



## KEVIN ESQUERRA ARELLANO

**Major:** Electrical Engineering

**Main Educational Goal:** Earn a Master's Degree in Robotics and Artificial Intelligence.

**Life Goals:** To help better communities and individuals through education.

**Significant Achievements:** Former President of Math and Science Club at Southwestern College; SWC ASO Vice President of Finance; Power Study Leader; MESA Tutor; active member of S.H.P.E at SWC.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?**

This award serves as a reminder that as long as I work hard for my goals I will be able to achieve them.

**How would you like others to remember you:**

A person who was dedicated to help others.

**Nominated by:** Minerva Garcia, Mourad Mjahed



## JAMSHID AZIZ

**Major:** Computer Science

**Main Educational Goal:** Earn a PhD in Computer Science.

**Life Goals:** Start-up company.

**Significant Achievements:** President's list; Phi Theta Kappa member; Founder of Jaguar Developer's Club; MESA Tutor.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** This award is a great inspiration for me to continue to excel in my studies and keep working hard when I transfer.

**How would you like others to remember you:**

I would like others to remember me as the student that would arrive to school at 9 p.m. and leave at 9 p.m. every day.

**Nominated by:** Mourad Mjahed, Carl Scarbnick



## SHANNON AZOCAR

**Major:** Liberal Arts: Arts and Humanities

**Main Educational Goal:** Master's Degree or teaching credential in Music.

**Life Goals:** To help others find happiness, inspiration, compassion and comfort through music listening, music performance and music education.

**Significant Achievements:** Southwestern College President's List- Fall 2017; Southwestern College Vice President's List-Spring 2018, Fall 2018; SWC Band Coach-Sunnyside Elementary 2018-2019; Serve on the Hedenkamp Elementary Parent Teacher Association, Executive Board 2016-2019; Hedenkamp Elementary GATE Volunteer Instructor-Knitting-2018-2019; Southwestern College Applied Music Concert Scholar-Spring 2018.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** It is heart-warming to be recognized for leadership and contributions to my community at home and at SWC. This award will be a reminder to me to never give up in pursuit of reaching my goals. There may be challenges along the way and I sometimes may have to forge a path unseen in order to realize my own dream, but as I reach my goal(s), those challenges—those experiences—will allow me to grow, ever expanding the scope of my own perspective.

**How would you like others to remember you:**

I would like to be remembered as someone who grew to have the courage and the ambition to follow her heart in order to realize her dreams.

**Nominated by:** Dr. Cynthia McGregor



## PATRICIA CASTRO

**Major:** Social Work

**Main Educational Goal:** To transfer.

**Life Goals:** To learn as much as possible and to give back to our community.

**Significant Achievements:** 1. In May 2016, I wore the cap and gown for the first time in my life when I graduated from Montgomery Adult School. 2. In the Spring of 2018, I was awarded the Lifetime Certification for International Tutor Training Program by Southwestern College. 3. May 24, 2010 Certificate of Appreciation for service as OASIS Inter-Generational Tutoring Program. 4. May 18, 2017 Certificate of Accomplishment by FYE for successfully completing the First-Year Experience Program. 5. I donate blood to San Diego Blood Bank every three months.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?**

This award means that effort and hard work are valued. Being nominated is the highest honor I have received as a student. It is hard to explain the emotions I experience at this moment, but this sensation will stay with me forever!

**How would you like others to remember you:**

As an inspiration and an example of tenacity, hard work and high expectations.

**Nominated by:** Jaquelyn Gardea, Fabiola Beck-Threats





## BRITTANY CRUZ-FEJERAN

**Major:** Journalism

**Main Educational Goal:** Work towards a Master's in Journalism.

**Life Goals:** Report on climate change, animal endangerment and national politics.

**Significant Achievements:** Mark of Excellence Award from Society of Professional Journalists; Certificate of Excellence from San Diego Press Club; Photo Editor position at my college paper; volunteer photographer for Autism Tree Project Foundation; pursuing a better college education away from Guam.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** It is further proof that I am making my family on Guam proud of me. My island and family meant so much to me, and it is because of them that I had the courage to leave.

**How would you like others to remember you:** I want to be remembered as someone who fought for those who could not fight for themselves.

**Nominated by:** Dr. Max Branscomb



## ESPERANZA DE LARA

**Major:** Political Science

**Main Educational Goal:** Transfer to an Ivy League university to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, and eventually a law degree.

**Life Goals:** Become a licensed attorney and an expert in political communications, eventually serving as either a political campaign manager in the United States, or as an electoral rights officer abroad.

