



SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE

*Student of
Distinction Award
2015*



Anna Balcazar

Major: Sociology

Main Educational Goal: To earn a BA in Sociology and a Master's Degree in Counseling.

Life Goals: I plan to work at an institution of higher education as an academic counselor, and expand my knowledge working with individuals from multicultural backgrounds.

Significant Achievements:

- Southwestern College Vice President's List, Fall 2012
- Recipient/Member IME Becas: Adelante Estudiante Scholarship, Spring 2014
- EOPS student intern, Summer 2013–Present

How would you like others to remember you?

I would like to be remembered as a passionate individual always willing to motivate and help others.

Nominated by: Arlie Ricasa and Leticia Diaz



Nicholas Baltz

Major: Journalism

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to San Diego State University or Chico State, and earn my bachelor's degree. Then hopefully move onto a master's degree.

Life Goals: I want to make a positive impact on the world, like my parents have. I may end up working for VICE News or at Sports Illustrated. For now I am just living in the moment, and enjoying each day.

Significant Achievements:

- Sports Editor of *The Sun* Newspaper
- Junior Varsity basketball coach at Mar Vista High School

How would you like others to remember you?

As a loyal friend, fierce competitor, and a joy to be around.

Nominated by: Max Branscomb



Tatyana Castillo

Major: Mathematics and Philosophy

Main Educational Goal: I plan to transfer to a four-year university, graduate, and continue my studies until I earn a Doctorate Degree in Mathematics and Philosophy.

Life Goals: To become a professor, and teach both mathematics and philosophy. I hope to inspire more interest in math, and logic-based studies.

Significant Achievements:

- Southwestern College President's List 2014–15
- Member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society 2014–15
- Tutor and member of the Math, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) 2014–2015
- Presenter at the International BOOST Educational Conference 2014
- Volunteer for the San Diego Humane Society 2013–2015

How would you like others to remember you?

I would like others to remember me as the girl who blossomed at Southwestern College, thanks to inspiring mentors, professors, and supportive friends.

Nominated by: Cynthia McDaniel and Sany Ramirez



Jocelyn Diego-Chavelas

Major: Biology

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to University of California, Santa Barbara to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Zoology, and later continue into a Master's and Ph.D. program emphasized in Wildlife Conservation.

Life Goals: To become a wildlife veterinarian/conservationist, and work in a non-profit organization that helps animals in danger of extinction.

Significant Achievements:

- Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
- Vice President of Biology Club
- San Diego Humane Society Volunteer
- Project Wildlife Volunteer
- State of California MESA Leadership Conference Award Recipient

How would you like others to remember you?

I want to be remembered as the woman who is "the change that she wants to see in the world."

Nominated by: Dr. Raga Bakhiet



Magnolia Garcia

Major: Biology

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to University of California, San Diego and major in Biology. After that, graduate from a medical school, and become a pediatric oncologist.

Life Goals: To work for a non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating health disparities. I also want to have a family, as well as travel around the world, learning from different cultures.

Significant Achievements:

- President of the Southwestern College Chapter of the American Chemical Society
- President of Puente Project
- Puertista of the Year 2012-2013
- Outstanding Community Service Award
- Student Representative for the Southwestern College Service Learning Partner Committee

How would you like others to remember you? As someone who was easily distracted by happiness.

Nominated by: Noreen Maddox and Sylvia Felan-Gonzales



Margarette Anne Gonzales

Major: Nursing

Main Educational Goal: To earn a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing, and hopefully a Ph.D. in the future.

Life Goals: I would like to have a successful career in the medical field, and have more time with my family.

Significant Achievements:

- U.S. Air Force Reservist
- Southwestern College President's List (twice), and Vice President's List (three times)
- Valedictorian (Dialysis Technician, City Health Care Institute, March 2015)
- Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
- Helped in humanitarian support missions

How would you like others to remember you? Someone who goes above, and beyond in helping others.

Nominated by: Andrew Medin, Jack Barber, Susan Yonker, and Minerva Garcia



Charles Evans Goodman III

Major: Photography

Main Educational Goal: To graduate this year with an Associate's Degree in Photography, transfer to Sacramento State University the following year.

Life Goals: One of my life goals is to work for a major publication, such as Vogue or Glamour.

Significant Achievements:

- Honoree of Heroes and Sheres for African American students
- Submitted photos to the Del Mar Fair and received 2nd and 3rd place, summer 2014
- Captured moving performances of students for the Southwestern College Spring Dance Concert 2014
- Currently working with a production company to produce a vintage pin-up calendar

How would you like others to remember you? I would like people to remember how outgoing I am, even though I'm shy.

