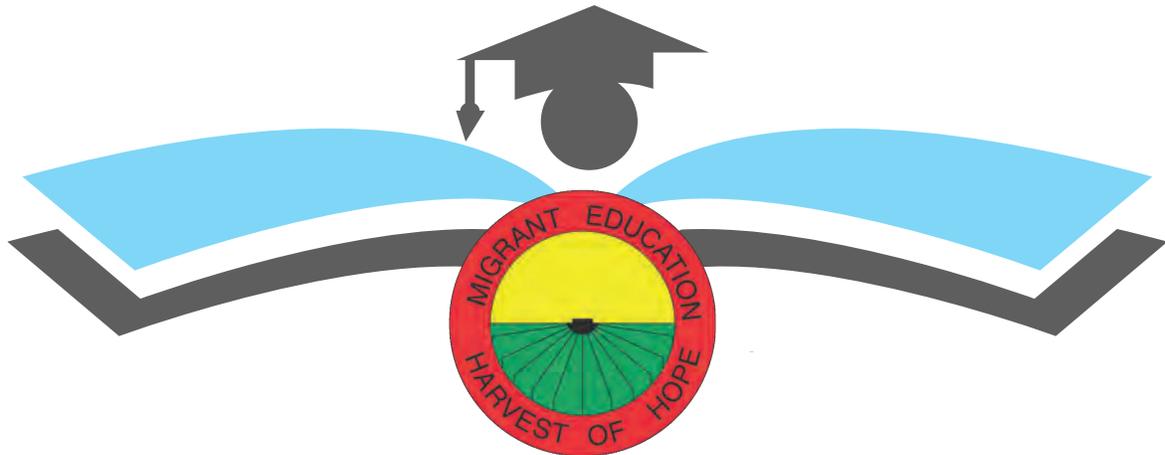




Georgia Department of Education

Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent
"Educating Georgia's Future"



Title I, Part C - Education of Migratory Children:
**SUCCESS STORIES OF STUDENTS
IN THE MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM**



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FOREWORD

The purpose of the Georgia Migrant Education Program is to design, implement, evaluate and support programs that help migratory students overcome the challenges of mobility, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, and other difficulties associated with a migratory lifestyle. These efforts are aimed at helping migrant students succeed and provide them with viable paths to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities beyond high school.

The following student stories celebrate the success of migrant participants with the support of the Georgia Migrant Education Program. Each story speaks to the contributions of educators, migrant staff, school administrators, local districts, community partners and migrant parents in helping migrant participants reach their highest potential.

It is our hope that the success stories presented in this booklet serve as a source of inspiration to other migrant students and parents, and that it becomes a valuable resource for engaging in dialogue with interested agencies and community leaders working together to not only enhance the services provided to migrant students and families but also to provide them with a better quality of life in their communities. It is our belief that with a strong network of support, we will increase the quality of supplemental educational services that will help migrant students meet and exceed state academic standards and be prepared to thrive in a highly connected world.

Imagine. Achieve. Inspire.
The Georgia Migrant Education Program





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INTRODUCTION

Education grants individuals the possibility to broaden their perspective of the world. It allows deepening analysis of historical events in connection to the present. More importantly, education prepares individuals to respond to their immediate needs more effectively. Proudly, we celebrate the

success of each participant in the Georgia Migrant Education Program. Despite any challenges through the students' journeys and struggles faced due to the moves with their families, the migrant

students featured in this publication proved to themselves that success is possible. We applaud all the stories shared in this booklet and those now professionals that participated in the program. We hope that students that have not graduated yet, college students, or those deciding to return to school will follow this legacy of success.

When you need help, remember that we in the Title I, Part C, Education of Migratory Children program, are here to provide that additional academic and non-academic support. We will work with you to remove barriers connected to the migrant lifestyle to enable you to reach your full potential.

