

THE REDDY CRU

BUILDING A LIFE CHANGING COMMUNITY OF STUDENTS PASSIONATE ABOUT CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JESUS

Fernanda's Story

I was born in El Salvador, where my mom and dad got divorced before I turned one. I never knew my dad or had the chance to form a relationship with him, but shortly after my mom and I moved to the United States, she got remarried and I finally felt like I had a family. My relationship with my stepdad was never good. I desired so badly to receive love from a father and to have that special relationship, but I was constantly feeling like I wasn't good enough and that I wasn't worth it. I wanted so badly to be loved, and would constantly be trying to establish my identity in other things, like taking pride in the material things I had, in friendships, and the house I lived in. This whole time I still felt like it wasn't enough and I needed the approval of those around me in order to feel valued and loved. Around junior year of high school, my parents got divorced. I felt angry, confused, hurt and not wanted. I began turning to boys, alcohol, and drugs to try to gain that approval and love I was desperately seeking. **Alcohol was my escape and a way to avoid my emotions and it was during this time I was raped.** Before leaving for college, I was at my lowest, feeling like I was worthless and had nothing to offer. I was so lost in the partying lifestyle and was convinced this was what life was all about. The second week of school at UCF, I was invited to Cru where I signed up for a small group. Although apprehensive the first week, I went and left feeling surprisingly good. I remember feeling so loved and I was drawn to these women as I watched them, with joy, talk about this Jesus. It made me want what they had. As I kept attending small group and began to be discipled, I began to understand the gospel. I still wasn't ready to make the decision to follow Jesus until I went home Christmas break and for the first time became aware of the weight of sin in my life and my need for a Savior.

It was as if a blindfold had been removed from my eyes and I was able to see and understand why I needed Jesus, and that he LOVED me. In that moment I accepted Christ into my life. Even from that moment I have seen God teach me so much. Understanding that I have a heavenly Father who is crazy about me and genuinely cares and knows me because of his death on the cross, I can be forgiven and live a life free in Christ. Not turning to temporary things for approval or worth but knowing that my worth and identity lies fully in Jesus and what he did for me! Never in my life have I experienced joy or peace like I have now, and although I continue to sin daily, I am daily shown God's grace and reminded of just how much I need him.

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Prayer Corner

Fernanda feels called to reach fellow students with a similar life story.

She recently got to share her story with 750+ sorority women and UCF!

She hopes to begin meeting with any sorority women that have felt the same brokenness and emptiness that she did.

Pray that God would give Fernanda many opportunities to share the love of Christ with these women.