MAESTRO CARES FOUNDATION

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



2024 RECAP

CHANGING LIVES, BUILDING DREAMS

MAESTRO CARES

FOUNDATION

CHANGING LIVES, BUILDING DREAMS

Introduction

We are proud to share the stories of our scholarship recipients, who are setting a path for themselves and transforming their local communities. Despite personal and social setbacks, these students have demonstrated a compelling desire to pursue a higher education and build a brighter future for themselves and their communities. They are hardworking, resilient, and determined individuals who want to contribute positively to their local and global communities.

The Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship program financially supports academically talented Latino/a students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in the United States and Latin America. We seek candidates who not only have significant financial need but also want to positively impact their communities.

Through our scholarship program, we strive to make a genuine impact on the lives of students who are driven to accomplish great things in their chosen field of study. This program aims to change lives and build dreams for future generations. Through our work, we alleviate the financial burden of obtaining an education and allow students to focus on their studies and on becoming tomorrow's leaders. Join us in supporting the aspirations of these and many other remarkable young people who are changing their own lives, the trajectories of their families, and the futures of their communities through the power of education.



Marc Anthony
Co- Founder



Henry Cardenas
Co- Founder

Our Focus

The Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship program provides financial support to academically talented and financially disadvantaged Latino/a students studying in both undergraduate and graduate programs in the United States, Puerto Rico, and Latin America.



We serve through two distinct pathways: individual scholarship recipients and university partnership agreements. All scholarship recipients are required to complete volunteer hours, as community service is integral to our philosophy at Maestro Cares Foundation.

Students who receive individual scholarships apply directly to our scholarship program and receive financial aid from Maestro Cares Foundation.

Students who receive scholarships through our university partnership agreements apply through their universities. Our university partners collaborate with us to identify, select, and support students enrolled in the partner university.

The Maestro Cares scholarship has **benefited over 150 students** in Latin America and the United States.

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Scholarship Program

Success Stories

Students who have graduated



Daniela Baten

From Dreams to Degrees: A Story of Gratitude and Transformation



My story of gratitude and overcoming challenges began at Aldeas Infantiles SOS Guatemala, a place that nurtured my dreams and gave me the foundation to pursue my goals. I grew up in a loving, close-knit family with hardworking parents who instilled in us the importance of pursuing our aspirations. While they provided every opportunity they could, economic limitations often presented significant obstacles. In that context, every act of support became invaluable. It was through Aldeas Infantiles SOS that I connected with the Maestro Cares Foundation—a connection that would change my life.

Being part of this scholarship program was transformative. It offered hope and the tangible realization that a brighter future was within reach. Today, five years after first daring to dream it, I have completed my degree in public accounting and auditing, thanks to your generous support. I am now preparing to begin a master's program—an achievement I once thought impossible. This scholarship not only eased my family's financial burden but also allowed me to focus entirely on my studies and move forward with purpose. In a community where many young people facing similar economic hardships see illegal migration as their only option, this scholarship was a life-changing gift.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Accounting

With my degree in hand and the prospect of a master's program beginning in 2025, I look to the future with immense gratitude and excitement. My immediate goal is to find a fulfilling career where I can give back—a way to repay the kindness I have received. I would be honored to work with the Maestro Cares Foundation, an organization to which I owe so much. Beyond my professional aspirations, I am driven to support my parents and siblings, empowering them to pursue their own goals without the constraints of financial hardship.

The Maestro Cares Foundation not only helped me realize my dreams but also instilled in me the profound importance of giving back to the community. Now, more than ever, I am ready to dedicate myself to my professional career and contribute to a better world. Your generosity and the impact Maestro Cares has had on my life will forever be in my heart.



Jose Luis Cabrera

Designing Success: From Parsons to Champion and Beyond



Since graduating from Parsons The New School for Design, I've enjoyed a successful career in fashion design, collaborating with renowned brands such as Oscar de la Renta, Marc Jacobs, Michael Kors, Hugo Boss, and New Balance. These experiences have taken me across the United States, Asia, and Europe, enriching my understanding of the fashion industry and shaping me into a well-rounded professional. Currently, I serve as Senior Men's Designer at Champion, leading a team in launching seasonal collections.

The Maestro Cares scholarship has had—and continues to have—a profound impact on my life and professional journey. Beyond enabling me to pursue my dream education, the foundation's networking events have connected me with individuals who have played pivotal roles in advancing my career. My ultimate goal has always been to launch my own brand. Last year, at a Maestro Cares and Diageo event, I shared my story about the foundation's influence on my life. This led to a chance meeting with an investor, and together, we are now developing an activewear brand slated to launch in Spring 2025.

Degree:

Bachelor of Fashion Design

I'm also deeply committed to supporting children in my community by providing school supplies and mentorship. Through my future brand, I plan to give back by donating to Maestro Cares and supporting local children in achieving their higher education dreams. I firmly believe that education is the most powerful tool for positive change in the world, and I'm dedicated to contributing to this change by supporting underserved communities and young people like me who face economic challenges that limit their opportunities.



Ethnicity

Dominican Republic

University

Parsons School of Design
New York, NY

Graduation Date

May 2019

Itzel Ceja

Redefining Representation: A Journey of Ambition and Impact



My name is Itzel, and I'm incredibly proud to be among the 7% of registered nurses in the United States who identify as Latina. It's a true honor to use my heritage, language, and lived experiences to bridge the gap between the Latino community and accessible healthcare. I'm thrilled to share that I passed my national exam in April and began my first role as a registered nurse this past July. The journey has presented its challenges, and I know there's much to learn, but I'm eager to grow and refine my skills. My goal is to gain valuable experience over the next few years and then pursue a master's degree in nursing, with the ultimate dream of opening my own family and mobile practice.

I would define my life's purpose as pushing boundaries and redefining Latino representation. This means not only achieving my goals in healthcare but also pursuing my passions outside of it, including modeling and acting, where I'm equally ambitious. I'm determined to break barriers and set new standards in every field I enter, ensuring that my journey reflects my commitment to visibility and positive impact.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

As a leader within the Latino community, I believe dreaming big is essential. I know that many Latino/a individuals across generations are watching, and if I can inspire even one person to pursue their childhood dreams, I'll consider my work a success.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Maestro Cares Foundation. Without their scholarship program, completing my education would have remained a distant dream. They made it possible for me to become a nurse, to focus on my passions, and to inspire future generations. What could have been a prolonged struggle became a successful journey, thanks to their invaluable support. Thank you, Maestro Cares Foundation.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Mercy College of Health Sciences
Des Moines, IA

Graduation Date

December 2023

Cesar Chiguil

From Financial Hardship to Corporate Success: How Maestro Cares Empowered My Journey



From a young age, I dreamed of attending college and building a successful career, inspired by my parents' tireless efforts to make my aspirations a reality. Neither of them had the opportunity to pursue higher education, so I saw this as my chance to break barriers for our family. However, during my sophomore year, I faced a significant challenge. Despite receiving several scholarships and grants, a substantial tuition balance created a heavy financial burden for my parents and me. The possibility of not being able to register for classes loomed, and it was heartbreaking to see my parents struggle to find a solution. Thankfully, they managed to help me continue my undergraduate journey.

Recognizing the need for a more sustainable solution, I took action. I took on a job, working 20-25 hours a week while balancing my responsibilities as a full-time student and college athlete. I also began searching for additional scholarships, which led me to the Maestro Cares Foundation. After a rigorous application process, I was welcomed into your community, receiving much-needed support during a critical time. Your assistance alleviated a significant amount of stress and brought peace of mind to my family. Receiving the scholarship had a transformative impact, allowing me to focus on my studies rather than constant financial worries.

Degree:

Bachelor in Business Administration

Maestro Cares embodies a powerful mission: to uplift individuals like me who are determined to break barriers and create positive change for future generations.

Since joining the Foundation, I've proudly graduated as a first-generation college student. I also secured my first internship during my undergraduate studies, which led to a full-time job offer. I've now embarked on my career in corporate America with a software company in Atlanta, GA. My goal is to make an impact in this innovative industry, but my ultimate mission is to give back to my community by mentoring and inspiring the next generation of Latino talent. I aspire to help others transform their lives by creating opportunities that can make a difference for them and their families. I am deeply grateful to the Maestro Cares Foundation for equipping me with the tools to advance my career. This is not a farewell; I look forward to remaining involved with the Foundation and inspiring future generations of Latino success. Thank you!



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Oglethorpe University

Brookhaven, GA

Graduation Date

May 2024

Mabel Andrea Mendieta

From Dreams to Degrees: A Story of Gratitude and Opportunity



I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the Maestro Cares Foundation for your generous support and unwavering commitment to my education. Thanks to your belief in me, I was able to fulfill my dream of attending university and earning a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Journalism. Your assistance not only provided access to resources and opportunities that would have otherwise been beyond my reach but also instilled in me the confidence and motivation to persevere through challenges.

I am now a college graduate eager to begin my career and find the perfect fit in the professional world. I am excited to discover a role where I can apply my knowledge and continue growing both personally and professionally.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Communication & Journalism

I believe that gratitude is not just a sentiment but a call to action. I am committed to paying forward this extraordinary generosity by helping others achieve their own goals and contributing to a more just and equitable world.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Maestro Cares Foundation for believing in my potential and empowering me to pursue my dreams.



Crystal Orozco

Empowered Through Education: A Journey of Growth and Giving Back



I am deeply grateful to the Maestro Cares Foundation for your generous scholarship, which enabled me to complete my Master of Executive Multimedia Design at UNITEC. This achievement has made a significant difference in my professional development. The skills and knowledge I gained have directly enhanced my work as a designer, allowing me to grow and excel in the field I am most passionate about.

Looking to the future, I plan to continue my professional development, including completing my English language studies. I am also incredibly excited by the opportunity to mentor and support more young women in achieving their own goals.

Degree:

Master of Arts in Multimedia Design

I am currently mentoring a young woman from a shelter who is studying graphic design. This experience has inspired me to expand my efforts and help more young people overcome challenges and discover their paths, just as I was supported. My goal is to share the knowledge and experience I have gained and give back in every way I can.

Thank you so much for your invaluable support.



William Recalde

A Story of Resilience: Finding Home and Purpose at Aldeas Infantiles SOS



I lost my mother when I was five and my father when I was seventeen—two deeply difficult moments that profoundly changed my life from a young age. After my parents' passing, I found a home at Aldeas Infantiles SOS in Quito. For thirteen years, until I reached adulthood, Aldeas provided the support, love, and sense of family I so desperately needed. It became my true home, a place I will always cherish.

During my time at Aldeas, I received not only shelter and a loving family but also incredible opportunities for personal and professional growth. Thanks to their support, I was able to continue my education, grow in an environment of respect and strong values, and build a solid foundation that allows me to thrive today as a communications professional.

However, my path has not been without further hardship. A few months ago, I lost my brother, a loss that has deeply affected me. His absence leaves a profound void in my life, impacting my spirit and prompting deep reflection on the fragility of life and the importance of cherishing every moment.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Communications

Despite these challenges, I continue to strive for strength and honor the dreams that my brother and I shared. Every day, I focus on fulfilling my responsibilities, going to work, and continuing my studies, knowing that my parents and brother would want me to keep moving forward. Today, more than ever, I am determined to live by the values I learned at Aldeas Infantiles and build a future where I can help others, just as I was helped.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to Maestro Cares for the support I received during my university studies. This scholarship allowed me to focus on my communications degree and pursue my professional goals without the overwhelming financial barriers that would have made my journey even more difficult. I am currently working at an audiovisual production company, putting my knowledge and skills into practice. It is an honor to be a Maestro Cares Scholar and contribute to inspiring future scholarship recipients.



Ethnicity

Ecuador

University

Universidad Politécnica Salesiana

Quito, Ecuador

Graduation Date

June 2024

Sebastián Vélez

Breaking Barriers in STEM: A First-Generation College Student Pursuing a Ph.D.



I completed my bachelor's degree in computer engineering at the University of Texas at San Antonio in Spring 2023 and subsequently began a doctoral program in computational science, engineering, and mathematics. As an only child and the first in my family to attend college, I have fully immersed myself in learning about my chosen career, both within and beyond the academic curriculum.

In June 2020, my mother was diagnosed with adrenal cancer and underwent surgery, which unfortunately left her unable to work. Since then, I have taken on tutoring positions to help cover my tuition and living expenses.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering

My goal is to become a physician-scientist specializing in oncology and conducting research in machine learning and artificial intelligence for early cancer detection. I also aspire to use my platform to create institutions and programs that assist low-income minority students in navigating the educational system. Ultimately, I hope to inspire more students from underrepresented backgrounds to pursue careers in medicine, thereby increasing minority leadership in healthcare.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

University of Texas

Austin, Tx

Graduation Date

May 2023

Scholarship Program

Current Individual

Program Scholars



Felipe Borjas

A Unique Perspective in Broadcasting: Felipe's Story of Resilience and Vision



Felipe's parents met and married in the United States, but his father was deported to Mexico after overstaying his visa. As a result, Felipe grew up in Texas with his mother and grandmother. In middle school, Felipe was diagnosed with high-functioning autism spectrum disorder, a diagnosis that profoundly impacted his life, both personally and academically. He was subsequently enrolled in a special needs program, which unfortunately made him a target for bullying and discrimination.

Degree:

Bachelor in Communications-Broadcasting

However, these challenges did not deter Felipe from pursuing higher education and achieving his goals. He is determined to build a career in broadcast and film production, driven by his deep fascination with the audiovisual arts—whether in television, music, or film. Felipe recognizes the unique perspective he brings to the industry and is eager to contribute his creative vision.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Lamar University
Beaumont, TX

Expected Graduation Date

June 2027

Michelle Calleros

A Voice for the Vulnerable: Michelle's Mission to Create a Safer World



Michelle's experience transitioning out of the foster care system has fueled her powerful dream: to travel the world and dedicate her life to helping others. She understands that earning a master's degree will provide the leverage and financial stability necessary to realize this vision. While pursuing her Bachelor of Science in International Business Management, Michelle had a transformative opportunity to work closely with foster and adoptive youth. This experience became a form of healing, providing her with the skills and knowledge to offer the support and guidance she herself lacked growing up in foster care.

Degree:

Master in Cybersecurity/IT

Looking to the future, Michelle plans to establish a non-profit organization dedicated to helping older youth transition out of foster care and achieve stability. She also envisions creating a second non-profit focused on locating missing children online who may be victims of trafficking—a critical issue in today's world.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

University of Texas
San Antonio, TX

Expected Graduation Date

May 2025

Maria Camas

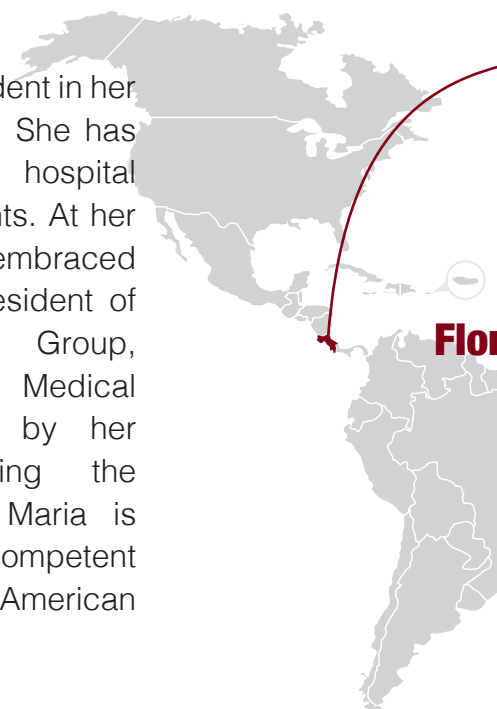
Inspired by Sacrifice: Maria's Path to Providing Culturally Competent Care



Maria, a first-generation medical student born and raised in Miami, Florida, is driven by a deep commitment to serving her community. Her parents, who escaped Nicaragua's socio-political turmoil in the late 1980s, sacrified their own education to build a new life in America. Maria excelled academically, completing her bachelor's degree with a near-perfect GPA in a demanding major. Despite her achievements, her family's modest means prevent them from covering the significant financial costs of medical school.

