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### Barrera, Jesse Family History

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# The Family History of

Jesse E. Barrera

2 May 2017

Jesse E. Barrera authored this family history as part of the course requirements for HIST 550/700 Your Family in History offered online in Spring 2017 and was submitted to the Pittsburgh State University Digital Commons. Please contact the author directly with any questions or comments:  
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## List of Direct Line Family Members

### Generation One

- A1. Jesse Eliezer Barrera (1996- )
- A2. (Spouse or partner's name here)

### Generation Two

- A1a. Jesse Barrera (1973- )
- A1b. Monica Eliza Barrera (1977- )

### Generation Three

- A1a1. Benny Barrera (1952- )
- A1a2. Linda Barrera-Benavides (1952- )
- A1b1. Eliezer Zayas (1959- )
- A1b2. Myrna Zayas-Acevedo (1960- )

### Generation Four

- A1a1a. Benito Barrera (1930-2005)
- A1a1b. Dolores Barrera (1934- )
- A1a2a. Manuel Benavides (1925-2012)
- A1a2b. Jessie Benavides-Ramirez (1928- )
- A1b1a. Francisco Zayas (1919-2001)
- A1b1b. Esperanza Zayas (1916-1989)
- A1b2a. unk
- A1b2b. Eusebia Guzman-Acevedo (1873-1933)

Generation Five

A1a1a1. Manuel Barrera (deceased)  
A1a1a2. Gerarda Amador-Barrera (deceased)

A1a1b1. unk  
A1a1b2. unk

A1a2a1. unk  
A1a2a2. unk

A1a2b1. unk  
A1a2b2. Teresa Ramirez (deceased)

A1b1a1. unk  
A1b1a2. unk

A1b1b1. unk  
A1b1b2. unk

A1b2a1. unk  
A1b2a2. unk

A1b2b1. unk  
A1b2b2. unk

## GENERATION ONE

**Jesse Eliezer Barrera (1996- )** was born in John F. Kennedy Hospital in Edison New Jersey, in 1996 to **Jesse Barrera (1973- )** and **Monica Eliza Barrera (1977- )**. The birth went through smoothly. Jesse first name was given to him by his father, who named him after himself. Jesse middle name was given to him by his mother, who named him after her father. Jesse was of Mexican descent from his father side, and Puerto Rican descent from his mother side.

After him, and his parents left the hospital they went to Perth Amboy. Jesse and his parents lived with his aunt **Mayra Quiles-Perez**. Jesse would be living back and forth from their place to his Godfather **Shawn Vandeburg** home. Perth Amboy and the surrounding towns weren't the safest places to live with high poverty. Perth Amboy was a Hispanic community with Puerto Ricans being the majority of the population<sup>1</sup>. Jesse and his parents would soon find their own apartment to live in.

Soon after moving Monica would give birth to another son **Joseph Barrera**. As Jesse got older his parents would notice him giving blank stares which can be sign of early epilepsy. The stares would only last for ten seconds, or so. His younger brother was suffering from asthma too at the time. As Jesse got older he and his brother would go to a child care center while their parents work.

After one year Jesse entered kindergarten at James J. Flynn School which was a K-4 school. He would go there all four years. He had to take a speech, and reading class since he couldn't speak, or read at the grade level well. After graduating elementary school he went to middle school which was a 5-8 school in New Jersey. The middle school had a bad reputation with students causing trouble. During recess time the outside looked like a prison yard with a fence all around, and multiple security guards. Stick bombs in classrooms, and fights were normal. With them happening at least once a month. One year someone brought a gun to school with the whole school being on lockdown, and students hiding. The next year someone called the police saying there was a bomb in the school because the student didn't want to take the state test.

