

Student Voices

Name: Carlos Zelaya

Age: 25 years Old

My father was undocumented and was deported when I was 8 years old. I entered the foster care system shortly after. My brother and sister and I were all split apart. We occasionally got to see each other. I ended up back with my mother while my siblings went to my grandmother. While living with my mother I lived in 3 different states. At age 15, My parents shipped me off to Mexico. I spent 2 years of my life in Mexico. While in Mexico I never attended school. At the age of 17 I began high school and finished within 2 years through ACCESS (continuation school). I then went on to Fullerton College for 3 years. While at Fullerton College I became very involved on campus, I was a part of many clubs and had the chance to work in the EOPS office. I transferred to Cal State Fullerton, with a full ride scholarship. While at Cal State Fullerton I continue to be involved as much as I possibly can.

This past summer through the Cal State Fullerton DC Scholars Program I had the chance to intern in Washington D.C.!

Currently I am attending my last semester for my undergraduate degree. This Saturday I begin GRE prep classes. I intend on getting a good GRE score and hope to attend Graduate school in the near future.

Currently I work in the Guardian Scholars Program at Orange Coast College. I work directly with students who are or have been "wards of the court" meaning they were part of the foster care or juvenile probation systems. I share my story willingly while I still feel it can make an impact in the lives of others.