Margarita Munoz
Program Manager
Title I, Part C
Education of Migratory Children
Georgia Department of Education

Areli Perez



My name is Areli Perez. I am the daughter of Edilberto and Josefa Perez. I am 25 years old and from Toombs County. I was a migrant student for many years as my family and I would move to different states because my parents were seasonal farmworkers. My sister and I were often there helping them out when we were not in school. This included: summer breaks, spring breaks, winter breaks, weekends, and sometimes after school. Working in the fields every day from sunrise to sunset in very cold or very hot weather pushed me to keep working hard in school to achieve my goals. I graduated from high school in 2013 and continued my education at Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College where I graduated with my Associates of Science in Education in 2016. I transferred to Georgia Southwestern University where I completed my Bachelor of Science in Education in 2018. A few months after I graduated, I was blessed with a job opportunity to become a teacher and pursue my profession. I felt the need to continue my education, so I decided to earn a Master of Science in Education degree. I graduated with that in 2020.

My friends and family would describe me as someone that strives for success. They would say that I am determined to reach my goals and have the will to overcome any obstacles to reach those goals. They would say that I have always been a handworker and love to help others. One of the things that I have enjoyed throughout my education is the learning process. Learning about many things that I probably would not have learned on my own without doing the research. Having the knowledge of new information and sharing what I have learned is always enjoyable.

If I could give advice to other migrant students, it would be to use your hardship as a motivator to become successful. Do not become stressed comparing yourself to others and continue to work at your own pace, and never give up. You will achieve those goals and dreams that you have envisioned!

Juan Darey

My name is Juan Darey and I am currently a student at Coastal Pines Technical College. I am hoping to take my Certified Nursing Assistant exam around June 2021, and I am working to apply for the Licensed Practical Nurse program. I am also a United States Marine serving in the Reserve. I love the career I chose because I enjoy learning about the human body since I find it so fascinating. I also enjoy the fact that I'll be able to help people in need. I would say my friends and family would consider me hardworking and someone that will do his best to achieve his goals, no matter how difficult they may seem. My greatest and proudest accomplishments are graduating with honors from high school and later becoming a United States Marine. My parents have been the biggest supporters in my life, and they've always been my mentors. They give me advice, encourage me to better myself, and are always reassuring.

The Migrant Education Program has done many things in my life. For example, they gave us the opportunities to visit colleges so we could explore our options. Most importantly, they gave me the hope that I could achieve things even bigger than my life dreams.

If there's any advice I could give other migrant students, it would be that in this life there is no such thing as an impossible dream. It takes patience, sweat, and tears to achieve them sometimes, but the feeling of accomplishment makes every sacrifice worth it. Nothing is impossible. It's a leap of faith that you need to take to achieve your dreams. Always remind your heart why you are going after a goal



Daniela Olalde



My name is Daniela Olalde. I am currently in my last semester of nursing school and will be graduating in May 2021 with my BSN. I am actively involved in the College Assistant Migrant Program at the University of North Georgia and have been throughout college. The first year I was a CAMP Scholar and for the past three years I have worked as a peer mentor for each cohort coming in. For now, my life consists of working at the hospital, peer mentoring with CAMP, and maintaining my grades in my nursing program. Through CAMP, I would be described as a leader, always taking on projects and assignments so that the program can push through and become better every year. I enjoy the versatility of the job I have chosen. Nursing is the most trusted profession as well as a career that allows one to explore different areas of interest.

The Migrant Education Program played an important role in my education. It allowed me to qualify for the College Assistant Migrant Program at the University of North Georgia at the Gainesville Campus. This program creates lifelong opportunities, and it is the one thing I enjoyed throughout my college career.

If there's any advice I could give migrant students, it would be to take high school seriously. Whether it's maintaining good grades to keep a high GPA or joining clubs and volunteering so you are a strong candidate for scholarships and college acceptance, school is the most important part of this point in your life. Education is power, and as minorities who are under-represented in this society, we should use education to our advantage to not only make our families proud, but also to be a part of the change that this society needs.

Astrid Torres



My name is Astrid Torres and I am 22 years old. I am a junior at Brenau University. I am in my second semester of the BSN nursing program. I am a first generation college student and am really excited to see what the future holds. I love learning new things about how to take care of patients. I am a very hands-on person so having clinicals and simulation labs is a great way to incorporate what I learn in lectures and my textbooks in real life. One of my proudest accomplishments right now is being accepted into nursing school. By the time I am done with my degree my ultimate goal is to graduate debt-free and to graduate Magna Cum Laude.

