



## Maria Martinez

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My parents were the individuals who I looked up to. They had courage and strength to give us a better life even at a tremendous sacrifice. Through the US Pedro Pan program, where 14,000 children were brought to the U.S. from Cuba, my parents were able to send my sisters and me to a country where we could have an education and be free from oppression. I often think about what my life would have been if I'd stayed in Cuba. My parents are total heroes for what they did. When faced with the option of communism or freedom, they chose to give us a better life. I am a survivor, I am resilient, I am a product of all my life experiences.