



BRIGHTSTAR
SCHOOLS

ALUMNI NEWS

ALUMNI SUPPORT & COLLEGE SUCCESS PROGRAM

BY GENOVEVA CORTES (310) 948-1733 GCORTES@BRIGHTSTARSCHOOLS.ORG

BSSCA CLASS OF 2010-2016

RANICA HORTELANO BSSCA ALUMNAE 2015
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES ALUMNAE 2020
MAJOR: BIOLOGY

Now that this Bruin has finished with her undergraduate education, Ranica is preparing to apply to graduate school to become a Physician Assistant, a licensed medical provider who can diagnose and treat illnesses and diseases and prescribe medication. For the next two years, she'll be working part-time in a medical center, taking several prerequisite classes at a community college, and studying for the GRE, a standardized test for graduate school, much like the SAT. In addition, she recently secured a competitive year-long internship at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center where she'll get to rotate among the various departments such as the Pediatric ward, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and the Medical Surgery floor. Training in this field is necessary more than ever now that we're dealing with Covid-19. We're excited to see where her career takes her. Thank you for service Ranica!



BRYAN CASTILLO

BSSCA ALUMNI 2015
CALIFORNIA STATE, LOS ANGELES, ALUMNI 2020
MAJOR: ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING



Bryan's advice to students is to start looking for internships while in high school and throughout college. "Before I started college, I thought I wanted to be a doctor so I started looking at hospitals' websites for paid and unpaid internships. I volunteered at Cedar Sinai but it helped me realize that wasn't the career path for me. You may think you want to do something but once you start doing it, you realize it's not what you want after all. It's important to learn about different careers and meet people who work in those fields to see if it's something you want to pursue or if it's just a hobby. You have to investigate things on your own." He also recommends you get out of your comfort zone and meet people so you can develop those networking skills. "Ask people you meet about their career and what the work dynamic is like." Bryan credits the friends he made in the Summer Transition Entrance Program (STEP) before the start of his Freshman year and in the Math Bootcamp with helping him excel in his classes because they formed study groups and held each other accountable. "You rely on each other for support. I wouldn't have passed a few classes without their support and the same for them." Now that Bryan has graduated from CSULA, there is no telling where his opportunities will lead him to.

BSSCA CLASS OF 2017-2019

BY GRACIELA APARICIO (818) 398-2358 GAPARICIO@BRIGHTSTARSCHOOLS.ORG

URIEL PACHECO

BSSCA ALUMNAE 2018
SMC - CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH
MAJOR: BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Uriel will start Fall 2020 at CSULB as a Business Administration major. Uriel has been successful at completing all the requirements and obtaining his Associate Degree to Transfer in just 2-years. Here is a little on his experience as a community college student ready to transfer: "At first everyone is always saying how college is hard and how college is this and that, but you don't know how college is until you actually experience it. From my experience college is only hard if you don't want it, like everything else in life. The hard part is waking up at 6am, doing the 2 hour commute, just to get to your 9:30 class. Not having anyone there to tell you, you have a paper due the next class because it was on the syllabus. That's hard because it's the first time you're really alone and free to do as you wish with your time, no ones going to call your parents if you ditched. The most important thing though is going to CC all 4 semesters, sounds hard but it's not if you take online classes. I applied to SJSU, CSULB, Cal Poly SLO, CAL Poly Pomona, and CSU Northridge and got accepted into all of them." Uriel is a great example of how focusing and working hard in community college and reap great rewards.



EDWIN SANTIAGO

BSSCA ALUMNI 2017
SMC- UCSB
MAJOR: COMMUNICATIONS



Edwin is excited to be transferring this semester to a 4-year university. With quite a number of college acceptances, such as UCSC, UC Davis, UCSB, and UCSD, he has chosen to attend UC Santa Barbara. Go Gauchos! Edwin discovered his interest in communications through his part-time work and being a part of the Adelante Program at SMC, a support program for first-generation college students. Even though working and going to school was difficult to balance, Edwin was able to push through and stay focused on his goal of transferring to a 4-year university. Edwin shares some advice for future community college students: "When I first entered Santa Monica College, I had no idea what my major would be. I changed my major twice until I realized that Communications is the easiest/ most interesting to me! I am excited to embark on the next chapter of my life. Throughout this whole process remember not to compare yourself to anyone. Slow and steady wins the race, and remember to try your best".

