

Monologues



Leadership Training

I am Abelina. My first husband abused me. After he died I married Eduardo. We pastor a church in Texas. In 2010 I went to my first week-long Latina Leadership Institute (LLI) training. I will go two more times and in 2013 I will graduate with a Certificate in Latina Leadership Studies.

Eduardo and I are very happy. We serve in a Hispanic community with many needs—especially among the women. When I heard that the LLI would offer seminars in ministry and leadership, I wanted to be a part of it. Opportunities are growing now for Latinas in leadership in the marketplace and society. At one time, Latina voices were not heard. I wanted to enable myself to help other women come out of their shells and help them discover their own talents and how they could better themselves and their communities. I believe that the LLI gave me a new confidence and helped me learn how to speak out and be heard. It gave me strength to come out and say and do what needs to be done.

At the LLI, I found other women who felt they had no real background in leadership experience. After the sessions, we get together and talk about our dreams and goals and how we want to be leaders in our churches. We really bonded during this time together and were encouraged by each other.

We all had a willingness to put all we were learning into practice when we returned home. We had a new passion and found ourselves saying, ‘I can do it—no matter what anybody else says.’

At the LLI I was taught some basic counseling skills. I was able to put some of those things into practice recently when two women came to me who needed some encouragement in the midst of other domestic abuse situations. I had learned at the LLI to simply listen first. While I was listening, I was also asking God to give me the words they needed to hear and to make their hearts ready to hear what I said. I was also taught that helping women read the Bible for themselves is better than reading it to them. So, I helped these two women read some scripture for themselves. The women stayed for more than four hours talking and listening to me. They left peaceful and happy. A few days later, I received a phone call from the pastor of these two women thanking me for the help I had offered. I said: “Don’t thank me, thank the Lord.”

I believe that those who graduate from the LLI will make a difference in our worlds. Graduating from the LLI will be the first time many women in our churches have graduated from anything. This helps the church know that women do have something to offer and it encourages the other women to see this accomplishment.

Eduardo is pleased I am LLI participant. He says I am more open now about talking about our relationship and about our ministry. He is looking forward to me attending the next two sessions.