**Significant Achievements:** President, Psi Beta Honor Society; Executive Secretary, ASO; Senator At-Large, ASO; VP of Communications, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society; Chula Vista Champions Award recipient; inclusion on multiple President's Lists.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** This award means the world to me because as I prepare to transfer to a four-year university on the East Coast, I hope to engage with my new local community with as much empathy and compassion as I have with the current community that I call home. The scholarship money will also help to alleviate some of the costs of my education as I move forward to complete my undergraduate and law degrees.

**How would you like others to remember you:** As an intelligent and thoughtful woman who has empowered others by advocating for peace and justice, and by helping further efforts to create a more equitable and democratic world.

**Nominated by:** Dr. Michael Odu, Danielle McAneney



## JUSTIN DOTTERY

**Major:** Communications

**Main Educational Goal:** To transfer.

**Life Goals:** To become an NFL/NBA Analyst and voice for the Black community.

**Significant Achievements:** Campus and Sports Editor of SWC Sun Newspaper; Society of Professional Journalists Mark of Excellence Finalist; Journalism Association of Community Colleges On-the-Spot competition honorable mention; former football player.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** It means that I am making strides to become the leader I hope to be one day for my community.

**How would you like others to remember you:** As someone who exudes Black excellence.

**Nominated by:** Dr. Max Branscomb



## DAVID GUILLENT

**Major:** Nursing

**Main Educational Goal:** Bachelor's of Science in Nursing

**Life Goals:** To become an Emergency Room Nurse.

**Significant Achievements:** Black Belt in Jiu Jitsu. Kids Jiu Jitsu instructor at Alliance Eastlake for six years. Led women's self-defense seminars. Coached T-Ball.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** This award is an honor to receive because it proves to me that hard work pays off. I have worked tirelessly (literally) to not only meet expectations, but try to exceed them. Ten years ago when I was a full-time student, I quit because I really believed school just wasn't for me. Now I realize that I just needed a little motivation and determination to accomplish my educational goals. Today, in addition to being a full-time student, I work two to three jobs at any given time, make time to have fun with my wife and kids, and I earned this SODA award. This will always remind me that IT CAN BE DONE.

**How would you like others to remember you:** I hope I am remembered as a hard worker and provider for my family.

**Nominated by:** Candice Taffolla-Schreiber





## FRANCISCO (FRANKIE) HARO

**Major:** Criminal Justice, Communication

**Main Educational Goal:** My main educational goal is to obtain a graduate degree to give back to my community.

**Life Goals:** My life goal is not only to become an FBI agent, but also to inspire each and every one to believe in themselves that it is possible to achieve the impossible.

**Significant Achievements:** Community service: fed the homeless, youth mentoring and beach clean ups. Graduating with honors 3.68 GPA while being involved in The Criminal Justice Club, the Pre-law Club, EOPS Club, and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. I am Vice President of Social Affairs in Phi Theta Kappa. Most importantly I am a son, brother, an uncle and the best student.

### What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?

Receiving this award makes me feel honored. This will not just impact me to keep achieving great things in my life but my nieces, nephews and hopefully my future children will be impacted as well.

### How would you like others to remember you?

I would like to be remembered by no matter the adversity or obstacles I was faced with, I was always able to keep one foot in front of the other while keeping a smile.

**Nominated by:** Noreen Maddox, Gary Guthrie



## NEREYDA LOPEZ RESENDIZ

**Major:** Mechanical Engineering

**Main Educational Goal:** To transfer.

**Life Goals:** To become a Mechanical Engineer.

**Significant Achievements:** Alpha Pi Epsilon Vice President of Honors in Action.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** I am honored to be receiving this award.

**How would you like others to remember you?** I would like others to remember me as a genuine and dedicated person.

**Nominated by:** Michael Odu, Myriam Moody, Minerva Garcia, Val Villegas



## LIZETH LOPEZ VAZQUEZ

**Major:** Biochemistry and Cell Biology

**Main Educational Goal:** To earn an MD-PhD after completing my Bachelor's Degree in Biochemistry and Cell Biology.

**Life Goals:** To become a physician who provides medical care to people in third-world countries and a researcher that looks for ways to make the system work better for everyone.

**Significant Achievements:** Offered a summer internship at the University of Pennsylvania in the Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering Department; Former Nevada/California Southeast District Vice President for Phi Theta Kappa; Regional Awards for Excellence in Leadership and Scholarship; performing cancer research with Dr. David Hecht; Received "Distinguished Chapter Officer Award" at the Phi Theta Kappa International Conference in 2018.

### What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?

This award is an honor to the times that I have encountered a challenge and I have kept going. Receiving this award will serve as a motivation and a reminder of my educational goals.