Degree:
Medicine

Maria's dedication to service is evident in her extensive community involvement. She has served as a medical assistant, hospital volunteer, and mentor to immigrants. At her medical school, she has embraced leadership roles, including co-president of the Internal Medicine Interest Group, president of FIU Rotaract, and Medical Student Ambassador. Inspired by her parents' experiences navigating the challenges of a new country, Maria is determined to provide culturally competent care to immigrants within the American healthcare system.



Ethnicity
Nicaragua

University
Florida International University
Miami, FL

Expected Graduation Date
May 2027

Brenda Castro-Macias

Leading with Purpose: Brenda's Vision for Ethical Business and Community Empowerment



Brenda grew up in Monee, Illinois, a Chicago suburb, in a family of five. As the eldest of three children and a first-generation college student, she feels a strong sense of responsibility to support her siblings, knowing that her parents cannot fully fund their college education.

Brenda is currently pursuing her Bachelor of Science in International Business at Loyola University. Her long-term goal is to earn a joint MBA/JD degree from the University of Chicago, specializing in corporate law. She is driven to promote ethical practices, transparency, and corporate responsibility, ensuring that companies uphold high standards and contribute positively to society.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in International Business

Beyond her professional aspirations, Brenda is deeply committed to giving back to her community through mentorship and support for individuals from underrepresented backgrounds. By providing guidance and creating opportunities, she hopes to break down barriers to success and foster the development of future leaders. Through her legal career and community involvement, Brenda aims to create positive change, contributing to a more equitable society and empowering individuals to reach their full potential.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Loyola University
Chicago, IL

Expected Graduation Date

May 2027

Juan Diego Gamboa

A Life Transformed: Juan Diego's Journey to a Future in Dentistry



Juan Diego comes from humble beginnings and has worked diligently to reach this point in his life. He is deeply grateful for the support he has received. He faced a significant challenge with a poor jaw formation that affected both his speech and daily activities. Seeking help, Juan Diego reached out to Mr. Henry Cárdenas and explained his situation. Mr. Cárdenas was instrumental in helping Juan Diego receive the necessary jaw reconstruction surgery, a procedure that has truly transformed his life.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Dentistry

Passionate about dentistry, Juan Diego is determined to give back to his community in Colombia by providing much-needed dental services. He is deeply motivated by the confidence and support he receives from the Maestro Cares Foundation. Juan Diego wishes to express his sincere gratitude for the foundation's generosity, believing that gratitude is an expression of humility.



Ethnicity

Colombia

University

Universidad Santiago de Cali

Cali, Colombia

Expected Graduation Date

December 2026

Caleb García

Shaping the Future: Caleb's Journey in Politics and Public Service



Caleb is a freshman at university, pursuing a degree in political science while maintaining near-perfect grades. Beyond academics, he is deeply engaged in his community, taking on various volunteer roles that reflect his dedication to service and leadership.

With aspirations of holding public office, Caleb envisions a future where he can directly impact community welfare and extend his commitment to volunteerism on a larger scale. He believes that a balance of logic and compassion will serve as the foundation for his political career, guiding him in making meaningful, ethical decisions.

Degree:

Bachelor of Political Science

His ultimate goal is to represent Texas, first at the state level and eventually as a U.S. representative. Caleb is driven by a mission to create lasting improvements for both present and future generations, advocating for a safer, more educated, and thriving society.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Southern Methodist University

University Park, TX

Expected Graduation Date

May 2026

Carolyn Henzi

Empowering Communities: Carolyn's Mission in Outreach and Advocacy



Carolyn, a Chilean scholar with a passion for education and community empowerment, has built an impressive academic and professional trajectory. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy from Universidad de Playa Ancha in Chile and later pursued a Master of Science in Agricultural and Extension Education with a Dual Title in Comparative and International Education at Penn State. Currently, she is completing a Ph.D. in Education, Development, and Community Engagement, specializing in Community Outreach and Leadership.

Now living in Buffalo, NY, with her husband and baby, Carolyn is driven by a deep commitment to advocacy and social impact. She aspires to work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote the well-being and education of marginalized communities.

Degree:

Doctorate in Education, Development and Community Engagement

She believes that her Ph.D. will equip her with the expertise and leadership skills necessary to secure her dream role in organizations such as the United Nations, UNESCO, the World Bank, or other influential NGOs at national and international levels.

Beyond NGO work, Carolyn is also interested in academic outreach roles, where she can develop and lead community-based programs focused on mental health, inclusion, diversity, and leadership. Through her work, she aims to foster meaningful change and empower individuals to build stronger, more inclusive societies.



Ethnicity

Chile

University

Penn State University

Smyrna, GA

Expected Graduation Date

December 2024

Jacqueline Kelley

Fostering Young Minds: Jacqueline's Mission for Literacy Equity



Jacqueline is deeply passionate about children's literacy, dedicating her career to creating lasting impacts on future generations of students. Raised by hardworking parents in a family of six siblings, she found her greatest inspiration in her mother—an educator who instilled in her the transformative power of education.

With a strong commitment to literacy equity, Jacqueline aspires to work in Title One schools, where she will focus on advancing children's literacy and collaborating with school districts to develop effective, research-based reading curricula. She firmly believes that literacy is not just a fundamental skill but a human right—one that shapes every student's future and unlocks opportunities for lifelong success.

Degree:

Master of Education Leadership, Organizations, and Entrepreneurship

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Through her background in education, Jacqueline is determined to ensure that all students, regardless of their circumstances, have equitable access to quality literacy instruction. By empowering young readers, she hopes to strengthen educational outcomes and drive meaningful change within her community.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Harvard Graduate School of Education

Cambridge, MA

Expected Graduation Date

May 2025

Sarah Kubasek

From Homelessness to Advocacy: Sarah's Journey to Law and Service



Experiencing homelessness during her senior year of high school due to financial hardship and family challenges was a defining moment in Sarah's life—one that shaped her college journey and deepened her resolve to succeed. Despite the immense adversity, she remained steadfast in her ambition to pursue higher education and become a lawyer. Moving into her dorm marked more than just the start of college; it was the first time in a year that she had slept in a bed after living in a car.

Sarah's long-term goals include excelling in law school, graduating debt-free, and dedicating her career to service through the legal profession.

Degree:

Bachelor of Political Science

She aspires to support the Latino community by specializing in intellectual property litigation and contract law, ensuring that young entrepreneurs have the legal protection they need to safeguard their innovations.

Beyond her legal aspirations, Sarah's experience with homelessness ignited a passion for creating more equitable and accessible solutions for displaced individuals. She is committed to using her platform to advocate for systemic change while inspiring other students who face similar challenges. Through resilience and dedication, she is determined to turn her struggles into a force for positive impact.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

University of California
Davis, CA

Expected Graduation Date

May 2028

Camila Maita

Breaking Barriers: Camila's Mission to Improve Autism Diagnostics



Camila is a first-generation student whose passion for pediatric neuropsychology is deeply rooted in her personal experience. Her parents immigrated from Peru just two years before she was born, instilling in her a strong sense of perseverance and ambition. However, it was her brother's early autism diagnosis that truly shaped her career aspirations. Witnessing the profound impact that proper diagnosis and support had on his life inspired her dedication to this field.

Camila's goal is to pursue a career in clinical psychology with a specialization in pediatric neuropsychology, focusing on autism spectrum disorders.

Degree:

Bachelor of Psychology & Brain Sciences

She is committed to making autism diagnostics more accessible, recognizing that many families face significant barriers, including lengthy waiting periods and the financial challenges of private evaluations.

Her ultimate ambition is to join Children's National Hospital in Washington, D.C., where she hopes to conduct diagnostic assessments and advocate for early intervention. Beyond her clinical work, Camila strives to serve as a role model for Latinas and women in psychology, paving the way for greater representation and impact in the field.



Ethnicity

Peru

University

Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

Expected Graduation Date

May 2028

Vanesa Malagón Mondragón

Powering the Future of Electrical Engineering and Construction



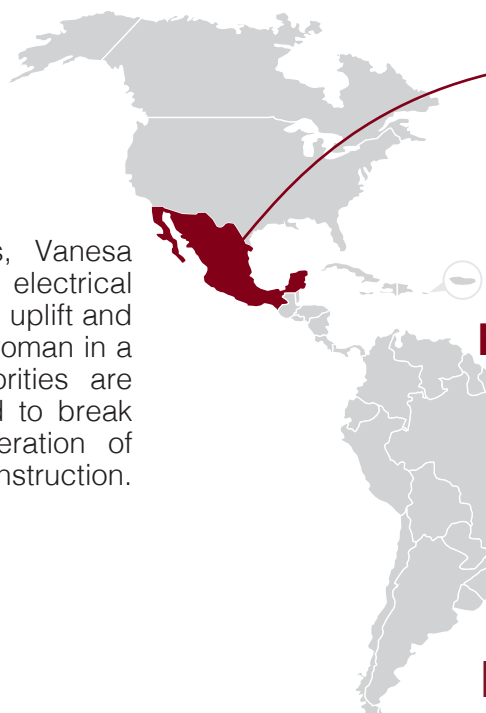
Vanesa is a first-generation immigrant student and a trailblazer in her family, becoming the first to graduate high school and earn a bachelor's degree. Raised in a family of five with her father as the sole financial provider, she understands the value of perseverance and hard work.

With a clear vision for her future, Vanesa aspires to become an electrical project manager, a role that requires both engineering expertise and construction management skills. She has already achieved a major milestone by earning her bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and is now taking the next step by pursuing a master's degree in construction management. With these two qualifications, she aims to be well-prepared to lead projects and excel in the construction industry.

Degree:

Master of Science in Construction Management

Beyond her personal career goals, Vanesa dreams of founding her own electrical construction company, where she can uplift and support the Latino community. As a woman in a field where both women and minorities are underrepresented, she is determined to break barriers and inspire the next generation of diverse leaders in engineering and construction.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Louisiana State University
Huntsville, AL

Expected Graduation Date

December 2025

Laura Matias Alvarado

Paving the Way: Laura's Inspiring Journey from Casa Hogar Alegría to Professional Success



Laura is a pioneering success story from the Casa Hogar Alegría (CHA) project in Toluca. Earning a university degree opened doors to a professional career, and through dedicated hard work, she has achieved significant milestones. Laura's journey demonstrates the power of commitment and perseverance, making her a role model not only for the girls at CHA but also for her own four-year-old daughter.

Driven by a desire for continuous growth as both an intellectual and professional leader, Laura is currently pursuing an MBA. She works as a Purchasing Manager at Renault and aims to continue advancing within her department.

Degree:

Master of Business Administration

Looking ahead to 2025, Laura has set three ambitious goals: completing her MBA while continuing her English language studies; securing a more impactful and rewarding professional position; and beginning the process of purchasing materials and building her new home. Each of these goals represents a crucial step on her path toward further personal and professional fulfillment.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Universidad Tecnológica de México

Toluca, México

Expected Graduation Date

May 2025

Jonathan Martinez-Lopez

Inspired by Experience: Jonathan's Drive to Provide Quality Care for All



Jonathan's father was deported to Mexico when he was only three years old, and he has had no contact with him since. He grew up in a three-bedroom trailer with his mother, grandparents, and uncles, at one point sharing the small space with fifteen people. Although his mother has since remarried, the family's financial situation has remained unstable. Jonathan is the first in his family to attend college and has set his sights on becoming a physician—a goal inspired by his newfound passion for chemistry during his undergraduate studies.

Degree:
Bachelor of Chemistry

While his love for chemistry blossomed in college, Jonathan's ultimate ambition is to practice medicine. He has witnessed firsthand the positive impact of preventative care and is eager to contribute to his community in this way. He also recognizes the significant underrepresentation of Latinos in the medical field, a disparity that has led many patients, including members of his own family, to experience inadequate care. This realization further fuels his commitment to providing quality healthcare for all.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Emory University
Atlanta, GA

Expected Graduation Date

June 2027

Jan Mendez Santiago

Bridging the Gap: Jan's Path to Becoming a Speech Therapist in Puerto Rico

Jan lives with his mother, stepfather, and sister. His parents' backgrounds in teaching and truck driving instilled in him a deep motivation to help others. This passion has shaped his academic and professional choices, and his dedication to caring for children stems from the significant unmet needs he has witnessed firsthand.



Degree:

Doctor of Medicine: Biomedical Sciences & Speech and Language Therapist

Jan aims to become a speech therapist to address the critical gap in the diagnosis and treatment of cognitive development disorders in Puerto Rico. He has personally observed the struggles faced by many misdiagnosed children, both in school and in their personal lives, and he is determined to be an agent of positive change for these children and their families.



Emely Moreno

A Future of Healing: Emely's Path to Child Psychiatry



Emely, a first-generation college student of Mexican descent, hails from Bridgeview, Illinois. She is currently a freshman at the University of Illinois-Chicago, majoring in biology and minoring in public health and Spanish. Driven by a passion for medicine and science, Emely aspires to become a physician, specifically a child psychiatrist. She plans to graduate with honors from UIC and gain acceptance into medical school.

Degree:
Bachelor of Biology

Emely is committed to a career in healthcare where she can ensure that every patient receives compassionate and understanding care. She is also determined to address the disparities in healthcare access and combat the mental health stigmas that disproportionately affect the Latino community.



Xitlali Mujica

A Champion for Education: Xitlali's Journey from Adversity to Advocacy



Xitlali comes from a low-income immigrant family. After the tragic loss of her brother, her mother left the household, leaving Xitlali to raise her younger brother while simultaneously working to support their family. Despite these immense challenges, Xitlali remained dedicated to her education, balancing part-time jobs and relying on the support of scholarships, including the Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship. Demonstrating exceptional academic performance and a strong commitment to community service, Xitlali became part of the first cohort of individual Maestro Cares Scholars and successfully graduated in Spring 2024.

Degree:

Masters of Arts in Teaching: English as a Second language

With continued support from Maestro Cares, Xitlali plans to pursue a PhD in educational leadership and ultimately lead an educational non-profit organization. This organization will focus on supporting first-generation children and students from underserved backgrounds. Her ultimate goal is to promote student-centered policies and create equitable educational opportunities for all.



