

Javier & Beby: “The Opportunity to Study”



Javier (Age 19):

“I came here a year-and-a-half ago, for economic reasons. My grandparents and I didn’t have enough to eat, or to pay for light or water. I only got to attend school until the fourth grade.

“At the beginning, I didn’t have money for rent, food, or clothes—I came here with nothing. Friends told me about the Center, and I signed up. Here I found support, food, and clothes; what little they had, they shared with me.

“But most importantly, through the Center I had the good fortune to find work, a scholarship, and the opportunity to study.

“Now, I study classical guitar at the Community School for Music and Arts, work at a restaurant, and perform at the restaurant and at church.

“To be a professional musician—this is my dream—if God wishes, to be a great guitarist. My hope is to benefit others through my studies, to really do something for other people like me, who have never had the opportunity.”

Beby (Volunteer ESL Teacher, Day Worker Center):

“I came here as an immigrant from Cuba; we had absolutely nothing. The hurdles we’ve had to overcome remind me of the troubles and hardships that my parents faced, including the lack of language and the way we were treated because of it. Now it’s time for me to help others learn English and develop some understanding about the culture.

“I’ve had some hard times, but never to the extent that they have; it’s a totally different life.

“The payoff is to see them succeed, to learn something, to get on with their lives.”