

7-1-2015

## Reflections and Analysis (Transcript)

Lavon Morris-Grant

Eesha Pandit

Rosana Araujo

Reina Fernández

Reyna Gómez

Follow this and additional works at: <http://repository.law.miami.edu/umrsjlr>



Part of the [Civil Rights and Discrimination Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Lavon Morris-Grant et al., *Reflections and Analysis (Transcript)*, 5 U. Miami Race & Soc. Just. L. Rev. 275 (2015)  
Available at: <http://repository.law.miami.edu/umrsjlr/vol5/iss2/7>

This Plenary 1 is brought to you for free and open access by Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Miami Race & Social Justice Law Review by an authorized administrator of Institutional Repository. For more information, please contact [library@law.miami.edu](mailto:library@law.miami.edu).

## TRANSCRIPT<sup>o</sup>

### CONVERGE! REIMAGINING THE MOVEMENT TO END GENDER VIOLENCE

## Plenary 1—Reflections and Analysis

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCHOOL OF LAW

*Eesha Pandit*<sup>\*</sup>  
*Rosana Araujo*  
*Reina Fernández*<sup>†</sup>  
*Reyna Gómez*  
*Lavon Morris-Grant*

**PANDIT:** My name is Eesha Pandit and I am going to moderate this discussion. I am going to frame what we are doing in this session and why this session is following Dr. Richie’s keynote.<sup>1</sup> This is a response to,

---

<sup>o</sup> This transcript has been edited from its original transcription for clarity.

<sup>\*</sup> Eesha Pandit is a writer and activist who believes in social justice movements, the power of intersectionality, feminism, sisterhood, and the power of art. Pandit contributed the following essay: Eesha Pandit, *On the Same Bodies: Exploring the Shared Historical Legacy of Violence Against Women and Reproductive Injustice*, 5 U. MIAMI RACE & SOC. JUST. L. REV. 549 (2015). Reina Fernández is a survivor of Domestic Violence and a founding member of Sisterhood of Survivors. Reina Gómez is a member of the Sisterhood of Survivors. She migrated to the United States in 2004 from Honduras, where she faced fierce persecution and repression for being a union organizer. Lavon Morris-Grant is a social and political activist for women and children’s safety against violence. She dedicates much of her time and efforts to statewide domestic violence and faith-based organizations. Rosana Araujo was born and raised in Montevideo, Uruguay and moved to the United States in 2003 with her husband and son. Rosana joined Sisterhood of Survivors out of an honest desire to empower other women and encourage them to speak about the physical, psychological, sexual and economic gender based abuse endured by women, particularly undocumented women, whose lack of immigration status prevents them from accessing treatment and educational opportunities.

<sup>†</sup> Original remarks from the CONVERGE! conference omitted.

Recommended Citation: Lavon Morris-Grant et al., *Plenary 1—Reflections and Analysis*, 5 U. MIAMI RACE & SOC. JUST. L. REV. 275 (2015).

<sup>1</sup> Beth E. Richie, *Keynote—Reimagining the Movement to End Gender Violence: Anti-racism, Prison Abolition, Women of Color Feminisms, and Other Radical Visions of Justice*, 5 U. MIAMI RACE & SOC. JUST. L. REV. 257 (2015).

and in alliance with what Donna Coker said at the beginning: it is not only that our work to end gender based violence is incomplete without the voices of survivors, but it is actually deeply insufficient without them. Our speakers will tell their stories and describe their work and then we will have a few questions, which I will moderate.

We will start with Reyna Gomez who is a member of the Sisterhood of Survivors. She immigrated to the United States in 2004 from Honduras, where she faced fierce persecution and repression for being a union organizer. In spite of having to flee her country for political reasons and being a survivor of both cancer and domestic violence, Reyna was not able to obtain legal immigration status in the United States. Still as an undocumented domestic worker, survivor of cancer, domestic violence survivor, and persecuted syndicalist, Reyna has managed to remain in the front lines of the movement to end gender-based violence and to participate in other struggles. She was one of the fasters during the University of Miami janitor strike in 2006,<sup>2</sup> which led to a 33% increase in janitor's wages and the ability to form a union.

Then we will hear from Lavon Morris-Grant who is a social and political activist for women and children's safety against violence. She dedicates much of her time and efforts to statewide domestic violence and faith-based organizations. She is a mentor for the Women of Color Network and was a board member for the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence for eight years. She is also an entrepreneur and an internationally recognized speaker on topics related to violence against women. Her book called *WHOM SHALL I FEAR: A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF A BATTERED WOMEN*,<sup>3</sup> tells her story and her process.

