



STAR SMILES NEWS

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Summer 2007

A Message from Dr. Mosquera

FORTY FIVE YEARS IN EXILE

On March 10th, 2007 my family marked forty five years of having left Cuba to come to the United States of America. It seems incredible that I left as a 9 year old boy, I am now fifty four, and have yet to return to the country of my birth.

Every Thanksgiving that we mark on U.S. soil is an occasion for gratitude for the freedom and opportunities this country offered us. The original seven Cuban refugees that came together as a family unit have all adopted this great country as our own and all became U.S. citizens.

My mother, Josefina, uncle Ubaldo and aunt Teresita, with my sister Ana Mary and cousins Ubaldo and Chichina flew to Miami on a Pan American flight. Visas had been obtained for us by Mr. Davidson, an American salesman that my uncle had befriended in Pinar del Río. We were fortunate that the children and parents were not separated by the Peter Pan operation, like other relatives and friends. Neither did we have to brave the seas like the countless rafters that have left the island in despair nor suffered the ordeal of the *Marielitos*.

To mark the 45th anniversary of our departure from Cuba, our family once again had a reunion; this time a festive dinner, which has become a ritual mockery of Fidel Castro's communist dictatorship. On this occasion we had an international selection of food and wine to celebrate Miami's culinary diversity, but the highlight was *Torticas de Morón* as a remembrance of the early days when Ubaldo and Teresita would make them with the lard handed out to us through the Cuban Refugee Assistance Act.

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1) Senior/Faculty Banquet at Bilbao Restaurant. 2) Belen Class 9-B, 1968. 3) Graduation and Mass at St. Michael The Archangel Catholic Church.



Belén Jesuit Preparatory School

This issue of Stars Smiles News is dedicated to Belén Jesuit Prep, the high school from which I graduated in 1971, in gratitude for the priests and lay professors who made an enduring impact on my life. Belén was the best of the Cuba we had lost, and the best of the Miami we would build. Belén's generosity—I received a partial scholarship at a time my family, recent penniless exiles, could not possibly afford private education. My mother was right—the Jesuits made all the difference.

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BELEN

Between my nakedness and the shark
was a sheet of glass.
The science displays were next
to the auditorium. As a first grader,
I had never seen them before.
The older classes studied the hard ghosts
that once were beasts. Grey and taut,
the shark displayed his repertoire of teeth
with a stillness that later, in exile,
I would see in all the family photos
we had brought from Cuba in a straw bag.
Everything else I had seen before
was either living or dead.

To commemorate October 10th, **Grito de Yara**,
when Cuba's first war of independence began,
my class would sing in the costume of 19th century
peasant guerrilla fighters: straw hat, red bandanna,
white guayabera, cardboard machete tucked in our belts.
The shark was my first saboteur
caught this side of the waking front.
Here was the prisoner, the dreamt beast
under a film of dust, the S of his body
ready for an attack. I could touch it
but for the glass on which I beheld myself
as a wraith in his jaws.
My naked classmates also reflected
all around me as we changed
into our costumes.

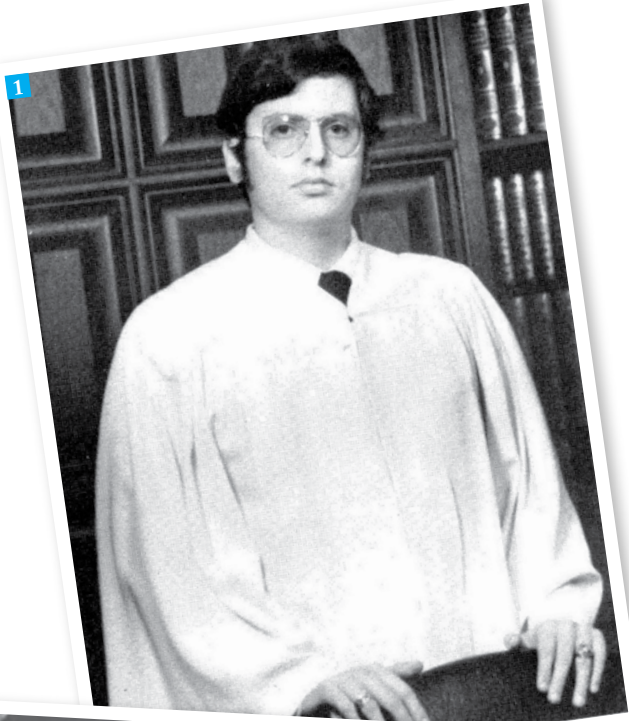
The school's name means Bethlehem, and in its chapel
reigned the Virgin with a cape of stars.
The boy Jesus stared at us beneath her raised hand.
Fidel himself had graduated from this "Palace of Education."
Soon, First Communion, and I would probably choke
on the host as I had, repeatedly, during practice.
Biting it was sacrilege, "a sign
of personal disorder, unholiness and weakness."

