

*Happy Valentine's Day
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A teenage mother shares her pain and looks for answers in this week's El Pachuco. See page 6.

Una madre adolescente comparte su dolor y busca respuestas en la sección "El Pachuco" de esta semana. Ve la página 6.



Johnny Valdivia's Family Refuses To Give Up

La Familia De Johnny Valdivia Se Niega A Renunciar



Joe Valdivia Jr. & Lupe Rennau addressed the crowd at the fundraiser, "The hurt never goes away. My pain will always be there because I don't have him here anymore. I can't hold him, talk to him, hear his voice or see his smile and that pain is going to be with me no matter. Joe Valdivia Jr., Johnny's Valdivia brother, thanked the crowd that came out in support of adding dollars to the reward fund. "To see the support of family and friends - that is love. I want to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart."

Joe Valdivia Jr. & Lupe Rennau se dirigieron a la multitud en la recaudación de fondos, "El dolor nunca se va. Mi dolor siempre estará ahí, porque yo no lo tengo aquí. Yo no lo puedo tocar, hablar con él, escuchar su voz o ver su sonrisa y ese dolor va a estar conmigo siempre. Joe Valdivia Jr., el hermano de Johnny Valdivia, agradeció a la multitud que asistió en apoyo de la adición de dólares para el fondo de recompensa. "Ver el apoyo de familiares y amigos - es amor. Quiero dar las gracias a todos, desde el fondo de mi corazón."

By
Joe Arce & Jose Faus

Lupe Rennau lost her son four years ago in a drive-by shooting. In the ensuing years, she and her family have fought to keep his memory in the public eye with the hope that someone will come forward and provide the information that will help catch his killer.

"The hurt never goes away. Even if we solve this, my pain will always be there because I don't have him here anymore. I can't hold him, talk to him, hear his voice or see his smile and that pain is going to be with me no matter. If this is solved it does give me rest to know that that person is not on the streets, and that there will be an end to that crime and maybe future crimes," said Rennau.

Family and friends gathered this past Saturday at Our Lady of Angels in Westport for the Johnny Valentine benefit, a taco dinner fundraiser to help boost the reward for information about the case. The reward currently stands at \$12,500 dollars.

"We are hoping that someone will come forward that has any information towards the conviction of the person that committed this crime," Rennau told Hispanic News. "Maybe there is someone out there that might need a lawyer or a new car. Well there is \$12,500 there to help them if they know anything that will lead to a conviction of the person that killed John."

"IT IS SUPPOSED ... / PÁGINA 4

Traduce
Gemma Tornado

Lupe Rennau perdió a su hijo hace cuatro años, en un tiroteo realizado desde un auto en movimiento. En los años siguientes, ella y su familia han luchado para mantener su memoria en el ojo público, con la esperanza de que alguien de un paso adelante y proporcione información que ayudará a atrapar a su asesino.

"El dolor nunca se va. Incluso si resolvemos esto, mi dolor siempre estará ahí, porque yo no lo tengo aquí. Yo no lo puedo abrazar, hablar con él, escuchar su voz o ver su sonrisa, y ese dolor va a estar conmigo, no importa lo que pase. Si esto se resuelve lo que me dará es descanso el saber que esa persona no está en las calles, y que habrá un fin a ese crimen y tal vez, futuros crímenes", dijo Rennau.

Familiares y amigos se reunieron el pasado sábado en Nuestra Señora de los Angeles, en Westport para el evento de San Valentín a beneficio de Johnny, un evento de venta de tacos para recaudador de fondos, y ayudar a aumentar la recompensa por información sobre el caso. La recompensa es actualmente de \$12,500 dólares.

"Estamos esperando que alguien de un paso adelante y que tenga cualquier información hacia la condena de la persona que cometió este crimen", Rennau dijo a Hispanic News. "Tal vez hay alguien por ahí, que puede ser que

"SE SUPONE ... / PÁGINA 4

Banco Lidera Con Servicios Bilingües Bank Leads Way With Bilingual Services

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Mario Urquilla (lower right) said, "With Kansas City, Kansas and its Hispanic community, it made perfect sense to create a strategy and go after that market. Especially if you look at the numbers and see how under banked the Hispanic population of Kansas City is, and across the nation for that matter." Hidy Ortiz (lower left) said, "One of the advantages of the new branch is all the employees are bilingual at this location."

Mario Urquilla (abajo a la derecha), dijo: "Con Kansas City, Kansas y su comunidad hispana, tiene mucho sentido crear una estrategia e ir en busca de ese mercado. Sobre todo si nos fijamos en los números y vemos el ladeo de la población hispana en Kansas City, y a través de la nación para el caso. Hidy Ortiz (abajo a la derecha) dijo: "Una de las ventajas de la nueva sucursal es que todos los empleados son bilingües en esta ubicación."



Por
Joe Arce & Jose Faus

El lunes, 3 de febrero, el Banco Enterprise & Trust, abrió una nueva sucursal de servicio completo en el número 151 S. de la calle 18, en Kansas City, Kansas, en la zona comercial de Prescott. Esta nueva ubicación también cuenta con un equipo completo bilingüe, y ofrece servicios diseñados para la comunidad hispana.

"No sólo estamos emocionados de extender los servicios del Banco Enterprise & Trust a Kansas City, Kansas, sino también estamos muy contentos de asociarnos con la comunidad hispana para

LA PRIMERA ... / PÁGINA 2

By
Joe Arce & Jose Faus

On Monday, February 3, Enterprise Bank & Trust opened a new full-service branch at 151 S. 18th Street in Kansas City, Kansas in the Prescott shopping area. This new location also features a full bi-lingual staff and offers services designed for the Hispanic community.

"We are not only excited to be extending Enterprise Bank & Trust services to Kansas City, Kan., but we are also excited to be partnering with the Hispanic community to do so," said Mario Urquilla, assistant vice president, community development.

The branch will offer banking services such as personal accounts,

THE FIRST ... / PAGE 2

Things Every Patient Should Know When Dealing With The Health-Care System

By Guest Writer
Ruth Fenner Barash

With millions of people newly covered by health insurance, and 11,000 more becoming eligible for Medicare every day, more people will be visiting doctors and hospitals.

And while that's a positive, patient advocate warns that the U.S. health care system is not always the benevolent safety net many people believe it to be. It can be abusive, incompetent, callous toward patients – and worse.

