

VALLEY & STATE

83-4404 | news@themonitor.com

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2022

ellar
key
House
rats

cuellar will be in-
vilizing Congres-
the
as
uty
8th
ip,
a
on-
nd
re-
ound up votes on



Cuellar

aintained a Sen-
Democratic presi-
continue to find
nd pass sensible
eps our families
nd spurs innova-
as congressman
ease earlier this

under incoming
Katherine Clark,
ged in his release.
incoming Demo-
ne Clark for pro-
great leadership
an honor and a
under new lead-
for the American

will also involve
See **KEY ROLE** | 7B

r sales
nbers
ng for
ities

Fighting for life



Delcia Lopez | dlopez@themonitor.com

Camila Orozco, 2, holds on to the hand of her father, Alfonso Orozco, in their trailer home Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022, in Mercedes.

Mercedes family hopes to raise money to help father combat his seizures

BY ERIKA DE LOS REYES
STAFF WRITER

MERCEDES — A father's decision to let his son sleep a little more one morning changed the trajectory of their life in ways they could have never imagined.

One day, not unusual in any way, Alfonso Orozco Oliva decided he would

drop his son off at school so that his son wouldn't have to wake up early for the bus, and that way he could get an extra hour of sleep.

He doesn't recall much else. In fact, all Alfonso remembers from that day is leaving his son at school and then waking up to the sound of an ambulance and firemen pulling him out of

his vehicle.

Alfonso had been in an accident that almost claimed his life. He hit a house in November 2021 while driving back home after suffering a seizure.

He didn't know at the time that he suffers from hydrocephalus and epileptic seizures that require surgery. Hydrocephalus is caused

by a build-up of fluid within the cavities of the brain.

The crash changed their lives in more ways than one, but the Orozco family has only grown closer.

Although Alfonso struggles with these conditions, he continues to work as a handyman in order to

See **FIGHTING FOR LIFE** | 7B

FIGHTING FOR LIFE

From Page 1A

provide for his family as the sole breadwinner.

His wife, Claudia Aracely Rocha Escamilla, stays at home to care for him and their three kids.

She spoke Wednesday about the day Alfonso almost didn't make it back home.

"He was going to come back to drink some coffee, and I was going to make him breakfast before he left for work, but he never came back," Claudia said about the day of the accident, remembering that hours had passed since he had left. "The police arrived at my door knocking and asked if this was where Alfonso Orozco lived ... because he had been in an accident."

She recalled immediately worrying for her son Emiliano Orozco, 7, who had left with his father earlier that morning.

Alfonso explained that the last thing he remembered was turning onto Hidalgo Street in Mercedes after dropping off Emiliano.

"Suddenly I began to feel a tickle in my head almost like bubbles ... I knew something was happening to me," Alfonso said, recalling the events of that day as he gripped his left arm. "It's all I can remember. When I woke up, the firemen were

removing me from my truck. I had crashed into a home."

Alfonso was transported to McAllen Medical Center where an X-ray revealed he had water in his brain cavity that applied pressure to his brain, causing him to have seizures.

According to Alfonso, this was due to a previous injury.

At the hospital, Claudia was told her husband needed emergency surgery in order to drain the water and prevent the seizures.

He was hospitalized for three days and underwent intensive therapy to prepare for his upcoming surgery; however, it was canceled because he does not have insurance.

"A neurologist told me that if he does not operate, I will not live to 50 or 55," Alfonso said with a heavy tone. "We have to take out the water, if not I could die."

All Alfonso wants is to get good health insurance so that he can be treated by

a neurologist.

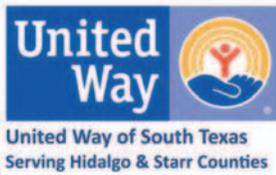
The seizures have limited the amount of work he can do, which has affected the family financially and makes it difficult to manage bills, rent and medication.

According to Claudia, her husband's medication costs about \$55 a bottle and only lasts about two weeks.

"All that I want is to be okay for my kids," Alfonso said. "Just to be OK to be working."

This holiday season Alfonso is asking the community for help in raising money to pay for his surgery and help in providing his kids with the perfect Christmas.

To help, call the United Way of South Texas at (956) 686-6331 and inquire about this family and the Spirit of Christmas campaign. The Monitor has partnered with the United Way of South Texas to garner support for Rio Grande Valley families in need of monetary donations, or other items and gifts specified in this story.



Delcia Lopez | dlopez@themonitor.com

Alfonso Orozco rubs his head as he explains the symptoms that occur with his illness while his daughter, Camila, plays with a stuffed animal on Wednesday Dec. 7, 2022, in Mercedes.