

# SIRVA Story:

## Friendship and a Valentine Save an Assignment



When it comes to relocation, successful assimilation into a new host country – both for the employee and an accompanying family – is crucial to the success of an assignment. Needless to say, when Paolo, a Brazilian native, contacted Global Assignment Consultant Eloisa Sebber to say that his wife and daughters weren't adjusting to their new home, she knew her help would be equally crucial. Paolo's family had recently joined him in the U.S., where he had been working for four months. His wife, Ana, didn't speak any English. Unable to communicate, make friends, work or take part in typical day-to-day

activities, she felt terribly isolated. His oldest daughter was uneasy in their new house and wasn't sleeping. Worry prevented Paolo from being able to fully focus at work. They were in trouble.

A Brazilian native who had relocated to Canada, Eloisa was all too familiar with culture shock. Knowing that Ana's comfort would be a precursor to the children's, she called Ana to both offer her friendship and to advise her on significant actions she could take to ease her transition. First, Eloisa found Brazilian expat groups in Ana's new city, on Facebook, and shared them with her. Ana joined a group with over a thousand members and began sharing her experiences, gaining support and making friends. Next, Eloisa helped her to find local stores with Portuguese-speaking staff members, so Ana could start participating in her new life. Eloisa helped Ana to get a driver's license and, with a portion of their allotted budget, also got her enrolled in a class where she could begin learning English.

Next, Eloisa turned her attention to Ana's oldest daughter, Juliana, hoping to make her feel more at home in her new home. Working within the parameters of the family's mobility package, Eloisa first alleviated some academic pressure by finding a tutor for the eight-year-old. To address Juliana's comfort at home, though, Eloisa had something special in mind: Though Paolo's benefit had expired, she worked with his employer to make an exception and, on Valentine's Day, Juliana and her sister came home to find their beloved dog, who had previously been left behind in Brazil with relatives. Finally reunited with their best friend, everything began to change for the better.

Thanks to Eloisa's caring approach to the family's culture shock, Ana and the children are now enjoying their new home and building relationships in their community. Paolo is excelling at work and meeting all of the goals of his new position. While Eloisa firmly believes in providing cultural and language training for the optimal success of an assignment, she also believes that, in cases where that training can't be budgeted for, establishing support systems in a new host location is just as important as ensuring that families maintain a connection to their loved ones at home. "There's a U-curve in cultural assimilation that consultants should help families navigate," she said. "First, you're fascinated by your new environment, then culture shock sets in. You can't help but feel lost as you compare everything to your native country. After about a year, you adjust. With support, you find things you never thought you'd love about your new location. Once that happens, you're home."

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*Every relocation is unique so, every day, SIRVA employees around the world go above and beyond to provide innovative, caring, and customized solutions to our clients and their employees. [Visit Sirva.com to read more SIRVA Stories](http://www.sirva.com) or contact us to learn how our global expertise can do the same for you.*

## The Face Behind the Story:

### Eloisa Sebber, Senior Global Assignment Consultant, SIRVA



Originally from Brazil, Eloisa started working in the relocation industry in 2009. Based now in Toronto, Canada, her work with SIRVA includes the end-to-end ownership and management of her clients' international relocation experiences. Along with her experience as a relocation consultant, these individuals and their families benefit from her years of experience in international human resources/global mobility at two other relocation management companies, in addition to the experience she obtained living in Latin America and England.

Eloisa earned a Master of Science in International Human Resources from London South Bank University and holds the Global Mobility Specialist™ designation from Worldwide ERC®.

She is bilingual (Portuguese / English) and has a professional working proficiency in Spanish.

During her private time, Eloisa enjoys meditating, watching movies and cooking creative vegetarian meals. She also enjoys traveling. Though her favorite place, so far, is Santorini, Greece, she longs to see the Amalfi Coast in Italy and the Northern Lights from a site yet to be determined. Eloisa lives with her husband, Niel, who enjoys dancing with her so much that they plan to take lessons in the near future.

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