His family ended up moving to Kansas. Jesse was twelve years old at the time. His parents wanted his brother and him to get a better education. The recession of 2008 also forced his family to move in order to make a living. The lifestyle in Kansas was a different experience for him. When he first moved to Kansas he saw how friendly people were compare to people in New Jersey, but for the first time in his life he experienced racism. Someone wrote an unpleasant note, and smashed the rear windshield of his parent's car. Compared with New Jersey something like this was rare since a large percentage of the community was minority's<sup>1</sup>.With most being Puerto Rican. Also in Kansas people assumed if someone was Hispanic they were Mexican. People in New Jersey would also assume if someone was Hispanic they were Puerto Rican, or Dominican. It was a change in worlds for Jesse. It was a good experience with the change in lifestyles.

Jesse finished middle school in Kansas. His brother had to go back to elementary school since in Kansas elementary school is K-6. The education in Kansas was much different. The elementary, middle, high schools Jesse went to in Kansas were a year ahead of schools in New Jersey. During high school Jesse join the Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp.

During that time Jesse became third in charge, and Commander of the Drill Team. He participated in multiple competitions with his unit. Participated in community services, parades, and fundraising events. Also during this time Jesse was diagnose with epilepsy. Jesse had to adapt his plans on what he wanted to achieve in life because of being diagnose with epilepsy. He worked on what he was strongest at which was history. He became the first person in his family to go to college. He decided to major in history.

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<sup>1</sup> Personal knowledge of the author, Jesse E.Barrera

## GENERATION TWO

**A1a. Jesse Barrera (1973- )**

**A1b. Monica Zayas Barrera (1977- )**

Jesse Barrera was born in 1973 in Gladstone, Missouri to **Linda Benavides-Barrera (1952- )** and **Benny Barrera (1952- )**. He was an only child.

During his childhood Jesse played football. He was a huge fan of the sport. His favorite team was the Raiders. He gave his first born the gift of being a Raider's fan. He was surrounded by dislike for his team since he lived in Missouri. The Raiders had the ability to win which was the difference. He was also a huge basketball, and baseball fan. His favorite basketball team is the Lakers because of Magic Johnson and his team. His favorite baseball team is the Yankees. Which he also past down to his first born.

He moved around a bit while in school since he lived in rough neighborhoods. His father got lucky with a job because of family. His father started working for General Motors. When Jesse turned twelve, his family moved to Rahway, New Jersey because his father job moved to New Jersey. He played football at Rahway High School where he met Shawn, and **Ron Storey**. They became best friends, and would mess around. Most of his friends were from his football team.

Shawn's girlfriend introduced him to her friend Monica during a double date. They eventually started to date more often. He would eventually ask her to marry him. It was not till after their first born when they got marry. Jesse got a job at USG where he worked twelve hour shifts for twelve years. The USG plant eventually closed down due to the 2008 recession.

Soon after he would move his family to Kansas. He got help from his Uncle **John Barrera**. After a year he was able to get his family a new apartment in Kansas. He found a job as a security guard, but quit due to the companies treatment of his fellow employees. He then got a job at loading trucks. He now's supports his sons through college since he wants them to have a better life.

**Monica Zayas-Barrera (1977- )** was born in 1977 in Perth Amboy, Middlesex County, New Jersey. She was born to **Eliezer Zayas (1959- )** and **Myrna Zayas-Acevedo (1960-1998)**. Her parents separated early. She was with her mother the whole time. She held resentment for her father for leaving them. She and her mother moved around a lot because they were poor<sup>2</sup>. Her mother ran in to trouble a lot trying to take care of her.

Monica ran into trouble with her grandmother, and her aunt and uncles. Her mother couldn't help at the time since she was locked up. Her Uncle **Luis Acevedo** helped take care of her since he had troubles with his mother, and siblings except for Myrna. Monica got in trouble a lot with school, and outside. She was constantly locked in her room as punishment. She now appreciates it since he was there when no one else was.

Her mother eventually took her back when she was cleaned up, and remarried. Her new Step-Father was **Raul Rivera**. Monica, and Raul grew close. Myrna was getting sicker as time went on. She gave birth to **Melanie Minerva Rivera**. Melanie also grew sick, and died during infancy.

Monica eventually rekindle the relationship with her grandmother, aunt, and uncles. Her and her aunt **Mayra** became best friends. Mayra dragged Monica everywhere especially scary movies. Monica would later meet Jesse, and marry him. Monica and Jesse lived with Mayra and her husband and daughter. Later moved out since Monica had a son.

