



# TODAY

YOUR WORLD...YOUR COMMUNITY...

## From Slave Laborer to Devoted Wife and Mother

*Your donations helped an orphaned human trafficking survivor and her family to thrive.*

By Quinnie Lin, Ayuda Volunteer

After she was orphaned at age 10, Isabel was smuggled into the United States from El Salvador by her much older brother. Instead of going to school, Isabel was forced to work fulltime for no wages, first as a domestic worker and then in a factory (at age 14). She eventually escaped with the help of her future husband, Ernesto. Your generosity provided Isabel, Ernesto, and their children with the help they needed to live without fear.

Isabel's brother and his wife had promised to love Isabel, care for her and sign her up for school. Instead they forced her to work around the clock as a domestic worker in their home, cooking, cleaning, and caring for their infant son. When she complained, they beat her. When Isabel turned 14 her brother forced her to work in a clothing factory and pocketed all her wages.

Isabel confided her situation to her best friend, Ernesto. Eventually the two fell in love and he helped her escape. They were afraid, but happy.

Your gift gave Isabel and Ernesto access to an Ayuda attorney and social worker who helped them build a safe stable life. They both secured visas and reported the factory where Isabel had been forced to work. Now Ernesto is happily working two jobs while Isabel goes to school. "I want to be a police officer, because they help people," she said of her future.

The couple are looking forward to travelling to El Salvador to visit Ernesto's mother, who has never met her two grandchildren!



I WANT TO BE A POLICE OFFICER, BECAUSE THEY HELP PEOPLE. – ISABEL

*Isabel (with her daughter) was forced to work in a factory full-time at age 14. Now she is happily married to the man who helped her escape.*

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\*Ayuda does not use the real names of clients in any of the published stories.

## Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

I am the new Executive Director of Ayuda.

Rather than give you a copy of my resume, I thought I would tell you the two most important things about me:

- 1) I am absolutely fanatical about alleviating human suffering. I spend most waking hours thinking about how we can help even more people!
- 2) I am inspired by people who give generously of their resources so that another person may live a richer life. I am inspired by you!

I consider it a privilege and an honor to partner with you to help the most vulnerable immigrants in our community overcome horrible pain and find dignity (and joy!).

I wish you could see the joy on the face of an Ayuda client who has just won an important case. I wish you could see the newfound peace when a client begins to heal from past abuse. I wish you could cry with the clients (and often the staff) when they realize that they are finally safe. I wish you could taste the homemade cookies that clients bring to the office to express their deep appreciation (I would even share!). This newsletter is our gift to you.

We want you to experience some of the lives you have changed through your generosity. You deserve to know how the world is markedly better because of you. You should understand how you helped keep Janna

safe from kidnapping and female genital mutilation. You need to know how you helped reunite Eva with her four children. Oh, and we want you to realize that your generosity helped Isabel and Ernesto build a life after slave labor.

I measure my own life by the degree to which the world is a better place because of my decisions, and I suspect you do, too. That is why we choose to help our community's most vulnerable immigrants. That is why we choose Ayuda.

I am excited beyond words to work with you to change the world!

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve with you.

Peace,

Ryan J. Dowd, Atty., MPA  
Executive Director

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## Surviving Your Own Worst Day in Your Own Language

*After sexual assault, domestic violence or other trauma, immigrants get an interpreter for help.*

By David Steib

Can you imagine:

- 1) Being sexually assaulted and not being able to speak to the nurse doing your forensic exam?
- 2) Going to identify your deceased relative and not understanding the coroner?
- 3) Surviving domestic violence, but having difficulty communicating with your therapist?

Your support—and funding from the D.C. Office of Victim Services—is working to prevent these additional indignities.

In November, Ayuda launched the “Emergency and Victim Services Interpreter Bank.” If an immigrant goes for crisis services to one of the 23 area nonprofits, we provide an interpreter.

Ayuda trains the interpreters to work effectively in emotional situations. Area nonprofits can request an interpreter 24-hours-per day or schedule in advance.

Ayuda’s other bank, the “Community Legal Interpreter Bank,” has provided interpreters to legal nonprofits for seven years.



