

## Yimailling, Strive for College student



Yimailling lives in Brooklyn, New York, in a quiet part of the borough that is far from subway lines. Her commute to school is 45 minutes each way. Yimailling is originally from the Dominican Republic, from what she describes as a “dangerous” part of Santo Domingo. When Yimailling was little, her mother moved to the U.S. and Yimailling and her siblings moved in with their grandmother. It was four long years before the kids were able to move to the States and reunite with their mom. Yimailling was in seventh grade at the time and had to repeat a year of school because she didn’t speak English.

Yimailling’s older brother wants to apply to school with her so that they can attend together and perhaps receive more financial aid. He currently works and helps their mother pay bills. Yimailling is concerned about her younger brother’s future, insecure that he’ll find the direction and discipline required to achieve his full potential. She worries about finding a job herself so that she can begin to contribute to the family’s finances.

Yimailling’s mother and extended family are all college graduates; she lost her father when she was just five years old. Before Strive, she didn’t give much thought to college because the U.S. school system is set up so differently than it is in the Dominican Republic. She began working with Strive in her junior year, and considers the mentors “amazing,” patient people. She appreciates the help she has received with the college application process, especially with her personal essay, which is about her long road to the U.S. Yimailling would enjoy becoming a Strive mentor herself one day.

Art and history are her two favorite subjects, but she performs well in most – this girl who doesn’t “think of [her]self as intelligent” is valedictorian of her class! She says she simply tries to do everything she ventures well. She is not sure what she wants to major in or even where she wants to pursue higher education, but she is considering attending NYU. Describing herself as a person who can’t sit still and must work hard all the time, she looks forward to becoming an independent, successful adult. Her dream is to inspire the world and hopefully guide her younger brother on a path to a bright future. She looks forward to being able to share the fruits of her labor with children battling cancer. She wants to help them get well so that they may pursue their own dreams.