

The Most Important Person in my Life

Deciding who the most important person in my life is seems like a hard task. There are many people who have helped shape who I am as a person. I could not be where I am today had it not been for each of those people. However, push comes to shove and there is always one person that comes to my mind, aside from God, and that is my mother. She is the most important to me because her values and behavior has shaped and motivated me to become the person I am and the person that I plan to be.

My mother is a strong woman who cares about other and always puts everybody else above herself, including her own children. Without her, I would be nothing. Mother was always the smartest person I knew, even though she did not finish high school. She always knew just what to say and how to make me feel better through all my struggles. One of those struggles was my education. Growing up was hard for me because I moved to Redlands, California in the third grade without knowing any English. They assigned a random student to help me translate and I had to learn English from scratch. It was tough but my mom was always there to support me. School was a lot harder for me than my peers, but I was motivated to make something of myself, even as a child. Many Hispanic students face struggles within the education system, and it contributes to the inequalities in this world. I want to change that because the most important person in my life taught me to care for others.

Mothers are always there for you growing up and they take care of you. My mom was more than that. She was an example to follow. Even though we struggled because of my father who deals with mental health issues, we always had each other's back. I am her rock, and she is mine. Her compassion for others has taught me that there is a lot of need in this world. It is the reason why I decided to major in Sociology. There is a lot of inequality in this world and even though we can do acts of kindness, we cannot change society unless we understand it. My goal is to take my mother as an example for my future. At least once a week you can find her helping someone in need. With my degree I plan to study inequalities, specifically in the Hispanic community, and one day change the narrative for Hispanic students.

The Chris Goughnour Scholarship

Adrianna Martinez-Lainez

I am the youngest out of five children. Undeniably, the best part of being the youngest is you learn from the mistakes of those older than you. My entire life, I've had the privilege to be guided by those wiser than myself. However, my oldest sister, Maria, did not have that privilege, as she was the oldest child. Coming from a Latinx immigrant family, being the firstborn can be a struggle; you are basically a third parent. Despite that, she was the first one in my entire family to graduate from college. On top of that, she did it while being DACA-mented (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) as she is not an American citizen.

Despite our eight-year difference, my sister and I have always been close. The biggest thing she has passed on to me has to be our passion to succeed. Just like Maria, my parents are undocumented. They left their home countries for the chance of offering their future children stability and safety. They chased the American Dream. However, many years later, the American dream has become more complicated. My parents' lack of legal status has limited their employment opportunities. We, like many other American families, live paycheck to paycheck.

With our background, it is common to keep the poverty cycle going generation after generation. Before my sister's acceptance into college, I had never even imagined the possibility of attending college myself. However, she always had that dream. Despite the odds against her as a first-generation and undocumented Latina, she found ways to apply to colleges and scholarships that supported DACA students. She applied to the Questbridge scholarship and in 2012 matched to Pomona College with a full-ride scholarship. That was the moment I realized that anything was possible. She is my role model.

She went on to get a degree in computer science and now works as a software engineer in San Francisco. For the longest time, I didn't know what she did. She really wanted me to understand her job at a deep level and encouraged me to apply to the coding program, Girls Who Code. I applied and was accepted into the program. That summer I spent it in San Francisco being introduced to me to the fundamentals of coding and the importance of women's representation in the computer science field. After that summer, I knew I also wanted to follow her steps and study computer science. I admire my sister even more after that life-changing experience because it was not enough to just explain computer science to me, but she wanted me to experience it firsthand.

Maria is someone I have huge respect for because of her work ethic and compassion for others. She has truly been a third parent to me, especially as I went through the college application process. My parents were unfamiliar with the process, but she was the only person we knew who had gone through the college process. Because of her guidance, I feel prepared for this new stage in my life. I am excited to follow in her footsteps. I owe it all to her for the person I am today and the person I will become in the future.

The Most Important Person in My Life
Alexia Whitley

I have no memories of my biological father. He walked out of my life before I even knew he was a part of it. I know it seems weird that I include this considering how irrelevant he is; however, his absence happened to lead the most important person in my life to me. I call him my dad. No, he is not my dad by blood, but I never equated family to being exclusively blood-related. There are countless reasons I could write about as to why and how he is so important to me, but 500 words will have to suffice.

