

**Maria Ramirez's presentation** to the National Commission on Adult Literacy

August 20, 2007

Good morning everybody,

My name is Maria Ramirez. I was born in Guatemala and came to this country about 8 years ago.

At first, when I came, I was very scared because I did not speak any English at all but then I went to school and starting learning.

In a school in Jackson Heights two of my friends talked to me about the GED but they not only talked to me, they took me to the Consortium for Worker Education and I got all the information I needed.

This year, in January, I started the GED class and in May I received my GED diploma and you know what? I got a job immediately. I am working for the CWE as an administrative assistant. Is not that amazing? My life has changed a lot and now I know that this is a change in my life, it is thanks to people like you who make this kind of programs possible.

I want to say thank you to my GED teacher, Lidia Cobos, for all the knowledge I received from her. Also I want to thank Darly Corniel for thinking about me to receive this award, an award that I receive not only in my name but in the name of many of my classmates that I know deserve an award like this for their effort to get their GED.

The last thing I want to say is that the GED for me is just the beginning of a new life for me and for my family and I promise to you, I am not going to stop until I get my degree as an architect.

Thank you very much