



# YOUNG VENEZUELAN UNDERTAKING ENTREPRENEURSHIP BEYOND THEIR BORDERS



**Migration and integration through  
the eyes of young Venezuelans**

# CREDITS

This publication was prepared by RET International in Peru, within the framework of the Proyecto **“Building bridges of assistance, protection and integration for Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Perú between 2019 and 2021”**, founded by the United States Government through the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM).

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## “YOUNG VENEZUELANAS UNDERTAKING ENTREPRENEURSHIP BEYOND THEIR BORDERS”

Interviewees:

Riccieli García, 25 years.

Luismary Hernández, 22 years.

Brainer Garrido, 22 years.

Sebastián Álvarez, 21 years.

María José Alvarado, 25 years.

Rosmary Martínez, 25 years.

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**First edition:** January 2022

Lima, Peru.

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MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION  
THROUGH THE EYES OF  
YOUNG VENEZUELANAS



## In recent years, millions of Venezuelans have requested asylum



To governments with territories close to their country. One of those that received these migrants was Peru, which became the **second destination with more Venezuelan refugees** after Colombia.



In Latin America and the Caribbean

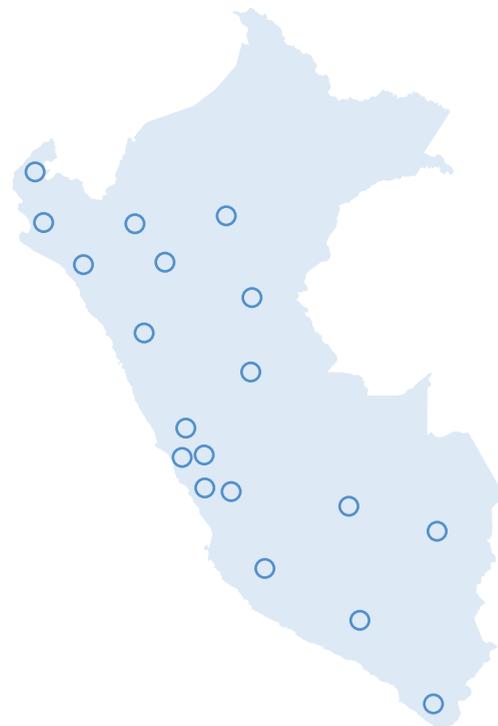
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Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the world.

According to the publication of the **Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants (R4V)**, as October 2021, 1 286 646 Venezuelans arrived in Peru, triple the number that arrived in Ecuador and Chile, countries that follow in this list of destinations for migrants. However, without a regular migratory status, it is likely that the total number is higher.

Within this large number of refugees are Rosmary, Riccieli, Sebastián, María José, Luismary and her husband Brainer, all of them young people under 25 years of age who arrived in Peruvian territory alone or with a family member, seeking to build a better future for themselves and above all to help those they left behind in Venezuela.



This group of young people have several common denominators,



one of them is the confidence when talking about the future



and the smile on their faces to continue undertaking



and growing in the country that has welcomed them



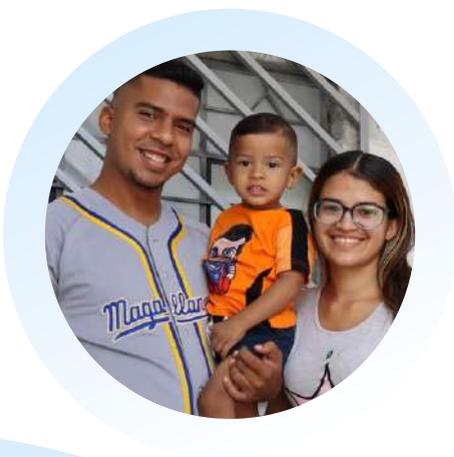
and that they even consider a bridge to cross other borders and continue dreaming of a better future.

They share a vision of hope, they have found a way to overcome the situation in which life has placed them.



### Riccieli García Ramos

She migrated to Peru with her husband. She arrived in Lima to work and did so immediately. She has worked as a stylist in several beauty salons, and she assures that very soon she will open her own hairdressing salon and with effort, other businesses. In addition to flattering women who are looking to feel more beautiful, Riccieli transmits positive energy and good spirits during her conversations. She spreads her optimism to others and that is what she enjoys the most.