You see, my mother was only 17 years old when she had me. Quite literally, a child having a child. When she found out she was pregnant with me, my biological dad quickly wiped his hands from any responsibility (Their families would have forced them to marry and neither desired that as their relationship had gone cold long ago). So, my mother had me by herself with just her family by her side. Meanwhile, my dad had always been head over heels in love with my mom all throughout high school. They had dated for a little bit early on in high school, but it did not last long. They had reconnected some months later after my birth and while my dad wanted to date my mom again, she rejected his advances because she did not want to burden him with a child—I mean she was a teen mom. Yet, my dad's persistence and wit convinced her. And from that moment on, he would be my dad.

This stranger who had previously held no obligations toward me laid his eyes upon me and immediately he knew. It still astounds me to this day why he would want to play the role of the father at such a young age, but I was not complaining. I now have the best dad ever. I like to think he did a good job raising me, even though I am a little biased. He has always supported me in everything I do and is truly the wisest man I know. I go to him for everything whether it be financial advice or have deep conversations about films. We both are huge movie junkies. I genuinely cannot fathom where I would be right now without him in my life.

Because of him, I am now able to attend college and pursue my dreams. Because of him, I was able to have a fun and memorable childhood. Because of him, I have grown into a strong and independent young woman. Because of him, I never have to look back and wonder why I never had a dad.



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Personal Computing Prod Tools

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Full name

Alexia Whitley

OU username (OU Net ID)

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Employee ID

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Employee title

The Most Important Person in my Life

Ana Simpson

My grandfather, Julio, grew up in a small town in Cuba by the name of Yaguaramas. He worked relentlessly to be able to afford to go to college to become a doctor to be able to provide for his family. Julio was in his last year of college when he was arrested by the communist regime for allegedly stealing his neighbor's livestock. In reality, Julio was arrested because the neighbor found out that he was against Fidel Castro, and he reported Julio and his brothers to the local authorities. He spent a total of ten years and one day as a political prisoner. When Julio was released he found the woman he loved and had a family with her. Julio realized that he wanted to give his children the opportunity to live a life without fear and allow them to excel in their education without any limitations. As soon as the Cuban ports, El Mariel, opened up, he gathered his family and set sail to America to give them all the freedom and future opportunities.

I am currently in school to obtain my Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health and seek to go to medical school. This opportunity would not be obtainable without the sacrifices that my grandfather made when he came to the United States. My grandfather taught me growing up that being selfless and generous was the most courageous act one can commit. Following my grandfather's footsteps in becoming a doctor is how I show my gratitude towards him, and I want to be able to extend the same gratitude he taught me by helping to heal others.

Angel Josue Contreras

August 1,2021

Kraig Baier Memorial Scholarship Application Essay

The Most Important Person in My Life

I am a strong believer in John F Kennedy's saying, "Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men." Every person is born into this life with their own struggles, be it illness, socioeconomic status, and many other things will continue to add on. Not to discredit anybody else's struggles but compared to the lives my friends lived I believe my siblings had it rough. I am proud to say that I made it out of my childhood a mentally strong person. However, it would not have been so easy, were it not for my oldest brother Mario, who showed the rest of our family that it was possible to succeed.

My parents were originally born in Mexico, however they moved to Texas back in the early 90s, to begin a new life. They had little to no money, but my mom and dad found a way to make it work with their first two children, Mario and Cindy. They had a difficult life, my dad struggled to make ends meet, and it only got harder when they had two more children. My parents were never the best at financial decisions, however eventually they were able to live a relatively stable life. Eventually, my parents had a total of seven children, including myself. My mom suffered from physical and mental illnesses, and my father often took his anger out on the wrong issues. It was safe to say that my family was extremely dysfunctional, and unfortunately some of my siblings continued to live in a frustrating household and made poor decisions. My oldest brother Mario found a way to make things work. He participated in many school organizations, and graduate at the top of his class. Often my other siblings and I saw him as a role model, he provided a great example. Perhaps the most important lesson he taught me, was that a strong will can defy any odds. Our parents gave us a foundation to build upon, but we were

Angel Josue Contreras

August 1,2021

Kraig Baier Memorial Scholarship Application Essay

not always pushed to succeed, but my brother Mario was the best possible role model my siblings and I could have had. He was the first in my family's history to go to college and create a name for himself. He now works as a senior executive for a tech company, which is incredible considering where we have come from. Furthermore, he seeks to create a nonprofit organization to help parents with mental illness, to help future generations of children in rough households.

Mario provided a great example for my family. While my cousins were straying into a path of crime, Mario created his own path to success. It is because of him that my siblings and I have been continuing to push for a college degree and a great career. Without any doubt in my heart, I can say that my brother Mario Contreras is the most important and influential person I know.

