

9<sup>TH</sup> UNPLUGGED

IRENE BUSTAMANTE

OPERATIONS MANAGER

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HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Hi, I'm Judge Latimore.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Hi, I'm Irene Bustamante.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you're listening to 9<sup>th</sup> Unplugged.

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: Well, good to see you. Before we get started with finding out what you do when you're unplugged, tell me a little bit about your position and the department you work with.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I am the operations manager at the Juvenile Courthouse.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And what does that entail?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: It entails a variety of things. It entails supervising diversion programs. It entails facilities. It entails assisting with anything the judges need, a variety of things.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you work with kids at times?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I do in the diversion programs.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You like kids, I'm thinking.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I do love kids.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, wonderful. So when you are not at work and you are unplugged, what is it that makes you just get really excited about being away from work and what you have an opportunity to do.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: If I have the time, I love going out to the beach and just relaxing.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And are you someone who grew up in the south or near oceans and beaches?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: We lived in Chicago until I was 12 years old.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, goodness, no.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: And then from there we moved to Orlando, and so, yes, I pretty much grew up going to the beaches every other weekend or – and then you know once I could drive, we went pretty much every other day in the summer.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. Because you came from Chicago where it can be freezing cold and you don't want to be anywhere near water, correct?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Exactly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Now, were you born in Chicago?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: No, I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, wonderful, and then so when is it that you left Argentina?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I was two years old.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you remember anything about Argentina?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I went back when I was gosh, maybe eight or nine, so it's been so long ago that not really.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. What is the hardest lesson that you've learned throughout life?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Hardest lesson I've learned throughout life. That you can't trust everybody.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And do you have a favorite thing that you will do when you're with your family?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: We love just to sit around and talk. We end up always laughing and having a good time and just enjoying each other's company.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What is it about your culture that makes you remember home?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Well, let's see, there's always a lot of cooking. Always a lot of food. The kids are always with us so it's not just adults gathering, it's always the entire family gathering.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you cook?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I do cook.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's your best dish?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I love to make Cuban food so I would say ropa vieja.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Say that again.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Ropa vieja, which in English means old clothes but it's a beef dish.

JUDGE LATIMORE: It's a beef dish.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. Wonderful. What are some small things that make your day go better?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: When people are happy, when they're content. When you see kids smile and their parents smile, things like that make my day go by and it makes me happy too.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Tell me something that no one would know about you that you're willing to share.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: That no one would know about me.

JUDGE LATIMORE: No one would ever guess.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Let's see, I like to draw.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, so what type of drawing do you do?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I like to do cartoons.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right, and how long have you been doing that?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Since I was a little kid.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wonderful. Wonderful. Tell me, what is something that you would never ever do again?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: That I would never ever do again. I would never ever, well, I can't say if I had to do it, I probably would but on the cruise line when they have those obstacle courses up in the air, I probably will not do that again.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I'm guessing that was a memorable occasion for you. Okay. Name one or two things that you have on your bucket list.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I would love to go to Europe, so hopefully this COVID will be over soon. What else is on my bucket list? I just want to travel with my husband. I like when my whole family goes on vacations together so we just have a good time when we're all together.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wonderful. What small gesture from a stranger made a big impact on you?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Small gesture from a – let's see. I think when somebody walks up to you, like when my kids were little, if they were well-behaved and somebody just came up to me out of the clear blue and said, you know, your children are so well-behaved, that to me made me feel good because I felt like I was doing a good job with them.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And do you speak languages other than English?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I speak German and I speak Spanish.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And is there a language that you would have like to have learned?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: You know, Chinese wouldn't be bad.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right. Tell me, when you and your family are together, you said that you go to the beach a lot, right and you all hang out there. Tell me something about getting away from this area that makes you feel a lot better.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Well, you know, when you're sitting on the beach and all you see is the water and the sand, it's a very calming affect so I could just sit on the deck and watch the water and the waves and just watch people walk back and forth and be content for hours.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's your secret talent?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: My secret talent.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Other than drawing.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: I love to cook so I guess that would be okay.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What are the proudest – what is the proudest thing you've ever done in life? What do you think made you the proudest?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Watching my kids succeed in life. I think both of them have done very well for themselves and that to me is something that I'm proud of.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Caring about your kids, how would you prepare for Zombie Apocalypse?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Oh, God.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Got to make sure the kids are okay when the zombies come. So what are you going to do?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Oh, build a cave, I don't know.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, that sounds good. How would you like to be remembered?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: As someone who was genuine and someone who listened and was very compassionate.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Can you tell me what are your top two rules for navigating life?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Listen when people speak and always be kind.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Always be kind. If in fact you were able to win the lotto, and you could spend your money on anything that you wanted to except paying bills, you know the usual things that we have to do when we don't have money, okay. What is it that you would do with your winnings?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: This is going to sound absolutely crazy, but I think it's so much to remodel homes so I would buy a house that needs fixing and fix it up and just flip houses because I think that's fun.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. That sounds good. Would you want to have one of those shows on the Home and Garden network?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Oh, no, I don't like to be in the spotlight.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, so you're just going to do it all on your own and not let anybody know that you did all of that. All right, what's an irrational fear that you have?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: An irrational fear is actually speaking in public because if you're asked to speak in public, you know what you're talking about. And usually your audience wants to hear about what you're talking about, so sometimes I think, why am I nervous about talking in public when I know what I'm going to say and what all it involves.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, and if you could pick your dream car, what would that be?

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Mercedes SUV.

JUDGE LATIMORE: There we go. All right. Any particular color?



MS. BUSTAMANTE: Royal blue.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. So you've thought about this, haven't you. Well, thank you so much. I've enjoyed speaking with you and being unplugged.

MS. BUSTAMANTE: Thank you so much.

(Music)