### How would you like others to remember you?

As a determined woman who stands for what she believes in, and someone who uses her passion for Biochemistry to make a positive change in her community.

**Nominated by:** Mourad Mjahed, Dr. Michael Odu



## MARIA ISABEL MEDINA DE SKLAVENITIS

**Major:** Spanish

**Main Educational Goal:** To transfer to SDSU and finish a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences.

**Life Goals:** I would like to be a Spanish instructor.

**Significant Achievements:** Fall 2018: Vice President's Honor List; Spring 2018: President's List; Fall 2017: President's List; October 2017: Phi Theta Kappa/National Literacy Nota Benne Award for a poem I submitted; May 2015: California Assembly Honor Award: academic excellence at Chula Vista Adult School.

### What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?

This recognition means a lot to me because it motivates me to continue my desire for academic improvement. I am a non-traditional college student. I set the pattern for all those women who are thinking of continuing their studies to do so, to motivate them, to empower them, showing them that their goals can be achieved. And above all, as a mother of three young adults, I am teaching them with my example that they can achieve everything that they do with dedication, love and commitment.

### How would you like others to remember you?

As a woman committed to her goals, responsible, hardworking, and full of love who likes to help her community.

**Nominated by:** Carlos Castellanos, Esther Alonso





## SARA MEZA

**Major:** Sustainability

**Main Educational Goal:** Transfer and attain a Bachelor's in Sustainability from San Diego State University and an Associate's of Science in Urban Sustainable Agriculture.

**Life Goals:** To build and bridge healthier communities starting from the ground up, beginning with our brothers and sisters most in need. I hope to increase nutritional access in impoverished communities and one day advise my city on conservation and environmental safety.

**Significant Achievements:** Cancer for College Scholar; National Collegiate Cancer Foundation Recipient; Graduate and Intern of Wild Willow Farm's School for Sustainable Farming; Church Volunteer and Young Adult Leader; have assisted in agricultural/food security projects with local and international organizations.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** Nothing means more to my family and I than receiving support for my mission of service and education, especially after so many trials. I have been blessed with a second chance at life to use my gifts for God's will and for good: to perpetually give back the love and blessings I have received towards a more just, peaceful and healthful world through environmental studies. This gift has completely enabled my education for this coming year and beyond; and for that, I am forever grateful.

**How would you like others to remember you:** A selfless and loving steward and servant of God.

**Nominated by:** Allen Chu



## JOEL OJEDA

**Major:** History

**Main Educational Goal:** Master's Degree

**Life Goals:** To become an immigration lawyer to help my people be represented to the fullest in the American law system.

**Significant Achievements:** President of MAS Scholars; Member of Phi Theta Kappa.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** This award would mean a better future because it would help fund my academic goals and provide credibility towards my passions.

**How would you like others to remember you:** I would like to have people remember me as a hard worker and dedicated to my community.

**Nominated by:** Greg Pantoja



## GISELLE ROMO

**Major:** Aerospace Engineering

**Main Educational Goal:** To transfer to Stanford University and earn my Bachelor's in aeronautics and astronautics, then go on to get a Master's and Doctoral degree.

**Life Goals:** My goal is to become an aerospace engineer and dedicate my work to advancing human space exploration technologies for Mars and beyond, with a specific interest in in-space propulsion.

**Significant Achievements:** President of the SWC Math and Science Club; President and founder of the former SWC SWE Proposed Affiliate Section; 2018 NASA Community College Aerospace Scholar; Secretary of the SWC Astronomy Club; and former Puenteista.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** It is an indication that my hard work, sacrifice and perseverance have been worthwhile, and it reinforces my motivation and belief that I am on the right path. Coming from a lower-middle class family, I am grateful that the scholarship will help me to achieve my academic goals while easing financial burdens. Beyond this, however, I hope this award will serve as an inspiration to my brother, my friends and to anyone who has ever doubted themselves, so they may know that their goals, no matter how large, can and will be achieved.

**How would you like others to remember you:** I would like others to remember me as a strong, hard-working, kindhearted and driven person who always fought for what she believed in and never gave up.

**Nominated by:** Mourad Mjahed



## AMERICA SANDOVAL

**Major:** Social Work

**Main Educational Goal:** My main educational goal is to receive my Bachelor's and Master's in Social Work at San Diego State and eventually work on receiving a PhD.

**Life Goals:** My life goal is to become a social worker because I want to help those in the military and the elderly. On top of this, I want to return to this institution and become a counselor in order to help students succeed.

