

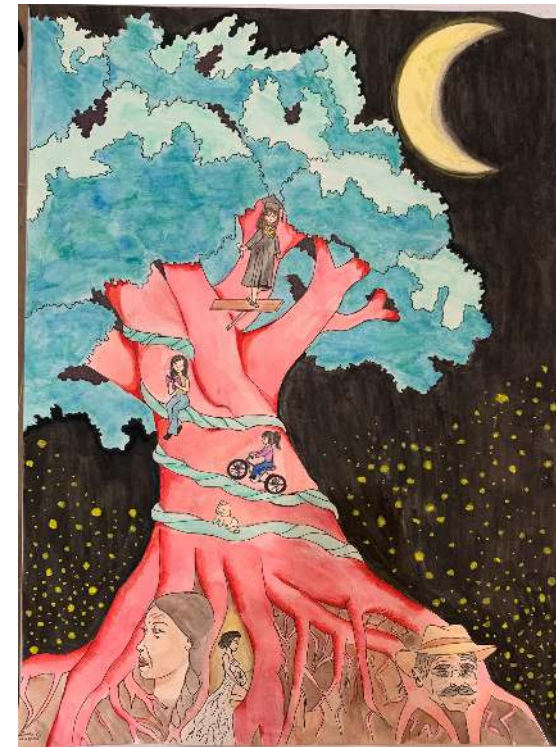
\$3,000 First Generation Art Scholarship Winner



Overcoming and Achieving
Jaylene Gongora



The American Dream
Kevin Marquez



Árbol Dulce
Dulce Chavez

Reach for it, Mija
Cristina Esquivel





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The Words you Never Told Me: Mia Ortiz

**AMÁ, APÁ, THE WORDS YOU NEVER TOLD
ME, I SOUGHT FOR IN OTHERS**

I learned English on my own at 5 but you never praised me
I translated documents and helped you in stores
But when I couldn't pass math, you shamed me.
Will you say everything's fine at least?
Silence

I'm in high school and you tell me I need to start working
I wait tables and begin earning
But I'm behind in school and coming home late
So, you think my priorities are becoming misplaced
Aren't you happy I'm doing what you asked at least?
Silence

I got my license on my first try
I burst through that door with tears in my eyes
I tell you how excited I am, but your face doesn't change
With a slight nod, you quickly fade
Will you say congratulations at least?
Silence

I graduated at a time where things were unpredictable
I looked at you with a paper in hand, but I felt invisible
"Well, that's what you're supposed to do," you say
How did getting my diploma just become a regular day?
Will we celebrate at least?
Silence

I always heard from others that they were proud
So, it feels selfish to say I felt alone in a big crowd
But I searched for a voice that was always near
Just to hear a few words unique to my ears

I hope you know I don't blame you
You were either working or afraid to be in a room where
everything was new
Maybe you worried I was growing up too fast
And maybe you regret the silence from our past

I'm in college now so I know what to expect
I will repay you for all the struggles you went through,
just like we said
But what if I fail?
Tell me I will prevail.
Will you tell me that at least?
No more silence, please
Because amá, apá the words you never told me
I sought for in others
And I got hurt.



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Growing in Their Foreign Land: Cielo Navarro

It started with a trip to a foreign land

A new intimidating world, with an unknown speech.

It became their home, and while at first, it seemed so grand,
their limited abilities made the American dream appear beyond reach

Then their first child was conceived.

Though she was not planned,

She was the best gift they could have received.

She was a light in the darkness; their new right hand.

She provided hope for a brighter tomorrow

And in their hardest moments, helped them cope

She lifted them up in their deepest sorrow

Thriving in the foreign was like trying to get across a tightrope

But the child would surpass her parents' scope

She embraced the foreign land's language with ease,
earned straight A's, and grew up with a love for learning

While providing for their child was no breeze

she gave them the motivation to give their all each morning

As he arrived home late in his dirty construction uniform every evening

So their daily bread they would never miss

Meanwhile, at school, the girl kept achieving

She aimed high, reaching for the sky

Time flew before their eyes

Their little caterpillar was now a beautiful butterfly

Who diligently kept her eye on the prize:

Giving her parents a better future than they were able to attain

The road to getting into college seemed so frightening and uncertain

For her two role models it was again, unknown terrain

But with God's help, the doors began to open

College and scholarship offers came flying in

after the countless tears she shed figuring things out, this brought
immense joy

in the midst of an unexpected pandemic, watching their little girl

finally walk the stage made them the happiest

they have ever been

seeing her parents' pride at every award ceremony of hers had always

motivated her to keep striving

To make every hour and drop of sweat and blood her dad spent at
work worthwhile

And to thank her mom for the countless sacrifices and support that
kept her child thriving

She pursued this dream of gifting her family a better future mile by
mile

Now as a first-generation college student, she eagerly begins her pre-
med track

She aspires to help all: sick people; struggling people; foreigners, of
all colors and views

She grasped the opportunity her parents lacked

And is a new example for those in the same shoes

For them to work towards their dream in the foreign land