Nominated by: Matt Truitt and Sherilyn Salahuddin



Maria Fernanda Gutierrez

Major: Journalism

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to San Francisco State University, earn my Bachelor's in Journalism, and obtain my Master's in American History.

Life Goals: Becoming a great editor-in-chief for a prestigious newspaper/magazine, and traveling around the world to explore and fall in love with another country's culture.

Significant Achievements:

- Being the first in my family to transfer to a 4-year university
- Campus Editor for *The Sun* newspaper
- Participating in Vocal Ensembles, and Choirs at Southwestern College
- Member and ICC Representative for ASTRA
- Graduating high school with honors

How would you like others to remember you? As someone who always stood up and fought for what she believed, and as someone who never gave up on her dreams/aspirations regardless of how high or unreachable they were.

Nominated by: Dr. Max Branscomb



Rosella Luna

Major: Political Science

Main Educational Goal: To earn my Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, and continue my education by attending graduate school.

Life Goals: I want to work for both the California State Legislature, and a non-profit organization as a means of helping underrepresented groups in society.

Significant Achievements:

- Southwestern College Vice President's List
- Southwestern College Associated Student Organization (ASO) Vice President of Finance
- Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
- Volunteer for American Cancer Society's Relay for Life
- Admitted into University of California, San Diego and University of California, Santa Barbara

How would you like others to remember you?

As someone who did their best, and did not crumble when faced with unexpected circumstances.

Nominated by: Sylvia Felan-Gonzales



Claudia Anabel Mendoza

Major: Communication

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to a university, and earn a Bachelor's Degree in Communication Studies, along with a minor in Film and Television.

Life Goals: Establish a career as a field news reporter in order to make a difference in my community, and by encouraging awareness of social issues. Also, to make my family, as well as myself, proud of who I have become.

Significant Achievements:

- Puente Project Secretary and Public Relations Executive Officer
- Southwestern College Associated Student Organization (ASO) Elections Board Vice Coordinator
- Intern with Uni-Radio in the Promotions Department
- CCCP Scholar Student at UCLA through their SITE Plus Program
- Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

How would you like others to remember you?

As a dedicated, caring individual who always enjoyed giving back and made others feel special.

Nominated by: Dr. Angelica Suarez



Erika G. Meza

Major: Psychology

Main Educational Goal: To earn a Master's Degree and/or Ph.D. in the field of Psychology.

Life Goals: To become a clinical psychologist, and work with sexual abuse victims, and victims of other traumatic experiences of all ages. I would also like to work as a researcher and teach at a college or university.

Significant Achievements:

- Vice President of the Honor Society in Psychology, Psi Beta
- Member of the ASTRA Volunteer Club
- President's List for Academic Excellence in the Fall of 2014
- AVID tutor at Montgomery Middle School
- SDSU Student Research Symposium in the field of Psychology

How would you like others to remember you?

As someone who despite all hardships, endured through life, never gave up on her dreams, smiled at the world and others, and sought to make a difference in the world one step at the time.

Nominated by: Rudy Contreras and Danielle McAneney



Brenda Gregorio-Nieto

Major: Journalism

Main Educational Goal: To obtain my Master's in Journalism.

Life Goals: To become a Broadcast Journalist, and to create my own non-profit organization benefiting undocumented immigrants.

Significant Achievements:

- Public Relations Officer of IDEAS@SWC
- California State Assembly: Certificate of Recognition for Good Citizenship, and Work Habits Award recipient
- Chicano Latino Coalition AB540 Scholarship Award recipient 2014
- Staff writer for *The Sun* newspaper

How would you like others to remember you?

I would like others to remember me by my willingness to help those in need, and as a hard worker who didn't let anything stop her.

Nominated by: Max Branscomb, Norma Cazares, and Phil Saenz



Carlos Ponce

Major: Computer Engineering

Main Educational Goal: I intend to graduate from the University of California, San Diego majoring in Computer Science Engineering.

Life Goals: I want to work as an Engineer at Google, and compete in the 2016 Olympics.

Significant Achievements:

- Captain of both Cross-Country and Track Teams
- Academic Athlete of the Year 2013-2014
- Southwestern College President's Honor List
- PCAC Champion in Cross-Country 2014
- State Championships Qualifier in Cross-Country 2013-2015

How would you like others to remember you?
As a legend.

