



SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE

Student of Distinction Award 2018



KHALIL ADISA

Major: Criminal Justice

Main Educational Goal: To transfer and graduate with a bachelor's from San Diego State University.

Life Goals: Working in law enforcement to bridge the gap between police and minority populations.

Significant Achievements: President of B2LA (Black Brotherhood Leadership Association); Vice President of Black Student Union; CAASIE Scholarship recipient; Diversity Champion Award

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? It shows me as long as you don't let fear take over you, you can do things you never thought possible or beyond your abilities.

How would you like others to remember you: I was a faithful servant to students and showed black excellence everywhere I went.

Nominated by: Dr. Jonathan King; Abdishakur Omar



HANAN ALI

Major: Biomedical Engineering

Main Educational Goal: My main educational goal is to earn an MD after receiving my bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering.

Life Goals: My life goal is to become a physician who provides affordable, quality health care to underserved communities in sub-saharan Africa.

Significant Achievements: Pearson Scholar recipient; Phi Theta Kappa Global Leader of Promise; All-California First Academic Team member; former ASO Outreach Vice President; MESA Tutor

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? Receiving this award means that my hard work at Southwestern College has paid off and this strengthens my resolve to excel at my transfer school and subsequently medical school.

How would you like others to remember you: I want to be remembered as the woman who changed the health care landscape in sub-saharan Africa and inspired a new generation of female African scientists.

Nominated by: Dr. Michael Odu; Mourad Mjahed



KERRIN BRADFORD

Major: Dental Hygiene

Main Educational Goal: To earn a Master's Degree in Dental Hygiene and to be able to teach Dental Hygiene.

Life Goals: To become a dentist.

Significant Achievements: Dental Hygiene Club President for both years in the program; Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member; 2017 recipient of the Sherry Mears Memorial Scholarship; Volunteered over 20 hours in San Diego County promoting oral health; Volunteered over 200 hours at Scripps Memorial Hospital, La Jolla, in the PACU & Cardiac Unit

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? I am honored to be one of the recipients for this award at a college where hard work and dedication do not go unnoticed. It will fund one of the three examination boards I need to complete for Dental Hygiene licensure.

How would you like others to remember you: I hope to be remembered as a Godly woman who was kind, compassionate & always put others before herself.

Nominated by: Karen Kubischta



JUSTINE LOURDES BUENAVENTURA

Major: Kinesiology, Emphasis in Pre-Physical Therapy

Main Educational Goal: To graduate with a Ph.D in Physical Therapy and in Biomechanics and Physical Rehabilitation.

Life Goals: To become a Physical Therapist. I want to embark on medical missions to areas inhabited by people with little to no access to treatment and services.

Significant Achievements: FYE Program Peer Mentor; President, American Medical Student Association 2018; SHARP Chula Vista Medical Center CORE Award for Service Individual; Diversity Champion of the Year Award Nominee; San Diego State University, Fall 2018

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award serves as a reminder that my hard work will be greatly rewarded in the future. Accomplishments throughout my journey inspire me to keep powering through.

How would you like others to remember you: As a loving, passionate, and strong leader who continued to work hard towards her goals in the face of challenges.

Nominated by: Gary Brown; Mourad Mjahed



MARSHA CHOC

Major: Education, Society, and Human Development

Main Educational Goal: My main educational goal is to obtain a Doctoral Degree in Education.

Life Goals: To one day become a college superintendent so that I may help the students of my community succeed.

Significant Achievements: President of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Alpha Pi Epsilon chapter at Southwestern College; Awarded "Distinguished Officer Team" Award at Phi Theta Kappa Internationals; received five awards at an international level at Phi Theta Kappa Internationals; President's List

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award means so much to me because it is a way of recognizing my achievements up to this point. This award has served as an inspiration for me to continue my passion for academic excellence. Southwestern College and the professors I have met here have truly shaped me into the student I am today.

How would you like others to remember you: I would love others to remember me as someone who never gave up despite all the challenges life gives us.

