



SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE

Student of Distinction Award

2017



MARIA DEL CARMEN ALONSO

Major: Journalism

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to SDSU and earn a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism and eventually obtain a master's degree.

Life Goals: To become a TV reporter and news anchor. Another goal is to create my own TV station.

Significant Achievements: Intern for Univision San Diego and Telemundo television stations; active member of National Association of Hispanic Journalists; worked for the Southwestern College Sun Newspaper; awarded the Bernard Osher Scholarship Spring 2017; I assist a junior student who is autistic.

How would you like others to remember you: "As a woman who makes a positive difference in someone's life."

Nominated by: Courtney Leckey Bussell



ANDREA MARINA ARIAS

Major: Nursing

Main Educational Goal: To obtain my Bachelor's of Science in Nursing at San Diego State University.

Life Goals: To become a pediatric nurse.

Significant Achievements: National Hispanic Recognition Scholar

How would you like others to remember you: "As a kind and hardworking woman who honored God in every area of my life."

Nominated by: Laney Collins



LAURA VICTORIA CAMPOS

Major: Political Science

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to a four-year university, obtain a bachelor's degree and go to Stanford Law School.

Life Goals: As a lawyer, I plan to specialize in corporate law. I plan on supporting college students and organizing scholarship opportunities. Eventually I would like to return to school for my Master's Degree in Political Science and become involved in politics. When I'm close to retirement, I plan on teaching to inspire the love of learning in others.

Significant Achievements: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member; California Scholarship Federation Honor Society membership award; AP Scholar with Distinction award; Election Day poll worker; former intern for Eastlake law firm

How would you like others to remember you: "I'd like to be remembered as the young woman who was crazed with passion to accomplish everything she wanted in life."

Nominated by: Ed Cosio



LOUI CASTILLO

Major: Administration of Justice

Main Educational Goal: To attain my master's degree and to expand my education as much as possible.

Life Goals: to become a politician or the President of the United States. Also, to teach Mexican American studies.

Significant Achievements: Phi Theta Kappa member; ICC Representative for MAS Scholars; CVA Ambassador; public speaking presenter, 3.8 GPA

How would you like others to remember you: "I would like people to remember me for my kindness, positivity and caring personality."

Nominated by: Gregorio Pantoja



MONA DIBAS

Major: English and History

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to a four-year university, earn a Ph.D. in English and Middle Eastern Studies.

Life Goals: Become a social justice activist and become a professor at a university and Southwestern College.

Significant Achievements: Awarded Woman of the Year by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez-Fletcher; City of Chula Vista Champion; ASO President; UNITED movement; Students for Justice in Palestine President

How would you like others to remember you: "As someone who tried to make the world a better place."

Nominated by: Dr. Max Branscomb



NADA MAHMOUD DIBAS

Major: Political Science

Main Educational Goal: I aim to transfer, earn my Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, then go on to earn my law degree.

Life Goals: I want to become a civil rights attorney and fight for the rights of underrepresented communities.

Significant Achievements: ASO Vice President of Public Relations; competed for the SWC debate team and have found much success as a debater; awarded Woman of the Year by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez-Fletcher; served as an Intern for Congressman Juan Vargas; activist and fight for the rights of marginalized groups through community organizing and protests.

How would you like others to remember you: "As the outspoken Palestinian Hijabi Queen that dedicated herself to social justice, not by standing on the sidelines, but by partaking in the actual struggle."

Nominated by: Dr. Max Branscomb



ROBBY DIMALANTA

Major: Nursing

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to California State University, Long Beach and earn my Bachelor's Degree in Nursing and then pursue a medical doctor degree.

Life Goals: To become an anesthesiologist and to work for a non-profit organization geared towards improving public health services. Also, to travel the world and immerse myself in various cultures I have yet to discover.

Significant Achievements: Vice President of the American Medical Student Association; five-time President's List awardee for academic excellence; Member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society; Human Anatomy, Physiology, and Statistics Southwestern College Tutor; former recipient of ASO Campus Involvement and ASO Higher Scholastic Achievement Award

How would you like others to remember you: "As someone who defies expectations and serves to be a reminder that it can be done."

Nominated by: Dr. Christopher Hayashi



VANESSA FERNANDEZ

Major: Kinesiology Emphasis in Pre-Physical Therapy

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to San Diego State University or California State University, Long Beach, and earn my doctorate.

