

Barten Law P.C.

Challenge Essay

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My name is _____ and I come from a hard working family who has had to overcome many obstacles in order to pave a path for me to achieve my dream. Growing up I watched both my parents work non-stop to financially support me and my siblings while also playing the role of a loving parent. At a young age it was not easy to understand all the struggles they had to face and the reason for which it happened. Over the years I started to realize I was different from not only my siblings but also my classmates. I learned I was labeled as illegal along with many other stereotypes. These obstacles had lead me to where I am today, a determined Latina willing to prove those stereotypes wrong and lead by example to other undocumented immigrants that it's possible to pursue your dream with hard work.

Being different from everyone has also been a struggle, especially back when society implemented it as a bad thing. Knowing there was little hope for me to be successful, I wanted to give up multiple times and wondered what was the reason to keep going. To my realization, my mom and dad have told me many stories about what they had to go through as a child and the struggles they still face today. They have been working since the age of ten in order to provide food and supplies for their parents and siblings. This is still seen today, they work double jobs and are rarely home only to provide me and my siblings with what we need. Over time I realized I couldn't give up, especially when I'm fortunate enough to live in a country that provides many

opportunities. I learned in order to achieve success and give back to my parents it had to be through furthering my education.

Being in school I was determined to be an excellent student because I knew that is where the opportunities would come. As a result, the first opportunity that came my way was in middle school. I was one of the few selected to be in a program called E.T.S that was meant for teaching young students to start saving for college along with many other opportunities such as visiting the many Universities here in Iowa. To my surprise, in order for me to join the program I had to have a social security number. Being eligible for DACA because of my age, I was devastated and powerless over what I could do. This was the first of many obstacles to come my way but I knew I had to be proactive and search for another similar program that'll help me in the future. That's when I came across Science Bound, they have helped over the past five years and continue to do so in order to see me be successful. Being apart of their program has made me become a leader not only to my younger sister but to be a role model in my classes and accept nothing less than success.

The most difficult challenge I've ever faced was being ashamed about where I came from. I didn't like being labeled or being different from everyone else therefore I was fine with being in the shadow which later on lead to being shy and non-spoken. I still struggle with this today because of all the restrictions I'm faced with. Though these are challenges I struggle with, it has taught me many things such as being grateful for what I have and not to take simple things for granted such as DACA. I've also learned to cope with my situation by reminding myself there are others just like me and others who are doing their best to change immigration policies.