### Luismary Hernández y Brainer Garrido

They are a young married couple who decided to settle in Piura. Brainer entered the beauty business and for two years he worked and acquired more know-how and together with Luismary opened their own beauty salon. Also, as a sportsman and soccer lover, he founded a team with other Venezuelans. He has earned the respect of his friends and neighbors, because he is always looking after the emotional health of those who, like him, arrived in Peru, and encourages them to continue fighting to achieve their goals.

2.



### María José Alvarado

She arrived in Lima and then moved to Tumbes with her older brother, who is deaf. They sold candy on the street and decided to look for a space to rent and open a hair salon. With a lot of effort and the help of their relatives, they succeeded. There are a total of six empowered women and warriors who run the beauty salon. María José spends her free time cleaning her mother's house, next door. But if it is a question of hobbies, she would like to practice kickball, a sport played by women that is being practiced in the region recently.



### Sebastián Álvarez

He has lived in Lima for five years. He came with his parents and his siblings, the oldest and the youngest. He discovered his talent for American soccer thanks to a friend's invitation. Playing this sport took him away from depression and also allowed him to get a scholarship to a university in Mexico that saw him play in an international game. Almost at the same time, he joined an NGO to provide emotional support to adolescents and young people who migrated to Peru like him. From this space, he encourages them to achieve their dreams and encourages them not to be defeated by bad experiences during their lives.



### Rosmary Martínez

She has lived in Peru since 2017. She settled in Tumbes and her partner joined her later. Together with her sister and cousins, they managed to rent two stands in a gallery to engage in hairdressing. The pandemic slowed down the start of the business. Then she dedicated to take care of her first baby, together with her husband. When they finally opened the hairdressing salon to the public, she lost her mother to COVID-19. However, she found the strength to pull herself together and, together with nine other women, reinvented the business that provides them all with a daily income and the possibility to grow day by day and to economically help those they left behind in Venezuela.

All of them fight every day. They do not lose hope. **They are an example of strength and resilience.** These young migrants show us that when people are decisive and the future is faced with optimism, there is no difficult situation that cannot be overcome.



**ROSMARY  
ALEJANDRA  
MARTÍNEZ ALVARADO**



Ten women, including Rosmary, are owners of a beauty salon that provides incomes for each of their families.

Rosmary Alejandra Martínez Alvarado decided to put off her studies for a while and prioritize work. She was 19 years old when her vision of things changed. She had never thought of leaving her beloved Venezuela, but she felt obliged to migrate to generate income and provide for her family.

She decided to come to Peru because a very close friend came ahead. Then her boyfriend also traveled. So, with the security of having people close to her, she left her country.



She remembers that the trip by land was difficult. She was afraid. **"Because I had never left Venezuela, I had never traveled there and coming in those buses was quite difficult. We did not know, that is, I had a route that said to pass to such and such a place, but I did not know if I was effectively there".**

It didn't take long to get a job. "When I arrived in Tumbes, I started working in a hairdresser's with a lady who helped me a lot."

She assures that she was lucky, because when she arrived, she did not go through the hardships that many of her countryfolks go through. "From the beginning I was well received. The people I worked with were very nice to me and I was doing quite well, but I wanted to get to Lima".

All their countryfolks talked about their desire to get to the capital of Peru. When one of her cousins told her she was going straight to Lima, she ventured to follow and meet her later. **She saved enough money to rent a space and get to the capital.**



She had been in **Tumbes** since June 2017 and by September she had moved to **Lima** along with a friend and the latter's partner. They tried their luck together with her cousin. However, a few months later, in November, she returned to Tumbes "because I could not adapt. I did not like it. Moreover, I was not doing well, so I went back and here I returned to the same job I had." Her friends decided to stay in Lima.



She changed jobs several times, but continued in the same line of work, hairdressing. By the following year, 2018, she was able to bring her father and the following month her mother, who arrived along with her sister and her husband.

