



City of Calhoun, Georgia

Site of New Echota in the Land of the Cherokee

I am honored to have the opportunity to share a wonderful memory about the importance of voting with our amazing community. The experience of voting as a woman and a Hispanic means a lot more to me than your average individual. My parents moved to the U.S. in 1966 from Cuba with all my siblings. I was the only one in my family that was born in the States. One by one, my parents and siblings became U.S. Citizens. However, the one that I cherish the most was my mother's citizenship process. It took her five attempts to become a citizen. I remember my siblings and I following her through the house asking her all 100 questions from the citizenship test in English. Her first language is not English, so it was a more difficult process for her. She not only had to know the answers in English, she also had to understand the questions in English. I was present the day that she was sworn in and that day still brings tears to my eyes because she was beaming with pride. She was a U.S. Citizen, and she would be able to vote to make a difference. As my mother, she took great satisfaction when she was able to vote for me for the City of Calhoun Council position. My mother was super proud to see my name on the ballot and she knew that she was making a positive difference for our community. I'm a proud mother to be able to witness my daughters continue in the voting process. Last year, our oldest, Julia was able to cast her vote when my name appeared on the ballot for the start of my second term. The tradition of using our votes for the common good will continue with our youngest, Jenna, as she will be able to begin voting next year.

Never take voting for granted. It doesn't come easy for everyone!

Jackie Palazzolo, Council Member Post 1