

Latinxs and Hispanics in Mathematical Sciences



Rosalía C. Zárate

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Born and raised in Delano, California, Dr. Rosalía C. Zárate knew that she had to go to college because higher education was something her Mexican-born immigrant parents and older siblings encouraged her to prioritize. Mathematics was a subject her parents could assist despite the language barrier; it became their common language. Rosalía's tenacious attitude towards excelling in high school paid off when she became co-valedictorian of her graduating class and a recipient of the Gates Millennium Scholarship (GMS), a full-ride scholarship that provides minority students with the financial means to pursue bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. Although this prestigious scholarship alleviated some of the financial burdens of pursuing higher education, Zárate was still unclear on how to navigate tertiary education beyond her undergraduate mathematics studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). Thankfully, the support of mentors led her to the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program, a TRIO program designed to help disadvantaged students with financial need. The McNair program and the Arizona State University REU-Summer Research Program in Mathematical and Theoretical Biology exposed Rosalía research, providing her with her first Latina role model with a Ph.D. in STEM, Dr. Erika Camacho.

"Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the accomplishments of nuestra gente (our people). It is a time to recognize how far we have come and continue to discuss how we can move forward by working together to assist those in our community who are in need, not able to voice their opinions or pursue their dreams or desires. It is a time to stand for those who are marginalized en este mundo (in this world). It is a time of hope, joy, and action. It is a time to share and commemorate our antecedentes (ancestors), sus historias (their stories), and those among us, en nuestra comunidad (in our community), who are leading the way, leading the lucha (fight) in diverse sectors because representation matters and we must tell the stories of our people and their contributions that have been left out of history."

She pursued her doctoral studies at the Stanford Graduate School of Education in the Developmental and Psychological Sciences Program under the guidance of Professor Amado Padilla and mentor Professor Brigid Barron. She simultaneously pursued a master's in statistics and participated in the Center for Education Policy Analysis Lab where she was also advised by Professor Sean F. Reardon and Professor Eric Bettinger. All programs at Stanford allowed her to curate her research interests around motivating and retaining underrepresented students in STEM, particularly community college students.

Currently, Zárate is a Research Scientist at Facebook in People Analytics with over six years of experience bridging data science and quantitative and qualitative research. Through her role, she pursues her passion for using data to assure that the company has accessible career paths and fair recruitment processes. As a research scientist, Dr. Zárate combines the world of data science, quantitative, and qualitative research. She utilizes machine learning and performs statistical analyses to help business leaders answer questions, solve problems, and make strategic data-driven decisions. Dr. Zárate mentors graduate and undergraduate students through organizations such as the Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley and Global Citizen Year. She also serves as a data and research strategy advisor for universities, startups, and professional organizations, providing feedback and guidance on data analytics, research strategies, and STEM initiatives. Have integrity in your work.

Lathisms was founded in 2016 in order to showcase the contributions of Latinx and Hispanic mathematicians during Hispanic Heritage Month, which is celebrated in the United States from September 15 and October 15 every year. During this time, we feature/reveal a prominent Latinx/Hispanic mathematician daily. See all the featured mathematical scientists at [LATHISMS.ORG](https://lathisms.org).

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