"Patients and their loved ones cannot blindly turn themselves over to this massive, technology-based system and trust that it will care – or take care of them," says Barash, who shares lessons learned from extensive health-care experiences

PATIENT ADVOCATE ... / PAGE 3

Las Cosas Que Cada Paciente Debe Saber Al Momento De Tratar Con El Sistema De Atención A La Salud

Traduce
Gemma Tornado

Con millones de personas recientemente cubiertas por el seguro de salud, y 11,000 más en proceso de ser elegibles cada día para Medicare, habrá más gente visitando a los médicos y hospitales.

Y aunque eso es positivo, un defensor de los pacientes advierte que el sistema de atención de salud de E. U. no siempre es la red de seguridad benevolente que mucha gente cree que es. Pueden ser abusivos, incompetentes, insensibles y peor hacia los pacientes.

"Los pacientes y sus seres queridos no pueden acudir ciegamente hacia este sistema masivo, basado en la tecnología y confiar que les importa cuidar de ellos",

DEFENSOR DE PACIENTES ... / PÁGINA 3

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Por Primera Vez en KCK



The latest Enterprise Bank & Trust location is in the Prescott shopping strip in KCK. Hidy Ortiz (Left) said, “One of our services as it applies to the Hispanic numbers, involves doing transactions with ITIN numbers. ITIN numbers are issued by the IRS to someone without a regular social security number for the purposes of filing taxes. It allows individuals to use that number to report to credit bureaus so they can build and establish their credit.”

La más reciente ubicación del Banco Enterprise es en la zona comercial Prescott en KCK. Hidy Ortiz (a la izquierda) dijo: “Uno de nuestros servicios, ya que se aplica a los números de hispanos, implica hacer transacciones con los números de ITIN. Números ITIN se emiten por el IRS para alguien sin un número de seguro social ordinario a los efectos de presentación de impuestos. Permite a los individuos utilizar ese número para informar a las agencias de crédito, para que puedan construir y establecer su crédito.”

CONT./PÁGINA 1

hacerlo”, dijo Mario Urquilla, Vicepresidente Adjunto de Desarrollo de la Comunidad. La sucursal ofrecerá servicios bancarios, como cuentas personales, cuentas comerciales, hipotecas y un cajero automático. Se ofrecerá el Número de Identificación del Contribuyente (ITIN por sus siglas en inglés) para préstamos individuales en autos y viviendas, así como préstamos ITIN para las empresas. Según Urquilla, la apertura fue de manera suave con la principal apertura fijada tentativamente para el 8 de abril. Esta es la primera sucursal del banco en KCK.

“Me contrataron para ayudar a llegar a la comunidad minoritaria aquí en Kansas City”, Urquilla dijo a Hispanic News recientemente: “Querían construir una sucursal en la que se refirieran como un referente de censo para la mayoría/minoría. Con Kansas City, Kansas y su comunidad hispana, tenía mucho sentido el crear una estrategia y buscar ese mercado. Sobre todo si nos fijamos en los números y vemos que tan bajos están los servicios bancarios para la población hispana de Kansas City y a lo largo y ancho de la nación para el caso”.

Urquilla esta de acuerdo que el viejo adagio de “ubicación, ubicación y ubicación”, se aplica a la nueva sucursal. “Una de las cosas más atractivas sobre la ubicación de Prescott es que el siguiente banco más cercano está a un par de kilómetros, en la Avenida Minnesota. Hay una clara ventaja allí también”.

Urquilla tiene una larga trayectoria en el sector bancario, comenzando como un cajero hace ocho años en un pequeño banco comunitario en Clinton, Missouri. Desde que se mudó a Kansas City en el 2008, el se ha centrado en la banca hispana y los sub bancarizados y no bancarizados en la población de Kansas City. Él ha estado con Enterprise por ocho meses después de haber sido reclutado por Commerce Bank.

“Otros bancos con los que hablé y me ofrecieron puestos de trabajo; mientras estaba en Comerse, ninguno pudo hacer lo que Enterprise hizo para convencerme de que eran tan dedicados y serios sobre lo que yo quería hacer, o lo que yo pensé que iba a funcionar”, explicó. “Enterprise fue el primer banco que se presentó y dijo: ‘No sólo vamos a hacer esto, sino también vamos a darle esa sucursal completamente bilingüe y vamos a abrir una nueva sucursal porque somos serios en esto’”.

“Es muy emocionante para mí, el ser parte de un banco que entiende, cree y apoya la idea de que se puede llegar a diferentes tipos de población y tener éxito como banco”, añadió Urquilla.

Hidy Ortiz ha estado con Enterprise desde hace un mes como gerente de la sucursal y presidente asistente del banco. Ella habló con Hispanic News acerca de las oportunidades disponibles en la nueva sucursal.

Uno de esos servicios; ya que se aplica a los números de hispanos, implica hacer transacciones con los números



de ITIN. Los números ITIN son emitidos por el IRS para alguien sin un número de seguro social regular con el propósito de presentación de impuestos. Permite a los individuos el utilizar ese número para informar a las agencias de crédito para que puedan construir y establecer su crédito.

“Vamos realmente a ser capaces de ayudar a la gente con préstamos ITIN, y ya sea en negocios, personales, préstamos para la vivienda, refinanciar, tarjetas de crédito y préstamos no garantizados para ayudar a la gente a establecer cuentas de crédito. Mucha de nuestra gente hispana tiene la bendición ahora de tener un número de seguro social, por ejemplo a través del programa Acción Diferida. La gente esta obteniendo su número de seguro social”.

Ortiz agregó que la libertad que otorga el Número de Seguro Social (SSN por sus siglas en inglés) se expresa de muchas maneras. “Ellos pueden trabajar. Pueden incluso querer comprar un coche, pero no tienen crédito. Ellos van a un concesionario de coches que les cobra interés del 20% debido a la falta de crédito. Lo que queremos hacer es estar ahí para ellos, para que podamos ayudarles a establecer el crédito para que al momento de cruzar ese puente, tengan un crédito establecido también.

Una de las ventajas de la nueva sucursal es que todos los empleados son bilingües. Según Ortiz, este tipo de enfoque es una gran forma de seguridad para la comunidad hispana y también se ocupa de las barreras

que surgen cuando los hablantes hispanos no nativos dependen de sus familiares para que sean sus interpretes.

“Yo les digo a los clientes, ‘usted puede venir con nosotros porque somos totalmente bilingües’. Porque entonces podemos explicar los documentos legales que son un lenguaje totalmente diferente para un niño, no importa lo inteligente que sea, no tiene la capacidad de saber o entenderlo. Este banco hizo su tarea y se dieron cuenta de cómo es esta comunidad hispana”.

Ortiz señaló que cuando llegó a la sucursal, el gerente le pidió una sola cosa y era contratar personal bilingüe, sin discriminación de género o raza.