The Most Important Person in My Life Anthony Davalos

This might come off as clichè but the most important person in my life would have to be my mom. It's not for simple reasons like how she loves me unconditionally or works hard as that is probably how most people would describe their mothers. What really inspires me about her is what she represents. Since I can remember I've always wanted to change the world. I had ideas and goals that reached past the clouds hovering over the New York skyline that me and her would frequent. Interestingly enough though, she told me that no matter how hard I tried I can't change the world. I suppose that is not something you would expect your own mom to tell you. But, as grim as that sounds, it actually inspired me. I considered how and where she was coming from when she told me that. This is a woman who sacrificed her life in Peru to come to the United States of America, land of the free and home of the brave. My mother, just like me, is someone who always wanted more. She loves Peru, both her culture (especially the food) and her family with all her being. But she understood that just like people, her country has its limitations and ones that would hinder my ability to prosper. So she would make the decision to take her things, hold her family for one last time, and walk to the airport to emigrate to a country that was foreign to her all but in name. My mother represents resolve and the human spirit to change, to adapt, to grow. Without her sacrifice, I would not be here lying on my couch in our little white and pine apartment here on Suydam Street in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Sacrifice is what it takes to change the world. It is not through the ideas and goals but it's through what you are willing to give up in order to change the world. She gave up her world to give me mine. So she is not important because she loves me or works hard. She's important because she's resolute and determined. She doesn't realize it but her strength and resolve do in fact change the world, or at the very least my world. As we sat on the train ride home I kept thinking that even though I cannot change the way people are, I can change someone else's life just like she changed mine. I can hope that then they too are willing to give hope to someone else and just maybe with enough sacrifice and hope I can touch someone else's life the way she did for me. And as we approach our last stop she ends by telling me "Tu eres mi vida, mi mundo y mi esperanza y siempre voy a estar a tu lado"

The Most Important Person in My Life

Anthony Salgado

The most important person in my life is a difficult person to identify. This is due to the fact that I have many influential people in my life. However, if I were to pick one person, I would have to choose my father. I realize this is a bit predictable, but bear with me. Fathers are an important component of the family, they are responsible for the growth and development of their children. In fact many children who do not have a father in the family are led to a life detrimental to them and their family. This can include crime, drugs, bad grades in school, etc. I for one am glad that I have my father in my life to support me. He is important to me, in discipline, influence, and instruction. Starting with discipline, now most would linger to this being spanking or yelling, but while that much is true, there is more to it than that. My father is someone who corrects us when we think of something that is not in accordance with human morality. For example, we once made fun of one another, calling each other names. He taught us that we should not be calling each other names, for anyone who calls his brother a fool is a murderer. His discipline comes from Biblical instruction which he in turn shows us. True, I know the Bible as much as he does, but as much as I know it, I myself still fall into anger at times, and sometimes I need someone to tell me to calm down. Although this produces more anger sometimes, most of the time I will calm down, I'll never be angry at him for too long because I know what he does is right. Furthermore, his influence on me is shown day by day. Most of my views on the world are because of him and God's work in both of us. Not only that, but he's persuaded me to not hate the world, but to be careful about what is in it. Never, have I actually appreciated work, but after working so hard with him for years, whether that be yard work, fixing the car, all of it has made me into the person I am today. It is part of the reason I am so determined to succeed in everything that I do. I want to be a great doctor, so I go to school everyday and I balance that with Jiu Jitsu. In Jiu Jitsu I wish to become a black belt someday, so I work hard everyday, but most of all I fix my eyes upon Jesus, and walk in a way that pleases him that I may live a good life both here and the next. In short, my father is the most important person in my life due to how he has helped me develop as an individual who is determined to follow his dreams and to glorify the Lord in everything.