Nominated by: Dr. Michael Odu



ALVIN COOK

Major: Liberal Arts, Math and Science

Main Educational Goal: I have been accepted to Columbia University in the City of New York. My goal is to complete my B.A. in Economics-Statistics and Computer Science. I will be a CEO and founder and hope to earn a Ph.D. from Stanford University in Behavior Design.

Life Goals: To create a global technology platform that makes it easier for people to earn money by simply using their cell phone so they may improve their lives.

Significant Achievements: Jack Kent Cooke Scholar Finalist; Phi Theta Kappa All-California 1st Team; ASO Senator, School of Business & Technology; Infinity Beyond Club Founder/President; Volunteer member of non-profit team which secured \$2.5M grant from City of San Diego to build startup accelerator in historically low-moderate income community

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? Only 1 out of 100 black men complete their degree within six years at SWC. This award means that others have a path full of light to help them find their way.

How would you like others to remember you: As the man who created the company that helped to democratize capitalism.

Nominated by: Dr. Michael Odu



ARIANA DELUCCHI LORENZO

Major: Nursing

Main Educational Goal: To transfer and obtain a Master's of Science Degree in Nursing (MSN).

Life Goals: To become a Neonatal Nurse Practitioner. I would also love to devote time to volunteering in free/low-income clinics.

Significant Achievements: Vice President-Elect of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society; volunteer tutor; church volunteer (child care, hospitality, prayer team); volunteering in homeless shelters and homeless outreach

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This is a blessing to my family and I as it helps ease the burden of paying for college. The award goes beyond just receiving money, it shows me that all my hard work is being recognized and encouraged, and that all my sacrifices are worth it. It not only serves as extra motivation to keep up my good work, but gives me the opportunity to pursue the career of my dreams. For that, I am forever thankful.

How would you like others to remember you: As someone who was always kind, caring, generous, and pouring her heart into everything that she did.

Nominated by: Dr. Max Branscomb



NINA DESMOND

Major: Nursing

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to a 4-year college.

Life Goals: To become a Registered Nurse and serve my community.

Significant Achievements: I am part of SWC Phi Theta honors; International Scholar Laureate program; participant in the Guardian Scholars Club

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award is more than a financial benefit to me. It demonstrates that I am on the right track to pursue my dreams. This is a great honor and allows me to have reassurance that I am hard working and have the strength to improve all of the negative stereotypes that target foster children. This award empowers me to approach my education with confidence. It will give me an opportunity for the future, and motivation for the present. I will be able to pay off a little of my student debt and focus more on my studies. I am truly thankful and honored to receive this amazing award.

How would you like others to remember you: She never stopped and never will.

Nominated by: Dr. Art Guaracha



MARISSA EGUIZA

Major: Film, Television and Media Arts

Main Educational Goal: My main educational goal is to earn a Ph.D., though I am currently getting ready to transfer to a UC to earn my bachelor's degree.

Life Goals: To live a happy and healthy lifestyle with my family as well as becoming a Director of Photography for the film industry.

Significant Achievements: ASO Senator at Large; ASO Social Vice President; Puente Project Alumni; Volunteer Softball Coach

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? It is an honor to earn an award such as this one. To me, it means that my hard work and dedication are paying off. This award will greatly contribute to my educational journey by getting me one step closer to achieving my degree. It also reassures me that this is not the end but just the beginning of my future and I am forever thankful to be given this opportunity.

How would you like others to remember you: I would like others to remember me as a strong, hard-working person who is open-minded and never gives up when times are hard.

Nominated by: Sandra Cortez



ZAMIRA D. FUENTES LOPEZ

Major: Anthropology and History

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to UCSD or UCLA and graduate with a Master's Degree in Archeology with an emphasis in Meso American Studies.

Life Goals: To travel and work on different archeological sites and eventually follow in the footsteps of my mother by becoming a teacher.

Significant Achievements: Secretary of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society; MAS Scholar; President's & Vice President's List

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? Receiving this award means very much to me because I can show my younger brother that through perseverance you can achieve a lot.