“Tienen que ser bilingües para el beneficio del cliente. Creemos que es la mejor forma de servir a nuestros clientes”, dijo Ortiz.

Urquilla ve un gran potencial en el mercado hispano.

“Si nos fijamos en el informe que la Reserva Federal acaba de publicar, dijeron que más del 48% de los hispanos, están sub bancarizados o no bancarizados. Entonces lo comparamos con cualquier otro grupo demográfico. Cuando nos fijamos en la población hispana nos damos cuenta de que una de cada dos personas que conoce no tiene una cuenta bancaria todavía. ¿Por qué usted no está yendo a ese mercado? no tiene ningún sentido”.

Traduce
Gemma Tornado

A First For KCK

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business accounts, mortgages, and an ATM. Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) loans for cars and homes will be offered as well as ITIN loans for businesses. According to Urquilla, the opening was a soft one with the main opening tentatively set for April 8. This is the bank’s first branch in KCK.

“I was hired on to help reach the minority community here in Kansas City,” Urquilla told Hispanic News recently.” They wanted to build a branch in what is referred to as a majority/minority census track. ... With Kansas City, Kansas and its Hispanic community, it made perfect sense to create a strategy and go after that market. Especially if you look at the numbers and see how under banked the Hispanic population of Kansas City is, and across the nation for that matter.”

Urquilla agreed that the old adage of “location, location, and location” applies to the new branch. “One of the most appealing things about the Prescott location is that the next closest bank is a couple of miles up the road on Minnesota Avenue. There is a definite advantage there as well.”

Urquilla has a long history in banking, starting as a teller eight years ago in a small community bank in Clinton, Missouri. Since moving to Kansas City in 2008, he has focused on Hispanic banking and the under banked and unbanked population of Kansas City. He has been with Enterprise for eight months after being recruited from Commerce Bank.

“Other banks I have talked with and that have offered me jobs while at Commerce, none could do what Enterprise did in convincing me that they were as dedicated and serious about what I wanted to do, or what I thought would work,” he explained. “Enterprise is the first bank that stood up and said, ‘Not only are we going to do this, but we are also going to give you that fully bilingual branch ... and we are going to open a new branch because we are that serious about it.”

It is very exciting for me to be a part of a bank that understands and believes in and supports the idea that you can reach out to various types of populations and be successful as a bank,” added Urquilla.

Hidy Ortiz has been with Enterprise for a month as branch manager and assistant bank president. She talked with Hispanic News about the opportunities available at the new branch.

One of those services as it applies to the Hispanic numbers, involves doing transactions with

ITIN numbers. ITIN numbers are issued by the IRS to someone without a regular social security number for the purposes of filing taxes. It allows individuals to use that number to report to credit bureaus so they can build and establish their credit.

“We are actually going to be able to help people do ITIN loans and this is business, personal, home loans, refinance, credit cards and unsecured loans helping people establish credit scores. A lot of our Hispanic people have the blessing now to have a social security number, for example through the [Deferred Action] program. They are getting their social security number.”

Ortiz added that the freedom afforded by a SSN # is expressed in many ways.

“They can work. They may even want to buy a car but they don’t have credit. They go to a car dealership that will charge them 20 percent interest because of a lack of credit. What we want to do is be there for them so we can help them establish credit so when they cross that bridge, they have credit established as well.

One of the advantages of the new branch is all the employees are bilingual. According to Ortiz, that type of focus is a big form of security for the Hispanic community and also addresses the barriers that arise when non-native speakers rely on family members to interpret for them.

“I say to customers, ‘you can come to us because we are fully bilingual.’ Because then we can explain the legal documents that are a totally different language that a child, no matter how smart they are, does not have the capacity to know it or understand it. ... This bank did their homework and they realized how this Hispanic community is.”

Ortiz noted that when she came to the branch, the manger asked her only one thing and that was to hire a bilingual staff without discriminating on gender or race.

“They have to be bilingual to the benefit of the customer. We think that is the best way to serve our customers,” said Ortiz.

Urquilla sees a lot of potential in the Hispanic market.

“If you look at the report the Federal Reserve just released, they said that over 48 percent of Hispanics are under banked or unbanked. Then you compare that to any other demographic. ... When you look at the Hispanic population you realize that one in every two people you meet does not have a bank account yet. Why you are not targeting that market does not make any sense.”

FYI KANSAS BYWAYS PROGRAM SEEKS OPINIONS

Bicyclists, Pedestrians Encouraged To Participate

If you enjoy getting off the beaten path by walking or bicycling, then the Kansas Byways Program wants to consider your ideas for inclusion in a new Kansas Byways Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The goal of the plan is to enhance bicycling and pedestrian opportunities for each of the state’s 11 scenic and historic byways.

The plan is being developed by a consulting team led by RDG Planning & Design, Omaha, and CFS Engineers, Topeka. The goal of the plan is to help make the state’s byways more accommodating to bicyclists and pedestrians. The diversity, character and manageable length of the byways makes them especially attractive to non-motorized users, clearly evidenced by the increasing interest expressed by these groups. A friendly, welcoming bicycle/pedestrian environment also offers economic opportunities for communities and regions along the byways.

To take the survey and learn more about the planning process, go online to www.rdgusa.com/crp/kansasbyways.

To learn more about the 11 Kansas Byways, visit the website at ksbyways.org.

About Kansas Byways

The byways program is a partnership of the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) working in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, private citizens, local byway committees and local governments. Kansas has 11 byways – eight scenic (two of which are National Scenic Byways) and three historic byways. They draw travelers to explore the scenic, historic, cultural and natural features of Kansas that lie beyond the heavily-traveled, high-speed highways. The Kansas Byways Program works within existing state and local regulations, does not require significant local financial investment and does not infringe on individual private property rights.

Scenic roadways serve as natural, social, cultural and economic resources for the visitors to the state of Kansas, the people of Kansas and the local communities in which the roadways are located. The program

is a cooperative effort among private citizens, local groups, local governments and state government agencies.

The Kansas Byways Program? The Kansas Byways Program was formed to identify and designate scenic roadways for the enjoyment of the traveling public in Kansas. The Kansas Byways Program is related to the National Scenic Byways Program, a project of the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). The National Scenic Byways Program seeks to identify and designate national scenic byways to increase tourism and educate the traveling public about our nation’s environment, history and culture. Roads in Kansas may be nominated for byway designation by private citizens, local groups or local governments. To nominate a road for Kansas byways designation, obtain forms from the Kansas Byways Program, complete the application form and a preliminary route resource inventory and then submit the form and inventory information to the Program at the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism. Call 800-684-6966 for further information. The Kansas Byways Program is designed to work within existing state and local regulations. The program does not require significant local financial investment nor does it infringe on individual private property rights.



