

Doris Espinoza (Farnsworth House)

My full name is Doris Espinoza. My maiden name was Sandoval. I was born in Nicaragua, Central America in 1935. I've lived here in the US for 25 years. It's very different here than it was in my country. I grew up in Managua. It's the capital city of Nicaragua. We had two seasons, winter and summer. They were long seasons. Winter is rainy and windy, and summer is very hot. It's a tropical country, so there's no winter. There are lots of fruit trees, every house has a big yard, and there are mangoes and other fruit trees. Here fruit is very expensive, but there it was everywhere.

I had four sisters and two brothers, and I was the oldest. My sisters were Darlene, Myrna, Irma, and Teresa; Roberto and Saul were my brothers. My mother was Asuncion, and my father's name was Marcos Sandoval. My mother died when she was just 32 years old, many years ago. She was very young. And my father died 5 years ago, when he was 84. I was married, but my husband is in Costa Rica now, so I raised my son alone.

I went to school to the sixth grade — primary school, they called it. After school I use to have to clean the house and help with the chores around the house. When I was your age I use to like to go to the movies and to parties. We use to just be together ... to hang out with our friends. We always went places in little groups. It was very nice. No, I never got in trouble with my parents.

No, I don't drive. My father was very strict. We had three cars when I lived in my country, but only Dad and my brothers got to drive!

The place that we use to go as a family was to the beach. The beaches there were very beautiful, and the water was clear enough to see the fish. Sometimes when you'd go to a restaurant, you could see them catch the fish right there — then they'd cook it for you. They'd put it together with a salad and beans and rice, and it was so good.

After I finished school, I learned to sew with the machines, then I went to work in an office. Later, I came here. The best job I ever had was working at the pharmacy.

I had my son in Nicaragua, then when he was 12 years old, we came here because I was afraid for our lives. My son's name is Sergio, the same as his father. When he was 7 years old I made him a piñata for his birthday! When we came to Boston he went to Our Lady of Lourdes School, then he went to Christopher Columbus High School in the South End. He's married now, and I have a 5 year old granddaughter named Isabella.

The hardest thing I had to do in my life was to leave my country. We came here in 1980, and I cried for almost six months. I cried on the plane and for a long time afterwards. I left because there was a war in my country. It was a long war, and at the end there were bombs ... it was very scary. I was afraid if we didn't leave we might be killed.

I think my granddaughter gives me the most happiness in my life. When she was born, I was at the hospital. The hardest thing about being here is winter! I like to walk, but when it's winter, it's too cold. And it's dangerous, you can slip. I love the warm weather and the beach. I like Spring time and Summer because it's warm and you don't have to wear so many clothes! I like soft music. My favorite song is by Julio Igelsias. My favorite colors are green and yellow.