



Our Harvard Law School Family



Morena Ulloa

Custodian, Facilities Maintenance Operations

Morena finished her formal education in El Salvador before immigrating to the U.S. in 1984. When she enrolled in the 9th grade, she realized she had already learned most of the math and social studies curriculum at school in El Salvador. However, her limited English proficiency made the transition to school in the U.S. very difficult and Morena eventually left school to work three jobs and support her family.

Working both the morning and evening shifts on many occasions, Morena's days on campus often start at 6:30am and end at midnight. Between her shifts, she takes English and computer science courses through Harvard's Bridge Program and is working towards her GED. Her older son, Alejandro, is 20 and studies business marketing at Suffolk University. Morena's younger son, Douglas, is 19 and choosing between psychology and computer science at UMass. Sometimes, Morena regrets not finishing high school in the U.S., because she believes her life would have been easier if she stayed. However, Morena is excited to finish her GED so she can show her sons that anything is possible with an education.

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Transito Sandoval Custodian, Facilities Maintenance Operations

Transito left El Salvador in 1999 and worked at the Red Cross and Santa Elizabeth Nursing Home for two years before joining the FMO team in 2001. Growing up during El Salvador's civil war, Transito witnessed many civilian deaths at the hands of a corrupt police force and arrived in the U.S. fearful of the police. She felt better about some aspects of life in the U.S. though, such as the freedom to leave when she wanted and the ability to speak her mind. She also found people in the U.S. to be more "positive."

Reflecting on her years in America, Transito mentions that even though there were many deportations unreported by the news in the past decade, she never felt anything positive or negative. "Now," she explains, "everything is negative... it's 100% negative." When Transito hears hateful rhetoric about immigrants, she feels like it is directed at her.

Transito's favorite thing about working on the FMO team is being able to joke around with students, colleagues and her supervisor Marcus. She explains that she's willing to work as long as people will give her the opportunity to work. All she hopes is that everyone can continue working together in the country regardless of race, age, or any other trait.

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Marcus Calegar

Operations Manager, Facilities Maintenance Operations

Marcus moved from Minnesota to Brazil when he was three years old and spent his childhood growing up in different regions of Brazil, Costa Rica and Italy. His family moved around a lot because Marcus's father was a diplomat, and on his many travels, Marcus became fluent in Portuguese, Spanish and English. After finishing high school in Brazil, Marcus decided it was time to come back to the U.S. to pursue higher education.

Marcus was drawn to studying hospitality management because he grew up living in hotels around the world and loved interacting with people with different cultures, different educational levels and different lifestyles. In 2004, Marcus met his wife Camila while studying Hotel Management in Connecticut. The couple now has a three-year old toddler named Samuel. Like his father, Samuel is already a globetrotter and has visited Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Costa Rica and Mexico. Samuel and Marcus's next stop? Disneyworld.

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A photograph of the Harvard Law School building at night. The building is a large, multi-story stone structure with many windows, some of which are illuminated from within. The building's facade features Latin inscriptions, including "ALK AND THE WORK THAT THEY MUST DO" and "AND SHALT SHEW THE WAY WHEREIN".

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Manuel Mendes

Events/Custodian Crew Chief, Facilities Maintenance Operations

Manuel immigrated from Cape Verde with his mother and sister in the early 2000s to join his maternal grandfather in Dorchester. When Manuel first arrived in the U.S., he enrolled in high school and took on a full-time job to support his family. Eventually, the schedule was too demanding and he switched to part-time school and part-time work. Through Harvard's Bridge Program, Manuel has been able to take English, biology and math courses. As Crew Chief, he's found that his English has improved rapidly due to constant interactions with other people.

The greatest differences between Cape Verde and Massachusetts, Manuel explains, are the weather, culture, and food. In Cape Verde, weather hardly ever drops below the 50s. Manuel was excited when he saw snow for the first time fourteen years ago, but that excitement has quickly faded through the years. As for culture, there is a close-knit Cape Verdean community in Massachusetts that serves as a hub for cultural festivities such as Carnival celebrations. Manuel has even been able to find his favorite dish cachupa. Cachupa is a slow-cooked stew consisting of corn, beans, cassava, sweet potato and either fish or meat. Each of the islands in Cape Verde serve their own variation of the dish. If you're looking to try the best cachupa dish in the area, Manuel says to check out Restaurante Cesaria in Dorchester.

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A photograph of the Harvard Law School building at night. The building is a large, multi-story stone structure with many windows, some of which are illuminated from within. The building features a prominent corner tower with a dome. The text "AND SHALT SHEW THEM THE WAY WHEREIN" is visible on the left side of the building, and "WALK AND THE WORK THAT THEY MUST DO" is visible on the right side. The sky is dark, and the overall scene is lit with a warm, golden light from the building's interior lights.

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Ligia Hernandez

Restaurant Associates

Ligia was born in Central Colombia in a city called Cali. When she first moved to Boston in 1999, she only intended to stay temporarily to learn English in order to pursue an International Business degree. After only a couple months, Ligia changed her mind and decided to call Boston home.

