



When the plane pulled up to the terminal at Washington Reagan Airport, the February sun had long set on a relatively warm winter day. Nancy and her daughter Linny were the last to step off the red eye flight. It had been an exhausting trip from Honduras, not to mention the emotional distress of the last few years. The walk through the airport was draining. How much farther would her journey take her?

Suddenly the air got lighter and her eyelids were no longer heavy. There, holding a welcome sign was her father, sister, and a few aunts and uncles. Nancy and her family had been separated for 20 years.

When Nancy was born, her father moved to the United States, unaware of when they would see each other again. Nancy had remained in Honduras with her mother; but being a single mother in a gang-driven, impoverished country took its toll and she left. . At this time, Nancy's grandmother became her fulltime caregiver. She loved and protected Nancy until she passed away last year. Nancy and little Linny had no family to turn to, no resources, no safe place to live. Nancy became even more susceptible to gang recruitment, rape, and violence.

Luckily, Nancy's father had been working with LSS/NCA's Central American Minor Program (CAM). CAM was established in 2014 by the Obama Administration to help reunify families torn apart by violence in South America. Families who reside legally in the United States can apply through CAM to have their children join them safely and legally.

Nancy's case was reviewed and accepted at a crucial time. Minors who are not accepted through CAM or do not take the treacherous journey across the border are left to face horrific realities. LSS/NCA has submitted 188 CAM applications to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Nancy and Linny are the first accepted case in our community, after a year of application reviews and determination.

Nancy and her family are adjusting well to life in Maryland. Nancy has already secured a part time job at Burger King. Her English skills have improved dramatically, and she is as likely to communicate with her caseworker in English as much as in Spanish. Linny has learned a lot of English too and likes to say hi when she stops by to visit or plays with her cousins.

Thank you from all of us at LSS/NCA

LSSNCA.org
See photos of Nancy and Linny on the website blog



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