Dulce Deinken Scholarship Application - Aris Martinez

If “American Dream” had a picture in the dictionary, it’d be of my mother. I am so incredibly proud and amazed by her life story, from living in war-torn El Salvador as a child to becoming an accomplished professional in the United States of America. My mother is a bilingual teacher, who pursued a Bachelor’s degree in Education knowing that the career opportunities the degree would open could lead to a better life for her children. She instilled in me at a young age the value of education, which has guided me from my desk in elementary school to my high school’s graduation stage as Salutatorian to now, in college. To be educated is to be free. To be educated is to empower yourself with knowledge of the world. And finally, to be educated is to open doors of opportunity for yourself and to gain the ability to open doors of opportunity for others. My mother embodies these three statements in her work. Her students are often the children of immigrants whose parents lack the means to boost their child’s education. It is my mother that educates her students to learn how to speak English, do basic mathematics, and read complex literature. She is empowering the next generation of Hispanic doctors, engineers, scientists, and entrepreneurs in her little classroom, and it inspires me like nothing else can. I am humbled by all that my mother’s done for me and others, so I can’t wait to make her proud in return by becoming a teacher myself. More specifically, I hope to become a university professor who teaches Civil and Environmental Engineering. Just as my mother inspires and supports young children every year, I hope to inspire young adults with my teaching. The brightest, most innovative people weren’t born with all their knowledge. At one point or another, there was a teacher or mentor there to help them along the way. After all, teachers are so much more than just the people that deliver lectures and give out quizzes. The best ones have the ability to truly uplift their students and ignite their ambition to do great things with their lives. Teachers can present the material in a truly passionate way that inspires their students to enjoy the subject too. Lastly, teachers can spark the inner creativity and enthusiasm of their students that can change their lives. Becoming a professor is my way to foster the next generation of world-changers, entrepreneurs, academics, and innovators. It is my way to make a positive impact on the world with so many problems that need fixing. However, all of my aspirations are only made possible because of the love and education my mother gave me. That’s why she is the most important Hispanic woman in my life. My moral compass is adapted from hers and my pursuit of higher education is inspired by her experiences. She is the light of so many peoples’ lives, and like flowers in a field, her light helps us grow.

The Most Important Hispanic Woman in My Life

Briana Lopez

Many people may say the most important Hispanic Woman in their life is Selena Quintanilla-Pérezs, Ellen Ohcoa, or Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. These are a few names that come to mind when I think of how others may answer this question. These women may have a strong influence on another's life because of their talents and status. But for me, the Hispanic woman who holds the most influence in my life and is most important to me is my mother. She is one of the many selfless Hispanic mothers who carry on the legacy of their own mothers that immigrated to the United States to provide greater opportunities for their children. I plan to continue this legacy as well.

At 11 years old, her family fled the dictatorship of Cuba, in search of a better life. She came to this country with nothing, not knowing an ounce of English, and had left behind all her family and friends. Still hopeful that this major change in her life would lead to great opportunities. With this hope and positive outlook, my mother was able to become the woman she is today, a successful Registered Nurse.

Now, she may not be a lawyer, in the supreme court, or a well-known artist, but she has worked long and hard to be at the status she is today. As a Registered Nurse and having three children, she works twelve-hour shifts six days a week to make sure my siblings and I achieve everything we need and want. She is who I aspire to be and more. I will follow in her footsteps by furthering my education and working my way into the medical field. Making a difference in people's lives by nurturing and finding new methods of medicine. My goal is to become a general surgeon, I want to be able to help a wide variety of patients as best as I can. By going into this field I can care for people every day and tend to their needs so they can become their best selves.

All in all my mother may not be on the news or an important part of history. However, she is an important part of my life and my history. She is the person who has given me life and who has allowed me to succeed into the person I am today. She is an independent woman who has been able to provide for her children and put herself through school. She has shown me that nothing in life comes easy and that I must never give up on my goals.

The Most Important Person in My Life Brooke Morales

The most important person in my life is my mom. I grew up in an unstable household, with an alcoholic father and a sister who chose partying over family. The one consistent person that I had in my life was my mom. After my dad died in April of 2015, all that was left was me and my mother. She raised me to be the woman that I am today. I watched her struggle to balance her personal struggles and the new hardships of being a single mother, yet she made it look like it was easy. She showed me to never give up in any situation that was too difficult; to not let fear stop you because you never know unless you try. Growing up in a home where I was being raised by a strong woman, I was inspired by the power that women hold and being a woman is something that pushes me everyday to succeed because our gender is seen as less than. My mom raised me to be proud of who I am, and love my latin culture. Living in a city that was predominately white it was shamed to celebrate your culture and be authentically you. My mom instilled in me to be who I really am because authenticity will go a long way. She showed me the beauty of our culture and how being Mexican and a minority is something that I should be proud of and to use it to push me to be successful. I have learned how to deal with hardship and struggle because of watching her provide for us. From a young age, my mom instilled in me the importance of school and how it can help me be successful, so I can live a better life that she worked so hard to provide. College is expensive and my mother can barely afford the day to day items we need. This scholarship will not only help me but also my mom cover the expenses needed to further my education. Going to college is important to me because I want to be able to pursue my education after I graduate and go to medical school to become a doctor. My mom suffers from Diabetes and due to our financial situation she does not have the money she needs to help get herself better. She has a lot of the side effects that come along with this disease, yet the price for her to get better is outrageously high. My mom taught me to help others no matter what

their background is, how they look, or how much money they have. My goal in life is to be able to start a practice that has good quality healthcare that is accessible to everyone. This dream was inspired by the ideals my mom taught me and the struggles she faces to get herself healthy.