My parents have played a huge role in my achievements; they are my number one supporters and are always pushing me to be the best version of myself that I can be. I told them I wanted to be a nurse and they pushed me to keep my grades up and look for resources that would help me achieve that. Additionally, the Georgia Migrant Education Program helped me with getting resources that have helped me be more successful in college career.

My advice to other migrant students is to take advantage of any dual enrollment classes offered in high school because that is money they will be saving. Also, talk to your school counselor early on when you start thinking about college. Tour colleges and try to keep an open mind. Lastly apply to any and every scholarship they can find. Keep pushing forward! It may be hard and there will be many obstacles along the way but the destination at the end of the journey will be totally worth it! Also make sure to use your resources and don't be afraid to ask questions! People are there to help you and they want to see you be successful!

Jennifer Gomez

My name is Jennifer Gomez and I am a proud DACA student currently studying at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia. My major is Nursing. I'm the Public Relations (PR) of my college Latina club called "Voz Latina" and I'm also a part of my college's cheerleading team. I am a very outgoing person who is willing to try and learn new things everyday. I like to think of myself as a very open-minded person; I enjoy listening to others points of views and seeing how they view different ideas. What I enjoy most about my education is getting to learn new things everyday, not only is it helping me for my future career but it is also helping shape the way I think and view the world in a different lens. One of the most important academic achievements I hope to accomplish is to pass all my classes with very good grades and knowing that I did my absolute best to make that happen. My parents play a huge role in helping me achieve my goals, one way is by their non-stop encouragement and support every day. My family and friends describe me as being very determined, persevering, naturally outgoing and a source of inspiration to others.

The Georgia Migrant Education Program helped me achieve my academic goal during high school, when I had the opportunity to participate in one of their summer school programs and also having someone check on my grades, and help me out if they notice I needed extra academic support.

My advice to other migrant students is to not be scared to get out of their comfort zone; it's okay to ask questions and try new things and meet new people. Also never stay quiet and ask for help when needed!



Juan Velasquez



My name is Juan Velasquez. I was born and raised in Guatemala for the first eight years of my life. During my first year in school in the U.S (third grade), I had to go to summer school because I failed a couple of Reading/Literature courses. My friends and family would say that I am hardworking and non-conforming. They would also say I am stubborn and dedicated. I was recently awarded the Management Excellence Award by the Mike Cottrell College of Business.

I remember being in Migrant Education Program since the 3rd grade. While I do not remember who specifically provided the assistance, I remember receiving help with my English learning journey. In high school, I remember attending the Leadership Without Limits summer program at UGA. There, I developed my leadership skills and made friends that had similar stories as mine. Later in high school, I also got the opportunity to attend the 2013 Presidential Inauguration in Washington D.C through the Close Up program. All of these experiences contributed to my success in high school and college.

If I could share a piece of advice with migrant students, it would be to persevere, fear less, and explore more. Life, in general, is not easy. However, anything that you set your mind to do, you can accomplish if you work hard enough for it. Do not limit yourself to what you already know. Seek desperately for new and different opportunities. Lastly, do not be afraid of failing. I believe failing is part of success. The faster you fail, the faster you learn which leads you to succeed faster.

Patricia Velasco



Hi! My name is Patricia Velasco. I was born in Texas and moved to Georgia where my father was working as I was about to start middle school. It was a tough move. Truly I thought I was not able to handle this change from being surrounded by kids with similar backgrounds and going to a place where it was a bit different. Despite this, I always felt supported and encouraged by the teachers and the school system. I am very grateful towards all the people who encouraged me along the way with their words or example. My friends and family would describe me as determined, dedicated, loyal, and caring.

What I enjoyed most about my education was learning more of what I loved, the art of medicine. An accomplishment I'm most proud of is graduating at every stage of my education including from high school, then Berry College, and then Medical College of Georgia, which is now called Augusta University. The best part is you never stop learning! I have acquired my master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies. My parents allowed me to focus all my attention on my studies and goals. My father gave us the example of determination and hard work. My mother gave us the example of loyalty and service.