Defensor De Pacientes, Advierte A Los Que Están En La Nueva Cobertura De Seguro: Hágase Escuchar

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dice Barash, quien comparte las lecciones aprendidas de la amplia experiencia de atención de la salud en un nuevo libro “Para bien o para mal: tambaleándose de crisis en crisis en la montaña de la medicina de los Estados Unidos”. Mi historia con moraleja narra el largo viaje médico que su marido, Philip, soportó con ella siendo su abogada. Ella descubrió la mala gestión y excesos, intervenciones inútiles y a veces un total desprecio para el dolor - incluso cuando no había ninguna esperanza de curación.

“Aprendí mucho de nuestra experiencia, y con tantas personas que ahora tienen acceso a los servicios de salud, quiero que los demás se beneficien de lo que he aprendido”, dice ella. “Usted puede navegar por el sistema, sólo necesita saber cómo”. Ella ofrece estas sugerencias para los pacientes y sus seres queridos, ya sea un viaje al médico para un chequeo o un diagnóstico de una enfermedad catastrófica.

· Evite la sala de emergencia - por su propio bien. Las salas de emergencia se han desarrollado con la idea de que solo algunas personas las utilizarían - la mayoría de la gente vería a su médico familiar. Pero a medida que los costos de atención de la salud se incrementaron, se convirtieron en un centro de atención primaria para los que no tienen seguro o el dinero para

pagar los servicios de su propio bolsillo. “No se espera que los pacientes y sus familias pasen un largo tiempo en la sala de emergencias - presumiblemente, los verían rápidamente y, o bien ser ingresados en el hospital o ser atendidos y dados de alta - por lo que no están diseñadas para ser cómodas”, dice Barash. “Se han convertido en sitios muy concurridos, especialmente en las ciudades, y los pacientes pueden esperar en la sala de espera, horas sentados en sillas de plástico duro. Para alguien que está enfermo o lesionado, esto puede ser una tortura”. Las personas enfermas por lo general no están aislados, por lo que las salas de espera también están llenas de gérmenes, ella señala.

· Sea escéptico - cuestionelo todo. Con demasiada frecuencia, se toma lo que se nos dice como un evangelio, dice Barash. “Si usted tiene el lujo del tiempo, tome un poco de ese tiempo para pensar las cosas, para investigar y obtener una segunda opinión”, dice ella. Investigue las conexiones de su médico. Cuando usted es canalizado con un especialista, pregunte por qué esa persona en particular. Si usted vive en una zona con una gran comunidad académica, pregunte acerca de los médicos y profesionales de la salud con las mejores reputaciones. ¿Quién tiene la mayor experiencia en un nicho en particular? ¿Quién está haciendo la investigación más prometedora? ¿Cuántas veces ha

realizado éste procedimiento, y cuál es su tasa de éxito?.

· Pregunte lo que cuesta - no importa quién está pagando. Nuestro sistema de salud es absurdo en el número de consultas inútiles, procedimientos de diagnóstico y las intervenciones que imponen a los pacientes, dice Barash. Ya sea que nuestros gastos de hospital están totalmente cubiertos por Medicare, Medicaid o seguro privado, o una parte está siendo pagada por nosotros mismos, todos tenemos que incluir el costo en nuestras conversaciones con los proveedores de atención de la salud. “Parte de la culpa de tener el sistema de salud más caro del mundo recae en nosotros, las personas, que no cuestionan las compras o buscan precios como lo haríamos en el supermercado, la ropa o los muebles”, dice Barash. “Si se ordena un examen o consulta, entienda el por qué. ¿Es realmente necesario? ¿Usted puede decir que no!”

Por último, todos debemos ser conscientes con el hecho de que la muerte es un hecho.

“El problema de mi marido, y el problema que muchos de nosotros podemos enfrentando, es el proceso interminable para llegar allí - una muerte que no queremos”.

Ruth Fenner Barash estudió filosofía en el City College de Nueva York y realizó estudios de postgrado en la Universidad de Chicago.

Patient Advocate Warns Those New to Insurance Coverage: Speak Up for Yourself

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in a new book, “For Better or Worse: Lurching from Crisis to Crisis in America’s Medical Morass.” My cautionary tale traces the long medical journey her husband, Philip, endured with her as his advocate. She discovered mismanagement and excess, useless interventions and a sometimes complete disregard for pain – even when there was no hope of healing.

“I learned a great deal from our experience, and with so many people now gaining access to health care, I want others to benefit from what I’ve learned,” she says. “You can navigate the system; you just have to know how.” I offers these suggestions for patients and their loved ones, whether it’s a trip to the doctor for a checkup or a diagnosis of a catastrophic illness.

· Avoid the emergency room – for your own sake. Emergency rooms were developed with the idea that few people would use them – most people would see their physician. But as health care costs rose, they became a primary care facility for those without insurance or the money to pay for services out of pocket. “Patients and their families were not expected to spend a long time in the E.R. – presumably, they would be seen quickly and either admitted to the hospital or treated and released – so they’re not designed for comfort,” Barash says. “They’ve become very crowded, especially in cities, and patients might wait for hours sitting in hard plastic chairs in the waiting room. For someone who’s sick or injured, this can be torture.” Sick people usually are not isolated, so waiting rooms also teem with germs, she notes.

· Be skeptical – question everything. Too often, we take the first thing we’re told as gospel, Barash says. “If you have the luxury of time, take some of that time to think things through, to research and get second opinions,” she says. Research your physician’s connections. When you’re referred to a specialist, ask why that particular person. If you live in an area with a large academic

community, ask around about the physicians and health-care providers with the best reputations. Who has the most experience in a particular niche? Who’s doing the most promising research? How many times have you performed this procedure and what is your success rate?

· Ask what it costs – no matter who’s paying. Our health-care system is absurd in the number of useless consultations, diagnostic procedures and interventions it foists on patients, Barash says. Whether our hospital bills are fully covered by Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance, or we’re paying a portion ourselves, we must all include cost in our discussions with health-care providers. “Part of the blame for having the most

expensive health-care system in the world goes to us, the individuals, who don’t question purchases or shop for prices as we would for groceries, clothing, or furniture,” Barash says. “If a test or consultation is ordered, understand why. Is it really necessary? You can say no!”

Finally, we all must come to terms with the fact that death is a given.

“My husband’s problem, and the problem many of us may be doomed to face, is the seemingly endless getting there – a dying we don’t want.”

