



Arizona • Florida • Georgia • Nevada

## Student Spotlight

May 2018

**Dereck Sandoval**  
**Little Flower School**  
**Reno, NV**



“The first step toward change is awareness. The second step is acceptance.”  
–Nathaniel Branden

This quote embodies Karla Martinez. Facing many challenges both emotionally and financially, she never gave up on her primary focus – ensuring her son Dereck receives a quality education. Not only has the AAA Scholarship Foundation made an impact on both of their lives, it was a true gift to their family in a time of need. “When times were hard, and it felt like every door was closed, the AAA Scholarship Foundation was there to remind me to remain hopeful, and to keep working hard as a single mother.”

15 years ago Karla Martinez made the bold decision to move from her home in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, all the way to Reno, Nevada. She knew she’d be leaving behind everything she’d ever known, but she was ready to broaden her horizons and see what more the world had to offer. Upon moving, Karla was able to land a job as a medical biller and coder and start a family. When her son Dereck was born, she immediately knew that she wanted to give him the world, and she would do anything to make that happen. Unfortunately, Dereck’s father was not on the same page. When Dereck was only in Kindergarten, and Karla was working long hours just to make ends meet, they were heartbroken to find out that Dereck’s father had left without even a warning. While this undoubtedly brought upon questions and tears, Karla stayed strong for her son and continued to put him first. From that moment, she knew it would be a long road ahead, but the love she had for her son made anything seem possible.

Dereck had been attending Little Flower School - a private school in Reno, Nevada. With her son’s education being her first priority, she wasn’t sure how she was going to manage to continue to send him there. Luckily, she had some money saved to get him through the first two years, but as that slowly disappeared, Karla was beginning to run out of options. Their family was already experiencing a tremendous amount of change, and the last thing Karla wanted to do was take away the school that she and Dereck loved.

Just as Karla was beginning to lose that last bit of hope, she came across the AAA Scholarship Foundation, and learned that they worked with families in Nevada. After researching and finding out that her family did qualify for a scholarship, Karla was overcome with joy. She could see that things were starting to look up for her, even when she thought there was no possible way.

Dereck is now in the fourth grade at his school of choice, and Karla can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. Not only does Little Flower School have an excellent academic curriculum, but they also have capable and professional teachers who are constantly taking training courses to keep up with the new era of technology. Additionally, the school has a strict security system that gives parents a peace of mind regarding their children's safety. The school is adamant about getting the parents involved in school activities and projects, and has become a safe haven for children like Dereck. Being at this school, Dereck has improved academically and socially. He is able to learn at a high speed, and can keep up with his fellow classmates. He has the confidence to ask questions, and be more involved in classroom conversation and activities. He enjoys science and basketball, and does not limit himself to trying something new. He's even developed a love for acting and performing arts! Karla can see a great change in her son in comparison to how he was four years ago, and it all shows in just his smile.

"As a single mother, having the opportunity to be a part of the AAA Scholarship Foundation has impacted my life in so many ways," says Karla Martinez. "Because of them, I was able to build a solid academic base for my son's future. I just want to take the opportunity to thank you all for your support, we are so happy to be one of the scholarship families in Reno, Nevada. Thank you!"

### **About AAA Scholarship Foundation**

The AAA Scholarship Foundation awards scholarships solely to qualifying low-income, disabled and/or displaced students. The typical AAA Scholarship student is an ethnic minority living with a struggling single parent/caregiver in a high crime community. More than 85 percent of AAA scholarships are distributed to children at or below 185 percent of poverty. Many children are either below grade level, failing at their previous school or both when they receive a scholarship. Parents, who find their children in these circumstances and are concerned about their future, look for viable options. They seek an atmosphere that challenges their child and will reverse inadequate learning, social patterns and the potential lifelong negative impact. They wish to change their child's learning environment, acquaintances and the unfortunate predictable outcomes associated with school failure.

AAA Scholarships are funded in Arizona, Florida, Georgia and Nevada by corporations that redirect a portion of their state tax liability to the AAA Scholarship Foundation in exchange for a dollar-for-dollar tax credit. The AAA Scholarship Foundation is one of the only approved 501(c)(3) nonprofit scholarship organizations exclusively serving qualifying low-income, disabled and/or displaced students through these tax credit scholarship programs in multiple states. AAA Scholarship Foundation provides your company with the convenience and efficiency of a single-solution for participating in multiple state tax credit scholarship programs. For more information, or to learn how your corporation can participate in the program, visit [www.AAAScholarships.org](http://www.AAAScholarships.org), or contact Kerri Vaughan at [kerri@aaascholarships.org](mailto:kerri@aaascholarships.org) or 888 707-2465 ext. 730.