

Phelps Family CAP Award Scholarship

By Alejandra Eduardo Nunez

From a young age, I was taught the importance of community, perseverance, and generosity. These values have not only shaped who I am but also how I view and interact every day with those around me. The values of Contribute, Achieve, and Pay-it-forward resonate deeply with my life's purpose.

I have contributed to helping my community by completing a total of 297 hours of community service. I have fundraised for children's Christmas gifts, volunteered at Literacy Programs, and participated in community clean-ups. My passion for education has led me to be a tutor to elementary through high school students. Currently, I tutor immigrant high school students once a week who only speak Spanish and are struggling to understand their English homework. Being a bilingual tutor has allowed me to motivate many students to not give up on school and to continue striving for improvement in their academic work. I offer my art skills to create coloring book pages for children, face paint during events, renovated an animal shelter's wall, and visited residents at nursing homes to do crafts. Through these contributions, I have been able to serve and strengthen my community based on the needs I see.

My family and I are immigrants from Mexico and have experienced difficult times with financial stress, instability, and the emotional struggle of adapting to a completely different country. Despite facing language barriers and constant financial hardships, I graduated with honors from Yuma High School with a 4.104 GPA and received my Associate of Arts Degree from Northeastern Junior College with President's Honor Roll for concurrent enrollment while still in high school. I was the guest speaker for the 12th annual outstanding migrant student event of the BOCES program where I shared my story and inspired underrepresented students to strive for higher education. As a first-generation college student majoring in Biology, I have continued to work hard to maintain a 4.0 GPA at UNC. The obstacles and struggles I have faced, have made me grateful for the achievements I have worked hard to earn.

Paying it forward is a powerful action that leads to improvement. On my life journey, I strive to positively impact the lives of others. During this Spring Break, I went on a Mission Trip to San Diego, California where I organized fun activities for Haitian refugee kids, assisted the Homeless, and contributed to painting a mural for the children's nursery at a church. I plan to further my education in the health field, which would allow me to positively impact and improve, not only the life of a patient but also that of the people around them. As Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Everyone can be great because everyone can serve." It is always my pleasure to pay it forward to my community, through observing what others need and what I have to offer.

Overall, the CAP values are the threads that weave the fabric of my character, guiding me to contribute to my community, achieve my goals, and pay it forward with acts of kindness. As I seek to further my education, these values will continue to be the foundation upon which I build my future and where I can contribute, achieve, and pay it forward on an even greater scale.