Ruth Fenner Barash studied philosophy at City College of New York and did graduate work at the University of Chicago.



“The Hispanic Information Super Highway Shrinks”

By Raoul Lowery Contreras

Now that Jay Leno has been let go by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) I no longer have any reason to watch NBC except during football season when they have a National Football League game on Sunday nights. Add to that, the demise of NBC Latino.

COMCAST owns NBC and one would think that the all-knowing cable behemoth would be aware of how many Hispanic/Latinos subscribe to their far-flung cable and Internet system and that they would know how many Hispanics there are who might be interested in a Latino/Hispanic web site crammed with news and information about and by Hispanics. One would think.

So why with the American Hispanic population burgeoning, with Hispanic high school and college graduates growing in number every semester, every year, in every community and state did COMCAST shut down NBC Latino?

Notice I’m not pushing Spanish-language media because though nice and proudly ethnic, we must not only speak but excel at and with English. I want a thriving English-speaking Hispanic community that catches up with the dominant non-Hispanic White community in accomplishment, in economics, politics and food with a world-famous culinary industry that puts Mexican combination plates in front of everyone. The bonus, of course, is a community that is bilingual what with 400-million Spanish-speaking neighbors to the south of us.

That does not mean, of course, that I would junk the great history of our people that

accelerated from the departure of Italian navigator from Spain in 1492 or from the great Spanish rogue and soldier of fortune Hernando Cortes and his expedition to Mexia from Havana, Cuba 500 years ago. We have a glorious history and tradition; we have great literature, great food and a scientific background that took a grass in the Valley of Mexico thousands of years ago and transformed it into something unavailable in nature, corn, the most widely eaten food in the world today. Then, not to forget the superior astronomy of the Mexican Indian in Yucatan.

I revel and revere that history. I revel and revere our history in the United States of America. I think others should also. So why with 53 million American Hispanics did NBC shut down NBC Latino? It did little to promote the site. It staffed it with bright non-Hispanics and used news from its news division and MSNBC, sad as that is. As heavily staffed as NBC and MSNBC are with on-camera Hispanic anchors and reporters, behind-camera editors and executives, it is amazing that there wasn’t an internal chubasco (tropical storm) of dissent and objections to the cut back (Excuse my sarcasm). Amazing!

There wasn’t and there might not be, perhaps ever, any introspection at NBC or COMCAST. Ask Jay Leno.

Corporate America hasn’t yet decided it is in its best interests to know the fast growing Hispanic/Latino community. From what we can see, it may never know. On the other hand, the best and brightest who run it and the country may wake up one day and realize that it is in its best interests to not only pay attention but to merge somewhat with the growing group, to absorb what they have to offer besides Super Bowl tortilla chips, guacamole, combination plates and “cannon fodder.”

We know that Hispanics are brand conscious, we know that they earn more money than ever, we know that they assimilate better and faster than any immigrant group in American history; these facts are not only self-evident but are proven empirically with every study performed by legitimate researchers. Compare, if you will, the Irish Catholic experience in America to today’s Hispanics. It took almost a hundred years for the Irish Catholic to reach the schooling and economic levels of average America.

According to the RAND Corporation, Mexican male immigrants one hundred years ago averaged 4 (four) years of schooling. In 1950, according to Dr. Thomas Sowell’s “Ethnic America” the average Mexican American male in California had an 8th grade level education. Today Mexican American youths are averaging slightly under 12 years of schooling, three times their great grandfathers and half again that of 60 years ago. One fifth of the American military’s Combat Arms (those who handle guns, artillery and armor) are Hispanic with more than 90% being Mexican American. And, without the benefit of dozens of colleges like the 140-year-old Black college system, Hispanics are now earning more graduate degrees than ever mostly from public colleges like the California State University system, the largest public university in the world. In California alone, over 600,000 Hispanic students study at public two and four year colleges.

One will not read or hear such good news from or at NBC because it shut down NBC Latino. Too bad, 54 million Hispanic Americans in a few months, 55 million next year -- you read it here, not at NBC.

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“It Is Supposed To Be A Time Of Love”

CONT./PAGE 1

Rennau was surprised to hear that the TIPS Hotline has doubled the reward they offer for information on the case to \$2,000.

“I am surprised and I think that is wonderful,” she said. “It is just a lot more money to give to someone who will want to come forward, cause you know to some people they don’t want to say anything but if they are in need of money that helps them and they are helping us.”

Joe Valdivia Jr., Johnny’s brother, thanked the crowd that came out in support.

“Sometimes we are thinking that we are not doing enough, then everybody shows us so much support and love for my brother. ... It is tough to do this every season because when it gets close to that time you are like ... this is supposed to be a time of love and to have that heartache every year is a rough road. But to see

the support of family and friends - that is love, man. I want to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart.”

Rennau echoed Michael’s thoughts. “I really want to say thank you to all of you because we could not really put all the money down for the reward without your support. ... And you guys are the most important because you are the ones who support us in making this a success. Every year we say this is going to be the year that we get an answer to my son’s death. ... I miss him terribly.”



Rennau has a message for the person responsible for Johnny’s death.

“For the person that committed the crime, we want them to know that we are going to keep it on the media and we are not going to stop until we find an answer.”

“Se Supone Que Es Un Tiempo De Amor”

CONT./PÁGINA 1

de dinero que los ayuda y ellos nos están ayudando”.

Joe Valdivia Jr., el hermano de Johnny, agradeció a la gente que salió con su apoyo.

“A veces pensamos que no estamos haciendo lo suficiente, entonces todo el mundo nos muestra tanto apoyo y amor por mi hermano. Es difícil el hacer esto cada temporada porque cuando se acerca ese momento, usted supone que es un tiempo de amor y el tener ese dolor en el corazón cada año, es un camino duro. Pero al ver el apoyo de familiares y amigos eso es el amor, hombre!. Quiero dar las gracias a todos, desde el fondo de mi corazón”.

Rennau hizo eco a los pensamientos de Michael.

“Tengo muchas ganas de dar las gracias a todos ustedes, porque no hubiéramos podido reunir todo el dinero para la recompensa sin su apoyo. Y ustedes son los más importantes, porque son ustedes los que nos apoyan para que esto sea un éxito. Cada año decimos que éste va a ser el año en que obtendremos una respuesta a la muerte de mi hijo. Lo echo de menos terriblemente”.

Rennau tiene un mensaje para la persona responsable de la muerte de Johnny.

“Para la persona que cometió el crimen, queremos que sepan que vamos a mantenerlo en los medios de comunicación, y que no vamos a parar hasta que nos encontremos con una respuesta”.

