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Before LONG BEACH LATINO CIVIC ASSOCIATION existed, we immigrants had a system to help other immigrants. During that time there was no email, there were no cell phones, and very few people had phones in their homes.

People who had telephones did not lend them to make long distance calls. We had to borrow the number so we can reach our families and where they can call us and leave us messages.

The reason for this was to get in touch with our families. To know that so-and-so died, his dad is in the hospital, or whatever the reason was. They left a message in one's name and one would return the call when possible.

Long-distance calls were very expensive and many times you lost track of time. A call could cost 75 dollars and at that time you earned 100 dollars a week, which was very expensive. The family would call and leave a message saying: that a family member is coming to The United States and would come on a certain day.

When you couldn't get a job or didn't know where, you went to church on Sundays. After mass all the parishioners would help you get all the contacts to get a job and find housing. At that time they usually rented you a room or a bed. Several people who had been here for quite some time rented their apartments, room by room, or bed by bed. The same system was used in evangelical and protestant churches.

The point was to help those who arrived. Like helping the person get to work because at that time there was no GPS and people got lost easily. One's duty was to take that person to work or teach them how to get transportation. The easiest was to show them where to take the bus and where to stop.

This terrible situation opened my mind and made me realize that there was no help at all for the Latino Community. That we urgently needed an organization to help immigrants like us. With the great help of my dear friend Mike Cruz we decided that enough is enough. We started our organization so people don't have to go through all these terrible things.

We started with a small office doing citizenship. I believe we did more than 200 citizenships at a time. Things were very difficult, but it was very easy to fill out the applications and teach people to the steps towards being granted citizenship.

From there, little by little, we began and continue to grow
LONG BEACH LATINO CIVIC ASSOCIATION.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL.