

Scholarship

Scholarship Success Stories

Guadalupe Gonzalez's Story

2017 recipient of the AAUW Healdsburg Branch High School Scholarship



My name is Guadalupe Gonzalez. I graduated from Cloverdale High School in 2017 and subsequently left to study Neuroscience at UC Santa Cruz that same fall. Transitioning from high school to college as a first-generation student was definitely something that took some getting used to. Going from having all the coursework materials provided for me in high school to suddenly having to even pay to use online sites to submit homework was a totally new experience for me. However, the Healdsburg AAUW scholarship alleviated some of the stress that would have been caused by having to spend hundreds of dollars a quarter on material and lab fees. While I heard a lot of my peers stress about the prices of textbooks and homework sites, I knew that I had a way to cover these expenses. I remember feeling joy at being chosen as a Healdsburg AAUW scholarship recipient and knowing that it would contribute to making college financially possible.

As a DACA recipient, when I was looking for ways to finance my college education, a lot of scholarships made it clear one must be a citizen or permanent resident to be eligible to even apply. Being allowed to apply for the Healdsburg AAUW scholarship and subsequently being chosen as a recipient was something that brought hope in the wake of hearing back about the other scholarships I had been able to apply for. The existence of your scholarship is something that I feel was so important to me and that, looking back, I am very grateful for. Whether it is used to contribute to tuition or course materials, it helps make a college education all the less financially stressful.

My study of neuroscience took me through an academic journey including various courses in mathematics, biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, physics, biochemistry, neuroscience, and more. We foundationally explored biological molecules as well as individual nerve cells and gradually the courses became more major focused, leading to the examination of neurological pathways. My favorite was an introduction to neuroscience course, as it was the beginning of the concentration I had chosen to study, something I was greatly looking forward to. In this course, I gained the fundamentals of the structure and function of the nervous system as well as the biophysics and physiology of single nerve and muscle cells. Prior to that course, neuroscience majors essentially follow the same course scheme as those majoring in molecular, cell, and developmental biology (MCD) before branching out to the neuroscience focused courses, which is why this specific course was so impactful for me.

Now about a year after graduating with a B.S. in Neuroscience from UC Santa Cruz, I am actively in the process of applying to medical school for the upcoming 2023 cycle while working at Providence St. Joseph Health in the oncology/hematology department. Once again, I want to thank the Healdsburg AAUW membership for awarding me the scholarship in 2017 and I hope to continue to see it be accessible to those pursuing higher education.