At the beginning, she remembers that there were not so many Venezuelans in Peru. "After one or two years, more compatriots began to arrive and there were many, many hairdressers in Tumbes, I began to have problems because sometimes people came to me and sometimes not and there discord started."

She looked for new spaces to work with her mother. "She was a hair stylist. So, to take care of my mother, because she was hypertensive and everything else, I told her 'mommy, let's go out of here and open something by ourselves' and so we started from scratch".



With that willingness to make a positive change and with a lot of encouragement, they started renting a small space. **"Without a name, without anything. We did eyebrows and eyelashes. My mother did hair."** They were joined by other girls who knew how to do nails and they grew to ten women. It was a place that they rented together, each one worked on her own and paid her share. However, they had problems with the municipality and decided to look for another place.



**Her husband worked in a technical service shop inside a gallery on Bolognesi Avenue,** where some stands remained empty. He encouraged them to rent in that place and they decided to start again.

"My husband told us to rent by ourselves, that it would be better for us. So, my mother, my sister and I decided to rent. But just then the quarantine started because of the virus". They had everything ready, rented and painted. They were about to inaugurate, and they had to cancel.



The joy came a few months later. **"When we were in quarantine, I got pregnant"**. She had to rest for the first four months. As the business resumed, they also opened the hairdressing salon and with some fear they started to work, just a few hours.



**“Only when I saw the girls very busy, I went to help, for a little while to do something and then I came back home, because of my pregnancy”.**”



A difficult moment for Rosmary, now 25, was losing her mother, who was infected with COVID-19 and had complications due to her diabetes and hypertension. **"It was an unexpected shock and we had to keep working despite what happened. I remember my mom passed away on a Saturday and by Tuesday we were already working."**



Rosmary's daughter's name is Rose, who is just a ten-month-old baby. "Sometimes I don't even feel like getting up, but she makes me do it. If it would not for her, I do not get up". The little one is her driving force and her motive. She is the one who injects joy into her life, and the one who takes her to work every day.

At the hairdresser's, they all work closer than ever and also collaborate in the care of the little girl. **"We take turns. For example, if I am busy, my sister or my cousins take care of her. I work with four other girls. If we are all attending, my husband helps me. Thus, we are all day long"**. This is how she has organized herself to continue. Currently, they have two stands where they are all giving their best to move forward.



The income allows her to afford her expenses and even send financial support to those she left behind. She feels grateful for everything she has and has achieved.

Happiness is having her family by her side, "that we can be here at least all together almost all day long because I feel that everything else is temporary. It comes and goes, and so far, I have learned that this is the most important thing".



She sees the future with optimism "always looking forward to it, because I know that there will be ups and downs, but we always project ourselves to the big picture to see what we can achieve".

She plans to return to Venezuela for a visit. She wants his family back home to be able to meet her little daughter. She misses everything, she says that there everything is **"more genuine, because I remember coming home from work and it was all about having coffee in the afternoons"**. The family warmth is a lasting memory that encourages her to be better.

However, **she has words of gratitude to the country** that has welcomed her, and to young people like her she asks them not to give up "that work does not dishonor anyone, because I have seen so many cases here that I say that the best thing is to do things well, because even if you earn very little, if you earn it honestly you have freedom, tranquility, happiness and these are things that you cannot buy".

Her mother was in charge of **leading the group**, taking care of the rent, organizing the cleaning, and **all the things at the stand**.

"Obviously, since she is no longer with us, I took over that position because there was a moment when we all felt lost at the stand, because we lacked the motivation that my mother used to give us. After that, I told the girls we needed

## to remodel the place

Again, they challenged themselves and with Rosmary's push and encouragement they remodeled the store, enlarged it, changed the color, and since then she has been in charge of delegating tasks, taking care of the rents, the electricity payments, washing the furniture, everything, even advertising and, above all, motivating the girls "to write to the clients, send them pictures, to advertise us".

The pride she feels is because of all that she has achieved at her age. Even with all the obstacles along the way, she did not fall apart. "It's important for us to have achieved this. Sometimes, when there are good days, I am happy because I can send money to my family back in Venezuela".



