

Grateful for Head Start

Barbara Vargas Ramos

[Speaking in Spanish] Good morning. My name is Barbara Vargas. I represent Head Start from Ponce. Currently, I am the president of the Policy Council and, also, the president of the Parent's Association of Puerto Rico.

I am here at the National Conference for Parents, where every workshop that we have attended has been particularly aimed at the program. I am very grateful for this opportunity that has been given to me.

I want to tell you my story. I have been participating in the Head Start program for nine years. All the benefits that I have received have been excellent. I have been an exemplary mother, and right now I have a three-year-old daughter in the program.

I encourage every parent to volunteer because it's up to us to keep the program moving forward. The Head Start program has been beneficial to me, my family, my children, and the community. I have learned much and acquired so much knowledge that I am very grateful for the opportunity that the program has given me as a mother.

Once again, I would like to tell all of you that I am immensely grateful for the program, I have acquired much knowledge and I am a woman with high self-esteem thanks to the program and the people that work there. I, as a mother, encourage all the parents to keep supporting the program, to make their voices heard, and to always say "yes, we can." The program is wonderful, essential, and spectacular. Everything that you can learn, you can learn in the program, and then you can teach it later on.

Therefore, once again, thank you very much. Barbara. Merry Christmas.

Our Head Start program in Puerto Rico has 1,680 children, 72 children from Early Head Start and Head Start. Our program has 92 classrooms. In addition to this, I share the responsibility of making decisions with the governing board of the program and with the workgroup that administers it.

As I have said before, my experiences have been fantastic, excellent, and extraordinary. As a mother, I feel well prepared to represent my children, guide them, and teach them everything humanly possible. Also as a mother, I will keep volunteering in and outside Head Start because I was born to do it, and I believe I have the right to say that "Head Start can."

So, as a last recommendation, please, always take your children – the Head Start program gives you the opportunities that you, your children, and the community need. Remember that we are all one big family and we can do it better with the help of the parents.