Yoselyn Owalabi

A Voice for Justice: Yoselyn's Path to Becoming a Civil Rights Attorney



Yoselyn is the only child in a single-mother household in Houston, Texas, where her grandparents recently joined the family and assumed caregiver roles. Despite embracing her Afro-Latina heritage, Yoselyn often felt her identity questioned. Encounters with skepticism and ignorance from others who struggled to understand her Caribbean dialect and unique ethnic features led her to doubt herself and become hesitant to share her culture. However, caring for her grandparents provided a powerful source of inspiration. Witnessing their resilience as immigrants seeking a better future for their family motivated Yoselyn to excel academically and honor their sacrifices.

Degree:

Bachelor of Legal Communication

Yoselyn aspires to become an attorney, joining the less than 5% of Afro-Latina lawyers in the United States, with a focus on civil rights. She is driven to help those who fall victim to discrimination. Her legal work will involve analyzing and working to reduce harsh sentences for minor offenses, advocating for the release of wrongfully convicted individuals, and educating minority groups about their rights.



Ethnicity

Cuba & Dominican Republic

University

Howard University
Washington, D.C.

Expected Graduation Date

May 2026

Julianna Maribel Portilla

A Healer's Heart: Julianna's Mission to Serve Rural Latino Communities



Julianna, who immigrated to the United States from Colombia with her parents, reflects on how her father's passing intensified her passion for medicine. She believes that hearing a healthcare professional speak one's native language can provide immense comfort and strength, especially during vulnerable times. Julianna aims to become a rural physician, addressing a significant need within the Latino community. While Latinos/as make up 18.7% of the U.S. population, Latinas represent only 2.4% of U.S. physicians. The number of Spanish-speaking physicians is even smaller, creating a critical language barrier for many patients. Julianna emphasizes that patients deserve a physician who understands their life experiences and can communicate with them comfortably in their own language.

Degree:

Bachelor of Biological Sciences / Pre - Dental

Julianna is determined to serve the Latino community in Mississippi, where healthcare access is particularly limited. She plans to use her bilingual skills and personal experiences to provide compassionate, quality care to patients facing language barriers, racial discrimination, and other challenges. Her ultimate dream is to open a medical facility that houses a diverse range of doctors and specialists, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where every patient feels accepted and seen.



Isabella Reyes Rosero

Serving with Purpose: Isabella's Vision for Accessible Veterinary Care



Isabella, a young woman from Cali, Colombia, recently completed her technical degree as a veterinary assistant, solidifying her love for animals and her passion for this career path. She plans to continue her studies, specializing in either animal dermatology or exotic animal medicine, with the ultimate goal of owning her own veterinary clinic. Isabella believes that all animals deserve access to fair and honest medical care, regardless of their owners' financial resources. To achieve this, she envisions forming partnerships with companies and foundations to offer services at accessible prices.

Degree:

Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Husbandry

Since 2013, Isabella has been an active member of the Scout Association of Colombia, currently belonging to Group 823, "Jaguares." Through this organization, she has demonstrated a strong commitment to community service, volunteering in nursing homes, collecting Christmas gifts for underprivileged children, and coordinating food drives for families in need. Isabella's greatest sources of support and encouragement in pursuing her dreams have always been her mother and grandmother. She plans to continue honoring their support by paving her own path and dedicating her life to serving those in need, both animal and human.



Enmanuel Rodríguez Echavarría

From Orphanage to University: Enmanuel's Journey to Becoming an Accountant



Enmanuel is 22 years old. His mother passed away shorlty after his birth, and he never knew his father, who passed away long before Enmanuel was born. As a result, he grew up in an orphanage, where he maintained a strong academic record through high school. It was at the orphanage that Enmanuel developed the dreams and goals he continues to pursue today.

Degree:

Bachelor of Accounting

Enmanuel is currently attending university, focused on completing his bachelor's degree in accounting. Upon graduation, he plans to either begin working as an accountant or launch his own accounting business. He also harbors a deep interest in cinema and hopes to study filmmaking in the future. Enmanuel expresses his sincere gratitude to the Maestro Cares Foundation for helping him achieve his goals.



Ethnicity

Dominican Republic

University

Universidad Dominicana O&M

Santo Domingo, Rep. Dom.

Expected Graduation Date

May 2026

Ruth Rodríguez

A Voice for Families: Ruth's Mission for Equitable Immigration Policy



Ruth is from Torrance, California. Growing up in a low-income, mixed-status family, she personally experienced the pain and uncertainty her undocumented parents faced—a burden shared by her and her siblings. For families like hers, U.S. citizenship represents more than just legal status; it's a lifeline, ensuring family unity. Witnessing the Immigration Rights Protests of 2006 at the young age of five profoundly shaped Ruth's understanding of the precariousness that can overshadow life in her own birthplace, where the promise of opportunity is often juxtaposed with the threat of family separation. This early experience ignited her passion for public service and informs her pursuit of a master's degree in public policy.

Degree:

Master of Public Policy

Ruth aims to create equitable and humane public policies through active community engagement. She plans to advocate tirelessly for mixed-status families and work towards meaningful immigration reform. Her goal is to become a policymaker in California, influencing public policy to build a more just and secure future for generations of families to come.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

University of California
Berkeley, CA

Expected Graduation Date

May 2026

Edwin Tovar

Built on Resilience: Edwin's Path to Becoming a Community-Focused Architect



Edwin is from Houston, Texas, the youngest of four siblings and the first in his family to attend a four-year university. His parents, Mexican immigrants, came to the United States seeking greater opportunities. His father found work in the pipeline industry, but when Edwin was just two years old, an accident occurred: a pipe fell on his father's leg, resulting in a disability. This event drastically impacted the family's finances, creating significant new challenges. Despite these hardships, Edwin nurtured his dream of becoming an architect and recognized his potential for a brighter future. Understanding that his journey would be different due to these circumstances only strengthened his resolve to persevere. At the age of 16, he began working to support his family and contribute to his education.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Architecture

Receiving the Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship has been transformative, allowing Edwin to excel academically and grow as an individual. To fund his education, he has balanced work, offering his photography skills and services, and applying for financial aid and other scholarships. To minimize expenses, Edwin has continued to live at home with his parents and commute to school. Now, on the verge of graduation, Edwin's journey stands as a powerful testament to resilience and perseverance as he prepares to enter the field of architecture. He aims to make a positive impact on society by creating innovative and sustainable designs that address the needs of communities, particularly underserved populations. His experiences have instilled in him a deep desire to give back and create spaces that uplift and inspire others.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

University of Houston
Dalton, TX

Expected Graduation Date

May 2026

Jorge Andrés Urquijo

A Future of Healing: Jorge Andrés's Mission to Serve Through Medicine



Jorge Andrés, from Bogotá, Colombia, has dreamed of studying medicine his entire life. However, due to limited financial resources, this dream seemed almost impossible for many years, remaining dormant and awaiting the right opportunity.

Five years ago, his life took a dramatic turn when he discovered the Maestro Cares Foundation. Since then, everything has changed for him and his family. Maestro Cares not only provided him with the opportunity to pursue his medical studies but also rekindled his hope. He expresses immense joy in waking up each morning and living his dream. With great pride, he can say that he is among the top students in his field, having learned that even the most challenging dreams can become reality with belief and perseverance.

Degree:
Doctor of Medicine

As a future doctor, Jorge Andrés aims to save lives and make a meaningful impact on society by providing compassionate care to those in need. He extends his deepest gratitude to everyone who supports the Maestro Cares Foundation. Thanks to the foundation's vision, his life has been transformed in ways he never imagined. Maestro Cares not only enabled him to study but also empowered him to live his dream and shape a brighter future.



Daphne Uribe

A Healer on the Border: Daphne's Mission to Address Health Disparities



Daphne was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley, a region along the U.S.-Mexico border. Growing up, she witnessed firsthand the pervasive health challenges facing her community, including diabetes, hypertension, and obesity. From a young age, she observed her family members managing these conditions, meticulously adhering to medication schedules and tracking their health metrics. These experiences ignited Daphne's desire to contribute to the well-being of her border community and honor the efforts of those who nurtured, healed, and educated her.

Degree:

MD/Master of Public Health

Daphne is determined to alleviate the health disparities prevalent in her community. By leveraging her MD/MPH education, she plans to provide direct health services, conduct epidemiological studies, and collaborate with public health programs to develop accessible and effective health interventions.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

University of Texas Health Science Center
Houston, TX

Expected Graduation Date

May 2028

Scholarship Program

Current University

Program Scholars



Our Agreements



We have established 19 partnerships in Latin America and the United States, currently supporting a total of 72 students throught these agreements.

Argentina
- Universidad Austral (5)

Chile
- Universidad del Desarrollo (2)

Colombia
- Fundación Jeison Aristizábal (6)
- Universidad EIA (4)
- Universidad ICESI (4)
- Jaime Benitez Tobón Foundation (2)

Costa Rica
- UCIMED - Universidad Ciencias Médicas (3)*

Ecuador
- Universidad Politécnica Salesiana (2)
- Pontificia Universidad Católica (2)*

El Salvador
- Universidad Evangelica El Salvador (6)*

Guatemala
- Universidad del Istmo (2)

Peru
- UTEC - Universidad de Ingeniería y Tecnología (2)

Puerto Rico
- Universidad de Puerto Rico en Mayagüez (6)
- Universidad de Puerto Rico en Ponce (8)

United States
- CUNY School of Medicine (4)
- Doral College (4)
- Northeastern Illinois University (3)
- University of California Merced (4)
- University of Illinois Chicago (3)

*Scholarship recipients are still being selected by university

Sofía Yanet Augusto

A Nurse with a Mission: Sofía's Journey from Patient to Healer



Sofía is a first-year nursing student and the first in her family to graduate from university. Her decision to pursue nursing stemmed from a personal experience: a hospital stay following a gallstones diagnosis. During this time, she received support from both nurses and doctors, but also observed instances where care could have been better managed. This experience motivated her to dedicate herself to the nursing profession, determined to provide people with the care and respect they deserve, regardless of their health or financial circumstances. Sofía emphasizes that without scholarship support, pursuing her university studies would not have been possible. Despite facing underestimation due to her gender and physical appearance, these experiences have only fueled her determination to achieve her goals.

Degree:

Bachelor of Nursing

Sofía is pursuing a bachelor's degree in nursing with the goal of specializing in neonatology and oncology. She aspires to provide comprehensive, quality care and support to patients, promoting their recovery and helping them regain their autonomy. Her immediate goal is to secure a position at the Austral University Hospital, where she hopes to work with newborns and patients with oncological diseases. Ultimately, Sofía intends to share her knowledge and experience through teaching, imparting the personal vision and motivation that drove her to achieve her own aspirations.



María Milagros Ayala

Building Futures: Empowering Young Paraguayans Through Nursing



María is a first-generation student whose mother, residing in Argentina, encouraged her to leave their home country in search of greater educational opportunities. Her primary source of inspiration is her grandparents, who provided unconditional love and support throughout her childhood and adolescence. Though separated by distance during her studies, they have consistently encouraged her focus on the health field, motivating her to pursue a career in nursing. María also aspires to serve as a role model for other young Paraguayans who, like her, face limited opportunities in their native country.

Degree:

Bachelor of Nursing

María's educational goal is to specialize in neonatal and adult nursing, focusing on the care of infants and the elderly—two particularly vulnerable populations. She is driven by the desire to help a wide range of people, recognizing that access to healthcare can be challenging, often involving lengthy wait times. María notes that she has faced underestimation due to her gender and ethnicity, experiences that have only strengthened her resolve to achieve her goals.

María's objective is to secure a position in a public hospital where she can perform diagnostic assessments for all types of patients, regardless of their access to resources. This commitment to equitable access reflects María's deep understanding of the challenges faced by underserved communities.



Ethnicity

Paraguay

University

Universidad Austral

Pilar, Argentina

Expected Graduation Date

October 2029

Anita Giorgio

Nourishing Lives: Anita's Path to a Career in Nutrition



Anita, a first-year nutrition student, hails from San Antonio de Areco, Argentina. She comes from a humble and hardworking family who instilled in her the importance of pursuing her dreams. As the first in her family to pursue higher education and a professional career, Anita is determined to demonstrate that financial constraints are not insurmountable barriers to achieving one's aspirations—with dedication and effort, any goal is within reach. Her educational objective is to specialize in renal nutrition, a field she believes is fundamental to improving the quality of life for many, especially the most vulnerable members of society.

Degree:

Bachelor of Nutrition

Anita is committed to supporting her community through her words and actions, conveying confidence and hope to those who may have lost it. She is also eager to develop her skills in research, where she can explore her natural curiosity and contribute to finding solutions that improve health outcomes.



Angelina Olivia

Empowering Through Empathy: Angelina's Path to a Career in Psychology



Angelina is a second-year psychology student and the first in her family to pursue a college degree. Her parents have worked tirelessly to provide her with the best possible education and support throughout her university journey. From a young age, Angelina has possessed a natural inclination to listen to and help others; this deep empathy has been her primary motivation in fostering inclusivity and ensuring that no one feels isolated.

Degree:
Bachelor of Psychology

Currently, Angelina's educational goal is to graduate with her degree in psychology. She has developed a strong interest in neuropsychology and eating disorders, among other psychological disciplines, and believes that as she progresses in her studies, she will gain greater clarity about her specific career path. In the meantime, she is committed to continuing her engagement in charitable work long term.



Candela Pilar Yeza

Fueling Potential: Candela's Dedication to Helping Others Thrive



Candela is a first-year nutrition student. Although her parents did not have the opportunity to pursue higher education, they dedicated themselves to ensuring that she and her sister had every chance to succeed. Witnessing her sister embark on her own career path inspired Candela to pursue her dreams and to fully appreciate the effort and rewards that come with higher learning. She believes that a degree is more than just a means to a job; by choosing a field that genuinely excites you, you unlock your full potential. This belief fuels her dedication and shapes her actions, driving her desire to help others improve their well-being through nutrition.

Degree:
Bachelor of Nutrition

Candela's long-term goal is to graduate and specialize in sports nutrition. She is passionate about assisting people in achieving their health and fitness goals and enhancing their physical performance through proper nutrition. Ultimately, she envisions contributing to a world where everyone can enjoy conscious eating habits and a healthy, fulfilling life.



Nicolas Arancibia Rocha

Healing Through Movement: Nicolas's Mission to Help Children Thrive Through Sports



Nicolas is a second-year kinesiology student who lives with his mother and sister. His parents' separation has created a challenging relationship with his father. A dedicated athlete, Nicolas trains most of the week, finding motivation and focus in his physical pursuits. He hopes that after completing his degree, he can further his studies, specializing in the application of kinesiology to sports performance and rehabilitation.

Degree:
Bachelor of Kinesiology

Nicolas aspires to research and develop innovative treatments and procedures that accelerate and enhance patient rehabilitation, particularly for athletes. His passion for helping children aligns perfectly with Maestro Cares Foundation's goals, and he believes that rehabilitation can be a powerful tool for assisting children who have experienced setbacks. He envisions not only helping children recover but also fostering a lifelong love of sports.



Ethnicity
Chile

University
Universidad del Desarrollo
Las Condes, Chile

Expected Graduation Date
December 2027

Sofia Nielsen Arriagada

Driven by Compassion, Guided by Science: Sofia's Vision for Accurate Diagnoses



Sofia is a first-year student in a Medical Technology program. Her parents are originally from Santiago, Chile, and she lives with them and her brother. A close family member's experience with illness sparked her realization of the crucial role early diagnosis plays in effective treatment. This personal experience serves as a powerful source of motivation for her studies. Her immediate educational goal is to complete her Medical Technology degree.