One morning the Jesuit who was coaching me
took me out of class and we sat on a bench
facing one of the vault-lined courtyards.
Its chorus of columns hummed distant steps and lessons.
The building was a three-story semicircle whose wings
parted the atrium into slabs of flesh-colored light.
In the tropic morning, the shadow of the building
toppled into the courtyard and cut it in two.
A boundary that was neither light nor darkness
incased the lit half of the courtyard
so that a grey cassock traversing the atrium
would turn white in a single step.
I choked yet again on the smallest make-believe holiness.
Father, if only I had the throat of a shark
I could swallow all Cuba and float unafraid in all currents,
complete in my nakedness like a shadow.

Ricardo Pau-Llosa

from *Cuba* (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Mellon U Press, 1993); first appeared in
Crazyhorse, No. 41, Winter 1991.

1



2



3



1) Ricardo Pau-Llosa Class of 1971. 2) Oct. 22, 1962 - Belen Jesuit Preparatory School acquires its own building and moves to a new site on the corner of S.W. 8th Street and 7th Avenue in Miami. 3) 1925 - Sixty acres of new land and several buildings are donated to Belen School. The complex is later known as "The Palace of Education."

Belén Jesuit Preparatory School

My graduating class consisted of nineteen children of exile—actually, one was an American who spoke no Spanish but would come to be seen as one of us. The times were difficult yet exhilarating, each of us with as much desire to excel in our new country yet passionate about our heritage. Cuba was legacy and open wound, America was promise and foreboding. I entered Belén in seventh grade, in 1965. I learned to admire and internalize the discipline which, at the time, I resisted. It was, after all, my adolescence and it transpired during the tumultuous sixties. Belén was a crucible, given the challenges of the time. We were caught in the undertow of having escaped a communist country whose ideology was all the rage among our American peers, especially later when we attended university.

Going to school was in itself a sign of the arduous times. At times I took the bus and would encounter native Floridians who would prefer Cubans would hop back on our “banana boats” and head back home, so painful was it for them to hear us talking in Spanish. Of course, these were the exception. Among the teachers I recall the most were Father Fitzgerald, whose insistence on correct English grammar I find myself imitating when I correct my own children. Father Robinson inspired us with experiences in World War II and as an offensive tackle for Notre Dame. Father Izquierdo, the first assistant principal and disciplinarian I encountered at Belén, provided firmness and fairness. Later, Mariano Loret de Mola, became the next assistant principal in charge of athletics and discipline. He was keenly feared yet respected for his intelligence. His insistence on proper haircuts—in the “Hair” days of the sixties no less—seems today quixotic and endearing. Tony Abella, biology instructor and later Principal, typified a strain of Cuban passion for science which was infectious. Father Nuevo had been the prior principal, a gentleman who embodied rigor and practicality. The central figure in the Belén educational experience was Father Daniel Baldor, rector of the school in Havana and in exile, and legendary educator. His lessons in Latin American and Cuban history, and in religion, would help establish our identities in immeasurable ways, as individuals with a personal conscience and a duty-bound sense of history. Fathers Arvezú, Rufino Herguedas, and Quevedo, intellectuals to the fingertips, made us all feel comfortable with the complexity of culture, literature and philosophy. Father Otto Martínez was key in my understanding of psychology. Father Cartaya whose keen knowledge of astronomy made the rules of the universe apply to our lives. Father Florentino Azcoitia, our counselor and spiritual guide. So many others, laymen and priests alike, who inspired as they disciplined, and taught us to think, above all to think, not simply to regurgitate.