Because we had to move three times during middle school, I felt insecure and timid. The Migrant Education Program allowed me to gain confidence and encouragement to achieve my academic goals.

My advice to other migrant students is discover your passion and purpose and pursue them - you will surprise yourself! If you're a migrant student, work hard but also do what you love! I would also say to migrant parents that they should help and encourage each child of theirs to discover and then reach their individual goals and dreams.

Maria Bruno

My name is Maria Bruno, but most people know me as Lupita. I'm originally from Washington State but I am currently living in Atlanta, Georgia. I attend Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) and my major is Rural Community Development. I have two part-time jobs on campus: One is Resident Life Housing and the other one is Assistant to the Associate Director of the HEP program. I earned my GED diploma through the HEP program. After obtaining my GED, I had the opportunity to attend college through the CAMP program at ABAC. What I enjoy most about my education is what I learn every day and all the opportunities I have to pursue my academic goals. My friends and family would describe me as a responsible, determined, and driven.

One of the accomplishments I am very proud of is being the first one in my family to attend college! Many told me that I could not do but I have proven them wrong. My parents play a big role in helping me reach my goals by encouraging me to pursue my dreams and succeed. They worked hard in the fields so that I could have a better life and an education.

The Migrant Education Program helped me obtain my GED and assisted me in applying to CAMP so I could attend college at ABAC.

My advice to other migrant students is to fight for their dream and overcome any obstacles you may encounter along the way. Take advantage of the opportunities you are given and never give up on your dreams! And my advice to migrant parent is parents to support their children and help them reach their goals in life!



Carmen Ochoa



My name is Carmen Ochoa and I'm a student driven to achieve my goals and dreams. I have managed school, sports, extracurricular activities, and a job all at the same time. I love school, and I love learning. I love the fact that the world never stops teaching us as we keep evolving and moving forward. This is also the main reason I want to get into the medical field. My family and friends would describe me as a positive, studious, driven, and a strong person! What I enjoy most about education is the challenge it presents. I like knowing that I must think outside the box to solve something. I'm confident that finishing my education will allow me to have better opportunities for myself and help my family. I owe a better future to my parents because they have given me a lot of financial and moral support, and I know that without them, I wouldn't be where I am now. I also love sports. I have been an athlete since sophomore year of high school. Running has been my passion and it has helped me cope with school and the stress that comes along with it

My biggest goal is to get a doctorates degree in medicine as a Cardiothoracic surgeon, and hope to graduate with a 4.0 GPA. I also love sports. I have been an athlete since sophomore year.

The Migrant Education Program has always been a great help. They have always guided me, given me advice and offered opportunities for me to take advantage of and I am very thankful for their assistance!

My advice to other migrant students would be don't let your goals become your limits; make them your starters!

Claudia Martinez



My name is Claudia Martinez and I am the 2020 GATESOL Teacher of the Year. I am a previous multilingual learner and migrant student. I am a first-generation college student and last year I got my doctorate degree from Georgia Southern University. I am currently working on adding my leadership certification from GSU. My friends and family describe me as hardworking, passionate, and determined. They know that I have been through so much and I still overcame all of the odds and obstacles stacked against me.

I currently work at North Tattall Middle School and I have the best work family that supports my work. I am able to pull my students during one of their exploratory classes and work on activities that will help them to close their English proficiency gaps. I believe in the implementation of cultural-linguistic relevant pedagogy and I have been able to do various activities through this practice. My biggest accomplishment has been getting a doctorate degree! It was the hardest thing that I have ever done. I am thankful for my family for their support and to some great mentors that never gave up on me.

My advice to other migrant students is If you really want to reach your goals, you will have to make a lot of sacrifices. At times it will seem impossible but hang in there! Seek a great support system and mentors that will help you. Always ask questions and try to over exceed your own expectations. One day you will look back and be proud of everything you have accomplished! And to Parents: don't stop pushing your children. Meet with their teachers and know what they are expected to do. One day they will thank you for this!