Degree:

Bachelor of Medical Technology

Sofia aims to help people by providing accurate and timely diagnoses, empowering them to pursue appropriate treatment for their illnesses. As a Medical Technology student, her greatest ambition is to use scientific knowledge and advanced technology to assist others, providing them with the precise diagnostic tools they need for a second chance at health.



Ethnicity

Chile

University

Universidad del Desarrollo

Las Condes, Chile

Expected Graduation Date

December 2029

Miguel Alvarez

From Loss to Leadership: Miguel's Path to Engineering and Community Development



Miguel is committed to continuous self-improvement and sharing his skills with others. Since his father's sudden passing in a car accident in 2022, his family has faced significant economic hardship in their efforts to keep him and his sister in school. Despite these challenges, Miguel demonstrated remarkable dedication and resilience, graduating from high school as a top student. Now embarking on his university studies, Miguel's goal is to secure a career where he can contribute to the development of Colombia's infrastructure while recognizing and supporting the local communities involved in these projects.

Degree:

Bachelor of Civil Engineering

Miguel firmly believes that the future belongs to those who dedicate themselves to serving their communities, understanding that education is the key to planting the seeds of hope that will blossom into a better tomorrow.



Ethnicity

Colombia

University

Universidad EIA

Envigado, Colombia

Expected Graduation Date

June 2028

Simon Duarte

From Family Legacy to Medical Innovation: Simon's Path to Impacting Global Health



Simon comes from a family of merchants whose legacy is built on the hard work and perseverance of his grandparents. They migrated from humble rural towns to Barranquilla, Colombia, seeking better opportunities for their children. This family history deeply motivates Simon to excel academically, honoring their sacrifices by pursuing his education and striving for future success. His passion for biomedical engineering was solidified when his father received a cancer diagnosis, sparking his interest in the medical technology used in treatment. During his frequent hospital visits, Simon witnessed the struggles of other patients, further inspiring him to pursue a career dedicated to improving their lives.

Degree:

Bachelor of Biomedical Engineering

Simon currently dedicates himself to advancing biomedical engineering through research and development. His ultimate goal is to create innovative medical devices and treatments that significantly enhance the quality of life for patients facing serious health challenges. He envisions leading projects that bridge the gap between cutting-edge technology and accessible healthcare, ensuring that advancements in medical science benefit even the most vulnerable populations. His lifelong mission is to alleviate suffering and bring hope to those enduring the hardships of illness, making a lasting impact on global health. Simon is committed to dedicating each day to improving humanity through the power of science and technology.



Valeria Orozco

Protecting Our Planet: Valeria's Vision for Sustainable Business Practices



From a young age, Valeria grew up surrounded by nature, fostering a deep connection to the environment that has guided her educational pursuits. Her parents have been relentless in their support, and they are thrilled that she has begun her studies at EIA University. Valeria's primary goal is to introduce innovative methods to large companies, improving their operational efficiency while minimizing their environmental impact. She also hopes to reach remote communities where access to information about environmental stewardship is limited, working to improve the quality of life for the people who live there.

Degree:

Bachelor of Environmental Engineering

Valeria believes that raising awareness about the environmental consequences of even small actions is crucial. She emphasizes the importance of developing empathy for the ecosystem and recognizing its vital role in sustaining human life. Her ultimate aspiration is to transform current practices to build a healthier, more balanced, and equitable society.



Juan Pablo Restrepo

From Colombia to the World: Juan Pablo's Mission to Create Opportunities and Inspire Change



Juan Pablo is a first-generation college student whose greatest source of inspiration is his family. Their unconditional support and encouragement fuel his pursuit of his goals and dreams. Currently working towards his Bachelor of Administrative Engineering, Juan Pablo is determined to make a positive impact on his community, both locally and globally. He is particularly interested in contributing to research on new renewable energy sources, the responsible management of natural resources, and sustainable development initiatives. Recognizing the prevalence of corruption in the allocation of educational funds in Colombia, he also aims to establish his own foundation to help underprivileged individuals access higher education.

Degree:

Bachelor of Administrative Engineering

Juan Pablo is passionate about providing opportunities for people with limited financial resources to pursue their education, empowering them to demonstrate their talent and dedication to learning. In addition to his focus on engineering and education, Juan Pablo also has a strong interest in creative design, and his personal passion project is to develop a popular clothing brand with a reach spanning all of Latin America.



Ethnicity

Colombia

University

Universidad EIA

Envigado, Colombia

Expected Graduation Date

June 2028

Jhon Fernando Castillo

A Future of Impact: Jhon's Journey from Adversity to Business and Philanthropy



Jhon, from Colombia, is the youngest of four siblings and the first in his family to attend college. His mother worked as a domestic employee to provide for her children, and she has been his greatest source of motivation. He dreams of providing her with a better quality of life as a way of expressing his deep gratitude for her tireless efforts and sacrifices. Jhon's academic goals include completing a master's degree in business with a specialization in finance, a field that has held his interest throughout his life. His immediate professional objective is to secure a position in an international company such as Samsung, where he is eager to contribute to a global environment.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

Looking to the future, Jhon's ultimate aspiration is to establish or become part of a foundation dedicated to supporting children and adolescents who have experienced psychological and physical abuse—a hardship he personally endured. He recognizes that the support he received during this difficult time was instrumental in shaping who he is today. Jhon believes that having clear goals helps one discern what propels them forward and what hinders their progress. He acknowledges that without this focused mindset, he likely would not have had the opportunity to pursue higher education.



Ana Sofía Piedrahita

A Champion for Justice: Ana Sofía's Vision for Transforming Colombian Law



Ana Sofía is among the first generation of students benefiting from the Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship at ICESI University. Born in Palmira, Colombia, her primary motivation is rooted in the love and admiration she holds for her mother.

Ana Sofía's long-term objectives include specializing in criminal law and beginning her career as a litigator, focusing on helping those most in need. Ultimately, she aspires to advance in her legal career and eventually serve as Colombia's Attorney General. In this role, she hopes to transform her country's justice system and contribute to the greater recognition and protection of human rights within society.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Law

Ana Sofía believes that while some pursue law for personal gain, her motivation stems from a desire to transform lives and families and restore social order. She is committed to contributing to the creation of a more just and equitable society, envisioning a country where all children can grow up with equal opportunities.



Ethnicity

Colombia

University

Universidad ICESI

Cali, Colombia

Expected Graduation Date

May 2027

Kenyi Jeday Roldan

A Symphony of Dreams: Kenyi's Passion to Inspire Through Music



From a young age, Kenyi has felt a deep connection to music, carrying it in his heart. While his parents are professional dancers, Kenyi chose a different artistic path, becoming a talented young musician. He finds joy in playing the piano, sharing his music, and bringing enjoyment to others. His parents' support has fueled his aspiration to become a master musician. Playing as an amateur since the age of 13, Kenyi has performed at major events such as the Feria de Cali, Mundial de Salsa, and AjazzGo. Since he was 16, he has also performed with professional orchestras, including La Orquesta La Ley de Hermes Manyoma. Thanks to the Maestro Cares Foundation, he is now realizing his dream of studying and professionalizing his musical skills at ICESI University.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Music

Kenyi has numerous goals, including becoming a versatile professional musician capable of performing and excelling in any musical genre. He also aims to become a renowned producer, creating his own music and producing for other prominent artists. Kenyi is a true agent of change, inspiring others through his own perseverance, and he is determined to impact society and young people through the power of music.

Despite attending a small-town public school within the municipality of Candelaria-Valle and being primarily a self-taught musician with limited economic resources, Kenyi has earned the opportunity to study at ICESI University, one of the leading universities in Cali and Latin America.



Sara Solarte

From Cali to the World: Sara's Vision for Latina Representation in Music Production



Sara is the first musician in her family of four from Cali, Colombia. The opportunity to study music at ICESI University is not only a significant asset for her career but also a departure from the typical path for musicians in Cali, especially violinists like Sara, who are often affiliated with established institutions. The Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship is opening doors for her to explore and project herself internationally, demonstrating that Latina women can thrive in the music industry not only as instrumentalists but also as producers. Her long-term goal is to specialize in sound engineering, encompassing areas such as live sound and acoustic engineering. As a woman in a male-dominated field, Sara aims to ensure that her voice and presence are reflected in everything she produces, arranges, performs, and teaches. She is committed to using her knowledge to mentor young people interested in pursuing music, providing guidance on both professional and personal development.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Music

Sara is deeply dedicated to serving her community. Since a young age, she has shared her musical knowledge with children in Siloé, a marginalized neighborhood in Cali, and she continues to do so. Sara serves as an inspiring example for her community, working tirelessly to uplift and empower others.



Paola Alizaga

Driven by Purpose: Paola's Journey to Empower Others Through Health and Wellness



Paola is currently in the eighth semester of her nutrition program. Due to her financial circumstances, continuing her education would not have been possible without the Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship. She is deeply grateful for this opportunity and excited to continue learning about nutrition-related topics. Despite the challenges she has faced, Paola has always known that her purpose is to help others and care for those in need, ultimately realizing her long-held dream of becoming a doctor. This aspiration, which first took root nine years ago during her high school years, is now within reach.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Nutrition

At this stage in her academic journey, Paola has discovered a profound passion for both clinical and sports nutrition. She envisions a future where she leads her own medical practice, helping as many people as possible, particularly those who are most vulnerable. She looks forward to guiding her patients in achieving their health and wellness goals.



Ethnicity

Costa Rica

University

Universidad de Ciencias Médicas

San Jose, Costa Rica

Expected Graduation Date

December 2025

Alejandra Miranda

From Loss to Resilience: Alejandra's Path to Helping Others Through Physical Therapy



Alejandra was financially dependent on her father, whose sudden passing created significant economic hardship for her family. As he was the primary provider, his abrupt loss exacerbated their financial difficulties. Her uncle has generously provided financial support for both her studies and household expenses. Alejandra is determined to overcome these challenges. This scholarship represents a crucial opportunity, enabling her to continue her university studies and pursue her academic and professional aspirations. Alejandra's primary goal is to graduate as a physical therapist so she can begin working in a field she deeply loves. She has observed that a significant portion of the Costa Rican population lacks access to this essential therapy and is committed to focusing her career on providing for these underserved sectors, contributing to improved quality of life for her patients.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy

Alejandra is also eager to expand her knowledge through specialized training within physical therapy. Currently in her sixth semester, she has demonstrated steadfast commitment to her studies despite the financial obstacles she has faced. During the previous semester, financial constraints limited her to four courses; however, this has not diminished her determination to stay on track. She plans to resume full course loads in the coming semesters to maximize her university experience and receive a comprehensive education.

In addition to her coursework, Alejandra is actively completing university internships, which provide invaluable opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge to practical settings and contribute significantly to her professional development. Alejandra is confident that with the support of this scholarship, she will be able to fully focus on her studies and achieve her goals.



Ethnicity

Costa Rica

University

Universidad de Ciencias Médicas

San Jose, Costa Rica

Expected Graduation Date

December 2025

Jhon Ismael Yunga

Designing Inclusive Communities: John's Vision for Social Urbanism



John is a first-generation college student who supports his parents by working part-time, assisting his father in informal trade. His family, despite facing economic fluctuations, has worked diligently to support both his and his brother's education, serving as his primary source of motivation. Having experienced firsthand the challenges of working in demanding outdoor conditions, John is driven to improve his circumstances through higher education. He aspires to be a role model for the young traders in his community, demonstrating the power of education to create positive change.

John's educational goal is to pursue a degree in architecture with a specialization in urban planning, focusing specifically on social urbanism.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Architecture

He is driven by a deep respect for human dignity and the belief that everyone deserves to be treated with respect and without prejudice. He aims to create environments where children can thrive, with access to quality education and health services. John's professional objective is to secure a position with the Municipality of Cuenca, Ecuador, where he can directly contribute to improving his community.

Living in a rural area far from his university has presented additional challenges for John. Despite facing socioeconomic disadvantages and being underestimated by some, he has consistently demonstrated that neither distance nor financial constraints can hinder his pursuit of academic and professional excellence.



Ethnicity

Ecuador

University

Universidad Politecnica Salesiana

Cuenca, Ecuador

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Escarleth Jamilet Poma

Rooted in Tradition, Driven by Compassion: Escarleth's Mission to Serve Vulnerable Communities



Escarleth comes from an indigenous community in the southern region of Kayambi town. Growing up in a rural environment under the care of her maternal grandparents instilled in her a deep connection to Andean healing practices and the natural world. Her education in rural schools further shaped her perspective on life and knowledge. A personal experience with a family member diagnosed with schizophrenia sparked her interest in psychology, motivating her to explore beyond ancestral knowledge. Being the first in her family to access therapeutic support further solidified her inclination toward this discipline. Through this experience, she recognized the importance of mental health and the distinct differences in its approach between rural and urban areas, deepening her commitment to the field.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Clinical Psychology

Her short-term goal is to earn a bachelor's degree in general psychology, followed by a master's degree in clinical psychology. However, she remains deeply committed to social service, driven by a desire to serve those in greatest need, particularly children, women, and the elderly in vulnerable situations.

Escarleth's long-term vision includes establishing a non-governmental organization dedicated to ensuring a dignified life for people with limited resources or those who have experienced violence. This organization would also actively promote mental and reproductive health in rural communities.



Ethnicity

Ecuador

University

Universidad Politecnica Salesiana

Quito, Ecuador

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Gilmar Fuentes Chavac

Building a Legacy: Gilmar's Path to Civil Engineering and Community Development



Gilmar is an exceptionally talented young man who graduated high school with honors. His father works in construction, and his mother manages the family household. Gilmar will be the first in his family to attend university. Inspired by his father's work, he aspires to become a civil engineer.

After completing his degree, Gilmar plans to contribute to his father's construction company, providing support not only in management but also in overseeing projects. He is committed to working with excellence and a strong sense of responsibility. In addition to his passion for civil engineering, Gilmar also has a keen interest in teaching mathematics, eager to share his knowledge with others.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering

The Maestro Cares Foundation has been instrumental in encouraging him to pursue his life goals, and Gilmar expresses his sincere gratitude for the scholarship. He is dedicated to his studies and fulfilling his responsibilities as a university student, striving to achieve his goals and become a highly valuable professional.



Ethnicity

Guatemala

University

Universidad del Istmo

Fraijanes, Guatemala

Expected Graduation Date

October 2028

Rogelio García Aguilar

Empowering Rural Creativity: Rogelio's Mission to Develop the Audiovisual Landscape



Rogelio, the eldest child in his family and a mentor to his younger siblings, discovered a passion for photography in 2023 and pursued courses to complement his future university studies. An excellent student throughout high school, he is eager to continue his dedication to academic excellence. His parents own an agricultural products business, but their income is not stable enough to cover his tuition costs. Rogelio's primary goal is to make a significant impact on the communication industry. However, he recognizes the limited development of the audiovisual sector in Colombia, particularly in areas outside the main cities. Therefore, he aims to be a pioneer in offering professional services such as animation, video editing, and photography by establishing his own advertising agency and audiovisual production company.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Audiovisual Communication

He hopes to inspire other students from rural towns to pursue their dreams at prestigious universities. Just a few years ago, Rogelio himself doubted whether he could attend one of the country's top institutions. Now, with this opportunity, he is determined to create and launch something innovative in his hometown in the Zacapa area, aiming to achieve a substantial positive impact.