MARÍA

JOSÉ

ALVARADO GIL



Six girls, including María José, **running their own hairdressing salon**, no longer working for someone else.

María José Alvarado Gil is 24 years old. She arrived in Peru with Elvis, her older brother, in 2017. He helped her with her traveling tickets. **That was how they both undertook the trip.**

Elvis' disability, his deafness, did not prevent him from accompanying her in the sale of chocolate cakes and brownies that they offered in the streets of Lima as soon as they arrived from Venezuela, with only \$90 in their pockets. It was clear to them that they could not waste time and they looked for a spot near the markets to offer their products.

**"We became known because we sold quite a lot. We were hired by a Peruvian in a restaurant, then we worked for him for about eight months".**

However, **the owner's treatment was not the best and they decided to return to the streets to sell** desserts and tizana, the typical drink of Venezuelan gastronomy that has orange juice mixed with fruit cut into pieces.



One of her cousins, who was also in Lima, decided to move with her husband to Tumbes. María José stayed with her brother. For a year they stayed in the capital of the country that welcomed them, in the while her parents and sister arrived with her baby.

The situation did not improve. Her mother had undergone an ankle operation and the nails and screws that were placed in the surgery caused her pain given the cold and humidity of Lima, so they decided to move to Tumbes.



"All, my brother, my husband and I came back here. Life is more peacefully here. The profit is the same because in Lima we did not have many sales and the man who hired us did not pay us well".

In Tumbes, they started again informally, but decided to bet on the beauty business. **After gaining experience, they opened their own hairdressing salon.**



Saving as much as possible and with a lot of effort, they managed to rent a place where they have been providing women with beauty services for two years now. "We don't work for someone else anymore. There are six girls working here; four of them are my sisters and two friends. My brother works in construction, but he is not paid up on a daily basis".



At the beginning, they all lived in a big house, but the services were too expensive, so they moved to a smaller bamboo house. There is no comfort, but they are united.

Their hairdressing salon is located on Tumbes Avenue. They have organized themselves well and work in shifts. There are six girls. As she says, one is a nail specialist and five are in charge of enhancing the eyebrows, hair and eyelashes of their regular customers.

"The five of us work in shifts and wait for the ladies. There are days when each of us get clients. Today I came with 20 soles to the house, it is little because if you look at it you spend all day, from 9 in the morning until 8 at night. But other days, I can bring a high amount like 60 or 80 soles".





María José's good spirits help her to continue. She considers herself a leader because she knows that she plays a fundamental role in her home. **"I am an essential piece in my household because I am the one who provides for the family. There are days that my sister makes more than me and she saves for the rent and there are days that I make more, and I save too".**



Both sisters are the breadwinners, together they assume the expenses of basic services such as rent, water and electricity. Her brother and her husband are in charge of buying the groceries for everyone, for daily expenses, "because as I say, if we buy on the street we spend more. So, my mom cooks for us. If there is no dinner is because there is not any, because it was not possible to earn money".

Her family is her greatest pride and happiness. Everything she achieves she dedicates to her parents. But she never forgets those who stayed in Venezuela, when she can save some, she sends them part of the money.

María José thinks about the future. She knows that this situation is temporary. **She longs to buy a piece of land or a property to live with her husband.**



In the area where she lives, there are many Venezuelans. She has some cousins who run a spa. They all support each other, they pull each other. "When things are low, we talk and try to help each other so that people can come to us. They teach us, we teach them. We help each other".

María José assures that she has no hobbies. She likes cleaning, helping her mother to keep everything neat, impeccable. And she just recognizes that there is a sport that catches her attention, **kickball**, a sport practiced exclusively by women in Venezuela, which is a combination of baseball with soccer.

**"Here in Tumbes, they are starting a baseball team for men, and they want to start a kickball team too. If they do, I would dare to play," she confesses with a laugh.**



María José and her husband complement and support each other. The little time available outside of work is a space to talk and analyze their lives. She thinks that this whole situation has made them both stronger, and that their relationship is solid and has improved. She feels that they are better people. They talk a lot about their goals and how to get ahead.

One of her dreams is to have a small ranch. When she returns to her native Barquisimeto, she assures that she will build her little wooden house to reunite her family, to live all together again.