**42<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**  
MAY 20, 2015

## JOIN US

**Wednesday, May 20, 2015**

5:00 pm–8:00 pm

**Microsoft Innovation & Policy Center**

901 K Street, NW, 11th Floor

Washington, DC 20001

### Speakers:

Congressman **Luis Gutierrez (D-IL)**

Former Transportation Secretary **Norman Y. Mineta**

C-SPAN Washington Journal Host **Steve Scully**

Arlington County Board Vice Chair **J. Walter Tejada**

WAMU Radio Host **Armando Trull**

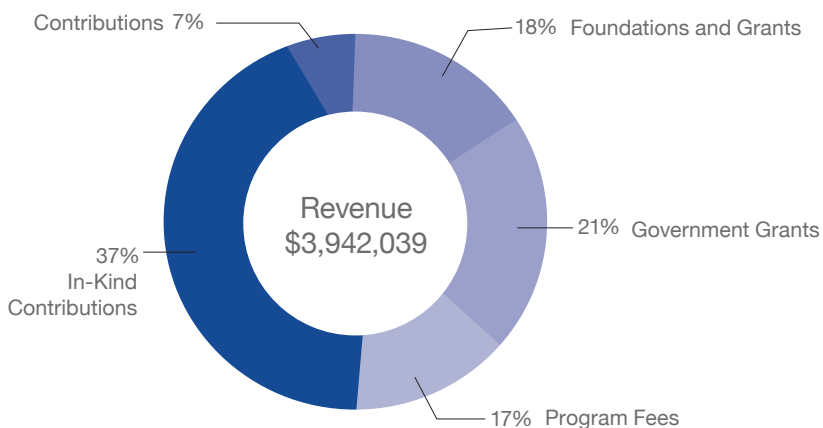
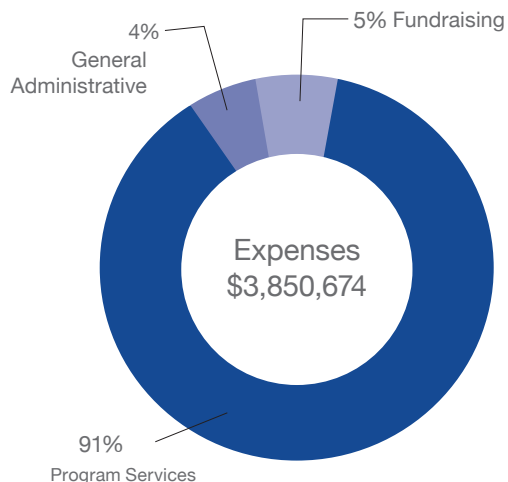
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## 2014 Finances







EVA WAS ABLE TO TALK TO HER CHILDREN ON THE PHONE EVERY WEEK, BUT IT JUST WASN'T THE SAME AS **BEING TOGETHER.**

*Eva (center) with her children (from left to right) Eva Gissela, Cristian, Karolina, and Hector.*

## After Escaping Domestic Violence, Mother and Children Reunite

*Because of your generosity, a single mother and her children are together again.*

By Rebecca Walters

Eva fled Honduras after the police refused to protect her from her husband. Unfortunately, she had to leave her children behind with their grandmother. Your donations helped Eva obtain a visa and bring her children to the United States so they could all be together.

Things are always bustling at the Knight family's home in Fairfax, Virginia. Eva is a single mother with a full-time job and four children (Cristian, Hector, Eva Gissela, and Karoline). She still finds time, though, to study English, attend church and volunteer for a domestic violence support group.

A few years ago, Eva sought help from the police repeatedly. Eventually she fled, leaving her children behind. Eva was able to talk to her children on the phone every week, but it just wasn't the same as being together.

Ayuda helped Eva obtain a visa for assisting police in the United States in the investigation and prosecution of her husband. Eventually Eva's children were granted their own visas and the family was reunited.

Eva is especially grateful because her youngest daughter, Karoline, was born with a heart defect. Doctors have told Eva that if Karoline lived in Honduras she would have died.

Now the family is thriving. Cristian (17) is doing well in high school. Hector (15) is a music fanatic. Eva Gissela (11) loves ballet and Honduran folk dances. Karoline (2) is obsessed with

"Dora the Explorer." The children stood proudly next to their mother when Eva finally received her green card last December. "Congratulations, Mom," young Eva Gissela beamed.

## You Helped Launch a Special Children's Initiative

*Ayuda recently hired additional staff to assist children fleeing their home countries.*

By Kayleen Hartman

Many children qualify to stay in the United States legally because they fled abuse, abandonment or neglect. Others qualify because they were the victims of certain violent crimes in their home countries or on the journey to the United States. With your generosity – and funding from the U.S. Committee for Immigrants and Refugees – Ayuda was able to hire four additional attorneys to work exclusively with these children.

The process for these children to obtain legal status is complex. It is nearly impossible to understand without a lawyer. The opportunity to remain in the United States has a life-changing effect for these children. For them, returning to their home countries is a terrifying prospect. Many children report that they feel safe for the very first time in their lives. Ayuda is proud to partner with you to stand with these children as they take their first step toward safety and security.

“MANY CHILDREN REPORT THAT THEY **FEEL SAFE** FOR THE VERY **FIRST TIME IN THEIR LIVES.**”



“OUR MISSION OF CARING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE IMMIGRANTS IN OUR COMMUNITY IS NEVER YET DONE.”