Ethnicity

Guatemala

University

Universidad del Istmo

Fraijanes, Guatemala

Expected Graduation Date

October 2028

Judith Rojas Barraza

Bridging the Digital Divide: Judith's Vision for Technological Development in Rural Peru



Born in the south of Ayacucho, one of Peru's poorest regions, Judith moved to Lima to pursue her university education, graduating with a degree in software engineering from Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos. Thanks to the Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship, she is now pursuing a master's degree in computer science, an opportunity that has enabled her to advance academically and envision a future where she can give back to her community. This advanced education is broadening her horizons and preparing her to navigate the challenges of a field still largely dominated by men, while also actively promoting female inclusion and participation.

Degree:

Master of Science in Computer Science

Deeply committed to the development of her region, Judith's goal is to leverage her acquired knowledge to initiate technological projects in Ayacucho, fostering computer science education among young people. These efforts aim to transform the reality of her community by equipping future generations with the tools they need for their own development and success.



Ivan Tacuri

Innovating for Impact: Ivan's Vision for Technological Development in Peru



Ivan is proud of his Andean heritage, with his father originating from Cusco and his mother from Huancayo, Peru. They instilled in him strong values, perseverance, and responsibility—principles that guide his actions. He attended public schools, consistently excelling from a young age. To prepare for university admission, Ivan dedicated himself to rigorous self-study from Monday to Saturday. As a result of this disciplined effort, he achieved second place in his program at the university and maintained a strong academic standing until graduation. He enjoys training and mentoring young entrepreneurs, sharing his knowledge of modern tools and methodologies.

Degree:

Master of Science in Business Administration

In the short term, Ivan plans to launch a digital company that will contribute to economic development and empower young professionals at the start of their careers. He intends to begin this initiative within his public university. Concurrently, he plans to establish a startup lab with colleagues to further strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Peru.

He expresses deep gratitude to Maestro Cares, whose scholarship has transformed his life, providing him with a broader global perspective and the resources to generate meaningful change in his community. Ivan aspires to be a catalyst for positive change, promoting technology for the development of Peru. He hopes his relationship with Maestro Cares will continue throughout his life, supporting the Foundation's impactful work in promoting values such as commitment, service, and excellence.



Arianis Cartagena Burgos

Engineering Hope: Arianis's Pursuit of Innovative Therapies Through Biotechnology



Arianis is a dedicated fourth-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Biotechnology with a minor in pharmaceutical engineering and a certification in biochemistry. Her academic journey has been shaped by both her passion for science and personal challenges. Growing up in Puerto Rico, she has witnessed both the resilience and the struggles of her community. These experiences have ignited a deep desire to use science, particularly through research and biotechnology, to improve lives. Recently, Arianis's family has faced significant financial hardship due to her mother's advanced-stage cancer diagnosis. The emotional and financial burdens of her mother's treatment have profoundly impacted their household, making the continuation of her education increasingly difficult. Despite these obstacles, Arianis remains steadfast in her determination to complete her studies and contribute to Puerto Rico's scientific and social progress.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Industrial Biotechnology

Upon graduation, she aims to combine her expertise in biotechnology and pharmaceutical engineering to develop innovative therapeutic solutions. Her specific focus is on creating treatments for autoimmune diseases and addressing critical health challenges in underserved communities. Arianis's goal is to contribute to the global scientific community while prioritizing the needs of Puerto Rico, where access to advanced therapies remains limited.

Arianis believes that true success lies not only in personal achievement but also in using one's education to empower others and improve the quality of life for the most vulnerable members of society.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico
Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Miguel Angel Díaz Crespo

Advocating for Families: Miguel's Path to a Career in Family Law



Miguel is a first-generation college student who has consistently demonstrated a commitment to helping others and a strong desire for professional growth while remaining grounded in his values and heritage. His primary motivations are his family and a genuine desire to contribute to the well-being of the Puerto Rican community. Miguel's long-term goal is to study law and specialize in family law.

Degree:

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

His objective is to support mothers, fathers, and children in both social and legal matters, empowering families by providing them with the necessary resources and tools. He firmly believes that families are a fundamental pillar of society, and that education is the most powerful tool for improving the lives of all families.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

May 2027

Marisel Hernández Vélez

Inspired by Science, Driven by Compassion: Marisel's Mission to Fight Childhood Cancer



Marisel is a first-generation student from San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico. Her interest in science ignited in eighth grade when she won first place at the science fair with a project investigating bacteria in makeup and its effects on the skin. Years later, her mother's diagnosis with a rare form of breast cancer further solidified her desire to study medicine, inspiring her to help patients like her mother and other loved ones affected by this disease. Marisel's educational goal is to obtain an MD with a specialization in pediatric oncology.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science of Nursing

Following graduation, she plans to take the MCAT and apply to medical school. Her dream is to work at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, where she can help pediatric patients achieve wellness through improved treatment processes. As a Puerto Rican, Marisel aspires to represent her country and demonstrate the capabilities of Latino professionals. Her Puerto Rican heritage is a source of great pride and strength, which she draws upon to overcome any obstacles in her path.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Steven Palmer Velásquez

Innovating for a Sustainable Future: Steven's Pursuit of Greener Pharmaceutical Processes



Steven, from Yauco, Puerto Rico, is proud to be the first in his family to pursue postgraduate studies. He is currently completing his Master of Science in Physical Chemistry, focusing on developing an alternative methodology for cleaning validation in pharmaceutical manufacturing. His research aims to create a process that is both more environmentally friendly and cost-effective than current industry practices. His primary motivation is his soon-to-be two-year-old son, who inspires him daily to persevere and work diligently toward his goals. Steven aspires to become a leader in the pharmaceutical industry, specializing in process optimization.

Degree:

Master in Chemistry

His goal is to drive advancements that improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance the overall quality of pharmaceutical processes. He is passionate about making a meaningful impact in the field by developing innovative solutions that address current challenges and contribute to the betterment of the industry.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

December 2024

Glorimar Franqui Rivera

Empowering the Next Generation of Marine Scientists

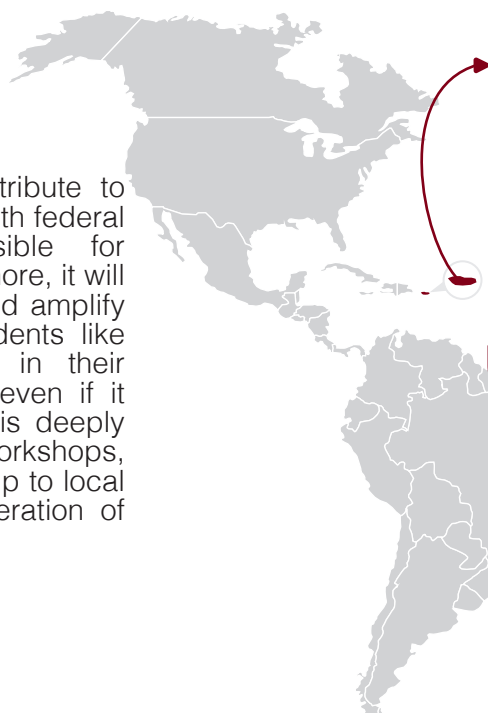


Glorimar comes from a low-income fishing community. Introduced to free diving by her ocean-loving father at a young age, she has always felt a deep connection to the sea, constantly exploring its depths. Fishing has been a part of her family's livelihood, practiced both for necessity and sport. She vividly recalls her first encounter with a deceased shark, awaiting processing for sale. Observing the stark contrast between the animal's inherent strength and its current vulnerability ignited a spark within her, solidifying her motivation to pursue higher education. She knew she wanted to contribute to shark conservation through scientific research, providing the knowledge necessary to implement effective protection laws in the archipelago. From that moment forward, her answer to questions about her future career remained constant: "I want to study and protect sharks."

Degree:

Doctorate in Marine Sciences

This PhD will empower her to contribute to crucial decisions made in meetings with federal and state organizations responsible for managing marine resources. Furthermore, it will enable her to create opportunities and amplify the voices of local, low-income students like herself, inspiring them to believe in their potential and pursue their dreams, even if it means forging new paths. Glorimar is deeply committed to continuing to offer workshops, research opportunities, and mentorship to local students, empowering the next generation of marine scientists.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

May 2026

Katsí L. Sierra Arcelay

From Cabo Rojo to Medical Innovation: Katsí's Pursuit of Medicine and Alzheimer's Research



Katsí is currently in her fifth year of studying Industrial Microbiology. She has lived her entire life in Cabo Rojo with her mother and grandparents. Her grandmother's Alzheimer's diagnosis and witnessing her health decline deeply affected Katsí. This experience was a significant factor in her decision to pursue a career in the medical field, motivating her to investigate Alzheimer's and other diseases with the aim of making a positive impact on people's lives.

Degree:

Bachelor of Industrial Microbiology

Katsí's educational goals include pursuing a medical degree and completing a residency in dermatology, specializing in skin cancer and Mohs surgery. Additionally, she aspires to work in investigative research, focusing specifically on Alzheimer's disease.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Valeria Castilloveitía Vásquez

A Dual Pursuit of Healing: Valeria's Ambition to Combine Medicine and Cancer Research

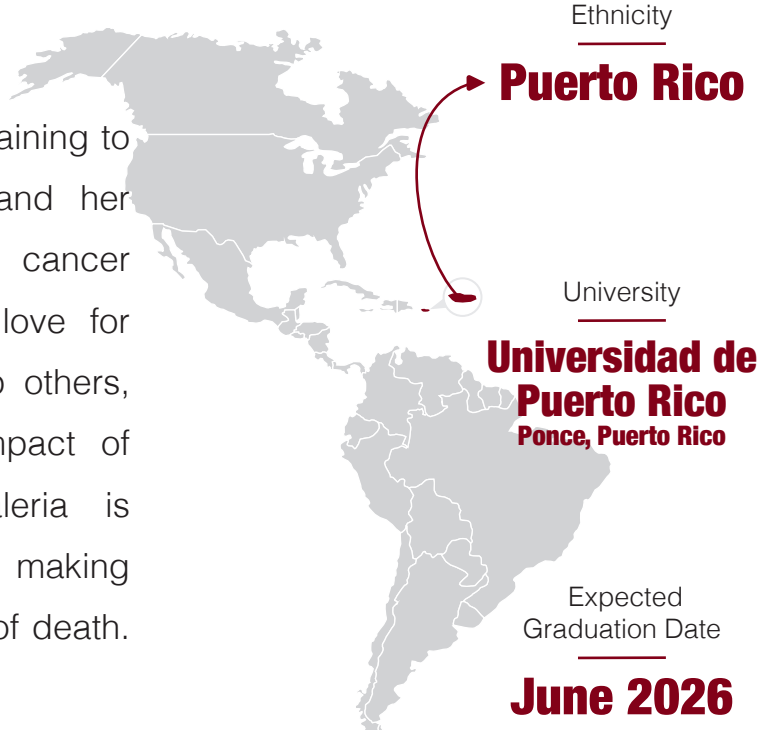


Valeria comes from a hardworking family that strives to provide for all her needs. While her mother is the primary income earner, her father works three jobs to support their family of four, as her mother's income alone is insufficient to cover all their expenses. Valeria's primary goal is to pursue an MD-PhD at Chicago State University.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences

She plans to use her medical training to specialize in anesthesiology and her doctoral studies to focus on cancer research. Driven by a deep love for medicine and a desire to help others, and having witnessed the impact of cancer on loved ones, Valeria is determined to contribute to making cancer a less prevalent cause of death.



Sebastián Cruz Zayas

A Catalyst for Change: Sebastián's Vision for a Healthier and More Supportive Society



Sebastián comes from an extraordinarily hardworking and humble family. Growing up in an environment where opportunities were scarce instilled in him the importance of perseverance, hard work, and discipline as key qualities for overcoming obstacles. Despite the numerous difficulties his family faced, Sebastián is grateful for the insights these experiences provided into the realities of the world. These formative experiences have cultivated in him empathy, understanding, and deep respect for those facing similar challenges today.

The Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship represents a meaningful connection to his past and a powerful opportunity to help others who may feel their future is uncertain. Sebastián plans to use this opportunity to raise health awareness within his community and encourage greater engagement with societal issues.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Biology

His long-term goal is to complete his MD and specialize in psychiatry, focusing on raising mental health awareness and becoming a catalyst for positive change. Sebastián also aspires to work at the Veterans Hospital in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Above all, his personal objective is continuous self-improvement and ensuring that his work benefits society as a whole.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Ponce, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Ensor Guzmán Sánchez

Balancing Act: Ensor's Pursuit of Accounting Excellence and Community Engagement



Ensor, a 19-year-old from Coamo, Puerto Rico, is currently in his third year pursuing a bachelor's degree in accounting, a field he is deeply passionate about. Alongside his studies, he is an active member of his university's dance team, which has achieved significant recognition in the Justas LAI National competition. Ensor also works part-time as a barista at a local coffee shop, applying his strong work ethic and sense of responsibility. Thanks to his Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship, he is able to effectively manage his various commitments.

Degree:
Bachelor of Science in Accounting

Ensor's long-term goals include graduating with honors and earning a double major, with the ultimate aim of becoming a Certified Public Accountant. He dreams of working at one of the major accounting firms in the United States, allowing him to support his family and loved ones and contribute to building a more inclusive society by providing opportunities for others. Coming from a humble family that has worked tirelessly to make ends meet, Ensor is deeply committed to representing them with courage and determination.



Ethnicity
Puerto Rico

University
Universidad de Puerto Rico
Ponce, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date
June 2027

Amanda Maldonado Torres

Empowering Women in STEM: Amanda's Pursuit of Medicine and Gender Equality



Amanda is currently in her third year of college, coming from a hardworking family that has instilled in her a deep sense of gratitude. As the only one of her siblings to attend private school—a decision that required considerable sacrifices from her parents—Amanda is committed to maintaining her excellent academic record and achieving her dreams. She believes that every family faces challenges that fuel their perseverance, and her own family's experiences have instilled in her a strong sense of resolve when facing setbacks. Amanda aspires to obtain an MD with a specialization in obstetric anesthesiology.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Furthermore, she is dedicated to increasing women's participation in STEM fields and promoting gender equality. To further these goals, Amanda plans to continue her involvement with "GET by STEM" at UPR in Ponce. She also looks forward to participating in a nephrology internship to gain a deeper understanding of kidney disease and provide support to those affected by it. Additionally, Amanda aims to study abroad to immerse herself in diverse cultures, broadening her perspectives and enriching her personal and professional development.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Ponce, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

June 2027

Nagelis Pabón Camacho

Nagelis's Mission to Serve Disadvantaged Communities Through Medicine



Nagelis is from Villalba, Puerto Rico. She is a third-year student at the University of Puerto Rico at Ponce, pursuing a bachelor's degree in biomedical sciences. Coming from a humble family, Nagelis has been instilled with the values of perseverance, empathy, honesty, and hard work as essential tools for achieving her goals, regardless of the obstacles she may face. Even when opportunities have been limited, she has consistently demonstrated discipline and made the most of every chance presented to her. She is deeply grateful for the opportunity to receive a scholarship from the Maestro Cares Foundation, which will undoubtedly be instrumental in launching her career.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Nagelis's long-term goals include completing her bachelor's degree in biomedical sciences, gaining admission to medical school to earn her MD, and specializing in endocrinology. Throughout her academic and professional journey, she is committed to serving as a key resource for the most disadvantaged communities and making a positive impact on their lives.