Among the younger priests who had a profound effect on us were Narciso Menocal, who would die at a young age, Alberto García, Charlie García, and Ernesto Fernández Travieso. Acutely in tune with the currents of our generation, they would provide role models for how to survive our times. They were superb teachers and good friends. Father Fernando Martínez was ahead of his time in his concern for “TV complex” and enlightening us how media crunches time and memory, and our identities along with them.

More important than each of them, and of the life-long friendships we would forge among our classmates, was the spirit of the place. The small, windowless, often cramped quarters of the newly exiled Belén on Calle Ocho and 7th Avenue felt as intellectually capacious and spiritually empowering as the old “Palace of Education” left behind in Marianao, outside Havana. Our teachers—the Cubans, who were the majority—shared our experience of exile but never indulged in the nostalgia of simpletons. Their faith and intelligence made us understand that memory and duty shape the men of tomorrow not the ghosts of yesterday. For this I and no doubt all my classmates owe them a debt of gratitude.



Father Dorta-Duque has been a very important factor in keeping our class together during his years as director of the alumni association. He has been a close friend to many of the alumni.



1) Class of 1971 35-year reunion. 2) Fr. Juan Manuel Dorta-Duque, S.J.

VICKIE PIERRE

Vickie Pierre is a Haitian - American artist born in Brooklyn, New York. While in New York, Pierre attended the School of Visual Arts and received her BFA in Fine Art, painting. Since relocating to Miami, Pierre has participated in several group exhibitions in and out of Florida including The Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, Florida and The Gulf Coast Museum, Largo, Florida; Kerry Inman Gallery, Houston, Texas and White Box in New York City. Pierre's paintings and works on paper have been exhibited at Art Basel Miami Beach 2002 - 2005. In 2003 Pierre participated in *The Caribbean Biennial V* at the Museum of Modern Art in the Dominican Republic where her work represented Haiti. Also in 2003 Pierre was selected by the Four Seasons Hotel in Miami as one of three Miami artists commissioned to create over 300 works on paper and canvas for the hotels' guest suites and private collection. Pierre's solo exhibitions include *What You Feel is What I Feel for You* and *Presents of Mine* at Ambrosino Gallery in North Miami, Florida. In early 2006, the artist's work was featured in a two - person exhibition at The Polk Museum of Art in Lakeland, Florida, titled *Views From Within*. That same year, the month of May saw the close of the exhibition *Transitory Patterns*, a group exhibit of seventeen women artists from Florida. The inaugural exhibition was displayed at The National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. and subsequently traveled to numerous museums throughout the state of Florida thru 2006. Selections from Pierre's current work were featured at Pulse Contemporary Art Fair in Miami, December 2006 and the LA Art Show in Los Angeles, January 2007. Miami collections featuring the work of Vickie Pierre include Liza and Dr. Arturo Mosquera Collection; Paul and Estelle Berg; Richard and Ruth Shack Collection; Dr. and Mrs. Steven M. Lanster; Cricket and Martin Taplin Collection. Additional collections include The Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, FL; Progressive Art Collection, Cleveland, Ohio and ALFA - Wasserman Collection, Bologna, Italy.



