finishing up his high school and applying to universities.

The Cobos decided to pursue a better life in the United States, and, as part of the U.S. Cuban Migration accords, came to Miami in October 2006. In December 2006 they began their English classes at Hialeah-Miami Lakes Adult and Community Education Center, where they were assisted by the center's SAVES program. Mom, Dad, and Abel took the CASAS test and started in ESOL High Beginning. Addel started in ESOL High Intermediate. The family continued to come to their classes, always with excellent attendance, always together. At the end of the 2006 middle trimester, both Abel and Addel were chosen as Best Students in their respective classes and received awards at their graduation ceremony.

Arnoldo, Monica, and Abel were selected to participate in the pilot of the Intensive English Academy Managed Enrollment initiative, and they all went up a level during the 8 weeks of the course. Today, Monica is in ESOL Advanced and Arnoldo and Abel are in ESOL High Intermediate and again excelling in class. Older brother Addel has exited the ESOL program and is taking computer classes.

The Cobos are working in a factory. Arnoldo was offered a better paying job as a machinist but he refused because it would mean that he could not continue at HML Adult. They have plans to complete their ESOL studies and start in a training program as physical therapists, with the hope of one day owning their own business. Of course, this will mean more classes—someone in the family would need to learn about business administration!

The Cobos speak very highly of HML Adult and of the center's SAVES program. Arnoldo says, "Words are not enough; thank God we are here and we can study. This program has changed our perspective, and we can see our possibilities. We definitely want to finish the 6th ESOL level." Abel says the program is 'bárbaro.' That's excellent in any language!



Left to right, back row: Arnoldo Cobo, Abel Cobo and Addel Cobo. Left to right, front row: Monica Izquierdo and Mrs. Llerena.

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