Edith Torres Velázquez

Inspired by Resilience, Driven by Compassion: Edith's Mission to Improve Children's Health



Edith resides in Villalba, Puerto Rico, and is currently a second-year college student studying biomedical sciences. She comes from a family where her parents worked diligently to provide the best possible quiality of life for her and her sister. From a young age, her parents served as her greatest role models, instilling in her the importance of resilience in the face of any circumstance. Two years ago, her life was profundly impacted by the passing of her mother due to cancer. This experience has given her a new perspective on the value of life and reinforced her commitment to pursuing her goals, honoring the legacy her parents inspired.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Her primary long-term professional goal is to enter medical school, obtain an MD, and specialize in either cardiology or pediatric oncology. Having witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of disease, she is deeply motivated to help children suffering from illness achieve a better quality of life. During her college years, she is determined to seize every opportunity for personal and professional growth, aiming to contribute meaningfully to society as a future healthcare professional.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico
Ponce, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

June 2027

Kariliz Toucet Santiago

From Accounting to Action: Kariliz's Mission to Build a Sustainable Future



Kariliz is determined to achieve her dreams and secure her independence through hard work and perseverance. Currently in her third year of studying accounting, she has faced numerous challenges this year that have demanded significant resilience. Balancing her academic responsabilities with a part-time job to cover her expenses and contribute to her household requires considerable dedication.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Accounting

Kariliz's goals include completing her bachelor's degree in accounting and becoming a Certified Public Accountant. To further enhance her financial expertise, she also plans to pursue additional coursework in finance. Ultimately, she aspires to support or establish an organization dedicated to environmental care and sustainability.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Ponce, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

June 2027

Diorimar Zayas Cruz

Diorimar's Vision for Accessible Rehabilitation and Mental Health Support



From a young age, Diorimar has understood the value of hard work, and the sacrifices required to achieve significant goals. Growing up in a humble, hardworking family, surrounded by older relatives who worked tirelessly to provide for their own, instilled in her a deep appreciation for the impact of even the smallest actions. This upbringing also fostered a strong desire to help others, regardless of her own circumstances. Currently, she is in her third year of undergraduate studies in the Department of Social Sciences, specializing in forensic psychology. Through her studies, Diorimar has gained a profound understanding of the human mind and how individuals respond to various situations, diagnoses, and life circumstances, allowing her to explore the complexities of forensic psychology in greater depth.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Forensic Psychology

Her long-term goal is to complete her bachelor's degree and then pursue a law degree with a focus on forensic psychology and vocational rehabilitation. By utilizing her legal expertise, she aims to advocate for individuals with mental health challenges and disabilities, ensuring they receive the necessary support and resources. The Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship is a crucial catalyst for advancing her studies and enabling her to make significant contributions to her community, particularly by promoting social justice and improving access to rehabilitation services for marginalized populations. Through her career, Diorimar aspires to create a more inclusive society where everyone can thrive.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

Universidad de Puerto Rico
Ponce, Puerto Rico

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Paulina Enriquez

Empowering Health Equity: Paulina's Vision for a More Just and Supportive Healthcare System

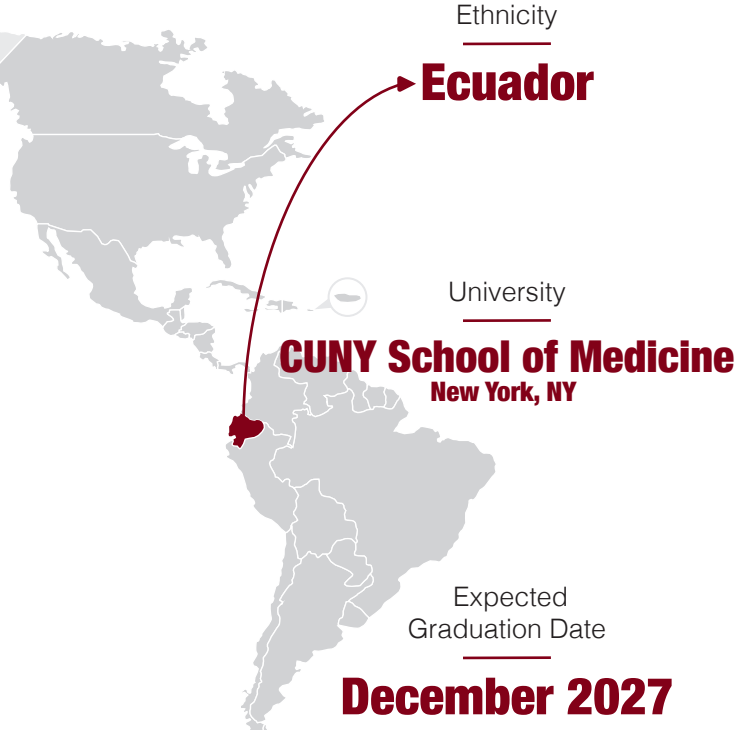


Paulina is a second-generation immigrant, the daughter of immigrants from Ecuador. Like many second-generation individuals, her family's story has profoundly shaped her identity. It was the courage of her parents and grandparents, who left their homeland in search of a better life, that made her own life possible. Upon arriving in a new country, they worked tirelessly to build the life they envisioned for their family. They learned a new language, adapted to a different culture, and began working from a young age. Because of their sacrifices and dedication, Paulina understands the importance of diligence and determination, and it is through their support that she can freely pursue her own goals.

Degree:
Doctor of Medicine

Her envisioned career path emerged from recognizing the marginalization, rather than support, that minority communities often experience. Growing up surrounded by family members working in healthcare, she developed a passion for service and a deep interest in science and the intricacies of the human body. Recognizing that medicine could be a powerful tool to provide the support that minority communities—especially Hispanic and Latino population—often lack, she became determined to become both a physician and a patient advocate.

Now in her second year of medical school, Paulina continues to work diligently toward her goal, driven by a desire to support her community, particularly its youth—its future—in the same way her family has supported her.



Priscila Espinal

Priscila's Mission to Support Underserved Communities Through Internal Medicine



Priscila, a first-generation Latina from the Bronx, New York, was raised by immigrant parents who made significant sacrifices to provide her and her siblings with a better future. Her family's experiences, particularly her role as a co-guardian for her younger brother with autism spectrum disorder, have profoundly shaped her and the path she has chosen. Growing up in an underserved community, Priscila witnessed firsthand the systemic challenges that prevent many from accessing quality healthcare, deeply influencing her desire to become a physician. Her community has always been central to her story. In the Bronx, Priscila observed how healthcare disparities and socioeconomic barriers impacted people's lives. These experiences ignited a passion for service, leading her to dedicate much of her time to volunteering with organizations that support marginalized populations. Through this work, she learned the importance of advocating for those whose voices are often unheard and providing care that is not only accessible but also compassionate.

Degree:
Doctor of Medicine

Priscila is pursuing a career in medicine because of the direct impact she has seen healthcare have on individuals and families. Caring for her brother with autism taught her the importance of advocacy, patience, and understanding in navigating the complexities of the healthcare system. Through her volunteer work with organizations such as City Harvest and Mount Sinai's SHARP program, she has witnessed the gaps in care that disproportionately affect underserved communities. These experiences have solidified her commitment to internal medicine, where she can address the full spectrum of health issues, from chronic diseases to preventive care, while building long-term relationships with her patients.

Her goal is not only to treat medical conditions but also to work toward reducing the systemic barriers that prevent communities like hers from accessing the care they deserve. As a Latina, she understands the vital importance of culturally competent care and is committed to being a physician who provides both high-quality medical attention and advocacy for equitable healthcare access.



Ethnicity

Dominican Republic

University

CUNY School of Medicine
New York, NY

Expected Graduation Date

December 2025

Michael Holmes

Inspired by Family, Driven by Service: Michael's Journey to Becoming a Physician-Advocate



Michael grew up in Jamaica, Queens, in a family deeply committed to public service. His mother, a labor and delivery nurse, lives with multiple sclerosis (MS), and his father is an NYPD sergeant. Their resilience and dedication to helping others, despite their own personal challenges, have been a constant source of inspiration for Michael. His mother's experience with MS, from initially hidden symptoms to subsequent relapses, taught him the importance of compassionate care and deepened his understanding of the complex dynamics between patients and the healthcare system. Growing up in a community where access to healthcare was often limited, Michael witnessed firsthand the impact of socioeconomic barriers and language difficulties, particularly among his Puerto Rican family members. These experiences motivated him to pursue a career in medicine, driven by a desire to bridge the healthcare gap for underserved populations.

Degree:
Doctor of Medicine

He is inspired by the opportunity to serve others, solve complex medical challenges, and build meaningful relationships with his patients. Medicine offers him a unique opportunity to combine these passions and make a tangible difference in people's lives. Through his experiences, he has come to appreciate the value of being both a healer and an advocate, and he looks forward to a career dedicated to supporting, educating, and caring for patients from all walks of life.



Ethnicity

Puerto Rico

University

CUNY School of Medicine
New York, NY

Expected Graduation Date

December 2025

William Manriquez

Striving for Health Equity: William's Path to Becoming a Physician



William is of Argentine and Mexican heritage. He lives with his parents in Ridgewood, a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood in Queens, New York. With family residing in Argentina and Mexico—most in a small rural town in the province of Santa Fe, Argentina, and others spread throughout Mexico—William and his parents have no other family in the United States. His family visits abroad have profoundly shaped his motivation to become a physician. Until his adolescence, William hadn't fully recognized the extent of the privileges he and his parents enjoyed living in New York. During his trips, he observed that his family members lacked basic necessities, such as reliable internet access, stable air conditioning, and even consistent access to gas. As he matured, he began to understand the underlying reasons for these disparities and recognized how fortunate he was to have these amenities readily available.

Degree:
Doctor of Medicine

While acknowledging that he alone cannot solve global inequalities, William is committed to working toward a future where life is more equitable for everyone. This dedication to equity is a primary reason he aspires to become a physician. Upon discovering that CUNY School of Medicine shares his vision of equitable health for all, he knew it was the ideal environment to pursue his ideals.



Abigail Carvajal

Nurturing Young Minds: Abigail's Commitment to Inspiring the Next Generation



Abigail is a first-generation college student. Due to financial hardships, her family members were unable to pursue higher education themselves. Abigail is pursuing a career in elementary education, choosing this field because she aspires to create a positive and nurturing learning environment where children can reach their full potential and develop lifelong skills. Working toward both a fulfilling career and personal growth, Abigail is earning her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Doral College. She then hopes to pursue a master's degree in Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and work at Somerset Academy. Abigail is committed to fostering a lifelong love of learning in young people by inspiring and shaping their minds during their formative years. She intends to encourage youth leadership and social responsibility, aligning closely with the objectives of the Maestro Cares Foundation.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education

Her dream is to instill self-assurance and passion in children, empowering them to become responsible, hardworking adults. Abigail believes that, by working together, we can raise a generation motivated to create positive change in their local communities and the wider world. Furthermore, Abigail is passionate about developing projects that address hunger in vulnerable communities. To this end, she has volunteered at a local food bank, organizing food drives and serving meals to underprivileged families. This experience enhanced her collaborative skills, deepened her understanding of social issues, and directly informed her academic pursuit of education by providing real-world perspectives on advocating for community well-being.



Ethnicity

Ecuador

University

Doral College
Doral, FL

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Daniela Giralt

Building a Brighter Future, One Child at a Time



Daniela's family immigrated from Cuba to the United States when she was very young. She initially faced challenges adapting to the cultural differences and learning a new language. With consistent support from her teachers, she gradually learned and adapted. Their profound and positive influence inspired her to provide the same support to other children in the future, which is why she is pursuing a Bachelor of Elementary Education at Doral College. Her parents' inability to achieve their career aspirations in Cuba also motivates her to succeed and make them proud. Upon graduation, Daniela is eager to begin her career as an elementary school teacher.

Degree:

Bachelor of Elementary Education

Although she will be a first-year teacher, she is eager to demonstrate her enthusiasm and passion for creating a safe, engaging, and positive learning environment for every student in her classroom. Daniela recognizes the hardships present in the world, including violence, poverty, and hunger, and believes that empathetic awareness of others' experiences is essential. She is committed to bringing this empathetic approach to her interactions with all of her students, believing that, like a domino effect, individual acts of kindness and support can create a ripple of positive change in the world.



Ethnicity

Cuba

University

Doral College
Doral, FL

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Jayla Hernandez

Driven by Inspired Teachers: Jayla's Journey to Becoming a Nurturing and Effective Educator



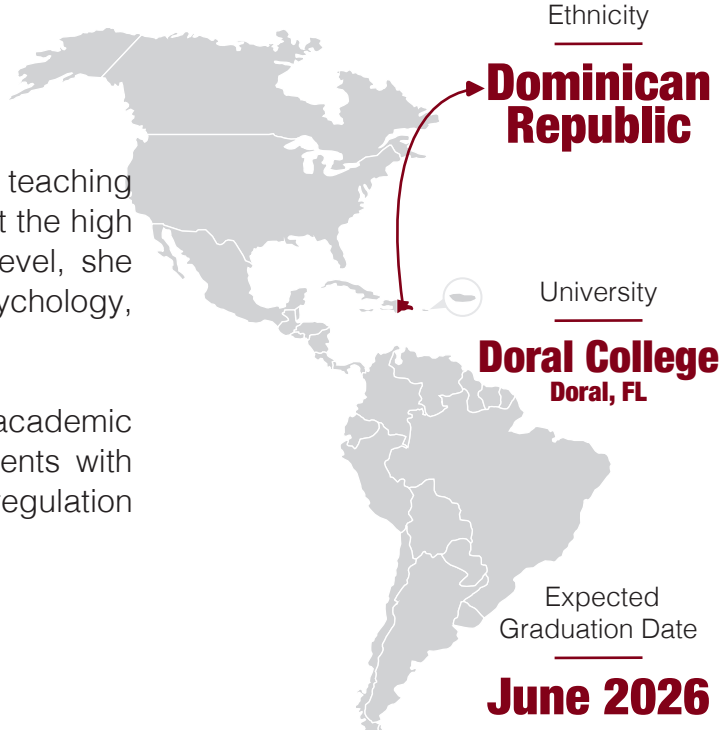
Jayla is a first-generation college student who graduated high school with an impressive 4.2 GPA. She is currently pursuing her lifelong aspiration of becoming a teacher, inspired by the exceptional care and attentiveness of her own remarkable instructors. Jayla believes that we need more educators like them, as they make a profound difference in a child's learning and overall well-being. While earning her Bachelor of Science in Education, Jayla hopes to gain practical experience as an assistant teacher and then transition into a full-time teaching position.

Degree:

Bachelor of Elementary Education

She is particularly interested in teaching second or third grade, as well as at the high school level. At the high school level, she would especially enjoy teaching psychology, her favorite subject in high school.

Jayla aspires to not only teach the academic curriculum but also to equip students with the essential skills of emotional regulation and self-management.



