



# Culminating Project

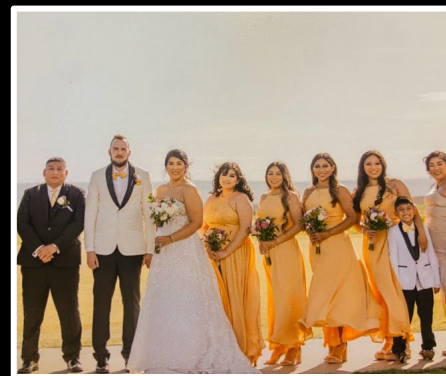
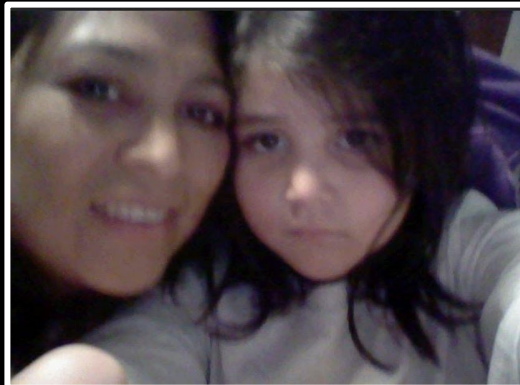
Senior Presentation  
Dariana Adorno







# Personal Story



# My Best Works – Junior Year



Ana Myrna Ramirez

By Dariana Adorno



/Formative  
nts in Lives



- “La guerra (The war)”
  - After the Archbishop of San Salvador, Óscar Romero, was assassinated, a civil war was sparked in El Salvador.
  - The war lasted from 1979-1992.
  - As the war worsened in the 90’s, it became a necessity to come to the United States. The soldiers and guerrillas were killing innocent civilians amongst each other.
- Growing up poor
  - She focused on her education, mainly.
  - “From when I was young, I always liked taking care of injured people.”
  - “When you are here, you want to pursue success. Not only for yourself, but for your children and for your whole family.”
- Love and Loss
  - Forced marriage with her first husband
  - The loss of her second husband.



# My Best Works – Senior Year

## Normal

Have you ever felt so rejected by others, that even *you* begin to reject who you are? I have been struggling with diabetes for thirteen years, managing and it keeping myself healthy. I've always dealt with this condition in the most sensible way possible; yet when I encountered this moment, I could not find a rational way of dealing with it.

I was nine years old and in the third grade. During the summer, I switched from using injections to using an insulin pump - and it was pretty noticeable. A giant blue insulin pump stuck to the side of a 4-foot-tall kid. I had been a diabetic for 5 years prior and other students didn't know about my condition, and, frankly, I didn't want them to know about my diabetes. But that would be the school year that things would change. When I walked into the classroom on the first day, I felt eyes piercing through my being. I didn't have many friends because all the other kids bullied me for reasons I did not know. They just didn't like me, and, for some crazy reason, I felt like my diabetes gave them another reason to dislike me. I sat alone at my desk, quiet and still. People just stared at me as if I was an animal at the zoo. That tension was present all day, all week. No one talked to me, no one played with me, everyone just stared at me. I stayed curious about why I was being isolated from everyone else... until one day, I grew too curious and frustrated and decided to ask why. I went up to some random girl who was in my grade and I asked her, "How come everyone is ignoring me?". She looked at me like she was angry with me, her eyebrows furrowed and her eyes narrowed. She pointed at my insulin pump and told me, "You're not normal!". At first, I was confused, then I felt shocked. I didn't even know why everyone in my class came to that conclusion because my mother told me that I was normal. But nonetheless, I accepted what she said and I just walked away.

realize that I wasn't, and will never be, like the other kids. On Christmas, I begged Santa for a cure for diabetes.

I never felt like a normal kid, and instead of trying to combat the criterion that "normal" kids are perfect in every single factor that makes us human, I tried to assimilate myself into their normality. I look back on that moment with sadness and sympathy. However, back then, I felt like I was doing the right thing. I felt like the other kids were finally going to stop being mean to me and finally accept me as their friend. In my eyes, it was justified. I was hopeful, yet something inside of my tiny, little, soul told me that what I was doing was wrong. Not the "that's bad, timeout" type of bad but the kind where my credence in my actions was incorrect. I guess that feeling never went away because although the other kids in my class finally started playing with me, I never felt honest with myself. As expressed, I yearned for acceptance by my peers and in order to do so, I pretended to be something I was not. I pretended to be "normal".

## Adorno 2

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## The struggle of losing my father and myself

When my father passed away, I felt truly alone in life. My relationship with my mom at the time was rocky, my closest friends had stopped talking to me, and I felt so much hate towards the world. My father and I were estranged at the time and I couldn't place my finger on why his passing had affected me so much. I cut myself off from the world and hid in my imagination; in doing so, though, I ended up getting lost in a fantasy. I lost my grip on life, I lost myself. I had so much guilt and regret towards every decision regarding my father - why hadn't I been there for him? Why didn't I pick up the phone whenever he called? Why didn't I go see him while he was still here? Sometimes I still find myself asking these questions.

## Life After Death

One day, my grandmother came to visit and she told me to pray for him, that my father had saved himself before he died because he became a Christian. That *God* needed him more than I did. At that moment, I had never felt more rage and confusion in my life. Why did *God* need my father more than me? With all his awful actions racing through my head, how could converting to Christianity save him? I began to question the existence of God and heaven and frequently began asking myself if either of the two existed. I kept thinking about it all day, all night. Laying in bed that night, I had completely gave up on my faith and decided that God and heaven didn't exist. If at that moment I were to die, then nothing would happen to my soul, and what would be left of me would be my body on Earth. My cold, motionless body, lying there just

doing things I promised myself I'd ever do. I began experimenting with drugs and alcohol just to ease the pain I was in. I had completely given up on myself and found myself questioning my purpose in life.

## The night it almost ended

One night, I was sitting on the ground in my bedroom. I was alone and had been crying for the past hour. I didn't want to be crying, I didn't want to be alone, I didn't want to be alive. I wanted to ease myself from all the hurt I had been going through. I laid in my bed, hands shaking and sweating, hyperventilating with a major headache. I thought about *taking my life* for a while, but I hesitated to go through with it. What if I was right? What if the lights went out, and that was it? I was scared. I kept thinking about my mom and my dog, how would my mom feel, and what would happen to my dog if I had killed myself. At that moment I realized that I didn't want to die, I wanted to live and get better. I started telling my mom how I felt and began taking care of myself again. It's been two years since he's past, and although I still ask those questions to myself, I am a much happier and healthier person now. My faith isn't completely restored but now I think things are better to be left a mystery.

# My Community Service Volunteer Work





# My High School and Beyond Plan