"After the Storm," 2005, 13 x 13 inches, mixed media on clay

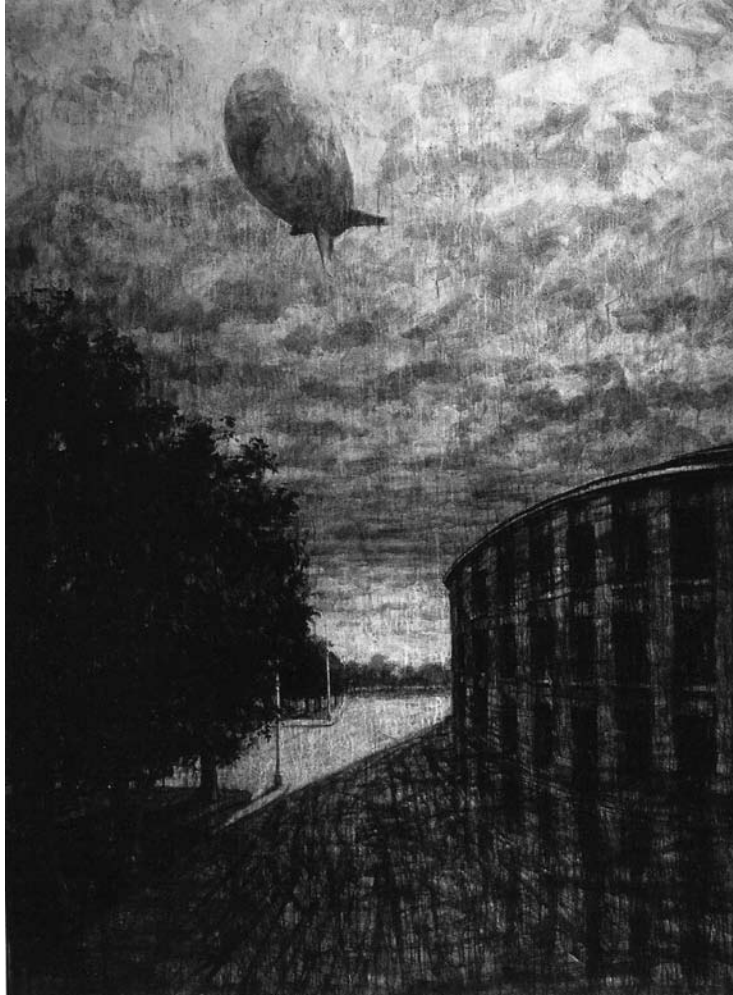
Artist Statement

The work of Vickie Pierre is informed and inspired by her collection of vintage children's books, objects and textiles, childhood memories, fantasy and pattern and decoration. Pierre employs a range of techniques that include painting, works on paper, wall drawing and installation, focusing on the exploration of form and structure through the use of appropriated source materials such as rubber stamps and stickers and feminine psychology. Pierre's recent work converts rubber stamps of Disney female icons, ink and paint into a complex universe where space and movement are whimsically conveyed. The abstract landscape of this world is comprised of the dresses of the three graces of the fairy tale animation world: Snow White, Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella. The repetitive application of the stamps into clusters and groupings, along with the text, has become the basis of a connective network that alludes, to identity, order, and desire as well as the psychological implications of social conditioning occurring in popular culture. In certain instances the works are combined with text stemming from song lyrics, overheard conversations, poetry or artist musings that express a reciprocal sentiment or sense of longing. It interacts and interferes with the biomorphic forms, allowing for a narrative of sorts to exist but also functions simply as mark, as line, as decoration. The deconstructed elements within her paintings and works on paper are transformed into new characters with sensual and precious personalities that recall the abstractions and distortions of the body. They are playfully aggressive yet delicate, nudging and resting against one another, consumed with their own interior formal logic.

*A reception for the artist will take place at our office on Saturday, July 21, 2007 from 7 to 9 p.m.
You and your family are invited to attend.*

GUSTAVO ACOSTA

Gustavo Acosta was born in Havana, Cuba in 1958. He presently lives and works in Miami. He graduated from the San Alejandro National School of Arts in 1977 and at the Superior Institute of Art in Havana in 1982. His work has received several awards at national and international events such as the First Havana Biennial, the Cuenca Biennial in Ecuador and the Caribbean Biennial in Dominican Republic. Gustavo Acosta was part of the Cuban representation at the XX Sao Paulo Biennial. His solo exhibitions include "Los Caminos de Roma" Castillo de la Fuerza, Havana. "Las Sugestiones del Limite" Galería Sao Paulo, Brazil. "On a Somber Note" Museum of art Ft. Lauderdale. "Deciphering Echoes" Generous Miracles Gallery, New York. "Books of Hours", Elite Fine Art, Miami. "Empire of Dreams" Latin American Masters, Los Angeles, "Los Juegos del Principe" Galeria Nina Menocal, Mexico City and "The News of the Day" Alonso Art Gallery, Miami. Acosta is represented by: Latin American Masters, Los Angeles, California. Galeria Nina Menocal, Mexico City, Mexico. Lile O, Reitzel Arte Contemporáneo, Dominican Republic. KUR Gallery, San Sebastián, Spain, Klaus Steinmetz Arte Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica and Panamerican Projects in Miami and Dallas.