VAHS CLASSES 2017-2019

BY KYLE PETRIE

(603)801-3686

KPETRIE@BRIGHTSTARSCHOOLS.ORG

ANDREI TENEFRANCIA - UCLA VAHS '19: PRE-PSYCHOLOGY

Andrei Tenefrancia has always been a wonderful student and human being. For the fall of 2019 he took his talents to Westwood and is now finishing up his freshman year on the campus of UCLA. Andrei is planning to major in psychology starting his sophomore year. He notes that one of the biggest changes from high school to college is both the duration and complexity of assignments. Andrei says that although the volume of work has gone down, the scrutiny with which teachers evaluate it has gone up. He credits Ms. Briggs and Ms. Anaya's classes with helping him develop the research skills that are necessary to be successful at a top-notch university. His piece of advice to his high school self: "Stop being so shy; a smile and a handshake will go a long way." Truer words were never spoken - keep doing big things next semester, Mr. Tenefrancia!



LINDSEY SANTIAGO - CSUN

VAHS '18: EXPLORATORY



One of the most genuine individuals to ever walk through the halls of Valor Academy, Lindsey Santiago is continuing her winning ways at Cal State Northridge. The strong habits that she developed at VAHS have continued to serve her well at CSUN. One of her favorite past times to relive are cooking and baking; she says that they have both been successful ways for her to relieve stress when things are hectic in college. Although she is still undeclared in her major; she is confident that she will find her true passion during her last two years in school. She enjoyed all of her English classes while at Valor, so it's possible that studying languages is in her future! A piece of advice that she offers all current seniors is to take advantage of all the opportunities that come their way. You never know when the next door will open!

KELLY MARQUEZ - CAL STATE EAST BAY VAHS '17: EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

"Thanks to Valor's Annual Thesis Project, the ten page papers in college seemed like nothing!" Such is the gusto of Kelly Marquez - a member of the VAHS founding class of 2017. She credits office hours and the community forged at Valor with helping her adapt to life in a new environment. As a sophomore, she became a member of the Sigma Sigma Sigma (Tri Sigma) sorority and cites that communal experience as the best decision she's made since becoming a student at East Bay. She credits Valor's English classes with helping her write, our Business class with her helping her build a resumé, and AP Spanish with helping her develop a deeper affection for her language and culture. Kelly acknowledges that moving away from family and friends have definitely given her a better perspective on the importance of close relationships in a person's life. In her words: "Moving away for college...makes you appreciate all the years your family has taken care of you." In a perfect confluence of events, Kelly plans to become a teacher when she graduates from East Bay.



RKHS CLASS OF 2020

BY STEPHANIE CALDERON 310 876-4368 SCALDERON@BRIGHTSTARSCHOOLS.ORG

ANGEL MARTINEZ - RKHS ALUMNI 2020

CAL STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE - EXPECTED GRAD DATE 2024

**MAJOR: KINESIOLOGY
2020 KAYNE SCHOLAR**

Angel is part of the very first graduating class from Rise Kohyang High School. He attended RKMS for middle school and is proud to be part of the very first cohort of graduates from the high school. Angel worked very hard during his senior year in high school with the Kayne Destination Scholars program and was awarded the 2020 Kayne Scholarship, which includes a \$20,000 scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to students who will be the first in their family to attend college and pursue a STEM major. Angel, has always been fascinated by fitness and sports and was accepted to CSUN as a Kinesiology major, where he plans to focus on the discipline of Sport Science. He is really excited to join fitness clubs and intramural sports once he is able to be on campus, but in the meantime he hopes to get acquainted to being a college student remotely. Angel has big plans for his future. He aspires to participate in sports internships and start his own business to bring awareness to health and fitness everywhere in the world.



DONTE WILLIAMS - RKHS ALUMNI 2020

UC MERCED, EXPECTED GRAD DATE 2024

**MAJOR: COMPUTER ENGINEERING
2020 KAYNE SCHOLAR**



Donte is also part of the very first graduating class from Rise Kohyang High School. He dedicated lots of time to the Kayne Destination Scholars program during his junior and senior year and was awarded the Kayne Scholarship to pursue a degree in Computer Engineering from UC, Merced. Donte shares that he is more of a quiet person and always enjoyed learning about computers as a kid. He even taught himself how to code! He is interested in Computer Engineering because it combines the disciplines of computer science and mechanical engineering. Donte is really looking forward to moving to UC Merced and getting the full college experience of living in the dorms, but for now he is excited to stay connected to his friends and family at home before moving away. When he is finally able to get on campus he looks forward to joining computer clubs and getting involved in student groups that foster teamwork and further his knowledge about computers. Donte's love for science and science fiction has motivated and inspired him to pursue a career that will allow him to create innovative technology that will change the world for the better.

