

# *An institution for all*

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By María Josefina Arce

Almost a century ago, the Popular University 'José Martí' was born in Havana to bring education to the popular sectors, strengthening alliances between workers, students and the Cuban intelligentsia in favor of the people's culture.

Qualified by its promoter, youth leader Julio Antonio Mella (1903-1929) as "an institution for all and an open road to a better future", it was a revolutionary and innovative initiative, which in its four years of existence turned to the most disadvantaged of society.

Mella's vision, shared by the Revolution, was to make knowledge reach everyone, and which he put into practice since his triumph in 1959 with a literacy campaign two years later, free education, the opening of new schools, access to higher education centers and the creation of the university for the elderly, among other actions.

This commitment has led to the resumption of this project, as part of the multiple actions developed by the Government in the communities to improve their living conditions, both material and spiritual.

This program will reach the 15 municipalities of the capital to bring the university closer to the people, broaden their horizons and provide them with new tools for their daily work.

And as on that occasion, university students will once again be the main protagonists. Young people who developed a commendable work during more than a year and a half of pandemic, highlighted by the highest leadership of the country.

A work that continues to support the maintenance and renovation actions that have been carried out for weeks in the different communities of Havana.

In the opinion of the young people, this has not been a lost time, but an opportunity for growth, which has tested their vocation of service, will and capacity to get involved and fight to transform reality.

Now new perspectives are opening up for everyone with this project which, in agreement with the academic authorities, will be developed in workplaces, institutions and social centers in the neighborhoods.

Improving the lives of citizens is the maxim of the initiative, renewed and adapted to current times, and which has its roots in the prestigious University of Havana, repository of the traditions of struggle and Cuban revolutionary thought.

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