

Sandra Rossato

“When I realized no one was coming, I knew that I had to build it.”

Every woman has a story. But some stories shake rooms, open doors, and redefine what's possible. In Her Words is SAR's series spotlighting trailblazing women who lead with courage, shape community with intention, and inspire the next generation through purpose, resilience, and grace.

Every story we've shared this year has led us here.

For our 12th and final feature of the year, we turn to the woman who quietly built the room where these stories could exist.

To the woman who believed that stories matter and understood that when women see themselves in one another, something powerful happens. The woman who built a space where women could remember that they are not alone in the work of growing into themselves.

Before there was a community, there was simply Sandra.

The people who know Sandra best would tell you she is soft yet strong, and someone they can count on. But long before she stepped into leadership, she was dependable. The sister. The daughter. The young mother. The person others could lean on. She grew up in a struggling family where guidance was limited and responsibility arrived early. There were problems to solve and responsibilities that forced her to figure things out long before she was supposed to.

“I learned early that no one was coming, and that changed everything,” she says.

She learned to keep moving, even when the path ahead wasn't clear.

Somewhere along the way, she stopped seeing closed doors as the end of the story.

“I don't take no for an answer.”



Her mother, an immigrant woman who endured poverty and hardships of her own, became one of her greatest examples of resilience. Despite everything she carried, she still met life with a smile and never told her daughter that something was impossible.

If Sandra believed she could do something, her mother believed she could too.

No hesitation. No conditions. Just belief.

Before she had fully discovered who she was, Sandra entered motherhood.

“The struggle was real,” she says.

Behind those words are years of sacrifice and growing up faster than she expected to. Some dreams had to wait. Certain doors felt heavier to push open. Life demanded resilience from her long before she ever felt ready to carry it.

Looking back, she doesn’t speak about those years with regret. She speaks about them as the years that taught her resilience.

As her career evolved, Sandra continued stepping into rooms where she had to trust herself before anyone else did. From banking to entertainment and eventually healthcare leadership, every chapter asked something new of her.

One of the defining moments of her journey came when she stepped into the role of Executive Director of Clínica Romero. As a young, first-generation Salvadoran woman without a traditional healthcare background, stepping into that role meant betting on herself once again.

The experience confirmed what she had quietly believed for years: she belonged in rooms she once thought were out of reach.

What she didn't expect was that women would come back.

They came back with promotions, new opportunities, and stories of doors they finally walked through. More than anything, they came back to say, “You helped me believe I could do this.”

That was the moment everything changed.

Sandra realized that what fulfilled her most was never the title itself. It was the conversations. The mentoring. The quiet realization that her own journey could become a bridge for someone else's.

At some point, success began to look different. The reward was no longer simply opening another door for herself. It became something quieter and, perhaps, more meaningful: giving back what she had learned so someone else could walk a little easier.

Somewhere along the way, she stopped waiting for someone to create the opportunity, open the door, or build the community she needed.

She made a different decision:

If no one was coming, she would be the person she had been looking for all along. That decision became SAR.

Because Sandra knows what it feels like to need support and not know where to find it.

So she built the room she once needed.

Through gatherings, conversations, and stories, SAR is an invitation for women to grow together and remember they do not have to navigate their journeys alone.

Over the last year, eleven remarkable women have trusted this series with their stories.

Different journeys. Different chapters. Different definitions of success. Yet every story pointed to the same truth: We are all still becoming.

These days, Sandra returns to a simple reminder: "Progress over perfection."

For the woman standing at the edge of something bigger, afraid to take the first step, Sandra's advice is immediate:

"Don't wait. Don't ask for permission. Be the light you've always needed."

And perhaps that is what this first year of In Her Words has always been about.

Women choosing to move forward anyway. Women building what they once needed. Women leaving the light on for the ones who come next.

"There is no roadmap. You create your own North Star," she says.

This is Sandra Rossato.

This is In Her Words. This is SAR.