Life Goals: To become a physical therapist and gain at least five –10 years of experience to then own my own physical therapy clinic. I want to benefit those less fortunate who do not have insurance, and give them the proper care that they deserve.

Significant Achievements: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member based on academic achievements; ISLP nomination (International Scholar Laureate Program- Delegation on Nursing and Health Care); Vice President's Honor List for Fall Semester 2016, Top 3% of all Southwestern College students; the honor of being the Women's Soccer Co-Captain as a freshmen during the 2016 season

How would you like others to remember you: "I want others to remember me as a lost cause that took advantage of opportunities to make a difference, demonstrating that work ethic is a much stronger weapon than inborn intelligence; I am nothing but a student athlete building success on perseverance and humility."

Nominated by: Carolina Soto



ANETH FLORES

Major: Criminal Justice and Dance

Main Educational Goal: To obtain my bachelor's degree in order to attend law school, then earn a doctorate degree in the field of law.

Life Goals: To work for the state government as a civil rights attorney and help people in their pursuit of justice.

Significant Achievements: Volunteer at Casa Familiar teaching Spanish to adults; Community Steering Committee member; President's List for Academic Achievement for three years; member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, past member of the faculty hiring committee for the Department of Administration of Justice at Southwestern College

How would you like others to remember you: "As a dedicated, enthusiastic and inspiring person who achieves her goals by improving the community, making it a better and more fair place for all."

Nominated by: Dr. David Caspi



VICTORIA GONZALEZ

Major: Journalism

Main Educational Goal: Transfer, graduate and later earn a doctorate.

Life Goals: To become a food journalist specializing in immigration's influence on culture and food.

Significant Achievements: Campus Editor at Southwestern College Sun; winner of the ASO Higher Scholastic Achievement Award; singles and doubles player for Southwestern College Women's Tennis Team; President's and Vice-President's list awardee.

How would you like others to remember you: "A hardworking, first-generation Latina student who has overcome daily struggles to get an education and pass on knowledge."

Nominated by: Dr. Max Branscomb



FREDA HERNANDEZ

Major: Communication Studies & Early Childhood Education

Main Educational Goal: After earning my bachelor's degree, I want to pursue a dual degree in law and education.

Life Goals: Work in the realms of education and public service focusing on helping those from disenfranchised communities.

Significant Achievements: 2016/17 Student Trustee for Southwestern College; 2015/16 ASO Senator for the Higher Education Center at National City; 2016 Certificate of Congressional Recognition on behalf of Congressman Juan Vargas; 2015 ASO Student Advocacy Award; 2013 Certificate of Achievement, San Diego Police Department

How would you like others to remember you: "The mommy to the amazing Alexandra, who spent most of her youth working in her community to help those from impoverished communities reach their fullest God-given potential."

Nominated by: John Tolti, Rusty Nichols, Candice Taffolla-Schreiber, Linda de Caterina



MARYSOL HUICOCHEA

Major: Anthropology

Main Educational Goal: To obtain a PhD in Educational Leadership.

Life Goals: To create more programs that will help motivate, inform, and guide students in hope of helping them to complete higher education, particularly those students who are first generation, low income or underrepresented.

Significant Achievements: President of Lead By Example (LBE); Member of Psi Beta Honor Society; Intern at Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood in the College Ambassador Program representing Southwestern College; 2015–16 ASO Vice President of Finance Award recipient for serving as a Senator at Large for the Associated Student Organization; 2015–16 UCLA CCCP Scholar

How would you like others to remember you: "As someone who followed her ideals and always tried to see the best in others."

Nominated by: Dr. Guadalupe Corona, April Brenner



MIRELLA LOPEZ

Major: Journalism

Main Educational Goal: Earn a master's degree from the University of Southern California.

Life Goals: Work as a bilingual public information officer at a public school district.

Significant Achievements: Woman of the Year Award by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez-Fletcher; Hispanic Heritage Award for Leadership by Assemblywoman Dr. Shirley Weber; Editor-in-Chief of the Southwestern College Sun; City of Chula Vista Champion medalist; 20 journalism awards by numerous collegiate and professional organizations

How would you like others to remember you: "As a leader that empowered other students to set high standards for themselves and gave them the tools to reach them."