"Hog Meat," 2005, 27 x 33.75 inches, c-print

Artist Statement

With this project I do not intend to have one more exhibition. The purpose is neither to "decorate Dr. Mosquera's office" nor match the seductive dental paraphernalia that surrounds us there. I can't deny that *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*-like atmosphere found in medical offices appeals to me. That is the reason I decided to play scientist and bring the projects, notations and documentation I use when compiling my work in my studio. This information in the form of precarious records, collection of sketches, ideas or however they may be called, is the material with which I thoroughly search and confront problems in my *Personal Cabinet* daily; problems that are at times new or not so new. Some problems are relevant and others are insignificant but, though diverse in nature, they are complementary. This invariably constitutes a source of experiences that makes it easier to understand the theme I may select and immerse myself in it, transforming it into a work of art.

*A reception for the artist will take place at our office on Saturday, October 20, 2007 from 7 to 9 p.m.
You and your family are invited to attend.*

PATIENTS IN THE NEWS



Patient Michele Lorenzo - An Accomplished Dancer

Michele Lorenzo recently competed at the Nexstar Regional Competition where she won first place for her age category. Michele, 13 years old, is a student at Florida Christian School where she is on the honor roll. Michele has been dancing since she was 5 years old. She dances at Dance Town, which is the only studio to ever win the prestigious Star Power National Victory Cup for three consecutive years. In June this year she and the studio will travel to Las Vegas to try for a fourth year in a row. They swept the Regionals for Nexstar, StarQuest and Star Power Talent, winning every category they competed in, as well as the highest over all technical scores. She finds time between school, studying and church to rehearse over 20 hours a week. Dance Town is now preparing for their fourth annual recital at the beautiful Gusman Theater in Downtown Miami.

She and her twin brother, Jorge, have been patients of Dr. Mosquera since last year. Their mother, Lisa, was a patient and completed her treatment over ten years ago. Recently, they discovered Lisa discovered a family connection with Dr. Mosquera. She brought to the doctor's attention that her husband's family is related to Tiburcio Lorenzo. The second issue of Star Smiles News was dedicated to Tiburcio. He was a well known Cuban artist and was Michele's and Jorgie's great-uncle. During the years Lisa was in treatment, it never occurred to Dr. Mosquera to enquire if her married name was connected in any way to Tiburcio's. Dr. Mosquera's beloved Aunt Mary was married to Tiburcio Lorenzo and the artist was influential is the doctor's admiration of art. One of the blessings of having Dr. Mosquera as your orthodontist is he treats everyone as family.

We wish to congratulate our patients

- Our best wishes for happiness to our patient Elizabeth Naranjo who recently married Roy Rodriguez.
- Congratulations to our patient Karen Begley, Jennifer Blanco, Natalie Linares and Carla Lowenstein on the arrival of their babies.
- Our patient, Eric Valle, was accepted into the computer magnet program at G. Holmes Braddock High School. Eric wants to become an engineer in the future. Congratulations, Eric!



1) Our congratulations to patients Gabriel and Daniel Mion as their 14-under soccer team, The Real Gables, won the Hackworth/Davis Cup State of Florida Championship. 2) We wish Juliet Robert a very happy 15th birthday.



'Quinceañeras' patients

Lauren Aguilar, Carla Alaimo, Regla Alfonso, Melissa Allende, Chris Alvarez, Ericka Bermúdez, Anabel Bobes, Bianca Canals, Alexandra Casals, Karen Castellón, Adriana Castellón, Katherine Castillo, Valentina Clerici, Kimberly Cobián, Tricia Cooper, Pía Correa, Paola Cunha, Madelen Díaz, Francelia Eckembrecher, Daphne Eckembrecher, Daniella Escalona, Lisa Estrada, Diandra Fernández, Nicole Fernández, Alexandra Florit, Patricia Fors, Ashley García, Carolina García-Casals, Alejandra Gaviria, Cristina González, Carolina Guerrero, Victoria Heredia, Camila Hernández, Yousy Jiménez, Jessica Johnson, Alexandra Larios, Lucía Larrosa, Susie Londoño, Lucy López, Jessica López, Ana López, Alexandra Martin, Ana M. Martínez, Kaitlin McClain, Michelle Miranda, Stephanie Miranda, Jessica Miret, Amanda Morales, Priscilla Muñoz, Carla Nodarse, Andrea Ortégón, María Ortégón, Karol Paredes, Stephanie Pareja, María Pérez, Stephanie Pérez, Marie Pou, Natasha Puig, Kathleen Pujadas, Andrea Rabassa, Gavielle Reyes, Anna Rico, Ivette Rivas, Stephanie Rivera, Juliet Robert, Tiffany Rodríguez, Christen Romero, Albanely Roque-Escobar, Albalidia Roque-Escobar, Paoli Rudman, Rubí Ruiz, Stephanie Salas, Janelle Salinas, Krystina Sánchez, Karina Styer, Jessica Telleria, Karolynn Trabanco, Arianni Trujillo, Allison Vanegas, Carolina Wong and Pamela Zedán.