Geovani Rodriguez

From Plumbing to Prosperity: Geovani's Plan to Create Jobs and Strengthen Communities



Geovani's parents were both born in Cuba; his father arrived in the United States on a self-built raft in 1993. As a result, Geovani is a first-generation college student, as his parents completed only high school. Since the age of 12, Geovani has been remarkably determined to become a business owner. He is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration, inspired by his father's success as an entrepreneur. Geovani already owns a small plumbing repair and demolition business, employing three individuals.

Degree:

Bachelor of Business Administration

His long-term goal is to expand his business, achieve financial independence, and create numerous employment opportunities for others, enabling them to support their own families. He demonstrates hard work, determination, and enthusiasm in all his endeavors. After graduation, Geovani plans to gain experience at a financial firm to deepen his understanding of finance, particularly the stock market, before establishing a construction or retail business. He aims to own his first home or rental property within the next five years.



Ethnicity

Cuba

University

Doral College
Doral, FL

Expected Graduation Date

June 2026

Yair Jordi Banuelos

Harnessing AI for Global Good: Yair's Vision for a More Resilient and Sustainable World

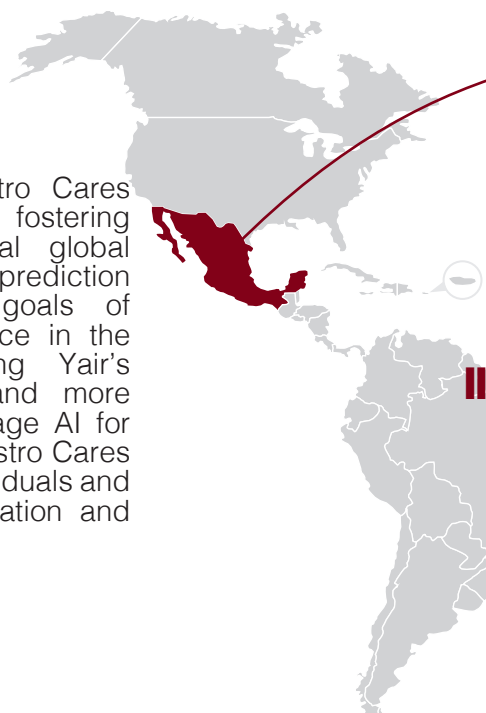


Yair is a first-generation college student whose parents immigrated from Nayarit, Mexico, to provide their children with greater opportunities. Raised by a single mother, Yair began working at the age of 14 to help support his family, an experience that instilled in him a strong sense of responsibility. His academic journey led him to discover his passion for computer science during a summer program at Northeastern Illinois University, shaping his pursuit of a career in technology. Yair plans to pursue a master's degree in artificial intelligence after completing his undergraduate studies in 2026. He aims to become a machine learning engineer, leveraging AI to address real-world challenges, particularly in the field of climate prediction. His long-term goal is to contribute to solutions that protect communities from the devastating impacts of climate change.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science

Yair's vision aligns with the Maestro Cares Foundation's mission by fostering advancements that address critical global challenges. His work in climate prediction modeling directly supports the goals of improving sustainability and resilience in the face of climate change, showing Yair's dedication to building a better and more equitable future. His desire to leverage AI for societal good resonates with the Maestro Cares Foundation goals of empowering individuals and communities to thrive through education and innovation.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Northeastern Illinois University

Chicago, IL

Expected Graduation Date

May 2026

Michelle Martinez

Advancing Healthcare: Michelle's Vision for Compassionate Care and Scientific Progress



Michelle is a first-generation college student who developed an interest in nursing at a young age. Her parents, both immigrants from Mexico, have always been supportive of her desire to pursue research. Undergoing surgery at a young age further solidified Michelle's interest in both research and nursing as she recovered in the hospital. Michelle is currently exploring ways to serve her community while also conducting research on amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). During her senior year, Michelle plans to apply to a nursing program to pursue a Master of Science in Nursing immediately following graduation.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Biology

Her goal is to study and work at Rush University College of Nursing. With her biology degree, she also hopes to pursue research, either full-time or part-time, specifically in cell biology. Michelle has faced several personal setbacks, which at times led her to compare her life and accomplishments to those of others. Now, she is passionate about sharing the message that everyone operates on their own unique timeline, and that this individuality should be celebrated.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

Northeastern Illinois University
Chicago, IL

Expected Graduation Date

May 2026

Eduardo Vaca

Illuminating the Path: Eduardo's Pursuit of Biological Research and Educational Equity

Eduardo, a master's degree student in biology, embodies resilience and dedication as a first-generation college student. He is passionate about research addressing the impact of light pollution on both human health and nocturnal ecology. He is also a committed advocate for educational accessibility and mentorship within his community. Eduardo draws inspiration from his Latino heritage and family legacy, fueling his determination to become the first in his family to earn both an undergraduate and postgraduate degree.



Eduardo is not only a trailblazer within his family but also a dedicated advocate for educational accessibility. Through his two-year commitment to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), he immersed himself in community outreach, supporting underrepresented students through the often-complex college application process. His experience as an ISACorps member involved extensive engagement with high schools, public libraries, and college fairs, where he assisted students and parents in navigating the intricacies of higher education.

Degree:

Masters in Biology Research Thesis

Reflecting on the guidance he received from his own mentors, Eduardo now views teaching, mentoring, and learning alongside aspiring scientists and students as a core professional passion. With the help of the Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship to further this dedication, Eduardo remains committed to representing and contributing to his community through continued service and mentorship, embodying the principles of leadership, resilience, and humility. His journey as a first-generation student, combined with his extensive experience in public service, has equipped him with a unique perspective and a firm commitment to making education accessible and empowering for all.



Ethnicity

Bolivia

University

Northeastern Illinois University
Chicago, IL

Expected Graduation Date

May 2025

America Banderas

Inspired by Family, Driven by Service: America's Mission to Ensure Equitable Access to Healthcare



America is a first-generation college student eager to maximize her experience at UC Merced. Originally from San Jose, California, America chose UC Merced because of the supportive environment and comprehensive programs the campus offers. As the eldest child in her family, she hopes to inspire her three younger siblings to go after their own dreams. She is pursuing a degree in public health with a minor in chemistry and plans to become an operating room nurse. She recognizes that her interest in research and data analysis, combined with her commitment to addressing health inequities and her passion for chemistry, will be instrumental in achieving her goal of ensuring equitable access to healthcare services.

Degree:
Bachelor of Public Health

She will complete her community service hours at the Merced Habitat for Humanity ReStore and at UC Merced's community garden. She expresses that the Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship is an immense source of motivation, and she is fully committed to making the most of this opportunity.



Ethnicity
Mexico

University
University of California Merced
Merced, CA

Expected Graduation Date
December 2026

Jakelinne Bocel

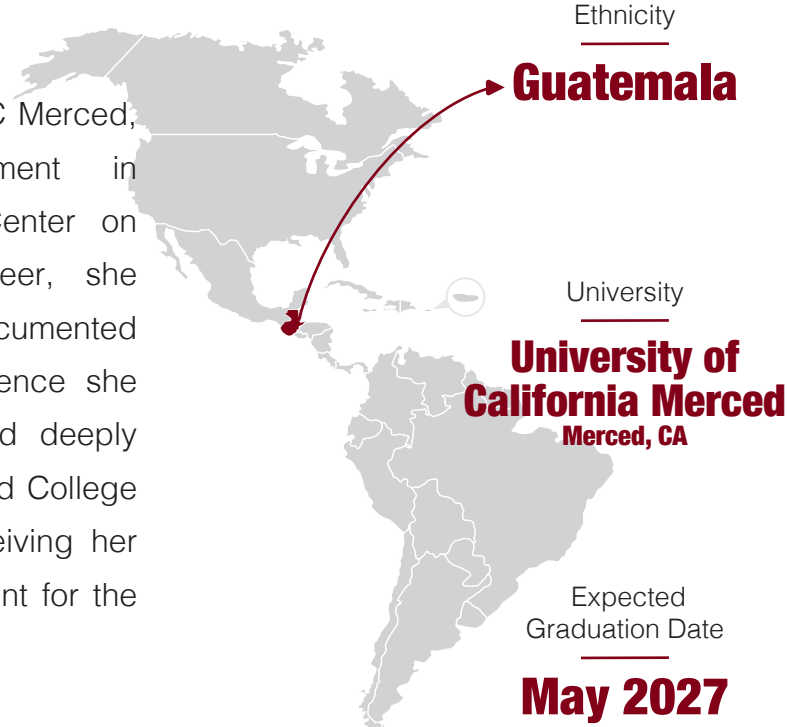
Building a More Inclusive Future: Jakelinne's Vision for Supporting Students and Strengthening Communities



Jakelinne comes from a supportive family who she credits as her primary source of strength and inspiration. Her greatest inspiration is her grandmother, whose life experiences and sacrifices have instilled in Jakelinne a profound respect for education and a deep desire to contribute meaningfully to her community. Jakelinne has chosen to pursue studies in public health and political science to improve the well-being of individuals and the communities she is part of.

Degree:
Bachelor of Public Health

Since beginning her studies at UC Merced, Jakelinne has found fulfillment in volunteering at the Monarch Center on campus. As a student volunteer, she provides crucial support for undocumented UC Merced students, an experience she describes as both humbling and deeply inspiring. Jakelinne has also joined College Corps and looks forward to receiving her community volunteering assignment for the 2025 academic year.



Nolberth Calderon

Empowering Communities Through Action: Nolberth's Vision for Making a Difference Through Service and Leadership



Nolberth immigrated to the United States from Guatemala at the age of nine. As a first-generation college student, Nolberth is deeply grateful for the opportunity to attend UC Merced and to receive the Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship. His sister also attends UC Merced, and he chose to follow in her footsteps. Nolberth is an active member of a professional fraternity on campus, where he serves on the Community Service Committee. He has participated in a 9/11 Memorial and contributed to fundraising efforts during “Philanthropy Week,” with proceeds benefiting the Ronald McDonald House and other local Merced organizations.

Degree:

Bachelor of Management and Business Economics

Nolberth also plans to complete additional community service hours at the Monarch Center on campus. He is committed to seizing every opportunity to achieve his dreams of success. The Maestro Cares Foundation scholarship not only provides crucial financial assistance but also inspires him to strive for excellence and to give back to his community.



Ethnicity

Guatemala

University

University of California Merced

Merced, CA

Expected Graduation Date

December 2026

Brenda Vicente Xec

Championing Immigrant Rights: Brenda's Path to a Career in Immigration Law



Brenda is a first-generation college student who immigrated to Los Angeles from Guatemala as a child. As the eldest of three children, she hopes to inspire her younger siblings to pursue higher education and reach their full potential. Brenda plans to complete her undergraduate degree at UC Merced and then continue on to law school, ultimately becoming an immigration lawyer.

Degree:
Bachelors of Political Science

She intends to fulfill her community service commitment through on-campus opportunities and is deeply motivated to make her parents proud.



Ethnicity
Guatemala

University
University of California Merced
Merced, CA

Expected Graduation Date
December 2027

Jimena Esparza

From Research to Rehabilitation: Jimena's Vision for a More Inclusive and Supportive Healthcare Landscape



Jimena is a first-generation college student; her mother works at a factory, and her father owns a construction company. She is deeply passionate about becoming a physical therapist and dedicates significant effort to her academic studies and performance. At the same time, Jimena is cultivating an appreciation for life's small moments and striving to become the best version of herself. At UIC, she hopes to have the opportunity to complete clinical hours, gaining valuable experience and further developing her understanding of physical therapy and the path to becoming a successful professional in the field.

Degree:

Bachelor of Biological Science

This academic year, Jimena is working on a capstone project at her research lab to investigate disparities in research studies involving Hispanic females. She is enthusiastic about continuing her research and advocating for underserved demographics.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

University of Illinois
Chicago, IL

Expected Graduation Date

May 2025

Dayane Padilla

From Jalisco to Chicago: Dayane's Mission to Bridge Healthcare Disparities Through Research and Medicine



Dayane is originally from San Juan de Los Lagos, Jalisco, Mexico, but grew up on the southeast side of Chicago. Driven by a passion for addressing healthcare disparities among Latino and other minority populations, she is pursuing her goal of becoming a physician. She is currently working toward her Master of Science in Kinesiology, conducting research focused on improving access to exercise and overall health for older Latino adults in Chicago. Her research also focuses on assessing and enhancing cognition and preventing chronic diseases within this population.

Degree:

Master of Science in Kinesiology

She aims to use her future medical career to advocate for equitable healthcare access and provide compassionate care to underserved communities. She expects to graduate in 2026.



Ethnicity

Mexico

University

University of Illinois
Chicago, IL

Expected Graduation Date

December 2026

Ashley Santizo

A Heart for Service, a Mind for Science: Ashley's Pursuit of Medicine and Community Impact



After volunteering with a literacy program for children with Down syndrome and a community organization supporting newly arrived immigrants, Ashley discovered a deeper sense of purpose. Driven by a passion for science and a desire to help others, she is pursuing a career in medicine. She believes that a career as a medical doctor will allow her to serve those who are most vulnerable. Ashley is currently working toward a Bachelor of Science in Molecular Biology. She recently transitioned from wet lab research to dry lab research, shifting her focus from hands-on experimentation to theoretical analysis. She also works as a research assistant for a program specializing in providing families with the educational support systems they need, where she assesses families and determines which schooling programs might be most beneficial.

Degree:

Bachelor of Science in Molecular Biology

Ashley continues to serve as a literacy tutor at GiGi's Playhouse and has also begun volunteering at a local school to organize donations for students in need. Additionally, she has pursued further volunteer opportunities to broaden her understanding of the diverse demographics within her community. The funding she has received from the Maestro Cares Foundation has enabled her to expand her interests and community service involvement even further.



Ethnicity

Guatemala

University

University of Illinois
Chicago, IL

Expected Graduation Date

May 2025

Scholarship Program

Special Programs



Hogar Estudiantil Jaime Benítez Tobón

Bogotá, Colombia

The Jaime Benitez Tobón Foundation is an organization dedicated to promoting social, cultural, and educational development in Colombia. Founded in honor of Jaime Benitez Tobón, it aims to improve the quality of life for vulnerable communities through projects that encourage education, entrepreneurship, and social inclusion.

In collaboration with Maestro Cares, the foundation provides crucial support to students, particularly in areas such as mental health, optometry, and the provision of educational materials. Currently, Maestro Cares, together with the Jaime Benitez Tobón Foundation, is benefiting over 130 students. This partnership has made a significant impact on the lives of many students, empowering them to pursue their studies and build a brighter future. Together, the Jaime Benitez Tobón Foundation and Maestro Cares are committed to fostering solidarity and social responsibility while enhancing the overall well-being of the community.