Nominated by: Dr. Max Branscomb



CRISTINA SANCHEZ MALDONADO

Major: Communication

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to a four-year university in Fall 2017.

Life Goals: Work in the FBI's communication department.

Significant Achievements: Member of Phi Theta Kappa; working for the Central San Diego Black Chamber of Commerce as administrative coordinator and handling internal communication; Study Abroad, Fall 2015 in Florence, Italy.

How would you like others to remember you: "As a person who has fearless passion to pursue her dreams."

Nominated by: Arlie Ricasa



ELIZABETH TRUJILLO MURILLO

Major: Biology

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to Harvard University, UC San Francisco, or Stanford School of Medicine.

Life Goals: To become a Coroner or Embalmer.

Significant Achievements : Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member; Phi Theta Kappa Alpha Pi Epsilon Chapter Treasurer; American Medical Student Association Club President

How would you like others to remember you: “As a kind, friendly, and admirable person who impacted people’s lives in a positive way.”

Nominated by: Mourad Mjahed



ILSE NARANJO

Major: Industrial Engineering

Main Educational Goal: Graduate with a Bachelor’s Degree in Industrial Engineering and further my education by obtaining a master’s degree.

Life Goals: Be the CEO of a tech company that dedicates itself to innovation, development of technologies, and helps others achieve their goals. Form a family of my own and be a great mother.

Significant Achievements: Former Vice President of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE); Southwestern College President’s List; tutor at the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Center; Garden of Giving: Engineering Academic Excellence Award and Southwestern SHPE Scholarship for Achievement recipient; accepted to Cal Poly Pomona.

How would you like others to remember you: “As a friendly, hard-working, and persistent woman who enjoys helping others and does not give up despite adversities.”

Nominated by: Mourad Mjahed



FRANCISCO ROBLES

Major: Electrical Engineering

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to UC Berkeley as an Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences major, and also earn master's and doctoral degrees.

Life Goals: To work on energy research and create my own organization about sustainable energies.

Significant Achievements: President, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE); Research Intern at UCSD (Summer 2017); Southwestern College President's List; tutor at the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Center; SHPE National Institute for Leadership Advancement (NILA) graduate

How would you like others to remember you: "As a man who never gives up, and always works hard to make his dreams come true."

Nominated by: Javier Madrigal, Mourad Mjahed



MORIAH RODRIGUEZ

Major: English

Main Educational Goal: Short term: to transfer and earn my Bachelor of Arts Degree in English. Long term: earn a master's degree and eventually a doctorate.

Life Goals: To become an English teacher/professor and inspire students. Establish a support group and awareness for students who have experienced bullying and/or chemotherapy.

Significant Achievements: Member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society; President's List for Academic Achievement; Youth Mentor for pre-teens and teenagers at First Family Community Church; Volunteer at Integrity Charter School for the past seven years

How would you like others to remember you: "As a girl that believes in God, in people, and in perseverance."

Nominated by: Sandra Calderon, Ashley Rose



CINDY SISON

Major: Marine Biology and possible minor in teaching

Main Educational Goal: Earn my associate's degree at Southwestern College to transfer to the University of San Diego where I plan to work towards my Doctorate in Marine Biology and earn a Master's Degree in teaching.

Life Goals: Become a marine biologist, to assess the effects of the environment and industries on marine animals. I hope to inform people of these issues and think of alternative ways to better protect the animals in marine environments. Later, I would love to have a career in teaching.

Significant Achievements: Student of the Year Certificate; involved as a volunteer at the Living Coast Discovery Center

How would you like others to remember you: "I want others to remember me as not only a disabled individual, but as a disabled individual who worked very hard for what she wanted and was able to accomplish tasks that an abled person was able to accomplish."

Nominated by: Youssef Francis, Dr. S. Griffith-Jackson, Kimberly Puen, Nghiep Quan



KRYSTEN EMANUEL TEMPLIN

Major: Public Health with an emphasis in Epidemiology and a minor in Microbiology

Main Educational Goal: To earn a Doctor of Medicine Degree (MD).

Life Goals: to become a trauma surgeon.

Significant Achievements: President's List three times; member of Phi Theta Kappa; volunteered at the Women's Center in a hospital for three years; started a "Learning to Read" program where I tutor children ages 5-12 how to read

How would you like others to remember you: "We all fall down, but she always got back up."

Nominated by: Dr. Max Branscomb