She would later give birth to another son. She still spent a lot of time with her mother since she was sick, and Raul. Eliezer was in and out of the picture for Monica, and they continued to have a on and off again relation at the time. Raul would later past away with Myrna soon following. This hurt Monica since she didn't really have a parent since she and her father weren't close. All of her mother's friends helped take care of her, and babysat her kids. Monica became a stay at home mom for a while till she felt

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<sup>2</sup> Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 182.



her kids were old enough to watch for themselves. She ended up rekindling her relationship with her father. They're still close.

She eventually started working for a Goddard School. Then she had to leave since they were moving towards Kansas. She jump from job to job since there were problems. She got lucky finding a job, and then another job offered her a job after they saw her work at that job. She accepted, and then problems rose up again, but she got lucky and she was offered a new job. She now works for a college.

### **GENERATION THREE**

**A1a1. Benny Barrera (1952- )**

**A1a2. Linda Barrera-Benavides (1952- )**

**A1b1. Eliezer Zayas (1959- )**

**A1b2. Myrna Zayas-Acevedo (1960-1998)**

**Benny Barrera (1952- )** was born in 1952 in Missouri. He was born to **Benito Barrera (1930-2008)** and **Dolores Barrera (1934- )**. He is the oldest of five siblings. He was named after his father in a way. Everyone called Benito, Benny for short, so he named his son after his nickname. Benny's aunts, and uncles would call him Benny Jr. sometimes.

Benny was never good at school, and got in trouble at times. He played football and had to teach his younger brother **John Barrera** to play. He had to teach his on how to deal with the racism they encounter. He was part of the school's biggest class in history. He was fired from multiple jobs for skipping out, and going with his friends to a pinball machine. He got lucky since one of his uncles offered him a spot at a trade school his cousin declined. He accepted since he was he saw it as a second chance.

During the time he became friends with **Bob Benavides** and would meet his future wife **Linda Barrera**. They eventually got married and had a child. They moved around since Benny was still in trade school. When he finished he got a job at General Motors. He got his son into being a Lakers fan since that was Benny's favorite sport. He would move his family to New Jersey since that's where GM plant was moving.

During his time in New Jersey he got a dog name **Nikki** which he treated like family. He and Linda got a divorce after Jesse finished school. There was no animosity between them and they still stay in touch. He told Jesse once his sons were born not to worry about education. Benny paid for his grandson's education till they finished high school. He eventually moved to Texas since GM was moving to Texas.

Benny loves working for GM not since he was lucky, but he gets a discount on the Corvettes he buys. He been wanting to retire since he oldest grandson was ten years old. He now known in the Barrera family as the hardest working man they ever met, and as the hardest to get ahold of.

**Linda Benavides-Barrera (1952- )** was born in 1952 Lakeside Side Hospital Kansas City, Missouri. She was born to **Manual Benavides** and **Jessie Benavides-Ramirez**. She was the only girl they had. She had six brothers and she was the second youngest. Her father was very protective of her nicknaming her "Lil Mama".

One day, the house they lived at went on fire. Linda was scared and buried herself in her blanket. Manuel saw he was missing a child and ran back inside to rescue her. Linda got a scar from where she got a scar.

She later met Benny through her brother and they married. She convinced Benny that they needed to move to New Jersey to support them. She and Benny later got a divorce after Jesse left the house. They still stay in touch.

Linda began a relationship with **Pat Cook**. She helps the American Legion because of him. She was part of a fundraiser where she made over four thousand dollars off of her tacos.

**Eliezer Zayas (1959- )** was born in 1959 to **Francisco Zayas** and **Esperanza Zayas**. He has some brothers and sisters. He had a child with Myrna Acevedo. He separated soon after Monica birth. He would have a on and off relation with her. It's not till after Myrna death where they reconcile.

He remarried against his daughter's wishes since she didn't trust the woman. He would get a divorce with the woman later. He would remarried a woman his daughter agreed with. They're still together.