Bryan McLucas

02 August 2021

My most important person

The most important person in my life is definitely my mother. My mother is the only person who has been there my entire life, since I was born. I say this because my biological father left us when I was two years old and my sister and I have no recollection of him nor have we met him since then. That being said, my mother raised us as a single mother from the age of 21 until the age of 31 when she met my current step dad. She worked countless hours of overtime for days on end just to be able to provide the necessities and some luxury, typically in the form of a Power Ranger action figure, my favorite when I was younger. She did this all without the help of welfare; because my mother is an illegal immigrant and therefore could not obtain it. My mother always taught me to be a proper human being; she constantly emphasized for me to never break the law in an immoral manner (we all speed from time to time), to never steal or touch anything that's not mine without permission, and if given permission to always return something in the manner received, if not better. She also pushed me to do well in school for it would most heavily decide my outcome in life and to pursue college and obtain a degree. My mother always said she did not have the opportunities that I have for simply being a US citizen and to not let them go to waste. I genuinely own everything to my mother, for it had been any other woman, I cannot be certain that I would be the man I am today with the opportunities that I have been given, as well as that I have become the first person in my family to obtain a college degree; I have earned my associate's. I remember my mother going nights without eating to ensure that my sister and I had food in our stomachs. She also never missed a day of work,

she worked so much we honestly didn't see her but late at night after she picked us up from an old lady that used to babysit us. I'm sure countless kids say it all the time, but I hope I can do this for my mother so that all the sacrifices and hard work she has committed to give me a better life would not go to waste. I could not be more proud of the mother I have received in this life, not to be cliché, but she is an angel sent from above and she deserves the world. There isn't much more I could tell you about my mom and our lives without telling you my life story so I bring my essay to an end. I hope you take my essay and our story in heavy consideration for this scholarship. We need it. Thank you.

Cecilia Martinez

"The Most Important Person in My Life"

As a child, my step-dad would come home from work in the mornings when I was getting up for school. He would take me to school, and stay up to watch my baby brother, while my mom went to work. My parents were always worried because my dad was undocumented, but, he always had a smile for us. He sacrificed his own self to take care of our family. It took time and money, but they were able to apply for his residency. Once that happened, he was able to fulfill his dream of becoming a Denver Sheriff. Life has changed for us, but knowing how hard it can be, my dad has continued to dedicate his time to giving back. He completes service through his job, at our schools, and coaches sports. This May, after 20 years, he became a Naturalized US Citizen. He defines determination and perseverance, and in seeing his work ethic, I made it my goal to follow in his footsteps in every way possible.

I started volunteering when I was in middle school. One of the first events I worked, was making pies to raise money for a women's shelter. Afterwards, I understood why my dad was so dedicated to giving back, because my heart was full. Participating in community service has become a part of my routine.

I have completed over 350 hours of community service, because I love to connect with my community. While in high school, I created a mentor program at the middle school I attended with a group of students. We met once a week with students at McAuliffe International for tutoring. I continue to complete service with the Denver Sheriff's Department, creating IDs with fingerprint and DNA kits for kids in case of emergencies. My first year at CSU, I participated in Campus Connections, a mentor group, where we are paired with an at-risk youth, and once a week we support them with pro-social activities, academics, and mental health services. I was paired with a 13 year-old girl. We have been meeting weekly, and even through the pandemic, we have continued to meet virtually. Every Saturday during the pandemic, I volunteer at a church to make sandwiches for those experiencing homelessness.

I have learned that community service is more than just giving back. It allows you to meet individuals from all walks of life, and it's an opportunity to put a smile on someone's face, while seeing life from another perspective. Volunteering has also led me to choose to major in social work, and has been an incredibly motivating factor. It has also brought me closer to my stepdad. I wish to continue giving back through being a School Social Worker and by also being an advocate for at-risk youth. February 2020 I was honored to receive a Commendation Award from the Denver Sheriff's department for the work I have done in the community. The best part about it was my dad received a Community Service Award alongside me.