How would you like others to remember you: As a happy, energetic, and hardworking woman.

Nominated by: Greg Pantoja; Leticia Diaz



MARTIN LOFTIN

Major: Journalism

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to SDSU and eventually earn a Master's Degree in Journalism.

Life Goals: Become an accomplished novelist and operate my own progressive newspaper.

Significant Achievements: Arts Editor for The Sun; six awards from the Journalism Association of Community Colleges and four awards from the San Diego Press Club

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award shows me that pursuing my education has been worth all the hard work. With this award, I'll be able to focus much more attention on transferring to SDSU.

How would you like others to remember you: I'd like my friends and colleagues to remember the fun times we had, and how we stuck together during the harder times.

Nominated by: Dr. Max Branscomb



DINEO MAINE

Major: Liberal Arts, Arts & Humanities

Main Educational Goal: My main educational goal is to graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Comparative Literature and eventually earn a doctoral degree.

Life Goals: I would like to be a writer, and one day have the opportunity to work with and empower other young writers in my country, Botswana. I believe in the importance of these voices, their stories, and the perspective they have to offer.

Significant Achievements: President of the SWC Psi Beta National Honor Society chapter; ASO Academic Excellence Scholarship recipient

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? Receiving this award means a great deal to myself and my family. It will help lift the financial burden and allow me the opportunity to further my education. I can continue to not just dream of a better future, but work towards it as well.

How would you like others to remember you: I would like others to remember me as a passionate, genuine, driven, and loving person, that made them feel included and valued.

Nominated by: Diane Palmer; Francisco Bustos; Tracy Schaelen



JENNIFER MCCANDLESS

Major: Education

Main Educational Goal: Transfer and earn a bachelor's degree.

Life Goals: Educator, be it as a teacher, tutor, or parent.

Significant Achievements: President's List at SWC; Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society at SWC; Power Study Program Mentor; Small Group leader at church, and help care for the toddlers at church

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award is such an honor, and the scholarship will make it easier for me to reach my goals as I transfer.

How would you like others to remember you: I would like to be remembered as someone who cares, took time for people, and loved well

Nominated by: Nghiep Quan; Minerva Garcia



VICTOR MORRILL

Major: Business Administration

Main Educational Goal: To achieve a Master's Degree in Business Administration

Life Goals: Start a non-profit to assist former inmates with their educational goals.

Significant Achievements: A.S. in Business at Taft College; working with Operation Promise's food pantry and homeless resources; worked with Lighthouse Care Foundation feeding and supplying resources for the homeless

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award reinforces my commitment to excellence in academics and social intelligence. This award recognizes the tireless work of my educators and their continued faith in my abilities. The impact this award will have on my future will be the high standards I will require of myself in order to reflect the honor of being chosen a Student of Distinction at Southwestern College.

How would you like others to remember you: A tireless worker for the betterment of our society, especially for those who are less fortunate.

Nominated by: Katherine Ness Santana



JANITZIA OLIVAS

Major: Mechanical Engineering

Main Educational Goal: Conduct research in Mechanical Engineering during summer 2018. Obtain a Bachelor's, Master's and a Doctoral Degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Life Goals: To work as an engineer in a non-profit organization benefiting isolated communities in Third World countries.

Significant Achievements: Secretary, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers; MESA Tutor; Research intern at UCSD in the Structural and Materials Engineering Department; SHPE San Diego Professional Chapter Scholarship Awardee; ASO Campus Involvement Scholarship Awardee.

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award provides me great support and motivation that will facilitate one more step in my educational goal to achieve my full potential.

How would you like others to remember you: As a virtuous woman who pursues God's purpose through the STEM path.

Nominated by: Mourad Mjahed



BRENDA PALSTRING

Major: Occupational Health and Safety

Main Educational Goal: To graduate with honors.

Life Goals: To find new and innovative solutions to bring safety and environmental protection to the forefront of employer's business goals.