Then we will close with Rosana Araujo, who was born and raised in Montevideo, Uruguay. She moved to the United States in 2003 with her husband and son. Rosana joined Sisterhood of Survivors out of a desire to empower other women and encourage them to speak about the physical, psychological, sexual, and economic gender-based abuse endured by women. She is particularly concerned with undocumented women, whose lack of immigration status prevents them from accessing treatment and educational opportunities. Rosana's passion is not merely to empower other women to speak out, but to create a woman-led movement to change legislation and to help create laws and protections and development opportunities for women and children who are survivors of gender-based violence.

---

<sup>2</sup> See generally *THE GLOVES-OFF ECONOMY: WORKPLACE STANDARDS AT THE BOTTOM OF AMERICA'S LABOR MARKET* 243 (Annette Bernhardt et al. eds., 2008).

<sup>3</sup> See also LAVON MORRIS-GRANT, *WHOM SHALL I FEAR: A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF A BATTERED WOMEN* (2001) (a memoir of Lavon's life relating to domestic violence after being shot four times by her husband who later committed suicide).

**GÓMEZ:** (*ORIGINAL SPANISH*) Mi nombre es Reyna Gómez y mi historia es complicada debido a mi situación. Padezco de cáncer y soy inmigrante indocumentada. Por lo tanto, he tenido que navegar el sistema desde que descubrí que tenía la enfermedad.

No califico para ningún seguro médico porque no cubren este tipo de enfermedad. Fui a buscar ayuda a La Liga Contra el Cáncer pero lo primero que me preguntaron fue, “¿Cuál es tu estatus en este país?” Por ser indocumentada no me pueden ayudar.

No ha sido fácil para mí, pero el sistema no ha podido doblegar mis ganas de vivir o mi fe. He luchado contra todo. Se me han cerrado puertas pero sigo tocándolas, he seguido adelante. Llevo once años en este país. Tengo once años aquí trabajando. Duele cuando te dicen que no te pueden ayudar porque no tienes un estatus legal. Tengo once años sin ver a mi familia. No tengo familia en este país, pero tengo mis amigos y ellos han tenido que ayudarme aportando dinero.

He tenido que trabajar en esta condición para poder tener el dinero necesario para comprar mis medicamentos. He estado en la situación de tener que tomar la decisión entre comer o comprar mis medicamentos. Esto también me ha afectado en mi trabajo porque una vez que le dices al empleador que estas enferma ya no te quieren en el trabajo.

En Junio, descubrieron que tenía un tumor y el tumor estaba afectando tres órganos. Mi médico me dijo que había que operarme inmediatamente, pero tuve que esperar seis meses, bregando en el sistema, seis meses pidiendo ayuda. Mis amigos tuvieron que hacer de todo para poder conseguir dinero, para yo poder ser operada.

Hace tres meses tuve la cirugía, y tuve que trabajar con dolor, tuve que trabajar buscando ayuda. Es una situación muy difícil para cada uno de nosotros y no tenemos la estructura ni nada que nos ayude. Mi hija o mi madre me preguntan, “¿Quién te cuida en el hospital?” “¿Quién está contigo?” “¿Quién te da un abrazo?” Yo le digo que mis amigos están conmigo. Pero hay veces que no están mis amigos, y no pueden estar porque están trabajando, y entonces estoy sola. Pero no le puedo decir eso a mi madre, o mi hermana, o a mi hija, por que sufren. Tengo que callar y quedarme callada para no hacerlos sufrir. Ya yo estoy sufriendo. Me preguntan cómo estoy haciendo y no les digo la verdad, ellos no saben cómo estoy sobreviviendo.

A pesar de todo, sigo en la lucha, sigo tocando puertas, y sigo estudiando, Les llevo el mensaje a mis compañeras porque hay muchas mujeres trabajadoras del hogar que limpian casas y cuidan niños pero no tienen ningún derecho. No tenemos nada que nos proteja. No podemos ni enfermarnos. Esa es mi historia y he tenido que decirle a cada uno de ustedes.

**GÓMEZ:** (*ENGLISH TRANSLATION*) My name is Reyna Gómez and my story is complicated due to my situation. I have cancer and I am an undocumented immigrant. As a result, I have had to navigate the system ever since I discovered that I had the disease.