BRIGHT STAR SCHOOLS ALUMNI SUPPORT & COLLEGE SUCCESS TEAM

All Bright Star Schools Alumni and Alumnae, high school graduates, will be supported in graduating from college for up to 6 years. Our goal is for our Alumni to earn a Bachelor's, Associate's, Career Technical Education degree, or workforce development certificate from an accredited college or program. If you are a BSS Alumni from the class of 2014-2020, we will be there to help you navigate, thrive, and succeed in graduating from higher education. If you have paused your education or want to get started in a program tailored to your goals and circumstances, please reach out to us so we can help you before your membership in the program expires.

KYLE PETRIE

BA, BOWDOIN COLLEGE

VAHS ASCS COORDINATOR
SUPPORTING CLASS OF 2017 - 2020
KPETRIE@BRIGHTSTARSCHOOLS.ORG

Kyle Petrie has worked in urban public education for over 12 years. He initially entered the field as a high school history teacher in the Bronx, NY, as part of Teach For America. After his time in New York, Kyle spent seven years as an AP teacher, advisor, coach, and Director of Alumni Support at Gary Comer College Prep on Chicago's south side.



As the ASCS Coordinator at Valor Academy High School, Kyle's primary responsibilities revolve around ensuring that all Valor alumni receive adequate support with the financial, academic, and social-emotional concerns that they face while pursuing higher education. Kyle is primarily motivated by the belief that higher education is the foundation that will allow our students to be successful and happy in both their careers and personal lives.

GRACIELA APARICIO

BA, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA
MS. CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

BSSCA ASCS COORDINATOR
SUPPORTING CLASS OF 2017 - 2020
GAPARICIO@BRIGHTSTARSCHOOLS.ORG

Graciela Aparicio has been working with high school students of color since 2013. In her undergraduate career, she organized conferences for undocumented high school students in Ventura County. After graduating from UCSB in 2015, she started her career in education working in numerous high schools in the San Fernando Valley in various roles such as math tutor, college counselor, academic counselor, and academic case manager.



In 2018, she completed her Master's of Science in Counseling and P.P.S Credential at CSUN. Graciela understands the necessity of our students of color to get into higher education and meet their educational and/or career goals. She's excited to work with the Bright Star Secondary Charter School alumni and provide the support they need to navigate post-secondary education.

STEPHANIE CALDERON

BA, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
M.ED. CSU, LONG BEACH COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

RKHS ASCS COORDINATOR
SUPPORTING CLASS OF 2020
SCALDERON@BRIGHTSTARSCHOOLS.ORG

Stephanie Calderon has over 6 years of experience supporting students and their families in college access and success programs. She currently serves as the Alumni Support and College Success Coordinator for Rise Kohyang High School. Her goal is to support all RKHS Alumni with their post-secondary plans to ensure they accomplish their goals and aspirations for the future.



Stephanie is a first-generation college graduate. She obtained her bachelors in 2014 from UCLA in Women Studies. Upon graduating college she decided she wanted to help facilitate the process for applying and earning a degree for youth in her community of Los Angeles.

GENOVEVA CORTES

BA, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
M.ED. HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

ASCS DIRECTOR
SUPPORTING BSSCA CLASS OF 2014 - 2016
GCORTES@BRIGHTSTARSCHOOLS.ORG

Genoveva Garibay Cortes has over two decades of experience working as an elementary and middle school teacher, K-12 and college administrator, and program coordinator. She was Bright Star Schools' founding math teacher for Stella Middle Charter Academy in 2003, and currently serves as the Director of the Alumni Support and College Success (ASCS) Program for the organization.



Geno developed and launched Bright Star's ASCS Program to support the organization's alumni to persist in and graduate from higher education. ASCS tracks, supports, and coaches Bright Star Schools' alumni to get to and through higher education, with a goal of 60% of Bright Star Schools alumni graduating with a bachelor's or associate's degree, vocational certificate, or from a workplace development program within six years of high school graduation.