TIPS Reward Increases TO \$ 2,000

The Greater Kansas City Crime Stoppers TIPS Hotline announced on January 30, the organization’s advisory board has voted to increase the maximum amount of rewards it pays from up to \$1,000 to up to \$2,000.

“Since our inception in 1982, our reward policy has been to pay ‘up to \$1,000.00’ for anonymous information on felony crimes that lead to an arrest by a law enforcement agency,” said Coordinator Det. Kevin Boehm. Crime Stoppers is a division of the non-profit Kansas City Metropolitan Crime Commission which has been in existence since 1949.

“Considering we are in our 32nd year of offering \$1,000.00 cash rewards and similar sized Crime Stoppers programs are paying higher rewards, we felt the time had come to increase our potential payouts.”

This new reward amount started on February 1, 2014. TIPS received prior to this date are still eligible for up to \$1,000.00. The new amount also does not affect existing “Supplement Rewards” established prior to February 1, 2014. The “Supplemental Reward” program involves cases where additional funds have been added to specific

cases by individuals or business thereby increasing the reward above the maximum offered by Crime Stoppers.

Crime Stoppers is available 24/7 and anonymous information can be submitted via phone (816-474-8477), text (text TIP452 and your information to 274637 which spells out “CRIMES”) or on-line at www.KCcrimestoppers.com.

In order to claim their reward, tipsters must remain anonymous and keep and protect the individual secret “code number” they receive when they first report their TIP. Crime Stoppers uses that number to identify the tipster since tipsters are always anonymous. Rewards are paid based only on the “code number” and not by any other method of identification.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers Greater Kansas City TIPS Hotline at 816-474-TIPS (8477), TIPS may also be submitted electronically at www.KCcrimestoppers.com, or by texting TIP452 and your information to 274637 (CRIMES). Information leading to an arrest in the case could be eligible for up to \$2,000.00 in reward money. ALL INFORMATION IS ANONYMOUS.

TIPS Incrementa Recompensas A \$ 2,000

El departamento de Detención al Crimen del área metropolitana de Kansas City “Stoppers TIPS Hotline (por su nombre en ingles) anunció el 30 de enero, que la junta asesora de la organización había votado por el aumento en la cantidad máxima de recompensa que se paga “de \$ 1,000 a \$ 2,000.”

“Desde nuestros inicios en 1982, nuestra política de recompensa ha sido pagar “hasta \$ 1,000.00” para obtener información anónima sobre delitos graves que conducen a un arresto en aplicación de la ley,” dijo el coordinador de Det. Kevin Boehm. Detención al Crimen (Crime Stoppers por su nombre en ingles), es una división de la Comisión Metropolitana de Kansas City sin fines de lucro, que ha estado en existencia desde 1949.

“Teniendo en cuenta que estamos en nuestro 32º año ofreciendo \$ 1,000.00 de recompensa en efectivo y por tamaño similar el programa “Crime Stoppers” pagó mayores recompensas, sentimos que había llegado el momento de incrementar nuestros pagos potenciales.”

Esta nueva cantidad de la recompensa comenzó el 1 de febrero de 2014. Información (TIPS) recibida antes de esta fecha sigue siendo elegible para recibir hasta \$ 1,000.00. El nuevo aporte tampoco afecta existentes “Complementarias Recompensas” establecidos antes del 1 de febrero de 2014. El programa “Recompensa Complementaria” se

refiere a casos en que se han añadido fondos adicionales a los casos específicos de personas o empresas, aumentando así la recompensa por encima de la máxima que ofrece “Crime Stoppers.”

Crime Stoppers está disponible 24/7 y la información anónima se puede presentar a través del teléfono 816-474-8477, en message de texto (TIP452 texto y su información al 274 637 que deletrea la palabra “CRIMES”) o en línea en www.KCcrimeStoppers.com.

Para reclamar recompensas, los informadores deben permanecer en el anonimato manteniendo y protegiendo en secreto el número de “código” individual que reciben la primera vez que informan. Crime Stoppers utiliza ese número para identificar al informante ya que siempre estarán en el anonimato. Las recompensas se pagan basados sólo a ese “código” y no por cualquier otro método de identificación.

A cualquier persona con información se le recomienda para ponerse en contacto con “Crime Stoppers” TIPS Hotline al 816-474-TIPS (8477), los TIPS (informacion) también pueden ser enviada electrónicamente a www.KCcrimestoppers.com, o enviando un mensaje de texto a TIP452 y su información al 274637 (CRIMES). Información que conduzca a un arresto podría ser elegible para recibir hasta \$ 2,000.00 de dinero en recompensa. TODA LA INFORMACIÓN ES ANÓNIMA.



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The Hickman Mills C-1 School District is accepting sealed bids for the following projects: **Hickman Mills C-1 School District DLP Projectors and Installation**, until **9:30 AM** local time, **Friday, February 28, 2014**, at the Hickman Mills Administration Center, 9000 Old Santa Fe Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64138. Bids will be publicly opened at this time. A copy of the Invitation for Bid may be obtained by calling 816-316-7049 or by accessing the Hickman Mills C-1 School District website www.hickmanmills.org

The KCATA (The METRO) is seeking a Human Resources Manager to perform professional and highly technical work of considerable difficulty overseeing a range of administrative functions related to human resource management and organizational development, which includes pension administration and leave under the Family Medical Leave Act; compensation and classifications; Affirmative Action program development, policy development, staff training and development; employee relations, and the audit and analysis of internal processes, policies and procedures. **To Apply:** Qualified applicants should immediately submit an updated resume and three professional work references by February 25, 2014 to: jobs@kcata.org. Go to www.kcata.org for detailed job description.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES:

Department: Police
Position: Police Officer
Status: Full Time
Starting Salary: \$40,288 (increase after approx. 6 months)
Salary Range: \$42,302 - \$63,453
Closing date for scheduling testing: February 14, 2014

**SUMMARY OF POSITION INFORMATION & TYPICAL DUTIES**

The City of Merriam is seeking qualified applicants for the position of police officer. Starting salary is \$40,288 annually with an increase to the salary range of \$42,302 - \$63,453 after approximately six months. Comprehensive benefits package includes KP&F retirement.

Qualified applicants should contact Ronda at the Merriam Police Dept., 9010 W. 62nd Street, Merriam, KS 66202, at 913-322-5560, between 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM to schedule a testing time for: Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014 at 9:00 AM; Thursday, Feb. 13, 2014 at 5:30 PM; and Saturday, Feb. 15, 2014 at 11:00 AM.