Nominated by: Carl Scarbnick



Ibtehal Hermiz Rizzo

Major: Computer Science

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to the University of California, San Diego and earn a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science.

Life Goals: To be able to complete my university goals and work as a Computer Scientist at Google Inc.

Significant Achievements:

- Southwestern College President's List for Academic Achievement
- Math, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Outstanding Student 2013-2014
- Master tutor at the Academic Success Center
- Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
- Service Learning certificate with Southwestern College Health Services

How would you like others to remember you?
I would like to be remembered as a diligent individual who selflessly guides and mentors others.

Nominated by: Dr. Raga Bakhiet



Juan Salazar

Major: Computer Science

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to a four-year university, and finish my Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science.

Life Goals: Create my own software developing company, where I can mix my two passions, music and programming.

Significant Achievements:

- Officer for the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers
- Tutor at the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement Center (MESA)
- Election Board Member for the ASO Elections of 2014
- Tutor for California Connects Program, teaching basic computer skills to the community of Chula Vista

How would you like others to remember you?
As a dedicated person striving to succeed, and always willing to help others.

Nominated by: Dr. Raga Bakhiet



Kristofer Schreiber

Major: Liberal Arts, Math and Science and Liberal Studies, Elementary Education

Main Educational Goal: A Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Studies in Elementary Education from SDSU.

Life Goals: To become an elementary school teacher.

Significant Achievements:

- Primary caregiver to my two young children, ages 5 and 8
- Received an Associate of Science Degree from Southwestern College in Landscape Occupations
- Volunteer for local elementary schools
- Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society
- Member of the South Bay Botanical Garden

How would you like others to remember you?
I would like to be remembered as an honest and hardworking, positive member of my family and my community while inspiring others to do the same.

Nominated by: Nghiep Quan



Carla Stewart

Major: Biology

Main Educational Goal: To transfer and obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Biology, and after taking the DAT, I would like to apply to dental schools.

Life Goals: To become a dentist and work in dental research.

Significant Achievements:

- Associated Student Organization (ASO) Student of the Month
- Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
- Volunteer at the Living Coast Discovery Center

How would you like others to remember you?

As an individual who pursued her dreams, and did what made her happy, while inspiring others to do the same.

Nominated by: Dr. Raga Bakhiet



Edna Stewart

Major: Biotechnology

Main Educational Goal: Earn a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology.

Life Goals: To become a biological researcher, and contribute to the wealth of knowledge in the field of genetics.

Significant Achievements:

- President's List for three semesters
- Obtained a high school diploma at the age of 12
- President of the Global Studies Club
- Completed an internship at San Diego State University
- Tutor at the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement Center (MESA)

How would you like others to remember you?

As one who consistently attempts to assuage human suffering, how ever and whenever possible.

Nominated by: Dr. Nouna Bakhiet, Laura Ryan, and Dr. Raga Bakhiet



Lara Stewart

Major: Biotechnology and Mathematics

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to a four-year institution, and obtain a Ph.D. in Cell and Molecular Biology.

Life Goals: I would like to contribute to the reduction of human suffering through research in the biomedical field.

Significant Achievements:

- Recipient of the Garden of Giving: Roy Olsen Biology and Biotechnology Academic Excellence Award
- Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Club Officer
- Volunteer for Dia De Las Ciencias at Montgomery Middle School

How would you like others to remember you?

I wish to be more tangible than a memory.

Nominated by: Dr. Raga Bakhiet, Dr. Nouna Bakhiet, Natalye Pass, and Laura Ryan



Stefanie Tellez

Major: Journalism and Media Studies

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to San Diego State's Journalism and Media Studies Program, and earn a master's degree from USC in the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

Life Goals: To become a nationally acclaimed inspirational and motivational speaker who encourages others to be confident and fearless.

Significant Achievements:

- Special Congressional Recognition from Juan Vargas, U.S. Member of Congress. Recognition of outstanding and valuable service to the community
- Recognition in Honor of International Youth Entrepreneurship from California State Senator Ben Hueso, 40th District. Honored and recognized for commitment to serve as a role model and leader to the youth of the 40th District
- Special Recognition from Remedios Gomez Arnau, Consul General of Mexico in San Diego. Recognized winning the youth Entrepreneurial Competition at Alliant University
- Awarded Scholarship from California Association for Bilingual Education
- 2013 Scholarship Winner, Union Tribune Young Latino Journalism Scholars Program

How would you like others to remember you? A driven, hardworking leader who strives to serve and be a voice in the community.

Nominated by: Ed Cosio and Dr. Max Branscomb