2,000 miles by Pamela Canté

I've always known how hard my parents work and so I've learned to work hard also. Mom and Dad always tell me to get good grades so when I become an adult, I don't have to have a back-breaking job at a factory or something similar. After school, I always see how exhaustion fills their eyes and cuts or bruises paint their arms. They want my future to be a lot different. To be a lot easier. I have to put in my part in order for that to happen. Like Castro said, "... the American dream is not a sprint, or even a marathon, but a relay." It's not about who gets to the end first or even getting to the end at all, but passing on the "fruits of their labor" so future generations will have better lives. My mom and dad weren't the first to come to the U.S. and didn't graduate either, but they've come as far as they can so I can pick up and go farther.

My parents started our relay when they left Guatemala for the U.S. The most important and dangerous situation they've undergone for me was taking the 2,451 mile journey on foot, their destination being the United States. This journey, thousands of families have gone through it in order to have a better life. My mom and dad traveled from Guatemala, a smaller country not well known or heard of. But they did not travel together, my dad came first and a year later my

mom tagged along, too. At the time though, they had my sister, Cinthia and brother Jefry. Cinthia was 3 years old, while Jefry was 1 year old. Like many other parents, they decided to leave them behind with my grandparents instead of exposing them to a desert, where they were never certain of what could happen. Fortunetly they arrived safely in 1999 and 2000. In 2001, I was born in Lincoln, Nebraska. My brother and sister stayed in Guatemala for 10 years. In 2010, they continued with our relay and took the journey to the U.S. through Mexico. This story has always been told to me so I can learn to value how hard they've worked so I can have what I do.

Overall, I think Julian Castro's words refer to how we as a hispanic community try to better our lives to break free from stereotypes that tie us down. Typically, you see latinos doing the jobs nobody want; cleaning hotels or picking fruits and vegetables in fields. Only two examples out of hundreds. But I believe we are capable of doing much bigger things. We just can't all finish at the same time or race eachother to see who ends first. All the sacrifices we make, don't just benefit the one person but our whole community.

At the end, we will all be able to grow.

We will be able to succeed and carry out our wildest dreams. All we have to do in this relay is be willing to hold on to our baton in our time. And be willing to pass our baton to the next runner.