



2009 Scholarship Recipients (8 Awarded)



Magaly Iman
Cesar Chavez Academy

Magaly Iman plans on attending Wayne State University in the Pre-Medicine program eventually becoming a Pediatrician. She carries a 3.99 GPA at Cesar Chavez Academy and is a member of the National Honors Society. Magaly has been a student leader in the Generation of Promise program in Detroit which gave her an opportunity to work with teens to improve their outlooks on life. She also had a chance to work in a school for the disabled. "I loved it" she says, "This experience reassured me that what I had in mind to study was right for me". Her recommender rates her as a "seek out" candidate stating she is "a leader not a follower" who takes time to help her peers on difficult topics. Magaly believes her Hispanic Heritage has helped motivate her to reach her goals in life. She wants to achieve her dreams of success and remain true to her culture and heritage giving back to her community in the future.



Marisa Rodriguez
Notre Dame Preparatory
School

"I believe that growing up in a culture rich in tradition has taught me the importance of solid morals, family values, respect and loyalty. It is this foundation that has given me the confidence to make good decisions in and out of school" states Marisa Rodriguez in her Hispanic Heritage and Role Model essay. A student at Notre Dame Preparatory School in Pontiac, Marisa is the captain of the Volleyball team, a member of the Spanish honor society and a counselor all while working 18 hours per week. With a GPA of 3.227, she challenges herself constantly at times taking up to 8 classes in a semester. Marisa has a strong community service resume including volunteering at Holy Redeemer School to help teach Latino children, working with the "Summer in the City" program building and repairing park benches and volunteering at a Catholic Heart work camp in Kentucky where she did grounds clean up and landscaping at a temporary apartment complex for the homeless and retired veterans. "Volunteering in Detroit taught me that every effort.....no matter how small can make a long term difference" she says. Marisa plans to attend Michigan State University and pursue a career in medicine perhaps as a physical therapist.



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Miguel Rosario
Pontiac High School

Miguel Rosario's four brothers and sister did not finish high school. He credits his mother with keeping him motivated to stay in school and work toward a college education. "I didn't have much growing up" he states which also "motivated me to stay in school and fulfill my goals". Miguel volunteers in a mentoring program called The Gettysburg Group where he works with the homeless, helps build playgrounds and cleans litter from local cemeteries. From this experience he has learned that "the world is full of surprises" and good can be found even in bad situations. Miguel attends Pontiac High School where he carries a 2.83 GPA with numerous Honors level classes. His teacher and recommender describe him as "a great person who is self motivated, confident and focused". Miguel's goal is to attend the University of Michigan to study business and accounting then pursue a career in finance. "My mother is counting on me to be different from my siblings and start a good life she did not have" he says.



Eduardo Salas
Western International
High School

"My parents have always told me to take advantage of any opportunity I have, they've taught me to be responsible and honorable" states Eduardo Salas in his essay on Hispanic Heritage and Role Models. Eduardo has certainly taken that to heart. His parents brought him to the U.S. to "give him better opportunities than they had growing up in Mexico" and Eduardo has not let them down. He carries a 4.05 GPA at Western International with numerous honors classes on his transcript. He plays on the baseball team, works 10 hours per week and has volunteered at Clark Park Recreation Center helping keep the park clean and leading younger children in the sports programs. Tara Baker, one of his teachers at WIHS, rates him extraordinary in all categories on his recommender form saying "he sets an example every day and has a strong work ethic and natural abilities that serve him well". Eduardo used those skills to score a 24 on the ACT last March and wants to attend the University of Michigan Dearborn campus to study accounting and business management. He also hopes to do some intern work with an accounting firm before next fall.



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Jonathan Valencia
Pontiac High School

“My grandfather, Jose Atilio Valencia, taught me at a very young age to always aim to be the best and to never give up” says Jonathan Valencia in his essay on Hispanic Heritage and Role Models. “My mother taught me that only those with a will to keep going and take hold of their dreams will move forward” he says. Jonathan helped lead the robotics team at Pontiac High School by fostering buy in from the other participants and taking charge to get a first place finish. His recommender says “I have seen him grow by leaps and bounds in the last year. He understands what it takes to be a winner”. Jonathan’s goal is to become a computer systems analyst and he would like to attend Oakland Community College next fall. On his future he says “There are many things I need to prove to myself and to others.... I will not fail”.



Andrea Vargas
Western International
High School

Andrea Vargas attends Western International High School in Detroit where she carries a 3.88 GPA. She works diligently to keep her grades up and set an example for her younger brother. She wants to inspire him to work hard and show him that a college education, an opportunity neither of their parents had, is attainable. Andrea came to the U.S. in the eighth grade unable speak English. Facing the challenges of trying to learn a new language, adapt to a new culture and keep up her studies was difficult but her family encouraged her not to give up. Today she is “proud to say she can understand, read, write and speak English”. Her recommender and teacher at Western International rates her a “seek out” candidate with strong leadership characteristics who has “helped her two best friends set goals and achieve to the best of their abilities”. Andrea would like to attend Wayne State and pursue a career in Nursing.



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Blanca Vazquez
Western International
High School

Working 10 hours per week, volunteering at the VA Hospital and captain of the soccer team at Western International High School while carrying a 3.97 GPA, Blanca Vazquez has done a lot to make her family proud. She points to her father Jose Luis as her greatest influence and role model. "He was forced to end his studies after completing only the third grade to help his father support their large family" she points out in her essay on Hispanic Heritage and Role Models. Despite working long hours to support his family "he always has a smile and advice for me to keep. He encourages me to work hard and persevere through life's challenges to become someone great" she says. During the summer break Blanca worked with first grade students at Hope of Detroit Academy to improve their comprehension of math, English, reading and writing. "While at times it was overwhelming to motivate and teach such young students, giving up was not a choice. These are the great minds of our future and being able to make my contribution is a great opportunity and honor". Her recommender for the Ric Gonzalez Memorial Foundation Scholarship calls Blanca "a leader among her peers that possesses a fire for learning". She plans on attending the University of Michigan after graduation majoring in Marketing.



Rosa Vega
Cesar Chavez Academy

Rosa Vega attends Cesar Chavez Academy in Detroit. She carries a 3.96 GPA while working up to 24 hours per week. She has spent time volunteering at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen packing food, organized books at the Kiwanis Warehouse and is described as a "selfless student who generously donates her time in the community" by her recommender. Through her volunteer work Rosa has "learned that I love helping others". She takes it upon herself to gather up clothes she outgrows and give them to a needy family friend who is less fortunate than her. Rosa wants to attend the University of Detroit Mercy to pursue a career in nursing a vocation that fits her altruistic nature perfectly. In her essay on Hispanic Heritage Rosa expresses her pride in being a Latina and how that motivates her to work hard and prove herself of graduating from college and setting an example for others to follow.