



## NARRATIVE STATEMENT

I have always been taught that if you want something, if you really want something you have to fight for it until you have it, make it, achieve it, or get there. Since I was little my mom had always told me the same thing: “You can be whoever you want to be, you can be the person who sweeps the street, just aim at being the best at it”.

It is not a secret that everyone wants to succeed and feel safe in their lives when they grow up, but for me to be happy is not as simple as just following the herd and doing what everyone else does. I like to explore the unknown and the “unthought”, after all, the avant garde of creation is held forward by the heart of black sheep.

I have the strong belief that if you do what you love, money will follow, not the other way around. It is sad to see how so many people in this world do not follow their hearts because of fear of failure.

On the topic of Success and Failure everyone has their own scale and concept. A big group of people believe that to fail is not to succeed. The way I see it is simpler. I believe that success is a measure of a combinations of personal aspects that must be fulfilled so we can live our lives to the fullest. It starts with a dream and our mission is to act towards it, that is where success begins.

A frustrated person will never be as happy and successful as he could be. I would rather spend the rest of my life fighting for something I believe in than doing something that safely kills my soul while the days go by.

When I was in school I was considered one of the most creative students in the class. I did not have the highest grades and some subjects were hard to pay attention to, I remembered wondering and going places seating in that chair, I also noticed and learned that when my heart ran free it was easy to excel.

Years went by and I was more and more attracted to express my point of view of the world in an artistic perspective. At the age of 20 I was already doing hiking trips in my country. The experiences that I lived in those trips open my brain quickly. I started feeling life and taking in the world with an expanded point of reference, where I valued even the fact of having a bed to sleep in when I came back home from these adventures. For me, these stories were so powerful that I was thirsty to share them with the people that surrounded me. I thought that a great way to make people value what they have was to share with them my experiences in a dynamic way, behind the lens through videos or in front of the camera expressing what I felt.

I have been a pretty dominant person since I was little. Leadership and perfectionism are a strength in my personality as they are a weakness. They have been a double-edged sword. At age of 22, I had the assignment in my university to do community service. We had two options: a. To help

in an already structured organization b. To develop a new project which in turn would help a community in our city.

As a natural hard worker I wanted to build something from scratch and experience the whole process. I challenged myself and did, with Maria Elisa Ticali, a project named “Sé Parte” (Belong). In this particular project we focused on helping people to become more socially aware and caring towards their community. We had the philosophy that if you do not treat human beings as humans, this mistreatment will have various negative effects in society. To see improvements in society, we should attack the main problem: Mistreatment and abuse inside families and schools will have long term effects on children and as a consequence it will cause side effects in society.

In Venezuela, public education system is completely deteriorated and almost non existent. Most children of humble means have very poor education and attend semi improvised stressful schools were they have reduced adult supervision and treat each other by the law of “survival of the strongest”. Many of these children live in very rough neighborhoods, where stress in human interaction is intensified by the socioeconomic situation. With our project we fought for human rights by educating children and families about the importance of good manners and treating each other well, both in the streets and in their homes.

This project was recognized in our university as one of the best community services projects ever made at the school. The project also competed and won as Best Research Paper at The UNIV 2014 International Congress. An international contest where more than 5.000 students show their own community service projects so they can be used as example and implemented worldwide on other communities where they might apply. In this contest we won the 1<sup>st</sup> place as Best Social Community Project 2014. I was inspired by my country’s situation and wanted to help its people. Despite it, I did not live their actual social – economic situation. I felt that I could help them by giving them the lessons I have learned in life thanks to my teachers, family education and experiences. However, Maria Elisa Ticali and I were not able to assist to the UNIV contest personally because the event was held in Rome, Italy, due to finance restrictions to afford the trip expenses. As fate would have, it was this project that lead me to making my first Movie video. Since we where not able to make it to Italy, we decided to send a video that would explain our project and show the impact that it had in only 6 months of deployment. We sent this video to UNIV and with it we conquer the judges heart, achieving the Contest 1st Place.

At that moment, I realized that I wanted to do this type of work for the rest of my life. The feeling of changing somebody’s perspective in life, see them emotionally moved because of a film was the best reward I could ever had. For me it was not the 1st Place honors that motivated me to follow this dream, it was the success of looking at the reactions that can be evoked by a good filmmaking tape.

After this experience I had a clearer picture of what I wanted, so I put all my energy to do my best and be a great filmmaker as a great actress. By the time I was in my last school year I wanted to create a film where I could combine my new found passion for film with my second passion, rock climbing. At this point, I already had 3 years of climbing experience and I had noticed that in Venezuela this sport wasn’t seen as feminine by most women in the country. I had the thesis that this was a “taboo’s situation” where women didn’t dare to do this sport because culturally it wasn’t well seen. My goal was to express the point of view of a selected group of Venezuelan rock climbing

women, including mine, in order to show a different perspective of this sport to the rest of the community. For my surprise, that wasn't actually the problem. We concluded, after a lot of interviews, that in Venezuela exists a big fear of failure. Most people do not dare to get out of their comfort zone. We film all this experience and with it we made a short-film documentary that worked as our Final Project of my undergraduate career. For me, this experience was a great lesson. It made me realize that even though culturally women have been seen as the weak gender, in this specific case that is not the issue. The issue is that a sport like this is very outside the box. If we translate rock climbing to every day's Venezuelan life problems we could confirm that most people in this country rather stay in their comfort zone than expose to an unknown experience because their fear of failure, not only women.

The co-director Veronica Contreras and I presented this film, after graduated with honors, in the Ascenso's Festival, the biggest Adventure Filmmaking Contest in the country. We proudly won the 1<sup>st</sup> Place and other awards. This gave us the opportunity to assist to the Adventure Filmmaking Workshop 2015 in the Banff Book & Film Festival, Calgary, Canada. They gave us a full scholarship to assist as part of the student's team of 2015's workshop.

On that workshop I met a lot of people that nowadays I see as coworkers. Each of the student's stories were greatly inspiring. I got the opportunity to be with the best people of the Adventure Filmmaking Industry. My teachers were Keith Partridge and Michael Brown, important and influential people in the field. We were a class of only 24 students. selected by the Banff Centre Team from a huge crowd of approximately 3.000 persons. For 10 days we shared our knowledge and we supported each other as a family. During these days I learned a great deal from all my classmates. The feeling of belonging while doing this workshop made me realize how much I liked this industry and made me understand that with a great crew everything is possible.

Following my passion, I want to create videos that can have a positive impact on the world as well as to be a truthful actress where I could express and show my point of view. I can't let my passion be limited by my country's situation and I will give the best of me to make my dream come true. I believe that doing one video, with big effort, can change the life of a lot of people at the same time. The power that the Filmmaking Industry has is indescribable and I will love to have the opportunity to learn from the most knowledgeable people in this industry so I can turn my passion into my career. I want to do movies inspired by personal journeys and with profound messages. I believe that this is my mission in the world, to teach people in an entertaining way, through my movies as filmmaker and interpreting characters that can deliver a different perspective of life to the world.



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Veronica Badell