

Dear Scholarship Committee,

December 6, 2020

My name is Ariana Ricalday. I found out about Denver Kids my freshman year of high school. I saw that I would be partnered up with a mentor to guide me through high school and beyond, and I really liked the idea of it. Although my mentor and I are not partnered up anymore, I benefited so much from Denver Kids because of the endless support that they provided for me when applying to college. Olivia Sutphen and Nathalie Dupart played such a big role throughout my college process. They helped me apply for financial aid and were there for any and all questions that I had. Not only did Denver Kids provide support through advising, but they were also there when the pandemic began. They consistently checked up on my family, and I appreciate that.

Outside of school, I love to stay busy. In college, I am part of multiple groups on campus: Cru, ESTEM, CWC and I also volunteer at the Children's Hospital in Aurora. Cru is a christian community that meets up once a week to read the bible. This group welcomed me with open arms, and I love attending my weekly bible studies. I meet up with people from such different backgrounds and we study God's word together. I am also part of a group called Equity in STEM. This group provides minority students with support through their undergraduate career. I take classes with the same group of students, and we get to know each other very well by the end of college. ESTEM is all in the same calculus class their whole freshman year, and we are provided with our calculus textbook. It's very nice to see a lot of familiar faces in classes, especially at a predominantly white school. I am also a part of a group called Colorado Women's College on campus. There are about fifteen girls in each class; we are chosen because of our character and desire to bring change to campus. We are also all working towards a leadership minor, which I know can look good on a lot of job applications once I graduate. Last but not least, I volunteer at the Children's Hospital in Aurora. I drive up there once a week and spend time with these amazing children. I call each patient on the floor that I am assigned and invite them to the playroom where I am waiting for them. It touches my heart seeing all the kids be so positive, regardless of their health situation. It also gives me exposure to working in the health field and talking with patients.

In the future, I hope to do something in the medical field. I want to attend Physician Assistant school at the University of Colorado - Denver. Their program is focused specifically on children, and that is exactly what I want to do. I love being around children and their innocence, and I would love to be able to work with kids like the ones I volunteer with. My dream job would also be at the Children's Hospital in Aurora, where I am currently volunteering at. As part of my extracurriculars when I am older, I want to start a podcast. In my podcast I want to talk about the

struggles I faced in college and hopefully give advice to those wanting to pursue PA school or any higher education. As a first generation and Latina student, I look up to the different girls in ESTEM that are all pursuing the medical field. It is so empowering seeing women that come from the same background as me go after something that wasn't meant for us. I would love to become a person that other Latina First Generation students also look up to.

One of the struggles I've faced in college is math. I thought I was decent at calculus, until I got to college. With the quarter system, everything is so sped up. My first month in calculus, I failed two quizzes and began to fall behind. I was not understanding anything we were learning. After that month, I got tired of it. I did not like the feeling of being lost in every calculus class, and I knew I had to do something. I reached out to my professor, and she was able to meet up with me twice a week after class. I now understand that professors do care about you succeeding, and it is up to me to reach out and ask for help. I have also faced a lot of financial difficulty. One of my scholarships was taken away after being told that I would receive it. I had a bigger financial barrier after this, and it was on my mind very heavily all quarter. I try to take it one day at a time, and I try to tell myself that everything will be okay. I definitely see myself changing my mentality, and it does have an impact on you overall. My parents have also been incredibly supportive. They tell me that people in Mexico wish they could take out loans for school and that I shouldn't be scared to use them when I need it. They encourage me to chase my dreams regardless of money, and their support does not go unnoticed.

This scholarship would help me fill in some of those financial barriers that I carry on the day to day basis. These extra funds would help take off some of that financial stress and would allow me to focus more in school. This quarter I found that I was always stressed about how I would be paying for the upcoming quarter, and I was not focused in school the way that I should have been. If I receive these funds, it would close a big gap in my tuition that I am unable to pay for at the moment. I would be able to put my full attention on my classes and not worry about taking out any private loans. I know anybody would be incredibly grateful for any type of help in college. Thank you so much for being so considerate; your donations are so very appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ariana