Ana Concepcion Tabares Martinez came from Chilpancingo Guerrero, Mexico at age 31 in 2003 and, at the time of the interview, had been in United States for 18 years. In Mexico she sold corn and sweets to feed her children. She was living in poverty and had been raped and assaulted. Her parents worked many jobs to save money to pay a coyote to get her across the northern border. She now is a citizen of the United States. She has worked various jobs while in the U.S. She had to leave her two young boys in Mexico but has since been reunited with them. She and her husband in the U.S. had a girl who is now 15. She has been a single mom for many years as her husband died in the desert while trying to get to the US. At the time of the interview, she was in her late forties.

Ana talks about the numerous jobs she has held. She shares how employers were able to take advantage of her undocumented status and pay well below the minimum wage. She is happily reunited with her two boys who were 20 and 21 at the time of the interview. She shares the humiliation and being taken advantage of due to her undocumented status before becoming a citizen. She expresses gratitude for the legal help she received to become a citizen and to bring her sons to the U.S. She describes how women, including her mother, suffered from domestic violence and is grateful that the laws in the U.S. are better in that regard. She struggles with learning English - it has been a challenge and she works hard to say things correctly, getting help from her daughter. She discusses how hard it was to feed and house her family as an undocumented mom, as employers could pay her below the minimum wage and workers couldn’t do anything about it. She is grateful as that she is now a citizen which has allowed her to buy a home and a car.

Ana’s call to action would be to change the immigration system and have more resources for single mothers. She feels it is wrong to separate children from their parents as has been done at the border, as this causes so much trauma. She believes there should be amnesty for people who have been in states a long time. She says they are paying bills, taxes, etc.; that many immigrants are essential workers, they contribute, and they are a resource.

Summary by Jackie Reilly, UUFNN Borderlands Justice Team