**Significant Achievements:** I have been placed on the Vice President's and President's List multiple times. I will be graduating and receiving three Associate Degrees in Sociology, Social Work and Italian. I have been volunteering with the elderly who suffer from Alzheimer's and Dementia at Towns Square. I have also volunteered at the South Chula Vista Library where I first learned to be a leader.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** Receiving this award demonstrates that I am capable of reaching any goal I desire. It is just a matter of effort, dedication, motivation and patience. No matter how difficult school may become and how much you want to give up, your work will be recognized at the end. This award will always remind me to continue serving my community and being an outstanding student.

**How would you like others to remember you:** I would love to be remembered as a motivated, dedicated, hardworking, caring, supportive student and friend, who aspires to learn every day and put it into practice within my community and within myself.

**Nominated by:** Surian Figueroa





## ANAHI SANDOVAL

**Major:** Business Administration

**Main Educational Goal:** Transfer to a University.

**Life Goals:** To manage and administer my own business.

**Significant Achievements:** I am part of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. I am a leader at my work.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** Receiving this award is a great honor. It gives me inspiration to keep up and get better every time. It also impacts my future in a very positive way because it makes me encourage myself to take more risk and responsibilities to not only get something good for me but for the people that surround me and need it.

**How would you like others to remember you:** I don't need it to be easy, I only need that it is possible.

**Nominated by:** Surian Figueroa



## KATY STEGALL

**Major:** Journalism

**Main Educational Goal:** I hope to pursue my PhD in Journalism.

**Life Goals:** I intend to become a nationally recognized reporter who focuses on the social and political injustices shaping the world. I'd like to also become a college professor after I receive my PhD.

**Significant Achievements:** I am the Editor-in-Chief at The Sun, a national award-winning publication. During my time as Editor-in-Chief, I won 2018's College Reporter of the Year with Associated Collegiate Press. I also won the Freedom of the Press award with Student Press Law Center for my work involving police accountability. I have dedicated my brief but intense career as a reporter to promoting social awareness on issues such as police brutality, mass incarceration, racism and human rights violations.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** This award showed me it is possible to leave behind a corrosive past. While old decisions can shape a person, those choices do not need to define them forever.

**How would you like others to remember you:** I would like to be remembered as someone who was guided by a great feeling of love, and who used her platform to amplify marginalized and historically silenced voices.

**Nominated by:** Dr. Max Branscomb, Laura Ryan



## KEVIN UDARBE

**Major:** Human Biology

**Main Educational Goal:** To obtain a medical degree (MD) after earning a Bachelor's Degree in Human Biology.

**Life Goals:** To become a physician and founder of a medical institute that will be headquartered in San Diego. Through my medical institute, I will provide state-of-the-art and affordable care to various communities in the United States and other countries lacking health care.

**Significant Achievements:** Dean's list four consecutive semesters; ICC Representative for the American Medical Student Association (AMSA); Vice President for AMSA; currently serving as President for AMSA; Power Study leader/tutor and Library tutor for Human Physiology and Biology.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** For the countless people I have helped, and the mentors who lead me towards the right path when I have lost my way, and lastly my family, this award is my legacy to you. This is my first time being ceremoniously awarded an achievement. This is assurance to my past self that I have changed to someone who can achieve extraordinary things.

**How would you like others to remember you:** I want everyone to remember me as the socially awkward and insecure boy, who brought himself to change for the better and helped changed people's lives.

**Nominated by:** Sharon Shapiro, Allison Green, Philip Osborne, Juan Gonzalez-Gonzalez, Lukas Buehler



## SIERRA VICKERS

**Major:** Southwest Regional Apprenticeship Program, Math & Science

**Main Educational Goal:** After I graduate the Southwest Regional Apprentice Program, I hope to go back to college and finish a Bachelor's of Science in Graphic Design.

**Life Goals:** I would love to travel the world, have my own design business, create a non-profit for dog rescue and have a rewarding career.

**Significant Achievements:** Getting accepted into the Southwest Regional Apprentice Program was a huge accomplishment for me. A personal narrative I wrote was accepted into the So Say We All Fall 2017 VAMP Showcase through SWC. I have received six performance and leadership-based awards through my employer, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, in the past two and a half years. I will accomplish a 28-mile hike on the Pacific Crest Trail this May 2019 to raise money for Make-A-Wish Foundation San Diego.

**What does receiving this award mean to you and how will it impact your future?** This award shows me that my hard work and dedication to myself and others has not gone unnoticed. This honor gives me even more motivation to continue my pursuit of happiness of myself and others through community service, hard work and leading by example.

**How would you like others to remember you:** "Well-behaved women seldom make history." -Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

**Nominated by:** Christine Perri