



# Sebastiana Raymundo

## Translated from Q'eqchi'

I am Sebastiana Raymundo Ramírez, I am from Guatemala, I share my testimony and I am going to tell you how I made it through and how I got to the United States.

I came in December 2018,

When I decided to come, I was very sad and I told my mom and my grandmother, I have to go to the United States, but they started crying, they didn't want me to come, but it was important, because I was receiving threats and my life was endangered.

I came to this country to save my life and that of my daughter, but when I was on my way, a lot of questions arose, every minute, every day I was moving away from my town.

On the way, I cried and became sad, because I was abandoning my friends, my relatives.

When we arrived in Mexico we went to a van and in the van: there was no food, no water, no sanitary service and when they closed the upper part, we had difficulty breathing, we lived through complicated situations.

But thank God we managed to cross and when we got to the border, by the way I don't know what it's called, I think it's Hidalgo, and they told us that we had to get fifteen people into a taxi, and we went one on top of the other and the car drove at full speed, when it stopped, when we were in the car they told us that all fifteen of us had to bend down in less than a minute and when we got out we had to run, we ran looking for a path that leads us to the river, we had to cross a not so deep river, but we did cross the river.

We went under a trailer, I mean we went under a train that was parked there, we went under.

We lifted the fence and passed under, and I realized that my daughter went ahead, and she had gone under the fence.

And we arrived where the immigration officers were and they captured us, they captured me and my daughter, my daughter was 13 years old at the time.

So when we stayed there in immigration, we were very wet and they didn't give us a change of clothes, we stayed eight days with wet, dirty, stinky clothes and the clothes dried on our bodies, and they gave us aluminum foil, that's all we used and there was very cold air from the fridge and we didn't have a jacket, I was so regretful, my daughter didn't deserve to go through that suffering but it was inevitable, because we were already there.

On December 24, 2018, we stayed in immigration, so the first month of the New Year, they transferred us to a group home.

Until then we bathed, they gave us food, the 8 days we were in immigration, they didn't give us food, they only gave us turnip burritos for dinner, we got bored of eating just that, but we couldn't do anything, there we were. When they transferred us to a group home, we bathed there, ate, then one of the companions paid me the ticket, but I was worried! because I didn't know how to take the bus, we went through several states, I got tired in the bus, I got tired of resting, I got tired of standing still, I no longer wanted anything, because I walked 3 days, three nights, four days.

We were hungry on the way, but we endured because we didn't have money, we didn't have money because we had just arrived, they gave us fruit at the shelter, but it didn't fill us up, the hamburger they gave us as we are not used to, and we didn't eat it so we stayed hungry.

When we were already here, we found another problem because he didn't have a house, where we arrived, we didn't have a room to rest.

They gave us a room, there was no kitchen, there was no bathroom, we suffered a lot, but we couldn't do anything, we're already there.

When I arrived, I thought that I would apply for a job in a house, but that is not how it works, it is important to process documents, to get a job in a company and I did not know where and how to process those documents.



I was there for three months, and I didn't get a job, I was already desperate, I didn't have a phone, I had nothing, I had nothing.

I thought, what am I doing here, it's worse than Guatemala, because I had no food, I had nowhere to rest safely. It was very cold, we arrived in New Bedford in January. I looked for a job in a restaurant, but they gave me work only for three hours and they only paid me 9, so I earned 27 dollars a day, but I paid 400 a month where I got a room, I had nothing left, nothing to buy food, I put my daughter in school but I needed transportation to take her to school because I didn't have a car. I didn't know how to take her to school. A lady taught me, so after three days I started taking my daughter to school, but I looked at all the big and identical houses and got lost and couldn't find the house anymore because I didn't have a phone and I couldn't look it up in the guide.

But Thank God I got another job in a place called lobster, and killing lobsters and I didn't know what a lobster was and I learned what a lobster is and how to kill lobster, and how a lobster is. Working makes me less worried because I had income, what they paid me helped me pay off the debts because I already owed a lot and I was left without a job for three months.

Now I am happy because my daughter is in the last grade of "High School", now she is in grade 12 as they say and she is going to study at the university.

Thanks to God, she has achieved and got a scholarship, so she is going to study at a university called Bridgewater State University. I am proud and that is our purpose, it fills me with satisfaction because we are moving forward and I am working with a group called DESEO and I am coordinating a group of Victorious Women, we are working on Women's Rights, the rights of undocumented people like me, but thank God they already gave me permission to work and now I am learning to drive a car and they gave me a license and I am happy and I am collaborating with the group LIDAMAYA where I do translations in the Court, I am happy now I thank this town for giving me an opportunity to get ahead and whoever is coordinating the CSD group is respectful, intelligent and respects Rights. I am happy working I thank you for listening to me, I am happy here, I thank you for your valuable time for listening to me.