



Sixty Countries around the World

Anna Nickles

I am an immigrant to the United States of America and have been a proud citizen since 2009. When I first came to this country in 1997, I spoke very little English, just enough to barely get by. I moved to Akron, Ohio, because I married an American citizen in my native country of Guatemala, and a short time after, his job transferred him back to Ohio.

Three months after starting my life in the US, I registered at The University of Akron to take an English as a Second Language course for the summer. This was an intensive program designed to help me learn English quickly. Later that year, I started working at National City Bank, where I had the

opportunity to begin practicing my newly acquired English skills. I remember those days like it was yesterday! I was afraid to talk to customers and answer the phone because I could not understand them very well. In 1998, I took advantage of the tuition reimbursement program from my employer and registered at The University of Akron, where I took a marketing course. My short-term objective was to improve my general knowledge of English and to become more familiar with commercial terminology. Those days were very hard for me because it was quite difficult to understand all the content presented in the class, and even the jokes professors and classmates made. I still remember racking my brain with the assignments to write a paper!

By nature, I enjoy challenges; after completing my first semester, I decided to stay in school and continue my education. In September 2000, I changed jobs and started working at Myers Industries as a bilingual customer service representative. While working a fulltime schedule, I continued taking classes at The University of Akron for the next five years to eventually complete my International Business/Business Administration degree. Myers also has a tuition reimbursement program and paid for the remainder of my education at the University. In December 2003 I graduated from UA and received my bachelor's degree. It was like a dream for me! In five years, I worked full time, attended school part time, and took care of my family at home, but I made it and graduated from the University. When I said "dream," I was already dreaming in

English, so I knew that I learned the language that I never thought I would be able to speak fluently. Later that year, I received great news from Myers. After graduating, they first promoted me to marketing specialist, and then offered me the position of international sales representative. Another dream came true for me, and I started traveling to different parts of the world. Now, I have visited sixty countries around the world, most of them for business, and some others for pleasure. Multiple times, I have been the top sales person in the International Department, as well. Now I handle different parts of the world. I am a regional sales manager for Mexico, Latin America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

Without a doubt, part of my success as an immigrant in the United States comes from the lessons I learned at the University. The different professors helped me understand how to conduct business in different countries and cultures. One of the best experiences while in school was when I chose to travel to South Korea and China with Dr. David Ayers, to experience Asian culture and business practices.

I would like to note that while I was a teenager, my father represented the Guatemalan government in different trade negotiations in Europe and Asia, as he was the director of international commerce and vice minister of economy. He got to travel to many different countries around the world. I always had great admiration for him and his job. I've always wanted to have great professional success, just like he did. While taking International Law and Policies courses, I studied international

agreements that were signed by my father. Unfortunately, he recently passed away; however, now I can proudly say, “Dad, I did that, as well.”

Thank you, University of Akron, for a great contribution to my professional life in the US!