# LUISMARY ALEXANDRA HERNÁNDEZ & BRAINER JOSÉ GARRIDO FRANCO



**Their beauty business has brought them together** as well as Luismary and Brainer's daughter and **the soccer team they both lead.**

**Luismary Alexandra Hernández and Brainer José Garrido Franco got married in Venezuela.** Shortly after starting their married life, they decided to leave their country. Brainer left first, on August 18, 2018, and Luismary arrived in Peru a month later, exactly on September 18.

Brainer wanted to try his luck in Lima along with a group of friends who accompanied him. That was his destination, but the trip was so difficult that once he crossed the border he no longer continued and stayed in Piura. His fellow countrymen continued the trip, and he was left by himself.

In Piura, the first thing Brainer did was to look for a job. **"I have always worked in barbering, esthetics, beauty. So, I immediately tried to contact people who had this type of business and could employ me, and I was successful"**. After three days, he got a job and stayed there for a year and two months. However, his desire to have something of his own and not depend on anyone made him leave the barbershop and begin the search for self-employment.

Meanwhile, Luismary was taking care of some girls until she became pregnant and had to stop working due to a threatened miscarriage. **"I had to rest during my entire pregnancy,"** she says.



The experience that Brainer had gained in his first job, attending to men in the barbershop, made him see the possibility of also attending to women. Little by little, he began to study the aesthetic procedures for women and together with his wife they ventured to open their own spa-barbershop. They called it **Silver 45**. "We gave it that name because our intention is to expand the business, so we wanted a name that was more common, less personal, and we decided to call it silver because the meaning of this word in English represents something of luxury, which shines and 45 because of the neighborhood where I lived in Venezuela, where I learned the art," says the young entrepreneur.



Currently, in addition to dedicating themselves to their entrepreneurship and their daughter, the couple exercises leadership with a group of young people with whom they interact every week. **Brainer is the head of a soccer team** in which only foreigners play, "we are in a Peruvian soccer league, and we are doing very well. I am the delegate of the team and well, I am also a player. We are unifying people. I have met many people". They are very happy because the sport helps them a lot, even with their business.

There are 20 Venezuelans playing in the soccer team. It is not that they want to exclude anyone, but the boys play without salaries. "They don't play for money, they do it for fun", Brainer assures.

We are playing in a championship in Piura, in a free category and the team is called



**Sport Venezuela,**

and it's very cool,

His extroverted and cheerful personality allowed him to become known among soccer players, which is how he was invited to tournaments. **"I began to contact my Venezuelan playing teammates,** about six or seven who are very good. They brought others and we became so many that we had to make a soccer team. Afterwards, I was in charge of registering the team. As a delegate, I organize the training sessions and now we have a strong group."

**The team meetings are also a perfect space for dialogue. What Brainer does is motivate them as a group leader.**



"Maybe on Saturdays they are going to drink, who knows. Then **I invite them to talk** and tell them it's wrong to do this or that. If you don't do it, you'll do better and play better. **Thanks to that kind of talk, we all help each other in the team.**"

The positive results in soccer came quickly, but also on the emotional side. The selfless work that Brainer does as a coach has made everyone unite and put aside vices and concentrate on more important issues.

The motivation for this young couple is precisely to have each other, and to see their daughter grow up healthy and happy, but also to help their friends who came with them, those they met in Peru and all those they left behind in Venezuela, because they fight for all of them every day.

He is aware that many of his team members are young people like him, with problems, so he encourages them to move forward and not to fall into alcohol or other vices. "Despite their young age, they also have some psychological or emotional difficulties. So, I am almost always there, even during the games, supporting them emotionally. I talk to them, for example, about responsibility, calmness, concentration, discipline."

**"Look boy, you are doing a good job with your teams. I congratulate you. You are 24 years old, and you are going forward. You are managing people who are 32 years old. You know how to do things. I congratulate you!"** were the words that a Peruvian coach said to Brainer and that are an encouragement to give the best of himself. "Because I do not give up. I could have been a professional soccer player in Venezuela. I am 24 years old, and I may become a professional soccer player here", he says with illusion.