Essay For the Most Important Hispanic Woman in my life.

Christian Fisk

Although I may not receive this scholarship base on a technicality, the need to share this is paramount. My adopted mother changed the course of my life, and I am forever grateful. When I was six and a half years old, I was adopted from Guatemala with my baby sister. This amazing and selfless act has been the most miraculous gift I have ever received, along with nurture and love I would not be where I am today. Today I am writing an essay for a college scholarship, for many people in the situation where I came from this is an unfathomable dream.

My mother is not Hispanic, she cannot speak any Spanish and had never been to Guatemala prior to my adoption. To adopt from out of the country is not an easy task as there are many different regulations and communication is all mediated by a translator living in the country. Also, this is still at the birth of our great technological advancement with the internet. As motivated and driven as you are to get your children home, the people who facilitate this are not in the same position and do not move with the same vigor. Because of this, the whole process was very time-consuming and frustrating.

This is not something my mother was going to let slow her down or stop her. This bold and courageous woman booked a flight and stayed in Guatemala for three months and was in the offices every day working to get papers, and everything needed to get us to our new life and family. Although my mother is not Hispanic, she boldly entered an unknown world to save a life from inevitable poverty. I have been back to visit to do mission work, seeing the world that I so narrowly escaped shines a light on how blessed I truly am.

My mother is not Hispanic but she is my heroine and the most important woman in my life.

The Chris Goughnor Scholarship
Scholarship Committee
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Christian Garcia
June 27, 2021
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The Most Important Person in My Life

It might be a stereotypical and cliché answer but, I wholeheartedly and passionately want to proffer my mother as the most important person in my life. She has been my backbone and support system during the past year, the hardest year for many people around the world. I had experienced what would be an illness that is unexplainable that nearly killed me multiple times but with her unrelenting support and unconditional love, I have been making steady progress towards coming to peace with my body again. This is also primarily the reason I hope to receive support for my higher education as being sick for the past year has yielded me from being able to work and caused a blow in my self-esteem as I used to be able to financially take care of myself and support my mother when she needed. I hope in describing my mother and how she helped me through my darkest times may even inspire you because she sure has motivated me into giving back and volunteering as soon as I am back to full health.

I have been sick since February of this year when I experienced my first 3 syncopes. These syncopes came with no explanation and I truly felt like I took my last breath during this time. I was asleep one night and at 1:30am was awoken to something in my eyes. It felt as if someone poured water over me, but my room was locked and that was impossible. I quickly rushed to the bathroom where I had my first syncope. Everything went black and I woke up to see myself on the bathroom floor, but then I blacked out again. This time I was holding on to the toilet with a wet hand. I blacked out again. This time I was in the living room in the arms of my father asking me “What’s wrong son?”, my mother yelling and pouring my body with alcohol

yelling “Don’t leave me mi hijo, I need you”, my brother on the phone with 911 trying to tell them if I was still breathing. I didn’t wake up right away, but I remember just laying there – unable to move myself and find the strength in my legs to get up.

Soon, I was rushed to the ambulance outside and found myself in an observatory room for 3 days getting scans, ultrasounds, and x-rays done. My mother was with me every second in that room and eased my stress and anxiety. She has taken great care of me after leaving the hospital through healthy dinners, daily motivation, and her undying love for me. Hearing her say that she needed me when I felt like I was truly dying must have bolted something inside me as I have not been the same person ever since.

The most important person in my life

I am very blessed with what life has given me. It has given me obstacles that I have been able to overcome and has only helped me to be a better person. One of my obstacles was getting pregnant at a young age. I lost friends and was in high school at the time. I thought I was a total failure, but I did not let anything get to me. The little human that was growing inside of me, only gave me strength and hope for what my future had in store for me.

At this point I believed that it was not a mistake, this was the path that was chosen for me. I wanted to keep going, I wanted to do things others thought I couldn't do. I have always been thankful for everything that I have had to endure. I had the opportunity to show others around me that nothing in this life is thrown at you to fail but to only make you better.

I have grown immensely and I am ready to get my career done. I might not have done it after high school but I am ready to do this now, more than ever, even at age 29. My children are the most important people in my life. They have shown me every emotion a human can ever experience. Because of them, I have been pushed to create a better life for them. They are the reason I have been at my current job for 7 years, I have been able to help them succeed in school, I started to drive, purchased my very own home, and now I believe is the perfect time to further my education so that I can pursue my dream career.