Brian Gutiérrez

From Colombia to France: Brian's Journey to Mitigating Landslide Risks Through Engineering and Innovation



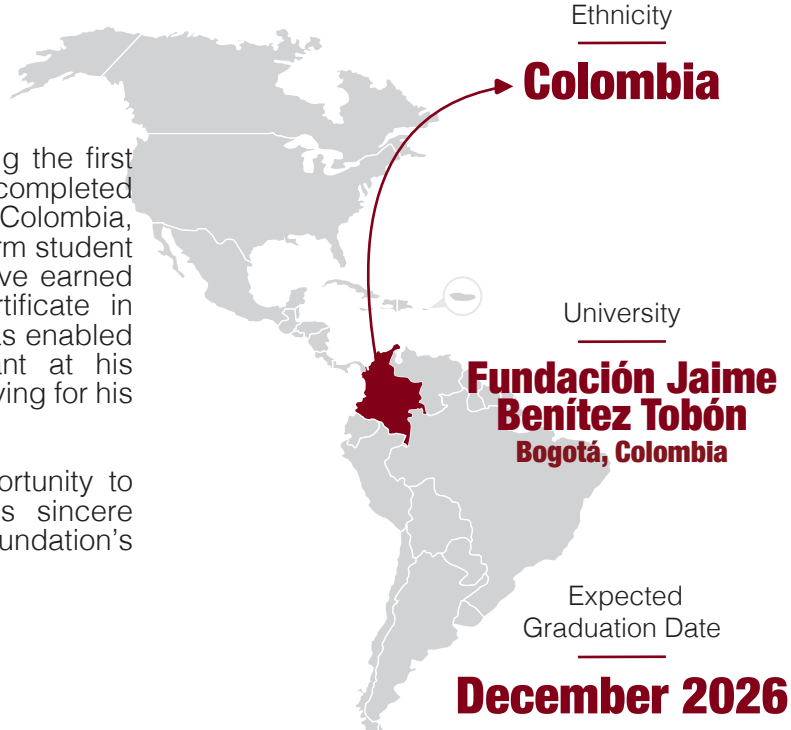
Brian is a remarkable student who, despite economic and social challenges in his hometown of Villavicencio, Colombia, has become the first member of his family to pursue higher education and the first to leave the country for this purpose. His strong academic performance and interpersonal skills have earned him multiple scholarships for his undergraduate studies, secured his acceptance into a double-degree program in France, and provided him with residency at the Jaime Benítez Tobón Foundation. Brian is pursuing a degree in civil mining engineering with a focus on geotechnical risk management. This focus stems from the recurring landslides on the road connecting his municipality with the Colombian capital, which have caused numerous disasters. Brian's goal is to collaborate with his university to develop a numerical model capable of generating early warnings for the population.

Degree:

Master of Civil Mining Engineering

Brian is currently in France, beginning the first year of his master's program. Having completed his ninth semester at his university in Colombia, he is now working to secure a long-term student visa. He is particularly pleased to have earned his DELF B2 French language certificate in December 2023. This achievement has enabled him to work as a student assistant at his university, allowing him to continue saving for his expenses in France.

Brian is deeply grateful for the opportunity to study in France and expresses his sincere appreciation for the Maestro Cares Foundation's support.



Andrés Lara

From Tierralta to Paris: Andrés's Journey to Improving Water Access and Quality Through Engineering



Andrés comes from Tierralta, Colombia, a municipality impacted by the Colombian armed conflict, and his family members do not have formal employment. From an early age, he has been characterized by his persistence, curiosity, dedication, and high aspirations. Thanks to these qualities and his outstanding academic performance, he gained admission to the National University of Colombia, becoming the first member of his family to access higher education. Now, with the support of the Maestro Cares Foundation, he is beginning his master's studies at École des Ponts ParisTech, a leading civil engineering institution in France—an achievement that represents the fulfillment of a lifelong dream and a significant milestone in his life. Andrés is pursuing a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and a master's degree in City, Environment & Transportation Planning, with a focus on water resource management in urban development. He aims to improve the quality of life in vulnerable communities in Colombia through his work.

Degree:

Master of Civil Engineering: City, Environment, Transportation

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The lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation sparked Andrés's interest in this specific field. He has been actively involved in the Water Resource Management Research Group (SIGREH), contributing to studies and research projects to better understand and manage surface water in urban areas throughout the country. He resided at the Hogar Estudiantil Jaime Benitez Tobón, an enriching experience that fostered his personal and professional growth through interactions with people from diverse regions of Colombia and participation in volunteer activities with local foundations such as the Bogotá Food Bank. Andrés expresses his profound gratitude to the Maestro Cares Foundation for making his dream of studying in France a reality.



Ethnicity

Colombia

University

Fundación Jaime Benítez Tobón

Bogotá, Colombia

Expected Graduation Date

October 2026

Fundación Jeison Aristizábal

Cali, Colombia

The Fundación Jeison Aristizabal / ASODISVALLE provides 150 young individuals with the opportunity to study a variety of careers and technical programs, including baking, tailoring, leatherwork, and printing, as well as professional programs in fields such as bilingualism, artificial intelligence, and graphic design.

In collaboration with the Maestro Cares scholarship program, support has been provided to six young individuals to help them learn English—a vital skill for securing better job opportunities and leading a dignified life. This program not only promotes personal development but also empowers these young people to overcome barriers and reach their full potential in the workforce.



Natalia Arcila

Embracing Life with Passion and Creativity: Natalia's Vision for Bringing Joy Through Design and Language

Natalia is a vibrant individual who navigates life with psychomotor and multiple disabilities. Despite these challenges, she thrives in a supportive home environment with her parents, younger brother, and two beloved pets. Natalia's passion for studying English is fueled by her dream of becoming a sought-after party decorator internationally.



Degree:
English Program

Her creativity shines through in her love for crafting and her talent for party decorations, where she finds joy in bringing celebrations to life. Looking ahead, Natalia is excited about the prospect of combining her language skills and creative flair by working as an English translator within a dynamic company. In her free time, Natalia enjoys visiting the hairdresser, exploring the countryside, and browsing the internet, embracing each day with enthusiasm and a zest for new experiences.



Nataly Castro

Empowering Independence Through Education: Nataly's Journey to New Skills and Opportunities



Nataly is a 25-year-old woman born with a cognitive disability. Throughout her life, she has received unconditional support from her mother. Beginning at the age of three, she participated in therapeutic programs at various rehabilitation centers, which have significantly benefited her cognitive development. Nataly has nurtured a talent for handicrafts, which she enjoys as a favorite pastime.

Degree:
English Program

She and her mother believe that learning a foreign language would be a valuable asset in her pursuit of employment. To this end, her mother enrolled her in the ASODISVALLE vocational training institute and is applying for a scholarship for this program, which is being made possible through the support of benefactors such as the Maestro Cares Foundation.



Esteban Hernández

Embracing Learning, Building a Future: Esteban's Enthusiasm for Education and Self-Improvement

Esteban is a 25-year-old man who was born with a cognitive disability. His primary support has come from his maternal grandmother, despite their family's limited financial resources. Esteban joined the ASODISVALLE Foundation at the age of seven, where he received therapeutic care and specialized education, leading to positive outcomes in his academic progress and daily living skills.



Degree:
English Program

Esteban possesses a calm and receptive demeanor, enabling him to adapt well to both academic and social settings. He readily follows guidelines, fulfills his responsibilities, and has demonstrated a strong interest in self-improvement. He is eager to continue learning and become a contributing member of society, and he is particularly enthusiastic about participating in the English course.



Juan David López

Seeking Stability and Independence: Juan David's Pursuit of New Skills and Employment

Juan David is a 35-year-old man who receives ongoing psychiatric treatment and supervision. He lives with his mother, who provides his care. However, Juan David actively seeks ways to contribute to household needs. He currently sells watches, providing some financial support, as it is important to him to feel useful and helpful.



Driven by a desire for daily improvement, Juan David dreams of studying English and finding stable employment that will provide peace of mind for both himself and his mother.

Degree:
English Program

Thanks to the scholarship program offered by the ASODISVALLE Vocational Training Institute and the Jeison Aristizábal Foundation, Juan David is now on a path toward fulfilling these aspirations.



Ethnicity
Colombia

University
Fundación Jeison Aristizábal
Cali, Colombia

Expected Certification Date
December 2025

Diego Losada

Opening Doors to the Future: Diego's Pursuit of Language Skills and Greater Independence

Diego is a 22-year-old man who, despite multiple diagnoses, has demonstrated remarkable resilience in overcoming significant challenges. Through dedicated effort and the unwavering support of his mother and healthcare professionals, he has achieved milestones in walking, speaking, studying, and completing his high school education.Concerned about her son's future, Diego's



Degree:
English Program

Concerned about her son's future, Diego's mother encouraged him to acquire skills and knowledge that would enable him to achieve economic independence as an adult. To this end, they are seeking enrollment in the ASODISVALLE Vocational Training Institute's foreign language program in English.



Ethnicity
Colombia

University
Fundación Jeison Aristizábal
Cali, Colombia

Expected Certification Date
December 2025

Gian Carlos Potes

Finding Strength in Perseverance: Gian Carlo's Pursuit of New Skills and a Brighter Future



Gian Carlos is a 30-year-old man who lives with a physical limitation. For the past ten years, he has used a walker for mobility following a serious accident while practicing BMX. Gian Carlos is a young man with many aspirations and, above all, a perseverant spirit that fuels his determination. He firmly believes in the possibility of realizing his dreams. He has the unconditional support of his mother, who has been a constant source of strength throughout his recovery.

Degree:
English Program

His favorite pastimes include playing the flute and xylophone and engaging in chess. He is compassionate and enjoys helping others. One of his goals is to study and master English. Despite facing significant challenges, he has never stopped pursuing his dreams. Today, he sees the possibility of achieving academic training and improving his quality of life through the English training scholarship program offered by Asodisvalle's vocational training institute and the Jeison Aristizábal Foundation.



Ethnicity
Colombia

University
Fundación Jeison Aristizábal
Cali, Colombia

Expected Certification Date
December 2025

Scholarship Highlights 2024

Campus Visit to Partner University: Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU)

- Date: April 10, 2024

The Scholarship Team visited NEIU in Chicago to hear firsthand the inspiring stories of the MCF Scholars and to strengthen ties with the university.



Campus Visit to Partner University: Universidad de Puerto Rico en Ponce

- Date: November 14, 2024

MCF visited Universidad de Ponce, cultivating deeper connections with scholars and the university team. Scholars shared their community impact, and MCF celebrated their academic and service achivements with certificates.



Marc Anthony's Meet & Greet with MCF Scholars from ICESI, Cali, Colombia

- Date: August 17, 2024

Four MCF Scholars at ICESI University, along with the university's philanthropy team and president, attended Marc Anthony's concert in Palmira, Colombia. The scholars shared with MCF co-founders, Henry and Marc Anthony, the life-changing impact of their scholars.



MCF Scholars Speak at 11th Annual Changing Lives, Building Dreams Gala

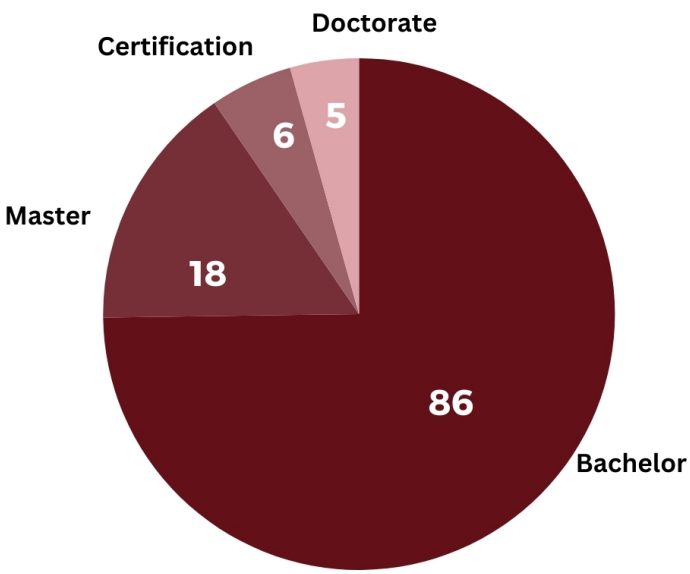
- Date: December 10, 2024

MCF Scholars Vanesa Malagón Mondragón and Laura Matías Alvarado, shared their inspiring stories of perseverance and strength at the 11th Annual Changing Lives, Building Dreams Gala. Both women serve as powerful role models in their communities and touched the hearts of all Gala attendees.



Scholarship Program Impact

DEGREE LEVEL



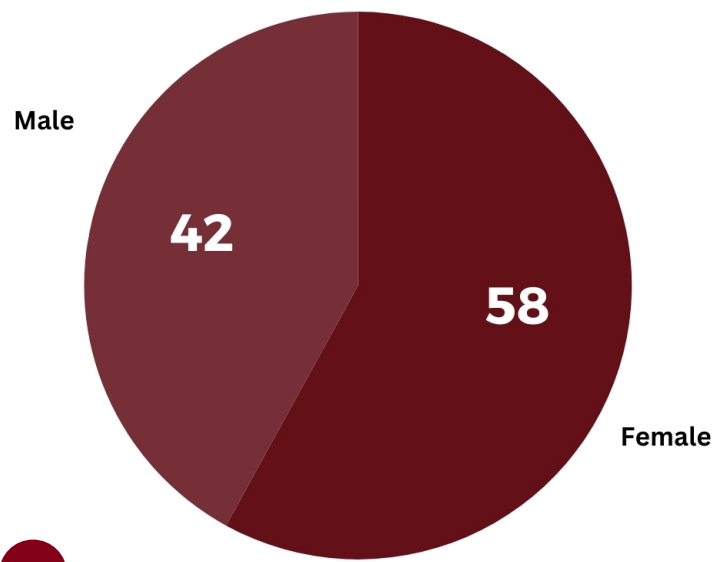
TOP AREAS OF STUDY

1. Health Sciences
2. Biological Sciences | Social Sciences
3. Engineering | Business Management | Humanities
4. Computer and Information Sciences
5. Education

TOP 5 COUNTRIES OF STUDY

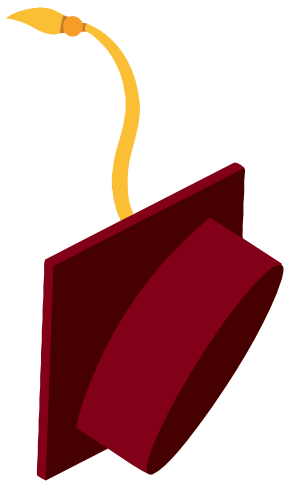
- U.S./Puerto Rico
- Colombia
- El Salvador/Peru
- Argentina
- Ecuador/Guatemala

GENDER DISTRIBUTION



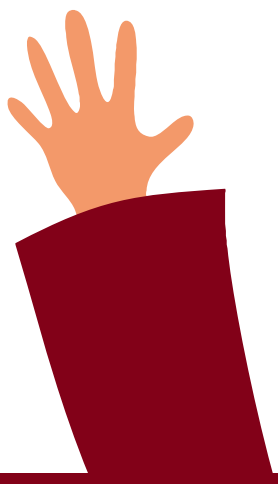
Thank You
for Making a Difference!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported our scholarship program. Your generosity has transformed the lives of these students, offering them a brighter future through the power of education.



If you'd like to join us in this mission and help even more students achieve their goals and dreams, you can donate. By scanning the QR code below.





Together, we can help transform today´s youth into tomorrow´s leaders. Join us in the work of chaning lives and buildind dreams!

For more information, please contact **scholarships@maestrocares.org**

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FOUNDATION

CHANGING LIVES, BUILDING DREAMS

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