Latinxs and Hispanics in the Mathematical Sciences

Christine Mondragon
Mathematics Teacher, Oak Park and River Forest High School

Christine’s journey to becoming a math teacher started at home with her parents. Both her mother and father were teachers. Christine enjoyed math and science classes at school, so she decided to study engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Christine graduated in 1990 with a BS degree in engineering and began to work for the state of Illinois as an environmental engineer. While working as an engineer was interesting, Christine could not ignore her desire to teach, so she made the decision to attend DePaul University. The unique Master’s program allowed her to continue working full-time while earning a degree in Secondary Math Education. The positive impact she made while student teaching at Oak Park and River Forest High School led to her being hired immediately as a full-time math teacher there. After 23 years of teaching at this school she continues to be happy with her decision to become a teacher.

In addition to teaching, Christine has been a math team coach for 20 years, earning top titles with her team and qualifying for state regularly. As a teacher, Christine has earned the honor of being selected to present at conferences such as the Metropolitan Mathematics Club of Chicago’s Conference of Workshops, Minority Student Achievement Network, and was recently selected by Collegio San Carlo School in Milan to virtually present on Women in STEM. Christine is dedicated to promoting female math students both on the math team and by starting a Women in STEM club for students at Oak Park and River Forest High School.

Christine says “Teaching is hard, rewarding but hard." She thinks teachers need to feel supported from administration, school boards, and the community at large. She believes this can happen with simple gestures like providing time for teachers to collaborate, plan and just breathe. She also thinks it is also important for teachers to feel that their voice is heard in educational decision making.