

## Story of Success: Marissa Mares



As a teacher only in the first few years of my career I would have never thought it possible to purchase my own home. I am a science teacher at a school in Santa Ana and have lived in apartments around the Orange County area during and after attending college at UC Irvine. And as someone who works in Santa Ana I wanted to live close to my school site but struggled with increasing apartments rents. My parents planted the seed that I should look in to purchasing a condo in Orange County to avoid increasing rents. This brought along the overwhelming concerns of not only finding a place but also qualifying as a

single income household on a teacher's salary.

I was lucky enough to learn about Santa Ana's Down Payment Assistance Program and some of those overwhelming feelings started to melt away. I was thrilled when I found out that I qualified and that the condo I fell in love with also met the requirements of the program. My two dogs and I have now been in my condo for two months and we couldn't be happier! It's a great feeling to know that I am now a homeowner and I love taking ownership of my little place by fixing it up with new paint and other small projects.

When I started the process, I felt nervous about all the ins and outs of homebuying but Claudia Shaw was so helpful in answering all of my questions and working with my lender and I to get everything completed. I wouldn't have been able to make this dream possible without the City's Down Payment Assistance Program. I now tell all my coworkers about the program and the opportunity to help make their home-owning dreams come true!