

Declaration of Juliana

I, Juliana, declare under the penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

My name is Juliana. I was born on November 1, 1987, in Distrito Federal, Mexico. I most recently came to the United States in August, 2003. I am now living in Modesto, California. I am applying for U Nonimmigrant Status because I was the victim of domestic violence. I was helpful to the police and the district attorney's office, and I suffered substantial abuse.

I met John in late 2006; we worked together at a hotel in Sonoma. After about two months as friends, we started dating. I liked how John was with my then six-year-old son Mark. He seemed like he would be a good father figure, so we moved in together.

Our son, John III, was born on July 1, 2007. After the birth, John acted differently. John's father and his sister were not happy that John was seeing me, and that we had a baby together. They put pressure on John to leave me. John blamed the conflict within his family on me. He said that it was all my fault that his father and his sister were mad at him. We fought more often.

The first time that John physically abused me was on Father's Day in 2008. I got off work late that day, around 6:30 pm instead of 5:00 or 5:30 (when I usually got off), because the hotel where I worked was full for the holiday weekend, and there were a lot of rooms to clean. John sent me text messages, saying, "Where are you?" He called me a prostitute, and he accused me of seeing another man.

When I got home, I could not open the door because the door was locked from the inside with the chain. I stood outside, knocking on the door and ringing the bell. I could hear John inside, but he would not let me inside. He shouted at me from inside, "Where have you been, Juliana? Where have you been?" When John finally let me inside, I went to the bathroom because I was going to take a shower. John came inside the bathroom with me. He told me that I was trash. Then, he said he wanted to make sure that I was not with another man.

I was scared; John had become so jealous. I told John that I only go from home to work and from work to home. I told him that there was no other man. John told me to shut up, and he started taking off my clothes, grabbing at my private area. He told me that he needed to make

sure that I was not seeing another man. When I tried to resist, moving away from him, he slapped me in the face. He goes to self-defense classes, and he picked me up and threw me to the floor just like he would his opponent in a class. I cried, and he left me there in the bathroom.

A few days later, after I came home from work and picked up the kids from the babysitter, I found a box full of my clothes outside of the front door. John told me that I should leave, and I knew I could not be with John any longer. I gathered some things for Mark, John, and me. John asked me where I was going to stay, he said, "Are you going with your lover?" He slapped me in the face. I left with Mark and John, and we went to my friend Maria's house to stay there for a few nights before we decided where to go next.

John called me three days later, telling me to come back. I went to see him, and John asked me to forgive him. I wanted us to be a family, and I wanted things to be like they were before all the fighting, especially because I was pregnant again, so we moved back in together.

On the morning of June 2, 2009, John asked me again if I was seeing another man. When I said that I was not seeing anyone else, he called me a prostitute and told me I was ugly. He thought I was lying to him, and he punched me on both sides of my face. He pulled my hair. I tried not to scream because Mark and John were in the house. He grabbed my neck and pushed me against the wall, then touched my breasts and put his hands on my crotch, saying, "You are mine."

I said, "Stop! Stop!" I told John that I wanted to leave, that I could not take it anymore. I tried to get him out of the bedroom, and I was able to shut the door on him, but John punched a hole in the door, hitting me in the head as I held the door closed on the other side. He shouted at me, "I'm going to kill you!" I knew he kept a handgun in the bedroom; I was so scared. I did not know what to do or where to go, but I knew I had to leave him.

I got Mark and John, and we left the house. I went to my friend, Lucille's house. I told her what had happened, and she told me she had an extra room that she would rent to me. Unfortunately, I did not have time to get any of my things together before I left, and I did not have enough clothes for Mark and John. On May 6, 2010, I called John and asked if I could come over to get the things. He told me to meet him in front of the house. When I got there, John told me that I could not come in, and told me to ask my lover for help. He called me a bitch, and he was not going to give me anything, so I left.

That evening, May 6, 2010, when I was at Lucille's house, her husband, Joe said I needed to report the abuse, so he called the Modesto Police Department. Two officers arrived at Lucille's house around 9:00 pm. The officers did not speak Spanish, so Lucille's daughter translated everything. They asked me a lot of questions about my relationship with John. I answered all of their questions, and I told them everything that happened on May 6. They took pictures of my face because it was still bruised, purple, and swollen. I told the officers that I wanted John arrested, and that I wanted to press charges. They gave me a temporary restraining order against John. I also gave the officers information about where to find John. I told them that he worked at the court, and I gave them the address of the house. I also gave the officers a photograph of John. The next day, the police came with me to get the things I needed from my house, like clothes and toys, because it would not be safe for me to do it alone. John was not home.

A few days later, Mary Smith from the Merced County District Attorney called me. She told me that they arrested John and that they wanted me to testify at court. She also told me about getting a permanent restraining order and about custody agreements. I went to court on the day that they told me to go. I was there almost all day because there was a jury trial. It was very overwhelming; there was a lot going on. I was nervous, and it was hard to see John again after everything that he did to me.

I testified for about two or three hours. The District Attorney and John's attorney asked me a lot of questions. I answered all the questions through a court interpreter. They showed me the pictures that the police took of my bruises and asked me about all of them. It hurt to relive everything; I usually try not to think about all the pain that John caused me.

The abuse that I suffered not only affected me physically, with swelling and bruises, but also emotionally. During the trial, I got support from Modesto Women's Services, but I have not been able to continue with counseling because of my work schedule. I feel sad, depressed, when I think about John and everything that went wrong between us. I really worry about my children, especially Mark, because even though he was little, he was old enough to understand what was going on between John and me, and he witnessed some of the violence. He sees me crying sometimes, and he asks me why I am crying. It is so hard for me to tell him that everything is all right.

I am requesting a waiver of grounds of inadmissibility related to my unlawful entry to the United States. I am a person of good moral character, I would suffer hardship if I have to leave the U.S., and it is in the public interest to grant me the waiver so that I can be granted U Nonimmigrant Status.

I am a hard worker. I work as a housekeeper at a hotel in Sonoma, cleaning and preparing the rooms for the guests. I work long hours, especially on holiday weekends when the hotel is full and there is a lot to do.

I am a good mother to my children, Mark, John, and my new daughter, Karina. I want them to be happy. I want them to have a better life than I have had. I take them to the park when I get off work in the evenings. Sometimes we go to the library, and I read them books. I help Mark and John with their homework when they need help.

I am a woman of strong faith. I go to Mass every week at St. Thomas Catholic Church in Modesto, and I donate money every other week to the parish. I help out with whatever the parish council needs on holidays or at other special events.

If I had to return to Mexico, things would be very difficult. There is a lot of violence because of drug trafficking. I would not feel safe there raising my family.

Please approve my application for U Nonimmigrant Status.