Photo credit: Photo by Dileepan Ramanan

## Whom Else Could We Help?

*Young Filipino Woman Promised Teaching Job by Trafficker is on Ayuda's "Waiting List."*

Joyce was brought to the United States from the Philippines by a notorious human trafficker who promised her a teaching job. Instead, he dumped her in a crowded home and told her to sleep on a cold floor with no bedding. He became sexually aggressive. The “land of opportunity” quickly become a nightmare for Joyce.

With your generosity, we have helped many people like Joyce (including many women abused by the same trafficker). Unfortunately, our resources are currently

insufficient to serve everyone asking for help and Joyce is on our waiting list.

We share Joyce's story to remind you (and ourselves) that – in spite of all of the wonderful successes in this newsletter – our mission of caring for the most vulnerable immigrants in our community is not yet done. We are working hard to expand our capacity to be able to serve Joyce and others. Thank you for everything you have already done – and continue to do – to makethat possible!





I WAS DELIGHTED THAT THE ORGANIZATION...WELCOMED ME TO THE AYUDA FAMILY

*Dr. Alan Cashell and his wife Diann discovered Ayuda after moving to Washington D.C. from West Virginia.*

## Retired Doctor: “Ayuda Is Important to Its Clients!”

*Your fellow donor sought out a local organization and ended up learning all about “notario fraud.”*

By Alan Cashell, MD

When I was moving back to Washington for retirement, I wanted to connect with a local organization. I found Ayuda. I was drawn to its mission and commitment to the immigrants in the community.

I made a modest gift online. I immediately received a call and an email from Ayuda’s development staff, Arleen Borysiewicz. She thanked me for the donation and invited me to be involved with the organization in other ways. I was delighted that the organization reached out to me personally and welcomed me to the Ayuda family.

As a volunteer at Ayuda I had the opportunity to participate in the publication of an article in a local newspaper.

The article was about a man from Silver Spring, Maryland man who pleaded guilty to defrauding undocumented residents who were trying to obtain legal residence. The purpose of this story was to alert the Hispanic community about “notario fraud.”

This scheme is based on confusion between the terms “notary” and “notario.” In the United States, a notary is someone who verifies signatures. In Latin America a notario can be a lawyer or a government official who can provide legal counsel. Through Ayuda I learned how victims of notario fraud not only lose thousands of dollars, but are often deported because of incorrectly filed documents.

Working on this article allowed me to work with the terrific Ayuda staff and to see how important Ayuda is to its clients. I hope to be able to continue serving with this excellent group!

## AYUDA DONOR WALL

*Cumulative gifts of \$500 and over in 2014-2015 through March 31, 2015. We thank all donors for their generosity.*

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### A FORMER CLIENT RECENTLY DONATED \$100 TO "PAY IT FORWARD"

**Ayuda attorney, Nelly Montenegro:** My former client is living in poverty, but she values Ayuda's work so much that she wants to help us help others. \$100 is a TON OF money for her. I can only imagine what a big sacrifice that was for her. Ayuda's clients are resilient and embody the notion of 'paying it forward' even though it is really hard for them to do so.

## Almost Kidnapped, 11-Year Old Girl Is Safe

*You kept Janna from being taken to Egypt for female genital mutilation.*

By Rebecca Walters

Janna is a talkative, energetic, and confident kid — a typical eleven-year-old. With excitement in her eyes, she let me know that she recently joined the 100-Mile Club at her elementary school. “We don’t run one hundred miles all at once. It takes lots of hard work and I just started. But by the end of the year, I’ll get it done,” she said.

She became quiet when her mother explained — in Arabic — their scary situation.

Janna’s estranged father had entered the United States on a tourist visa from Egypt and attempted to kidnap Janna. He had broken into the family’s home and attacked Janna’s mother, demanding Janna’s return to Egypt to undergo female genital mutilation. Fortunately, Janna was in school when he showed up at their house.

“I would not recognize him if I saw him. I only knew him when I was a baby in Egypt. I don’t understand why he thinks he needs to come get me all of a sudden,” Janna said.

Janna’s mother sought Ayuda’s help to get a protective order and full custody of Janna. They won their case.

Last February, I met with Janna to complete her green card application. Unlike most people, she was excited for the interview with the immigration officer. “I can’t wait to tell them about all the clubs and school activities I’m in — especially the step team,” she gushed.

Janna’s mother began to cry. Janna was embarrassed. “My mom wants me to tell you how happy and how thankful she is for Ayuda and all the work you have done to help us,” she said. “And I want to tell you that, too.”



*Janna’s estranged father came to the United States from Egypt to take her back for female genital mutilation. He broke into her home and attacked her mother who wouldn’t tell him where to find Janna. Your donations enabled Janna’s mother to access the American justice system to keep her daughter safe.*



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