I do not qualify for any health insurance because they do not cover this type of disease. I sought help at La Liga Contra el Cáncer<sup>4</sup> but the first thing they ask you is, “what is your status in this country?” I am undocumented and therefore they cannot help me. It has not been easy for me, but the system has not been able to bend my will to live or my faith. I have fought against everything. I have knocked on doors, doors have been shut, but I have continued on. I have been in this country for eleven years. I have eleven years working here. It hurts when you are told you cannot be helped because you do not have legal status. It has been eleven years that I have not seen my family. I do not have family in this country, but I have my friends and they have had to help me raise money. I have had to work in my condition in order to have money to buy my medications. I have been in the situation where I have had to make the decision between eating and buying my medicines. It has also affected my job, because once you tell your employer that you are sick they no longer want you working for them.

In June they discovered that I had a tumor and the tumor was affecting three organs. My doctor told me that I needed surgery immediately, but I had to wait six months, struggling in the system, six months asking for help. My friends had to do all sorts of things to be able to get the money in order for me to be operated on.

Three months ago I had the surgery and I had to work with the pain, had to work looking for help. So, it is a very difficult situation for each and every one of us and we do not have the structure, to help us. My daughter or my mother asks me, “Who takes care of you in the hospital?” “Who is with you?” “Who gives you hugs?” I tell them that my friends are with me. But there are times that my friends are not there, they cannot be because they are working, so then I am alone. But I cannot tell that to my mother, or my sister, or my daughter, because then they will suffer. I have to be quiet and remain silent to not make them suffer. I am already suffering. They ask me how I am doing and I do not tell them the truth, they do not know how I am surviving.

Despite everything, I keep fighting, I keep knocking on doors and I keep studying. I carry the message to my colleagues, because there are many domestic working women that work inside cleaning houses, taking care of children, that do not have any rights. We do not have anything

---

<sup>4</sup> For more information, please visit LA LIGA CONTRA EL CÁNCER, <http://ligacontraelcancer.org/> (last visited May 12, 2015).

that protects us. We do not even have the right to get sick. That is my story and I have had to tell it to each one of you.

**MORRIS-GRANT:** Good morning, as a speaker for so many years I have never been so emotional before my speech. Beth messed me up this morning because she told my whole story. Beth has been my “shero” since I first came into the movement.

I went to my first national conference in 1998, as a survivor coming from the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence. I bought into the belief that my voice was relevant, that I was necessary at the table, and that I was welcomed. And boy oh boy was that such a huge illusion for an African-American woman survivor or just an African-American woman period. I did not know there was a language out there that you all called “domestic violence,” because in my community we do not call that domestic violence, we call that survival—“You hit me, I’m going to hit you back. You cuss me, I’m going to cuss you out.” I did not know there was a whole movement of people with a language, but I was living a language you all had defined for my life. Because I did not define the language you had already defined for me, for my life to fit into, I became the problem at the table.

It has been a hard fight to stay in the work. I am so passionate about this work because so many women are dying and being abused. But it is so hard to stay connected to the people at the table because they are not connected to you, and you know they do not want you there, but they cannot say, “you can’t come,” because you are a survivor. I am a political activist. I know your analysis; I have studied you very well and you have taught me a lot. New York State is a heavy hitting state, very progressive, and those women at the table taught me a lot.

I had heard so much about this Beth Richie and I did not know who she was; all I knew was that she was a Black woman and I had never really seen any Black women at the table—I thought I was the only one. I was in the bathroom with this Beth Richie, but I did not know she was Beth Richie. We were washing our hands and I am talking my truth. When I get back to the Women of Color Institute room, they called this Beth Richie up because she was on the program to speak. She walks up and I was like “oh my god, I told her my real thoughts.” At the end of the Women of Color Institute she said to me, “Lavon, my sister, don’t ever let them take your voice.” I did not fully know what she meant by “my voice” because I did not fully know that I was going to be in the midst of the enemy camp at in some point in my journey, but her words have rung true.

I began to raise questions and challenges within the very system that told me I was welcomed. I began to ask questions of the framework that you all had already designed. I asked “where was my community?,” and

“where were women of color in this framework?” We do not want police in our community; the police in our community are not our friends. You decided to bring in the prison industry people. I knew my reality, and the white women told me, “Well Lavon, we never thought about it that way, but you know we are going to move forward anyway.” I said, “Then you all are going to find out that it is not going to work.” Little old me who did not know anything; but they had all the answers.