## Luismary and Brainer consider themselves a team that works

not only in beauty but also in sports.



But, above all, they see themselves as a young, consolidated couple that learned and matured as they went along and that, besides growing together, they are an example for other people who see in them a proof that it is possible to be better every day. mejores cada día.



## RICCIELI GARCÍA RAMOS

Riccieli, a manicurist par excellence, **will soon open her own spa.**



On October 24, 2019, Riccieli Garcia Ramos left Barquisimeto, Venezuela. She is the eldest of two sisters. **She was living with her parents and grandmother when she made the decision to migrate to help her family.** She and her husband arrived in Peru where her aunts, cousins and father-in-law lived.

Her parents did not question her decision even though she had never left the country before. It gave them peace of mind to know that she was not leaving alone but with her partner. Suitcases in hand, she said "let's go." While she wanted to take her father with her, he did not accompany her for fear of the rumors that had reached them about xenophobia in Peru.

Riccieli looked for work as soon as she arrived in Peru and thanks God that she did not go through what others of her compatriots suffered when they had to sell candy on the street. "I put in applications everywhere, baking, sewing, hairdressing. I was given the opportunity here, because not everyone does several things in the same salon, so it was easy for me to get a job".



That is how she started in a beauty salon, then in another and another one. One of her bosses recommended her to speak as a Peruvian so that people would not notice she was Venezuelan and avoid thus bad moments with xenophobic comments. But happily, she never had any problems of that kind. If someone made a comment, she explained to them with a smile that if they came to Peru, it was out of necessity.



The strength of this young woman is encouraging. She has a clear roadmap. Her project is to open a business next year, a beauty salon. First, because she already knows the business movement. But not only that, but she also plans to open a chain of businesses in other areas, a website, a hairdresser, a lounge spa, and a boutique, among other plans.

She is also clear that she must maintain a **positive attitude** towards the situation she has had to live.



"In Venezuela, for some time now, we have had limitations. But one thing is a physical limitation, and another is that you limit your goals, your dreams. I have a life, I am healthy. Money is a little lacking, but that does not prevent me from dreaming, so little by little it will be".

Her biggest motivation is her family, she hasn't seen them for years. She cannot contain her sorrow and with tears and a cracked voice she answers: "I know that here I can give them a better future, so whether it is a good, bad or hard day, they are the ones that motivate me, the ones that lift me up, and I fight for them".

She is working hard, raising money to buy tickets and bring her mother and younger sister, including pets. "My mom deserves all the things in this world. She is a doctor, all her life she has helped people."



She is proud of everything she has achieved at 25 years old. While she did not go to college as her mother asked her to do when they both lived in Venezuela, she brought all her papers and documents of the courses she was taking little by little there. She plans to resume classes in the not-too-distant future. "Because the salary one earns is a minimum wage and it goes to education. So, I have left it as a second goal. My priority right now is my family, but that does not prevent me from continuing and I said well, it will be for later".



While her classmates in her home country are graduating from university, she knows "that there is no age for studying and I realize that, despite the delay, I have my own apartment, I have my husband's family here".

She dedicates with a lot of effort to learn hairdressing. In Venezuela, she worked at home and also gave classes, but she had never worked in a hairdressing shop as such. In Peru, she has worked in about five hairdressing salons and feels that she has learned and progressed a lot.

Another thing that motivates and fascinates her is to encourage those around her to see life with a look of joy and optimism. "I have many neighbors, both small and teenagers. Many of my friends are former or current clients and I have helped them to meet their goals, because sometimes they do not know what to do because of discouragement or not having a job, so I have taught them to work in this business."



In Venezuela, she worked as a teacher for a short period. So, she feels that it is easy for her to teach. She invites women to be partners, to work or simply to learn. "I like the idea of teaching that things are possible, that everyone starts from scratch, and to be an example for young people and for older people, because there is no age for entrepreneurship, there is no age to dream, there is no age to be what you want to be. So, yes, I would like to be a leader".

She is happy because December has arrived, for the moments she can share with her loved ones. She knows that it is not the time she would like because of her work schedule, but "I love those few moments to be with my family, with my father-in-law or my aunts. These are few moments, but they are valuable".