GET TO KNOW STEPHANIE SANTOS

I was born in Miami, Florida on January 25, 1989 and I have lived here all my life with my mom, my brother and my grandmother, surrounded by a large and close knit, supportive and loving family. I attended Marjory Stoneman Douglas Elementary and then Paul W. Bell Middle school, right next door. Being a senior this year at Coral Park Senior High is very exciting. I'm currently in the work experience program and have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Mosquera and his wonderful staff. I feel grateful for all



the things learned and experience gained, which is very hard for a young, high-school girl like myself. One of my plans after graduating in June is going to Miami Dade College and studying Neonatal Nursing. I have wanted a career in the medical field since middle school, after being influenced by my health teacher Mrs. Blandon-Gomez. Dr. Mosquera and staff are very dedicated and our patients are wonderful. Thank you for making this such a wonderful experience for me.



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Childhood memories fill my life, both back in Cuba and after our arrival in Miami. I cannot deny my desire to reconnect with my birthplace and visit with relatives left behind and somehow reconcile my memories of loss. Spiritual, cultural and even materialistic thoughts fill my mind continuously. Yet, the day of return must wait for a free Cuba where I won't be subjected to unwarranted restrictions, surveillance and racketeering.

It's ironic that I have extensively traveled and explored many countries and learned to cherish their people, customs, foods, culture and natural habitats, and, after forty five years, have not been able to return to a free Cuba. That is also the haunting reality for so many of our older generation, that they are dying without seeing their dream of a Cuba free of Castro or, at least, as many have told, ousting the dictator.



The emotions are overwhelming at times. One recent afternoon, I was attending a banquet event of the Miami Medical Team (MMT). This is the humanitarian organization that made it possible, through the efforts of Dr. Enrique Cepero, a dentist member of MMT, for the South Florida District Dental Association to have access and participate in providing relief to the thousands of Cuban, as well as Haitian, rafters that were sent to the Guantánamo Naval Base. I had been President of the district dental association that year and was proud to have had Dr. Cepero and many dentists from our community provide dental emergency assistance to the refugees and positively change naval dental care policy at the base to prevent dental mutilations. It has been the only time in forty five years that I have set foot on Cuban soil. After the invocation, the Cuban national anthem *Himno de Bayamo* was played, which is always strong felt; however, accidentally the American national anthem was not played immediately thereafter as it is the custom. After it was brought to the attention of the director in charge of the event, the Star Spangled Banner blasted through the speakers. It was a time of reflection and revelation simultaneously. I came to realize that in our adopted country I had become truly American. Not through the process of naturalization, but by identity.

1) We wish to Bianca Cabrera for winning our 2007 Valentines contest. 2) Congratulations to Mariangel Duin for winning our 2007 Easter contest.

Growing up in this country, I always thought how great it was to have the benefit of two worlds. To be able to choose from the best of each culture was certainly optimum. I thought it was a great advantage to be able to speak, read and write English and Spanish from an early age. How wonderful to be able to reach into the mixture of my European ancestry with my Cuban Creole influence and combine it all with the best traits of the Anglo Saxon culture and the Puritan work ethic. With the current globalization trend I am keenly aware of the benefit that the multicultural South Florida community provides to the families of exiles and immigrants alike and to the bright future and prospects for our adult and young patients in a country that offers countless opportunities, choices and freedoms. Our children, although influenced by the cultures and traditions of our native countries, will undoubtedly come to feel as American as I have myself.

STAR SMILES NEWS

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