

Testimonial from A. Sandoval

My family and I moved to Pickering in September. We're of Hispanic background, of Nicaraguan descent. My children were both born in Canada.

In February 2004, we attended the annual Heritage Day Celebration at the Pickering Town Centre – presented by the City of Pickering Advisory Committee on Race Relations & Equity. We saw performances by a few groups of different cultural background. We were particularly impressed by a group of teenagers who were dancing to East Indian music. Seeing the love and energy these kids put into dancing to the music of their culture, knowing that most of these young people were probably born in Canada, inspired me to start contacting people of my culture in order to form a group of Nicaraguan folklore music. Previously, there had been a group that my nieces had belonged to but it had disintegrated a few years ago – when most of its members either got married or busy with their own lives. I contacted the former director and a few parents, and little by little the group started to take shape.

I'm happy to say that we started the group at the beginning of April 2004. We rehearse every Sunday morning at a room that a community centre allowed us to use free of charge in Scarborough. The kids are learning a lot and really enjoy learning about their music and culture, and are practicing their language skills as well. And I'm also proud to say that they will be having their first-ever presentation at the Canadian Tapestry event that will take place at the Pickering Museum Village in mid June 2004.

Alma Sandoval