A completed Personal History Statement must be submitted in person at the Merriam Police Department, 9010 W 62nd Street, Merriam, KS 66202, on or before your scheduled testing date.

Applications will not be accepted until the test has been taken and passed.

EOE/ADA/Drug Screen - The City of Merriam does conduct background checks/ investigations.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Must be 21 or older;
- Must have a valid driver's license with a good driving record;
- Must have high school diploma or equivalent;
- Must be in good physical condition;
- Must be able to touch type a minimum of 25 wpm;
- Must have a good criminal record free of any serious traffic, misdemeanor or felony convictions.

If reasonable accommodation is necessary to schedule testing or further information is needed contact Karen Kline, Human Resources, City of Merriam, 9001 W 62nd St., Merriam, KS 66202, 913-322-5502, Mon-Fri, 8:00am-4:30pm.

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In my last column, I began telling the story of Sophia, a 19-year-old, single mother who had lost all hope when she was seven months pregnant with her second child by a second man who had abandoned her. (If you missed this column, you can read it in the archives section at www.kchispanicnews.com, Volume Number KCHNV17N20.) Sophia continues...

By
LUIS CORDOBA & KATHY JULIO

“I am sitting on my bedroom floor, crying as I rock my body back and forth. All I can do is look down at my belly, look over at my baby's things, and then look back down at my belly. I am big. Seven months big. What am I going to do? Yes, I want a baby with Renato. I love him. I want to create a family with him, but I haven't seen him in three weeks. I have no idea where he is except that he's out drinking and drugging with his homies. And all I'm doing is worrying myself sick as I imagine him getting high and leaving me forever.

“And that isn't my only concern. I'm also helping out my mom. Why? Because when my dad got deported, I felt that I needed to be there for her, both financially and emotionally. So here I am, nineteen years old, either figuring out solutions to problems for my mom or figuring out solutions to problems for my boyfriend. In my aloneness, I had to be maciza (the strong one) for other people.

“I'm asking myself, ‘What kind of life is this for my son?’ First of all, I never imagined having a baby at fifteen. And now I am bringing in a second child to a father who chooses drugs and alcohol over him? My mind begins filling up with anxiety, confusion, and panic. Dark thoughts are pouring in. How am I going to raise another child by myself? “I feel like

I'm stuck, trapped in this ‘place’ filled with unbearable pain. The hopelessness that I'm feeling inside of me, I don't know what to do with it anymore. I'm about to explode. I start banging my hands on the floor, feeling like I'm going crazy. I'm crying, holding my stomach and telling my unborn son, ‘I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. I'm bringing you into nothing good. I love you so much but I can't take this anymore. But it will be okay. We're going to be fine.’ That is because I have the answer. There is only one way out. I know what I need to do. And then it will all be gone. You think like that. That in an instant, with one act, you can make it all go away.

“You see, I had things prepared. I already had signed over legal guardianship of my four-year-old daughter to my mother. It was easy. I just told her that it was the best thing to do in case something serious happened to me. Since my mother took care of my daughter when I worked and when I was away at school, my mother accepted this explanation. Like it was nothing. So I know that my daughter will be in a better place with my mom. Slowly I was getting prepared for this day.

“So everything seems to be falling into place. No one is home. I am thinking of cutting my wrist. I already had been cutting myself. With scissors. With the blades from razors. On my legs. It was my way of letting out the pain. With that thought I suddenly get up and rush to my dresser. I open the drawer and frantically start searching. As the tears run down my face, I see it: The blade. I grab it and immediately press the sharp edge down on my wrist, close my eyes, and I apologize to my son for what I am about to do.

Suddenly I hear something. My whole body freezes. Someone's home. As I listen closely, I can tell who it is. It's mom's purse thumping on the dining room table. I take a calming breath because I know that my mom never comes into my room. I hear her run upstairs. Sounds like she came back just to get something. I hear her run back downstairs. Now I know she is about to leave the house again.

“Wait... What is she doing? Is she coming back? I have my head down now, intently trying to catch any sound of movement. Please, no. I begin to make out slow footsteps coming towards my room. In an instant I'm back on the floor shoving everything away, pushing all the baby clothes and baby toys under my bed while I'm trying to wipe my face clean.

There's a soft knock. ¿Hija, estás aquí? (Daughter, are you here?) I stop and sit up. I hear her crack open the door and in a quiet voice say, ‘Are you in here?’ With my back to her, as calm as I can, I answer, ‘Yeah.’ In that moment, my mother rushes down to the floor next to me and starts hugging me and saying, ‘Are you okay?!? Don't worry! Everything's going to be fine. You're going to be okay.’ But as I listen, her words do nothing for me. They mean nothing to me. That's because I know that words aren't going to change anything. It's just someone trying to make me feel better.

“Crazy thing is that even though I believe that her words don't mean crap, I start to feel different. I start to feel myself slowing down. I begin asking myself, ‘What's happening here? What am I doing?’ And I feel myself getting calmer.”

In her desperation, Sophia was not only willing to take her own life but the life of her baby in order to stop the pain. But with the instinct that comes with a mother's love, Sophia was able to see that things could be better with some help. Because even though there are times when “words don't mean crap”, they can harbor a power that is made to momentarily stop the pain, giving you a chance to breathe and understand that you are important.

In my next column, I will share with you how Sophia realized her worth as a woman and how this understanding brought an amazing change into her life.

The Pachuco Educado.



This column is dedicated to helping youth and families. My mission as the Educated Pachuco is to help people of all ages overcome prejudices and stereotypes. My desire is to encourage youth and families to examine life from a new perspective with the hope of motivating all peoples toward positive life change. If you have a question or concern that you are struggling with, please contact me on Facebook at (www.facebook.com/educatedpachuco). I look forward to getting to know you.

The Educated Pachuco.

Advice offered by the Educated Pachuco is intended for informational purposes only. If you have a specific concern that requires professional help, please consult with an appropriately trained and qualified specialist. When you submit responses and any other information, you grant the Educated Pachuco and Kansas City Hispanic News permission to use, reproduce, or modify your submissions in all electronic and print publications here and/or elsewhere. Identifying information will never be included or distributed. Due to the large number of submissions, we regret that we cannot respond personally to each one. The information presented does not represent the opinion of Kansas City Hispanic News or any of its employees.

En mi última columna, empecé contando la historia de Sofia, una joven de 19 años de edad, madre soltera quien había perdido toda esperanza cuando tenía siete meses de embarazo de su segundo hijo, de un segundo hombre que la había abandonado. (Si te perdiste esta columna, se puede leer en la sección de archivos en www.kchispanicnews.com, Número de volumen KCHNV17N20). Sofia continúa ...

