



SPRING 2019 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

ALEXIS CANAS



- CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN LUIS OBISPO
- GRADE LEVEL: THIRD YEAR
- MAJOR: BS, CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

I am from the Coachella Valley, located in Southern California. I originally thought I wanted to be a civil engineer. I am fascinated by buildings and have always wanted to be a part of building something amazing. For me, being able to pass a building and say I helped build it is one of the greatest things I could ever accomplish.

I went to the University of California at Irvine to pursue a degree in civil engineering. I discovered through the coursework that I was not interested in the design aspect of the program and went to the career center for guidance. There I was introduced to construction management, a major I had not yet learned about. Following some research, construction management seemed like the perfect fit for me. I decided to transfer to Cal Poly SLO because of this major and their "learn by doing" culture. I have been attending for a year now and am going into my senior year. I really enjoy my major, my school and all my professors. My time at Cal

Poly, along with the internships I've had, has proven to me that I made the right decision.

I am still learning what my career goals and aspirations will be, but one goal for certain is to get as much experience as possible in all aspects of a construction project. I would like to build different types of structures, and would like to gain experience as a superintendent, project manager, scheduler, estimator and accountant.

One day I want to create an organization that provides financial assistance to low-income, first-generation students interested in pursuing a four-year education in construction management. I would like for this organization to guide students with their resumes, internships, finances and in obtaining a professional career. I look forward to learning about construction management while helping the next generation in the industry as WACA has for me.

JORGE GARCIA



- CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
- GRADE LEVEL: FOURTH YEAR
- MAJOR: BS, CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

I grew up in Visalia, California, a dairy town west of Sequoia National Park. The Sierra Nevada was basically my backyard. When we were out for recess in elementary school, we would always appreciate the beautiful view of the snowy mountaintops. Later, when I was old enough to work with my mother picking fruit, the white mountain peaks always grabbed my attention. The Sierra Nevada runs long, and because of it, looks endless. It is my favorite part of growing up in the Central Valley.

As mentioned, in my teenage years I would work picking fruit with my mother. Those were some difficult times. We always had contractors who would treat us poorly. On top of that we earned minimum wage and at times below minimum wage, and it made us feel horrible. Yet, there were

two contractors that I will never forget because they treated us with respect. They would buy us pizza, sodas and look at us when speaking to us. I looked up to those guys and I wanted to be just like them: respectful and caring to all people no matter how they look or where they come from. Growing up, I wanted to be a civil engineer because I enjoyed math and I loved the artistic side of buildings. When I found out about construction management, a major that gives me the chance to be out in the field with the tradespeople and work aside engineers and architects, I knew the major was made for me.

My career goals and aspirations are to become a superintendent at a respected construction company and to be able to care for and respect the people that I work alongside.

SUSIE HORNER



- CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO
- GRADE LEVEL: SENIOR
- MAJOR: BS, CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT; BS, CONCRETE INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT

I was born and raised in Chico, California. When it came time to choose a college, I wanted to go anywhere other than Chico State. I was accepted to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in 1996 for architecture, but I was already a teen mother and could not afford to pursue that dream. Years later, I struggled to attend Butte College as a civil engineering major and raise two children on my own. I completed my Associate of Science degree, though not in engineering. Shortly thereafter, I got married and became a Navy wife. My husband adopted my two children, and we now have a total of five children (ages 23, 21, 9, 7 and 6) and one grandson (age 4).

Now, 23 years later, I am proud to be attending CSU, Chico and finally fulfilling my dream of earning my Bachelor of Science degree in construction management. I chose to major in construction

management because of its close connection to architecture and engineering that I was interested in. The Concrete Industry Management (CIM) program that introduced me to the career path that I am so passionate about did not even exist at Chico State until 2007. When I learned about the CIM program, only one of four in the United States, I added it as a second major.

After three summer internships with construction materials companies, I learned that I am very passionate about aggregate mining and all things related to quarries and heavy equipment. I am also concurrently earning my Heavy Equipment Operations certificate along with my double major. I aspire to be a plant manager or superintendent of an aggregate plant and quarry. Even though it has been a very long journey for me, I know I am exactly where I am meant to be.

DIANA GONZALEZ



- **CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO**
- **GRADE LEVEL: JUNIOR**
- **MAJOR: BS, CIVIL ENGINEERING;
BS, CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT**

I was born in Sacramento, California, and lived there for my first four years of life. I then moved to Oroville, California, 80 miles north in Butte County. It was then that I was introduced to Chico State on a campus tour. Little did I know that I would attend that school 12 years later. My time in Butte County was short and I moved to a small town of 6,000 people called Plumas Lake. My family has lived in the same house for the past 15 years, except for me as I am attending college.

My interest in construction really began with my family and, most importantly, my dad. My parents' story started when they came to this country in search of a better life. Growing up, I heard my father and uncles talking about their work in construction as concrete masons, carpenters and laborers. I was always fascinated by how they spoke about their crafts. Some of my favorite moments in life include walking through completed projects that my dad worked on; he would talk to me about the project problems they faced and how they

overcame those challenges. You could hear the pride he had in his work. It was during those times that I told myself I wanted to be a great designer and design great buildings while taking pride in my work.

A year and a half into my civil engineering degree, I took a construction management course and knew I wanted to take that path as well. After much consideration and many mentoring sessions with both the civil engineering and construction management department chairs, I am on track to earn two degrees in both these fields within five years. After completing my education, I hope to start in a field engineering position to decide whether to choose a superintendent or project manager role. In due time, I hope to go back to school and pursue a master's degree in either workforce development or public policy. Once I obtain this degree, I hope to work for an organization that helps educate, inform and defend worker rights in the construction fields.