She is always thinking about the future, about having her own business. With the first one she will open, she wants to help her husband, a welder for a company in Peru, who travels for weeks at a time to all the regions placing structures for advertisements.

**"We have grown as a couple. It has not been easy, because we were never apart. In this job he is working in, sometimes we spend a month and a half or two months without seeing each other. When he comes, he stays for a week or four days. It is hard, but I do think that it has made us stronger, because I understand his work and he understands mine".**



**Now, they enjoy every second together.**

Riccieli asks young people not to give up just because it is hard. She knows, she lives it day by day. "I would advise them, as others advised me, not to spend on one little thing here and there like are chocolate, soda. At the moment you will enjoy it, but then it goes away. Instead, if you use every penny with a lot of effort and you set the goal you want, you can achieve it. Yes, you can".

Despite feeling that she had many things going against her, Riccieli also knows that, if one plays her cards right, as she says, in a smart way, she can save, raise money, start a business and finally set up the business she longs for and which she will open next year in the district where she lives, San Juan de Lurigancho.



# SEBASTIÁN ALVAREZ MERLO



**American soccer rescued Sebastián from depression.** Now he studies and dreams of becoming a great businessman.

Sebastián Álvarez Merlo is 21 years old and has lived in Peru for the last five years. **He arrived with his parents and siblings looking for a better future and since then he has been working, studying and playing sports.**

On December 23, 2017, his family left Venezuela. Peru was one of the options he evaluated together with his siblings, the oldest and the youngest, because they saw that their father would have business opportunities here.

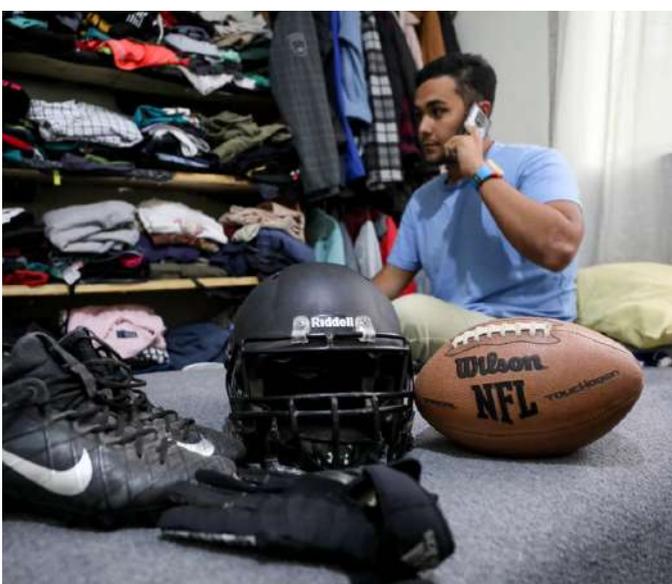
Before leaving Venezuela, Sebastián was studying Social Communication at the Catholic University and was doing international distance studies in Spain.

When they arrived in Peru, they settled in the district of San Martín de Porres. He got a job as a construction worker and in the afternoon as a security agent. Soon after, he joined a chicken grill restaurant where he worked for two years.

**"I have had to work** as a host, distributing flyers, as a delivery person, in human resources, as virtual support, at the airport".

With his income, he enrolled in an institute to learn English and look for better jobs.

Not continuing college degree studies due to his low income did not discourage him and he kept looking for something better. Again, he got a job as a host in a cosmetics company, and there a colleague invited him to practice with an American soccer team, a sport he had not played, but he learned immediately and in which he excelled.



**He started with Aguilas Peru and also played for the Leoncio Prado military school.** "I represented Venezuela and Peru in Mexico, in an international tournament. There, I became known, and three universities saw me. But because of COVID-19, I could not take the offers of two of the universities that were quite good. But there was a third option in a university that was starting with American soccer there".

**So, he got a full scholarship with the opportunity to play,** but they did not grant him the visa to travel. Fortunately, they gave him the alternative of remote classes until he could get the document.