Significant Achievements: Served as President, Vice President, Secretary, and ICC Representative for the Environmental Technology Club during various semesters; Phi Theta Kappa member; President's List multiple times; Dean's List; received several awards for academic achievement

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award is dedicated to all my children and their futures. I hope they use my example as proof that with hard work and dedication, they can do anything at any age. This award money will be going toward my wedding in September.

How would you like others to remember you: I hope to be remembered as a dedicated leader, determined student, and devoted mother.

Nominated by: Carla Edwards; Eleuterio Buquiran; Marie Vicario



YESSICA PINEDA

Major: Nursing

Main Educational Goal: Earn my Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing.

Life Goals: Become a Family Nurse Practitioner.

Significant Achievements: Class Officer for ADN Cohort 2016-18; Sharp Chula Vista Integrates Therapy Leader; Thousand Smiles Foundation International Volunteer; San Diego National Hispanic Nurses Association Scholarship Recipient; Coeta Scholarship Recipient 2016-18

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? Receiving this award means to me that there are people who continue to believe in me and my pursuit of helping others. Receiving this award allows me to further my educational pursuit, follow my dreams and continue giving to my community.

How would you like others to remember you: As a dedicated mother striving to succeed for her son and loving family.

Nominated by: Mary Livingston



BETINA RUBIO

Major: Hospitality Food Management; Culinary Arts and Business Administration

Main Educational Goal: To graduate with an Associates Degree in Hospitality Food Management; continue taking courses for my second major in Business Administration. Transfer to SDSU or UC Berkeley in Fall 2019.

Life Goals: To own a catering business and create a non-profit organization to teach young women how to cook, while also serving those with food insecurities.

Significant Achievements: Chicano Latino Career Technical Scholarship recipient; elected as Phi Theta Kappa's Communications VP of the Nevada/California Region; Treasurer of Phi Theta Kappa; assisted with SWC Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week; Eastlake Church Volunteer

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? This award encourages and motivates me to continue striving for my goals. It's proof that hard work and dedication are necessary to lead and succeed. This will forever be a part of the story I share with other students to strengthen them and give them hope.

How would you like others to remember you: As a compassionate person who is always willing to serve others.

Nominated by: Michelle Sepulveda



CYNTHIA SAN PEDRO

Major: Business Administration and Administration of Justice

Main Educational Goal: Transfer to SDSU and earn a Master's Degree in Business while attending the police academy.

Life Goals: To become a detective for the Chula Vista Police Department and change the way people perceive the police by being more involved with the community. I would like to expand my family's business, creating jobs for the Chula Vista and Otay Mesa communities with an emphasis on elderly employment. Also, I aspire to teach in other countries.

Significant Achievements: Phi Theta Kappa International Society; ASO Senator-At-Large; ASO Executive Secretary; ASO Vice President of Finance; President's List.

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? It has assured me that what I'm doing is honorable and worthwhile. When future employers view my resume, this award may imply that I am ambitious. Since I will be transferring the scholarship will make a difference with tuition or textbooks.

How would you like others to remember you: As the sweetest and friendliest person they have ever met; someone who devoted her life to helping others.

Nominated by: Dr. Tanya Haddad



KIRSTYN SMITH

Major: Accounting

Main Educational Goal: To transfer to a 4-year university, hopefully USC and obtain my bachelor's, master's and Ph.D.

Life Goals: To become a CPA and start my own accounting firm.

Significant Achievements: Girl Scout Gold Award, which is achieved by only 5% of Girl Scouts; Becoming the youngest and first African American ASO President; President's List (two years); UMOJA President of the UMOJA Learning Community; Phi Theta Kappa member and Honor Student

What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future? It represents everything that I thrive to be. It will help ensure that I will have the financial means to continue my education without having any interruption and the stress of funding it. My goal is to complete my education with as little financial debt as possible.

How would you like others to remember you: As a strong, confident black woman with big dreams, great ambitions, love for others and a heart as big as her smile.

Nominated by: Dr. Kindred Murillo; Nicole Hosfield