I am a woman who was never hit by her husband. I was married to him for ten years. Ten months after I left him, one day when I went home to get my children, my husband attempted to kill me. He put a 22-caliber gun to my head and pulled the trigger. That bullet is lodged in my head to this day. As this was happening, my children were downstairs in the house. They were fourteen, seven, and four years old. Marquis, Cory and Sharia, are the true heroes. After shooting me in the head, he then shoots me in my thigh. I get out of the bedroom and he then shoots me in my butt. I dove down the stairs. I knew I was going to die, but I had to get those children out of the house. As I am diving down the stairs, he shoots me again in my foot. That bullet is still lodged in my foot today. I got down the stairs and I grabbed my children and we ran. I did not lose consciousness. I just knew I was going to die because I had a bullet in my head. I get us to a neighbor’s house and I asked my neighbor to put my children in the basement because I did not want them to see me die. That was my only concern—I did not want my children to see the last of their mother dead.

As you can see I did not die. But unfortunately, and it *is* unfortunate for us, my husband then shot and killed himself. His death did not make us whole or make our healing any easier. My children were left without a father and I was a widow at the age of thirty-four.

My son Marquis is thirty-two years old. He graduated from Morehouse College and went on to get his Master’s degree. Cory is twenty-four; he is in the Navy, married with two kids, and doing very well. Sharia is the baby and she went through a horrible prison nation. She went to jail, but she is now a senior at Savannah State University and is going to start a Master’s program. So there is hope and there is healing. You have to keep working at it regardless of what systems come at you and regardless of how people try to tell you that you are not relevant.

**ARAUJO:** (*ORIGINAL SPANISH*) Mi nombre es Rosana Araujo, soy Uruguaya y vengo de una familia con muchos problemas de violencia domestica. Yo creo que desde mi procreación he sido expuesta a la violencia. En el año 2002, a causa de la crisis económica que aun persiste pero que hubo mas en el sur en Uruguay y en Argentina, tuvimos que emigrar. Ahora soy una inmigrante indocumentada.

Nunca en mi vida imagine emigrar. Por cosas de la vida y el destino llegué a Miami. Cuando llegué estaba súper emocionada porque estaba en la ciudad de visión, Miami. Pero al mes me enfrente con mi primer reto. Mi primer obstáculo fue el no poder estudiar. Yo soy una egresada de la universidad pero por no tener documentos no podía estudiar. Entonces tuve que trabajar porque hay que vivir.

Tuve que anotarme en las agencias de trabajo que toman personas como temporario. Por primera vez tuve que trabajar en una factoría. Quizás suene un poco arrogante, pero nunca había trabajado en una fábrica, no conocía lo que era una fábrica. Empecé a trabajar en un almacén de flores. Ahí tuve que trabajar en condiciones con temperatura bajo hielo, con ropa que no eran adecuadas. En ese trabajo, sufrí muchos abusos y tuve muchos problemas. Los problemas ocurrieron porque me quejaba mucho. Todo el tiempo daba quejas de que nos maltrataban. Nos encerraban en el almacén, que era como un congelador, y nos hacían trabajar horas y horas. Nos robaban el dinero, no nos dejaban ir al baño y muchos abusos mas.

Después de ahí me llevaron a una empaquetadora de juguetes. Por suerte mi amiga y yo pudimos ir—porque gracias a ella es que estoy acá hoy. Mi amiga era lesbiana y el manager pensaba que éramos pareja y que teníamos una relación. Por esto, el manager nos maltrataba muchísimo todo el tiempo y decía cosas que afectaban mi integridad. Un día me enoje muchísimo con el y lo afrenté, pero desafortunadamente empeoraron los abusos. Trabajar ahí fue terrible para mí porque nos amenazaba que si lo reportábamos iba llamar a inmigración. No pude llamar a la policía porque si la policía me pide los documentos, al no tenerlos puede perjudicar a mi esposo y a mi hijo. Después de ese trabajo, con todo lo que me pasó, me costó muchísimo superar el daño y aun me cuesta superarlo. Me cuesta en lo que es psicológicamente, físicamente y en todo.

De ahí nos llevaron a otro lugar a trabajar. Yo tuve la triste desgracia de tener un accidente en el lugar nuevo. Se me vino una pared de madera que había con cajas, encima. Me lesione las vertebras. En vez de preocuparse si yo estaba grave, lo primero que los dueños me dijeron fue, “No tenemos seguro; nos vas a denunciar? Que horrible si tu haces eso sabes que podríamos llamar a inmigración, la policía te llevaría, te separarían de tu hijo.” Cuando me llevaron al hospital Palmetto tuve que mentir, decir que el accidente ocurrió mientras tomando un curso en ese lugar. No estaba involucrada todavía en lo que es Sisterhood of Survivors y Miami Workers Center.

