



RISKING IT ALL FOR EDUCATION STORIES OF COURAGE AND PERSEVERANCE

“A Daring Journey”: Your Inroad into the Lives of Workers

The Day Worker Center celebrated 19 years of serving the community by premiering *A Daring Journey* at the Community School of Music and Arts on November 6.

After the screening, producer and director **Dorothy Fadiman** (above, right) moderated a question and answer session. Panelists were (L-R) the film’s narrator **María Marroquín** and co-producer **Owen Tomlins**, along with film stars poet **Luis Bejines** and the **Robles family** (**Ruben Sr.**, **Janet**, and Vassar graduate **Ruben Jr.**). Before the film, specially invited guests chatted with Dorothy at a “Meet the Filmmaker” fundraising reception.

Fast Facts ...

- ♦ *A Daring Journey*’s narrator and translator is none other than our very own Executive Director **María Marroquín**!
- ♦ The Day Worker Center staff and workers are indebted to everyone who generously donated their time to make our event a success!

What would you risk to give you or your child the education needed to live a life free of extreme poverty? Would you leave behind family and friends, everything you know and love to trudge a scorching, perilous desert for days with little food or water? Would you work two, even three back-breaking jobs in a new place where you don’t speak the language and many of the people don’t trust you? Would you live with the constant threat that you or your entire family could at any moment lose what you’ve managed to build and be sent back to a life with few or no options?

Many people come here seeking America’s promise of opportunity. After earning an education, people have the tools in hand to create a better life.

“On the ranches where we lived in Mexico, it is not easy,” says Ruben Robles Sr., owner of the Michoacan Market in Menlo Park and one of the people featured in the documentary *A Daring Journey*. “Many kids cannot attend school; maybe they do not have the money to pay for transportation — or food.”

In *A Daring Journey*, the Robles family and two other young men recall their terrifying journeys to the U.S., and recount harrowing memories of earning a living without documentation, the trials of fitting into a new culture, and fear of the immigration system that could shatter their dreams. Ultimately, we feel their triumph in achieving the education for which they sacrificed so much.

♦ **Ruben Robles Sr.** and his wife, **Janet**, dreamed that their children would get the education not possible living on rural farms in Mexico. Here in Menlo Park, hard work earned the Robles their Michoacan Produce Market.

We follow **Ruben Jr.**’s five-year journey from high school senior to Vassar College graduate. As he leaves for Vassar, Janet says, “If he studies, he will not have to work like we do.”

Post-graduation, Ruben Jr. is continuing his studies to become an attorney. “I [will be able to] think of creative ways to advocate for people,” says Ruben, “and that’s what I want to do.” He believes many people with legal dif-

“
Many kids cannot attend school; maybe they do not have the money to pay for transportation — or food.

—Ruben Robles Sr.

INSPIRING CHANGE IS FILMMAKER'S GOAL

Menlo Park producer and director Dorothy Fadiman doesn't mince words about the intent of her latest work, **A Daring Journey**. "The undocumented tend to get lumped together with sweeping, [harsh, negative] statements," she says. We want to show that these are "real people, not statistics, but visionaries who want to contribute to their new country—some of the hardest working, most ethical people in the U.S."

The film takes an intimate look at a few people without documentation and brings them to life. For example, Ruben Sr.'s fear is palpable as he recounts his harrowing border crossing, as is Sergio's shame over a social security card dilemma. According to Dorothy, these glimpses allow the viewer to empathize with "[their] existential pain and shame."

Like **A Daring Journey**, Dorothy's other films over her 35 years of producing have centered on human rights and social justice. They have also earned her an Emmy, an Academy Award nomination, and a Gold Medal from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Dorothy believes films can inspire and motivate social change. As she says in **Producing with Passion**, a manual for independent filmmakers that she co-authored, a film that "reflects your true passion can have a lasting impact on the world."



Learn more about **Concentric Media**, and buy, view, or download Dorothy's films for free at: <http://concentric.org>

Risk from page 2

faculties find it difficult to grasp their situation. Ruben Jr. says, "As an attorney, you try to understand complex situations," then help the clients see, too.

♦ As a child fascinated with language, **Luis Bejines** dreamed of becoming a poet. When he arrived in the U.S., Luis put his love for language to immediate use learning English, then achieving two associates degrees at Foothill, in Communications and in Sociology. Next step was San Jose State, where he received a Communications B.A. In 2014, he earned his master's degree from San Francisco State. Luis is now applying to doctoral programs—and working *three jobs*. But he has already realized his childhood dream: 11 books of poetry have his name printed on the cover.

Of his arduous, multi-day trek from Mexico, Luis recalls, "My friend got his feet twisted, and he kept on limping. So I carried two backpacks all the way. But we made it through."

♦ When **Sergio Garcia** successfully prosecuted his case before the California Supreme Court, he became the first undocumented person in the U.S. to receive a law license—fulfilling his childhood dream of becoming an attorney to protect the weak and abused.

"Throughout my life, being chronically poor, I knew that the only way out—the only way to exit that poverty—was to educate myself."

Sergio overcame daunting challenges, put himself through college, and now has law offices where he helps those "disenfranchised... forgotten, and those unable to pay the high price of legal services."

In May 2015, Sergio received his "green card" — sought by many but given to very few — that identifies him as "lawful permanent resident" of the U.S.

These men now have lives rich with options. Despite life-threatening obstacles and a system that could easily destroy their families and their futures, these immigrants dreamed of—and sacrificed everything for—education.

SEE THE FILM!

Dec. 1–31
**CREATIVE ARTS ONLINE
FILM FESTIVAL**

www.creativeartsfilmfestival.com

Dec. 10
MONARCH FILM FESTIVAL
Pacific Grove, CA

WATCH THE TRAILER
<https://vimeo.com/129826787>

Find lots more information
adaringjourneyfilm.org/articles.html

AT A GLANCE

Featured in
A DARING JOURNEY

LUIS BEJINES

Author of 11 books of poetry
Currently applying to PhD programs
[www.lulu.com/shop/
search.ep?keyWords=Bejines&type=](http://www.lulu.com/shop/search.ep?keyWords=Bejines&type=)

SERGIO GARCIA

The first undocumented person to become a licensed attorney in the U.S.
Chico, CA office specializes in personal injury
See also the **Sergio C. Garcia Foundation**
sergiocarcialaw.com

RUBEN ROBLES JR.

Vassar graduate
Working toward law degree

JANET and RUBEN ROBLES SR.
MICHOACAN PRODUCE MARKET

Home of the Best

Mesquite-Grilled Chicken!

3380 Middlefield Road in Menlo Park
www.michoacanproducemarket.com