

## Tatiana Martinez's Story

My name is Tatiana Martinez and I have lived in Irvine for two years. I took an assessment called StrengthsQuest, so I would say that one of my strengths is that I am empathetic. Usually in a situation when someone is feeling a little bit down or in a place where someone is stressed, I'm pretty good at managing that. I am a resolver. If I see a problem I want to finish it or resolve it as soon as possible. I'm (also) futuristic, so I tend to see when something has to get done in the future. If something is going to happen in the future, we need to fix it now, so that it won't get delayed. I don't want to miss a deadline.

Living in Orange County has been something to adjust to because I'm from Los Angeles County. I feel like it has been a different culture coming here to Irvine from L.A. In Irvine, there's definitely more greenery here. Over in L.A., there's definitely more city, like going to a store that's nearby and there's always something that's closer. Parking and transportation has been something that's a bit of a struggle (here) I would say, because in L.A. there's usually parking everywhere. I think over there the problem more is traffic and here the problem is you don't know where to park, 'cause there's always like a fee day that you have to worry about. I guess it definitely made me grow in a different way, just because, in L.A. I was used to being surrounded by people for so many years and here I had to like branch out to talk to people that I probably would have never branched out to. So I think it has definitely made me grow more as a person 'cause I never been in this kind of space.

I think my biggest struggle right now is trying to figure out post-graduation just because I am a third-year (student). So when I think about what I'm going to do in the future it kind of scares me. Also, being first-generation, I don't really have family that's been through the struggles of like coming into college and then graduating and seeing what they've done. So this is like very new territory for me and the same with my cousins, because we're all first generations. Our parents are always on us to try to do something just because they want a better life for us and then we don't want to let them down because they gave up so much for us already.

What do I love about Orange County? This goes back to all the greenery, like I'm not used to that. Because in L.A. there's like no trees. I feel I could go outside and take a breath of air but over there you hear lots of traffic, firefighters coming by, and you know there's police around. I feel like I'm more on guard over there, but here it feels a lot safer, so that's kind of nice.

What does a hate-free Orange County look like? I think this is a controversial thing, but I know that there were certain speakers that came to the university and people don't want to hear them. I feel like if there wasn't hate, I think there won't be much concern about having a speaker come to the campus and just speaking their own mind, even if it's a completely different opinion. But I don't think it's just a problem on our campus, but it's also a problem in many other campuses as well. Yeah, I think it also goes along with the political climate.

So, it's kind of known that some people do overgeneralize and think that, I don't want to say Orange County, but Irvine is more of a bubble. I would say to branch out and explore other communities. If you have been raised here in Orange County, there are certain things that you've grown accustomed to and there are certain privileges that you have. But there are other communities that struggle a bit more. I feel like you should go to other communities and just learn more about them. Maybe even live there at one point, just to like understand a bit more of other people's situation.