Two years after arriving in Boston, Ligia met her husband. She now owns a house in Revere and is a mother of two. To Ligia, Boston is a beautiful city that provides safety and economic opportunity for her family. However, every year the Hernandez family will take a trip to Colombia or Mexico, where Ligia's husband grew up, so her children can maintain their cultural roots in Latin America and celebrate their heritage. Aside from raising her own family in Boston, Ligia has also been successful in bringing over her family from Colombia. Now, Ligia's father, mother, and sister are also proud Boston residents.

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Doralean Cox

Restaurant Associates

Doralean worked for 25 years at a phone company before retiring. A quiet lifestyle of retirement, however, was not for her. It's not surprising considering Doralean is a Boston native who grew up in Roxbury, Massachusetts with 14 siblings. With 2 children of her own and 2 grandchildren, Doralean's family is still growing.

In pursuit of more activity and excitement in her life, Doralean joined an even bigger family and began working on the Restaurant Associates team in 2000. She loves the fast pace of her work and enjoys interacting with all the different students at the law school. Doralean remarks that the active, social environment of her workplace is a perfect fit for her. One might say that amidst the chaos and hustle bustle of the campus, Doralean feels right at home.

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Markeith Leary

Restaurant Associates

Markeith grew up with a large family in Roxbury, Massachusetts. During his youth, he enjoyed two great passions: cooking and football. The first of these, Markeith turned into a career.

After discovering his love of cooking in grade school, Markeith attend Le Cordon Bleu in Boston to receive formal training. He worked in the kitchen of an assisted living home prior to joining the team at HLS. In the kitchen here, Markeith began as a dishwasher. Over time, he has worked himself up to being a cook.

One of Markeith's favorite things about cooking is his ability to visualize what the food will look like. He enjoys the fast-paced, high-octane nature of the kitchen and loves the adrenaline rush it gives him on a daily basis. The high standards of the kitchen push him to pursue excellence in his cooking. It turns out Markeith's knack for the culinary arts might actually run in the family-- his sister is currently pursuing a career as a baker.

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Veronica Atocha

Restaurant Associates

Veronica was born in Ecuador and moved to the United States when she was one year old. For the next 12 years, her family moved back and forth between the two countries before finally settling down in Boston when Veronica was 13. She found the first year of high school to be quite lonely since many of her old friends had separated into different cliques while she was in Ecuador. Veronica sought out other Hispanic students thinking she may fit in with them, but found that this group was also divided across cultural lines with cliques comprised of Brazilian students, Central Americans, El Salvadoreans, and other groups. Veronica did not meet any other Ecuadorian individuals until recently.

Given the opportunity, Veronica says she would not choose to move back to her birthplace permanently because Ecuador is much more conservative than the U.S. on social issues. For Veronica, this is a huge issue because it means she wouldn't be able to live her life as freely in Ecuador.

Veronica came out as lesbian to her parents about 4 years ago. She struggled with the decision to come out initially because her family is steeped in conservative and religious Hispanic values. At first, Veronica's mom suggested that perhaps she just hadn't met the "right guy" yet or perhaps she could talk to a therapist. Since then, Veronica has found her parents to be pretty supportive of her sexual orientation. The loneliness that Veronica felt as a teenager has faded away, and hopefully one day Veronica can travel to Ecuador and share that slice of her heritage and childhood with her new girlfriend Maddie.

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Dajuan Stubbs Restaurant Associates

Dajuan grew up on Georgia Street in Dorchester, Massachusetts with his mom and grandparents. It was his grandfather, Roland Stubbs, who taught Dajuan a valuable lesson about adversity that has carried him through life.

Roland was employed by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and was the first black individual to drive a T-bus. From passengers spitting in his face to riders refusing to pay the fare, Roland put up with years of harassment at a job he hated so he could support a family he loved. These incidents all culminated in the day that Roland was assaulted by two teenage girls when he tried to kick them off his bus for not paying the fare. After 37 years of employment at the MBTA, Roland was forced to resign.

His grandfather Roland's grit and resilience inspired Dajuan to get through tough periods in his own life. He's lost 14 friends to gang violence, 9 friends to drugs, and witnessed his father's slow recovery from heroin addiction.

Dajuan's love of art and dream of attending the Massachusetts College of Art also got him through these periods. However, his portfolio of graffiti art was turned down by MCA which explained that his style was "too urban." Dajuan astutely points out that this style has suddenly become *not* "too urban" alluding to the success of the street artist Banksy. Eventually, Dajuan began work in the kitchen of a nursing home until he was urged by a caring colleague to strive for more. He quickly moved through the ranks at the nursing home, worked at a high-end Italian restaurant downtown, attended the Cambridge School of Culinary Arts and is now the proud father of two daughters in college.

Asked if he had any advice for students facing adversity, Dajuan replied: "Remember who you are. Remember where you come from. Don't let this place change you. Money isn't everything, but love is everything. Ignorance will kill you, but love will save you." After all, in a world full of adversity, it was Roland Stubbs who proved to Dajuan how love can be our greatest source of strength.

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