Traduce
GEMMA TORNERO

“Estoy sentada en el piso de mi dormitorio, llorando mientras que balanceo mi cuerpo hacia atrás y adelante. Todo lo que puedo hacer es mirar hacia abajo, a mi vientre, mirar las cosas de mi bebé, y luego mirar hacia abajo, a mi vientre. Estoy muy grande. Tan grande como siete meses de embarazo. ¿Qué voy a hacer? Sí, quiero un bebé con Renato. Yo lo amo. Quiero crear una familia con él, pero yo no lo he visto en tres semanas. No tengo ni idea en dónde está, solo sé que él está fuera bebiendo y drogándose con sus amigos y todo lo que estoy haciendo es preocupándome hasta la enfermedad, mientras yo lo imagino drogándose y dejándome para siempre”.

“Y esa no es mi única preocupación. Yo también estoy ayudando a mi mamá. ¿Por qué? Porque cuando mi papá fue deportado, sentí que tenía que estar allí para ella, tanto económica como emocionalmente. Así que aquí estoy, de diecinueve años de edad, ya sea tratando de encontrar la solución a los problemas de mi mamá o buscar soluciones a los problemas de mi novio. En mi soledad, tenía que ser maciza para otras personas”.

“Me estoy preguntando a mí misma, ‘¿Qué clase de vida es esto para mi hijo?’. En primer lugar, nunca me imaginé tener un bebé a los quince años. Y ahora ¿voy a traer un segundo hijo de un padre que elige las drogas y el alcohol por encima de él? Mi mente empieza a llenarse de ansiedad, confusión y pánico. Pensamientos oscuros están llegando. ¿Cómo voy a criar a otro niño por mí misma?

“Me siento como si estuviera atrapada, atrapada en este ‘lugar’ lleno de dolor insoportable. La desesperanza que siento dentro de mí, ya no sé qué hacer más con ella. Estoy a punto de explotar. Yo empiezo a golpear mis manos en el suelo, sintiendo como me estoy volviendo loca. Estoy llorando, sosteniendo mi estómago y le decía a mi hijo por nacer, ‘¡Lo siento mucho! ¡Lo siento mucho! Yo te estoy trayendo a nada bueno. Te quiero mucho, pero no puedo soportar más esto. Pero vamos a estar bien. ¡Vamos a estar bien!’ Eso es porque tengo la respuesta. Sólo hay una manera de salir. Yo

sé lo que tengo que hacer. Y entonces todo se habrá ido. Una piensa así. Que en un instante, con un solo acto, tu puedes hacer que todo desaparezca”.

“Ves, yo tenía cosas preparadas. Yo ya había firmado la tutela legal de mi hija de cuatro años de edad a mi madre. Fue fácil. Sólo le dije que era lo mejor por hacer, en caso de que algo grave me pasara. Ya que mi madre se hacia cargo de mi hija cuando yo trabajaba, y cuando yo estaba en la escuela, mi madre aceptó esta explicación. Como si no fuera nada. Así que sé que mi hija va a estar en un mejor lugar con mi mamá. Poco a poco me estaba preparado para este día”.

“Así que todo parece estar cayendo en su lugar. Nadie está en casa. Estoy pensando en cortar mi muñeca. Yo ya había estado cortándome. Con tijeras. Con las cuchillas de las maquinillas de afeitar. En mis piernas. Era mi manera de dejar salir el dolor. Con ese pensamiento de repente me levanto y me apresuro a mi tocador. Abro el cajón y frenéticamente inicié la búsqueda. Mientras las lágrimas corren por mi cara, yo la veo: la navaja. La agarro y presiono inmediatamente el filo hacia abajo en mi muñeca, cierro los ojos, y me disculpo con mi hijo por lo que voy a hacer”.

“De repente oigo algo. Todo mi cuerpo se congela. Alguien está en casa. Al escuchar con atención, puedo decir quién es. Oigo caer el bolso de mi madre en la mesa del comedor. Tomo una respiración con calma porque sé que mi mamá nunca entra en mi habitación. Oigo que corre escaleras arriba. Suena como si ella regresó sólo para llevarse algo. La oigo correr escaleras abajo. Ahora sé que ella está a punto de salir de la casa de nuevo”.

“Espera... ¿Qué hace ella? ¿Ella va a regresar? Estoy cabizbaja ahora, intensamente tratando de atrapar cualquier sonido de movimiento. Por favor, no. Empiezo a distinguir pasos lentos que vienen hacia mi habitación. En un instante, estoy de vuelta en el suelo empujando todo lejos, empujando toda la ropa de bebé y juguetes del bebé debajo de mi cama mientras yo estoy tratando de limpiar mi cara. Hay un suave golpe. ‘Hija, ¿estás aquí?’ Me detengo y me incorporo. Oigo el ruido al abrir la puerta y

en voz baja decir, ‘¿Estás ahí?’ Dándole mi espalda, tan tranquila como pueda, respondo: ‘Sí’. En ese momento, mi madre se apresura hacia el suelo a mi lado y empieza a abrazarme y decir, ‘¿Estás bien?! ¡No te preocupes! Todo va a estar bien. Tú vas a estar bien’. Pero el escuchar sus palabras no hace nada en mí. No significan nada para mí. Eso es porque sé que las palabras no van a cambiar nada. Es sólo alguien que trata de hacer que me sienta mejor”.

“Lo más loco es que a pesar de que creo que sus palabras no significan una mierda, me empiezo a sentir diferente. Empiezo a sentirme mas tranquila. Empiezo a preguntarme, ‘¿Qué está pasando aquí? ¿Qué estoy haciendo?’ Y yo me siento más tranquila”.

En su desesperación, Sofia no sólo estaba dispuesta a quitarse la vida, sino la vida de su bebé con el fin de detener el dolor. Pero con el instinto que viene con el amor de una madre, Sofia fue capaz de ver que las cosas podrían ser mejor con un poco de ayuda. Porque aunque haya tiempos cuando “las palabras no significan una mierda”, pueden abrigar un poder que hace parar momentáneamente el dolor, dándole la oportunidad de respirar y entender que tú sí eres importante.

En mi próxima columna, voy a compartir con ustedes cómo Sofia se dio cuenta de que valía como mujer, y cómo este conocimiento le ha traído un cambio increíble en su vida.

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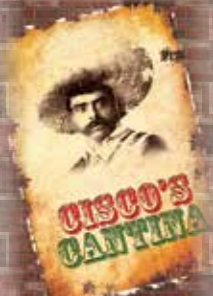
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