Ese accidente me costó mucho porque me lesione la cabeza, las vertebras, y perdí bastante el conocimiento. Tardé mas o menos como seis meses en recuperarme. Al no tener documentos, no tenía acceso a ir a

terapia física. Gracias que uno siempre tiene a esos amigos que son enviados por dios y que los ayuda. Gracias a ellos conseguí unas sesiones pero aun con eso no quedé bien. No puedo trabajar, no puedo estar horas parada ni horas sentadas, pero eso no me ha impedido involucrarme. No quería estar mas callada, no quería estar llorando en una cama con intentos de suicidios. Mi hijo en ese momento estaba mas pequeño y tuvo el desatino de contar en la escuela que su mama se quería ir al cielo; me acuerdo que me llamó la consejera y me enoje mucho con ella porque para ella era mas importante que tuviera un numero social de lo que me pasaba a mi.

Pero, un día llegué al Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC) y de ahí fui al Miami Workers Center y Sisterhood of Survivors. Encontré a estas mujeres que tenían historias muy similar a la mía. Ellas me inspiran todos los días para no quedar mas callada, para revelar la falacia en pensar que el sistema nos va ayudar y que todos vamos a estar mejor. Por eso estoy involucrada en la lucha. A veces me desamino, me siento enferma, me decaigo pero me inspiro en escuchar a mis amigos hablar sobre lo que hago. Por ejemplo, un día fui a un casamiento de mis amigos y cuando iba caminando decían, “Mira, mira! Esta es la que va a las protestas, la que esta gritando, la que esta en las calles,” y pensé, “Vale la pena estar horas en las marchas y venir con dolores de cabeza y pasar tres días en la cama.” Juntos, espero que podremos cambiar el sistema para mejorar las vidas de mujeres.

**ARAUJO:** (*ENGLISH TRANSLATION*) My name is Rosana Araujo, I am Uruguayan and I come from a family with many problems of domestic violence. I think I have been exposed to violence since procreation. In 2002 due to the economic crisis that still lingers, but that was more prevalent in the south, in Uruguay and Argentina, we had to emigrate. Now I am an undocumented immigrant.

Never in my life did I imagine I would ever emigrate. By happenstance and destiny, I arrived in Miami. When I arrived I was super excited because I was in the city of vision, Miami. But within a month I faced my first challenge. My first hurdle was not being able to study. I am a college graduate, but because I did not have documents I was unable to go back to school. As a result, I had to work because we had to survive.

I had to sign up with work agencies that hired people on a temporary basis. For the first time in my life I had to work in a factory and this might sound a bit arrogant, but I had never worked in a factory; I did not know what a factory was. I started working in a flower warehouse. There I had to work in conditions with temperature below zero, with inadequate clothing. In that job, I suffered many abuses and had many problems. The problems occurred because I complained too much. I was always

complaining about how they mistreated us. They would lock us up in the warehouse, which was like a freezer, and they would make us work for hours and hours. They would withhold our wages, would not let us go to the bathroom, and many other abuses.

After that job they took me to a toy-packing factory. Fortunately, my friend and I were allowed to go—thanks to her I am here today. My friend was a lesbian and the manager thought that we were a couple and had a relationship. Due to this, the manager would mistreat us all the time and would say things that would affect my integrity. One day I got really angry with him and confronted him, but unfortunately the abuses worsened. Working there was terrible for me because they would threaten that if we reported them they would call immigration. I could not call the police because if the police asked for my documents, me not having them could have hurt my husband and my son. After that job, with everything that happened, it took a lot for me to overcome the damage and it still takes a lot to overcome it. It takes a lot in a psychological, physical and every kind of sense.

From there they took us to another place to work. I had the misfortune of having an accident in the new place. A wooden wall that had boxes came down on me. I injured my vertebrae. Instead of worrying if I was seriously hurt, the first thing the owners told me was, “We don’t have insurance; are you going to report us? It would be horrible if you did because you know we could call immigration and the police would take you and separate you from your son.” When I was taken to Palmetto Hospital I had to lie, I had to say the injury occurred while I was taking a course at that place. I was not yet involved in what is Sisterhood of Survivors and Miami Workers Center.