**Every day he gets up and thinks about his goals, a good job, finishing his studies and the sport that brought him joy.** He also takes time to support an NGO that provides emotional support and counseling to other young people like him and also to teenagers who are going through a difficult time. "I am currently the sponsor of the youth brigade where we do a social event for minorities. We have five minorities: mistreatment of women, Afro-Peruvian population, migrants, LGTBQ+ and others. Right now, we are doing a project with Venezuelan boys ages 13 to 16 years. They are people who have matured a lot, as I have matured in these short years, since I have been in Peru".

**Sebastián sees himself as a leader** who guides everyone who passes through his life and those who he can help and those who allow themselves to be helped. "I am glad to be in a project with them and support them, all together, on a peer-to-peer basis, that is, that



At 21 years of age, he feels very proud of what he has been able to achieve far from his homeland, as a young man and as a family. "I'm proud that my mom and dad have been able to handle things so well with three boys. Despite of being of legal age, I live with them under the same roof, following the rules and regulations."



His mother is always by his side. **"She is a strong woman"**, Sebastián remarks. Despite everything they have gone through, including the death of his grandparents, whom they could not say goodbye, they have moved forward.

"I am proud of myself, because I have been able to achieve dreams that in my life I thought I was going to achieve and much less I thought I was going to achieve them in Peru, because Peru is not a country where American soccer is played. They are dreams that I asked for a lot, I wanted them, and I think it was so much what I wanted and needed inside me that it happened. It may or may not be my path to continue playing American soccer, but I was able to get to make myself known".

The sport made him meet many people who have come into his life, who gave him that push to reach even organizations with which he works at the moment.



**"If those things would not have happened, I would not have seen some direction in my life or at least some direction for studying, sports or discipline."**



**For this reason, he continues studying and will return to English classes to keep learning the language that has opened several doors.**

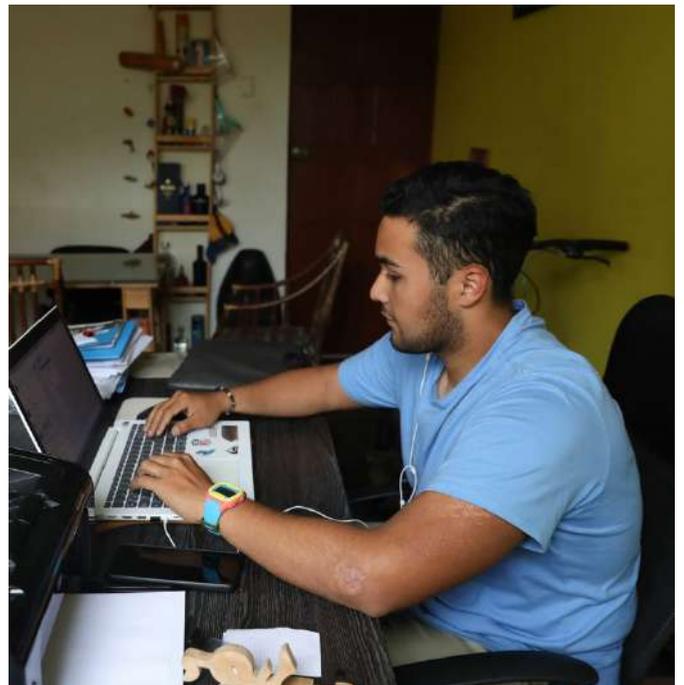
"You have to have that ambition to know, to know more. You have to be an ambitious person, both monetarily and also in personal development, in matters of learning as much as possible, so that when your time comes, you get ahead."

**The future is clear for Sebastian. He projects himself in another country, and the only way to see himself in Peru is to do some business.**

"I see a person with the greatest ambition to be able to help other people who are in the same place where I was at some point, because at that time I always wanted someone to arrive and tell me, "Sebas, what do you want, do you need to study?"

He wants to be that person who helps children or families. More than giving them monetary support to teach them what to do with the income they can generate.

For young people like him, he also has some words, always encouraging and positive words, always with a smile.



**"You never know when the opportunity comes. But when it comes, you have to be prepared. Because if you don't take it, you will regret it all your life".**



This document has been prepared by RET Américas thanks to the generous support of the United States Government through its Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM).