

Crossing the Bridge

A Mexican Family Works to Send Their Son to a U.S. School

Carolina Salas

BEFORE YOU READ: What sacrifices have you or others you know made for education?

When my son was born, I always wanted him to study in the United States. I knew it would be difficult and very expensive. When my son was 15 years old, he started at a private school in El Paso. My husband and I worked hard to be able to pay for his school, his student visa, and his passes from Ciudad Juárez to El Paso.

Every day, he crossed the bridge from Ciudad Juárez to El Paso. Regardless of the rainy, cold, or hot days, he walked across the bridge. Sometimes, there were long lines of one or two hours to get across the bridge. I left him at the bridge at 6:00 am. I worried about him being a victim of bad people.

It was tough to have Luis in private school in the U.S. I had to take a second job. I worked at a store in the morning, and in the afternoon, I took care of an elderly woman. When Luis left school in the afternoon, I was sometimes there on the Juárez side of the bridge to pick him up. I took him home and fed him. Then I went back to work. Other days, he took the bus to our house.

My son appreciated all the effort we made. He was a good student and athlete. His hard work paid off. He won a scholarship to a university in Texas. My dream finally came true when, after four difficult years, he graduated from the university. We are so proud of him, and we know that his accomplishments are also ours.

While he was in university, our other son, Esteban, who is a U.S. citizen, started the process for us to become permanent residents. It took two years, and in that time, Luis turned 21. So he does not qualify as a dependent of someone with a green card.



Bridge of the Americas connecting Ciudad Juárez in Mexico to El Paso, Texas (in the U.S.). Photo from [Flickr](#) is U.S. government work, in the public domain.

Because he does not have documents, he went back to Ciudad Juárez. Now he is there, and we are here in El Paso. We are still separated by the bridge. However, a company has offered him a job, and they will sponsor his green card. I am so happy and proud of him because he is accomplishing everything by himself now.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What are some of the sacrifices this author made to support her child's education?
2. Read the article on p. 30 by Taehwi Byun. Compare and contrast the stories by these two moms. What is the same, and what is different?

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