They are my reason to live, to move forward, and to better myself. I can only make them better by making myself better. My dream is now my reality and I now am the happiest person in life with my husband supporting me right next to me and my two beautiful children. I would do anything for them and will make sure they have everything they need to succeed and be there every step of the way.

“The Most Important Hispanic Woman In My Life”

Throughout my life, I have had many Hispanic female figures who have made an impact on me. With being Mexican, my aunts, and grandmas are all important to me as they've helped to take care of me when I was younger. However, I wouldn't say they are the most important women in my life. The most important Hispanic woman in my life is my mom. For most choosing their mom as the most important woman in their life is common, but everything my mom has done for me proves that she is. There is so much that she has done to provide a financially stable and happy life. I don't even know where to begin, with all that my mom has done. My mom has gone through so many hardships and overcame all of them, which is one of the main reasons why I chose her as the most important woman in my life. Everything began when she was 10 and her family decided to move to the U.S. for a better life. My mom's family didn't have much in Mexico and my grandparents wanted all of their kids to get a good education. When my mother got to the U.S. learning English was her first obstacle. The (ESL) program helped make English easier, and by the time she entered High School, she no longer needed the program. High School is when my mom took school very seriously. It's not like she didn't before but High School is what gets you ready for college. My mom had decided she wanted to be a nurse and devoted all of her spare time to study. The only exception she made was work since she had to save up for college and help out my grandparents. My mom never had much and wanted to change that, which is why she chose to be a nurse and have a nice future ahead of her. Money wasn't the reason why she chose to be a nurse, helping others who are sick is why she chose this path. My mom has had a job since she was 15 and her dedication to school paid off as she was given an academic scholarship to LBCC. What I like most about my mom is

that she did everything on her own because my grandparents couldn't afford to help her financially and they didn't speak English, so they couldn't help her in school even if they wanted to. Once at LBCC my mom accepted into the nursing program. While in college my mom's family decided to move to Texas for a year. When they decided to move back my mom had lost a year of school and had to restart. She went back to LBCC got her nursing license and transferred to CSDH to get her BSN. Now she is a Public Health Nurse. I am thankful my mom never thought of quitting and stayed dedicated.

The most important person in my life

I am very blessed with what life has given me. It has given me obstacles that I have been able to overcome and has only helped me to be a better person. One of my obstacles was getting pregnant at a young age. I lost friends and was in high school at the time. I thought I was a total failure, but I did not let anything get to me. The little human that was growing inside of me, only gave me strength and hope for what my future had in store for me.

At this point I believed that it was not a mistake, this was the path that was chosen for me. I wanted to keep going, I wanted to do things others thought I couldn't do. I have always been thankful for everything that I have had to endure. I had the opportunity to show others around me that nothing in this life is thrown at you to fail but to only make you better.

I have grown immensely and I am ready to get my career done. I might not have done it after high school but I am ready to do this now, more than ever, even at age 29. My children are the most important people in my life. They have shown me every emotion a human can ever experience. Because of them, I have been pushed to create a better life for them. They are the reason I have been at my current job for 7 years, I have been able to help them succeed in school, I started to drive, purchased my very own home, and now I believe is the perfect time to further my education so that I can pursue my dream career.

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"The Most Important Hispanic Woman in my Life"

Daniela Reyes

The most important person in my life is my mama, hands down. I know it's not the most unique answer, but it's the truth. She's always been someone that people admire; she's a thoughtful, humble, and hardworking mother breaking generational curses and being an inspiration to others.

My mom's life story is quite literally a classic rags to riches tale. She was born in the U.S., but despite being born there, was raised in Mexico for 17 years before moving back for better opportunities with my grandpa, uncle, and aunt. While she worked in a factory, she was also getting her associates degree in early education. She was able to pass all her other classes fairly well, but no matter how much she tried, she couldn't get the hang of English. She was forced to take English classes that went from level 1 to 8 in order to graduate and it was the WORST. She came here not knowing a lick of English and suffered because of it. She was bullied and harassed and would often cry in frustration, wondering if any of the effort she's putting in would be worth it. But she did make it, and after graduating, she bought a house that was able to fit my grandparents, my aunts, my uncle and herself (plus me later on). And even with all those people living there she still had enough space to make a home daycare and start her first business.