The accident cost me a lot because I injured my head, my vertebrae, and I lost consciousness. It took me more or less six months to recover. Having no documents, I did not have access to physical therapy. Luckily one always has those friends that are sent from God to help us. Thanks to them, I got a few sessions, but even with that I did not fully recover. I cannot work, I cannot stand or sit for too many hours, but that has not prevented me from getting involved. I did not want to keep quiet any longer; I did not want to be crying on a bed with intentions of suicide. My son at that time was smaller and foolishly commented in school that his mom wanted to go to heaven; I remember getting a call from the counselor and being very mad at her, because for her it was more important I had a social security number than what was happening with me.

But one day I went to the Florida Immigrant Coalition and from there I went to the Miami Workers Center and Sisterhood of Survivors. I found women who had stories very similar to mine. They inspire me

every day to not keep quiet, to reveal the fallacy in thinking that the system will help us and we will all be better. That is why I am involved in this fight. Sometimes I get discouraged, I feel sick, I get depressed, but I get inspired hearing my friends talk about what I do. For example, one day I was at my friends' wedding and as I was walking they said, "Look, look! She is the one that goes to the protests, the one that yells, the one that is in the streets," and I thought, "It is worth spending hours in marches and coming home with headaches and having to spend the next three days in bed." Together, I hope that we can change the system to improve the lives of women.

**PANDIT:** We heard some of the systemic issues come up in the stories we heard about the institutions that folks turned to that [did not support them, I want to hear about the challenges that each of you faced within these systems that you thought were there to protect you or you thought *should* be there to protect you. I also want to ask each of you [to tell us what are some solutions and strategies that you think would work, what should the systems have looked like, what could they have looked like to help you in the ways that you needed and to better respond to your experiences.

**MORRIS-GRANT:** When I went into the state New York shelter, I just saw a whole different environment from New Jersey, where I grew up. I was the only Black woman and it was very different from where I came from. The police used to follow me everywhere I went. When I left home I took my fur coats, I took my car, I took some material things with me, so I had some privilege—yet still they would stop me randomly. They knew I lived in the shelter because they know everybody coming in and out of that shelter. They arrested me and held me in the jail because they said I was speeding. I promise you, I had just gotten on the road and there was no way I was speeding. Then when they arrested me they said that my license was suspended because my license is from New Jersey and I had not renewed my license in New York. I was just so shocked that the advocates could not get me out.

You know who got me out? My husband. He was coming up to visit with my son, because we were still in contact. The advocates could not get me out of prison and the cops would not stop stopping me. I had to move from that area to a community of crime and drugs because I was more comfortable there. The racism was going to kill me before the crime and drug addicts and all the other people would.

**GÓMEZ:** (*ORIGINAL SPANISH*) Para mi la reto es cambiar el sistema, que La Liga Contra el Cáncer pueda ayudar a la gente que no tenga un estatus, eso es una meta. Otro de las metas es educar a la gente. Entonces eso es una meta para todo nosotros, los indocumentados, que

nos entiendan el porque nosotros venimos acá y porque nosotros nos enfermamos como cualquier personas, entonces es seguir educando.

Otra de las cosas es el miedo, el miedo de ir a pedir ayuda, mucho de nosotros tenemos mucho miedo. Mucha de mis amigas han perdido la vida porque han tenido miedo, entonces es un reto decir no tengo miedo. Pero llegan y dicen, “no me pueden ayudar” y cuando se les encierran la puertas no vuelven a tocar otra puerta, entonces es una [meta] seguir educando continuamente a la gente indocumentada que si se te cierra una puerta va haber otra puerta que tu puedes abrir. A mi me ha tocado y estoy aquí porque no he dejado de tocar puertas, no he dejado de educarme, no he dejado de llevar el mensaje. Entonces ese es el reto para cada uno de nosotros.

**GÓMEZ:** (*ENGLISH TRANSLATION*) For me the challenge is changing the system so that the League Against Cancer is able to help people who do not have status, that is my goal. Another goal is to educate people. That is a goal for all of us who are undocumented – to be understood as to why we come here, how we get sick, and the fear we experience—the fear of going to ask for help. Many of us have a lot of fear. A lot of my friends have lost their lives because they have been scared, so then it is a goal to be able to say I am not afraid. They come and they say, “no one can help me,” and when the door closes they do not come back and continue knocking on other doors. It is also a goal to continue educating undocumented people to know that if one door closes there will be another one for you to open. I am here because I have not stopped knocking on doors, I have not stopped educating myself, and I have not stopped carrying the message.