CABE congratulates Martha Sarabia for her dedication to becoming a bilingual teacher! The following describes her personal experience and educational philosophy.

Personal Statement
I was a professional journalist for about 13 years, but I felt that my goal of helping others have a better life was not being met and I changed careers. Once I was hired at the high school that I currently work at, I started seeing that our teacher population did not reflect the student population they served. I work at a school where more than 80 percent of our students are of Latino descent, many are English Learners and about a third of them come from low socio-economic households. On the other hand, less than 10 teachers are either Latino or speak Spanish. That is when I started asking myself about the huge disconnect between both populations who interact on a daily basis. How can our students feel encouraged to be better in school, to achieve their best, to go to college when many do not feel that personal and/or cultural connection with the person who teaches them about history or math? Why are so many of them having behavioral issues spending hours at the AP office when they should be learning a certain subject in a classroom with their peers? In addition, I am an English Learner myself. I came to this country from Mexico at age 13 and did not speak a word of English. I know what it is like to be a student and, as a teacher, I want to help my future students to reach their highest potential and to believe in themselves.

Educational Philosophy
My educational philosophy is that all students can and should learn. By using different strategies, I will strive to make sure that they all have an opportunity to learn the way they learn best. I plan to use their strengths to help them learn, without ignoring their weaknesses. I also want them to be active learners and be engaged in the subject matter in order to achieve true learning and not just memorize information. Learning should also be fun, with active collaboration. I also consider parents as my partners and I will make sure to collaborate with them for the benefit of my students and community. I will also provide feedback to my students to make sure they have chances to improve and support them in their areas of need. As an English Learner and a student of a bilingual program that helped me transition to learn English, I firmly believe in bilingual education. I was in ELD classes for two years, where I used my native Spanish to learn English well enough to be reclassified. That quick transition was doable because I transferred my knowledge from one language to another. As a mom, I now have my daughter enrolled in a dual language program where, in just a few months, my daughter went from not wanting to speak Spanish because it was harder for her to do so than English, to speaking it clearly and feeling validated.

¡Felicidades, Martha!