**Myrna Zayas-Acevedo (1960-1998)** born 1960 to **Eusebia Guzman Acevedo ( -2008)** and **Raymond Quiles (unk)**. She married Eliezer and they had a child. She was in and out of jail, but took care of her daughter. She then married **Raul Ramirez**, but both got really sick and had a child who died during infancy.

Myrna was described by her brother as making cars stop in the middle of the street, but she passed away in 1998.

## GENERATION FOUR

**A1a1a. Benito Barrera (1930-2005)**

**A1a1b. Dolores Barrera (1934- )**

**A1a2a. Manuel Benavides (1925-2012)**

**A1a2b. Jessie Benavides-Ramirez (1928- )**

**A1b1a. Francisco Zayas (1919-2001)**

**A1b1b. Esperanza Zayas (1916-1989)**

**A1b2a. Eusebia Guzman Acevedo (-2008)**

**A1b2b. Raymond Quiles (unk)**

**Benito Barrera (1930-2005)** was born in 1930 to **Manuel Barrera** and **Gerarda Amador-Barrera**. He has a twin **John Barrera**, but was given to another Amador family since they had trouble raising five kids in a train car. Benito forgave and later met his brothers.

After that he created his own restaurant Los Barrera which close down after a few decades. He married Dolores and they would have five kids of their own. They would later divorce. He passed away in 2005.

**Dolores Barrera (1934- )** was born in 1934 to parents unknown. She would marry Benito Barrera and have five kids. After they divorce she remarried and hurt a relationship with her son. She remained marry till her husband death.

She is now supported by her oldest son Benny. With Benny owning her home.

**Manuel Benavides (1925-2012)** was born in 1925 to parents unknown. His father died before he was born, and never knew him. He married Jessie when she was really young, and they had kids. When WWII started he joined the Navy.

He served in the Pacific theatre. He survived a kamikaze attack only because someone wanted to trade positions with him. He still has bad dreams about that day till his death.

When he return home he continued to have kids. One day a fire broke out, and he saved his daughter.

As he got older he was put in a home, and got put in a locked section. He almost got in a fight with another man who was mocking his family, he got out of his wheelchair when the man left.

**Jessie Benavides-Ramirez (1928- )** was born in 1928 to **Teresa Ramirez and father unknown**. She married Manuel when she was thirteen having her first child after. She would later have six more children with him. She now lives in a home.

**Francisco Zayas (1919-2001)** was born in 1919 to parent unknown. He married **Esperanza Zayas**. They both came to America from Puerto Rico in the 1950s. Passed away in 2001.

**Esperanza Zayaz (1916-1989)** was born in 1916 to parents unknown. She married Manuel. They both moved to America from Puerto Rico. She passed away 1989.

## GENERATION FIVE

A1a1a1. Manuel Barrera (deceased)  
A1a1a2. Gerarda Amador-Barrera (deceased)

A1a1b1. unk  
A1a1b2. unk

A1a2a1. Unk (died before Manuel Benavides death)  
A1a2a2. unk

A1a2b1. unk  
A1a2b2. Teresa Ramirez (deceased)

A1b1a1. unk  
A1b1a2. unk

A1b1b1. unk  
A1b1b2. unk

A1b2a1. unk  
A1b2a2. unk

A1b2b1. unk  
A1b2b2. unk

**Manuel Barrera** (deceased) lived with his two siblings and his aunt. He left when he was thirteen because he was tired of his aunt's ignorance, and ignorance in general. He fought with Pancho Villa till Villa last battle. He went to America from Chihuahua, Mexico. He lived in Kansa being the first Hispanics to live in Johnson County. He lived in a train car with his wife Gerarda, and four of his five sons<sup>3</sup>.

**Gerarda Amador-Barrera(deceased)** married Manuel, and had five sons. She gave one of her sons to be raised by one of her family members since she couldn't take care of five kids. She the reason why the Barrera's and the Amador's have such a tight bond.

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<sup>3</sup> Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 138.

**A1a2a1** passed away before seeing Manuel Benavides born.

**Teresa Ramirez (deceased)** gave birth to Jessie Ramirez.