Since then she's made a name for herself in the family; she's helped her sisters start their own daycare businesses, and makes sure her daycare is in tiptop shape. She buys every kid a present every holiday, she treats her employees to lunch, she regularly checks on the people she cares about, and rarely ever turns away anyone that needs help. She's helped her past employees create their own business and has helped them get ahead, even if it's not with her. And although she's found success, she's never been one to brag or flash her money. When she was younger, she never had the money to buy what she wanted, her mom would make her clothes from spare fabric and any money she made would immediately go to my grandpa until she became 18. Now that she makes her own money, she doesn't care too much for brands, any clothes are fine as long as she looks and smells nice. She'd much rather spoil her kids and her family, but it's okay, cause we do what we can to spoil her too!

Despite all the hardship she's faced, my mother has always managed to bring herself up. Even on the days where she felt her lowest, she found the strength to rise above it all. She isn't without her faults though, she can be hard-headed, a perfectionist, and an overthinker. Unfortunately for her, I got those traits too! But hopefully, I also got her resilience, modesty, thoughtfulness, and her ability to uplift and inspire.

Daniela Santiago
14 August 2021

The Most Important Person In My Life

When asked about the most important person in their life, most people think of their role models, but the most important person in my life is someone who I strive to be a role model for. And because of this responsibility, my nine-year-old niece has provided me with inspiration, drive, and humility.

My niece is a young, strong, and outgoing Afro-Latina. She gives me one of the most important reasons to pursue my career goals. I aspire to create films that represent diverse people. As a child, I was ashamed of my hair because all I saw on TV were girls with straight hair. There was no one that looked like me on screen that I could look up to. I thought that straight hair was the pinnacle of beauty so I damaged my hair trying to hide my curls. Latina characters were scant and whenever there was a Latina character, she always fulfilled a harmful stereotype that I knew didn't reflect me at all. Just once I wanted to see the love, passion, rhythm, thoughtfulness, perseverance, and morality behind our culture depicted on the big screen but I never did. I don't want my niece to think less of herself because of what she sees on TV. I want her to feel represented and celebrated when she watches a film. My hope for her is what pushes me to accomplish my goals and pursue my education.

My niece not only inspires me to achieve my dreams but to do it with integrity. She drives me to make the right decisions, whether big or small, because I know she is always watching and absorbing what she sees. When I want to take the easy way out and slack off, I go the extra mile so that I can set high standards for her. As she gets older, I don't want her to see the bare minimum as her limitation. I want her to look at me and know that if she has a tia that has gone above and beyond, she can do the same.

It's very easy to get caught up in the ups and downs of life. The stresses of work, friends, and other responsibilities can consume you if you let them. Seeing her face, or even just a picture of her keeps me grounded. Her simple youthful anecdotes allow me to see the simplicities of life that as adults, we forget to stop and appreciate. I credit her with unknowingly maintaining my mental health. When I am stressed and overwhelmed, her requests to do simple activities like taking a walk or going for ice cream are what give me a break. Little does she know the peace that she is providing me with. It's the simple moments that I spend with her that give me the energy to get back on my feet and work hard for her. It's our loved ones, the most important people in our lives that deserve the utmost recognition for our accomplishments.

The Most Important Person in My Life

Dayna Tillett

Mom rules the world. To me, the most important person in my life is: strong, loving, and supportive. No one fits this category better than my mother. Most importantly she is the most resilient meteor to me.

Even as a single parent she has shown me what a strong role model is. My mother taught me how to be brave. A vivid memory of my mother being fearless is when she lost her job and which led to our house getting foreclosed. As a child, I didn't understand the urgency of the situation. Although my mother protected me from the stress. She took it into her own hands to find a safe place so I could grow up in a sheltered environment. As I have gotten older I have grown to appreciate the multiple ways my mother has protected me. My mother gave me the privilege to have a childhood. Undoubtedly when I imagine my mom I think of her kindhearted heart.

Moreover, my mother has shown me, unconditional love. An action that reminded me of my mother's love is her sliced fruits. Even though it is a simple plate of fruits it portrays my mother's love and her support for me. My mother would carefully slice and plate each fruit vertically. The time and effort she took is the same patience she had raised me. The sliced fruit meant a lot because it gave me a sense of tranquil comfort. My mother always cheered me up even when I tried to deceive my feelings. Without a doubt, single mothers raise confident children.

One person that has supported me even in rocky moments is my mom. My mother only has a GED diploma and has experienced the disadvantages those with lower education encounter. As a result, my mom has encouraged me to seek higher education. She has encouraged me to take on every difficult high school course that was offered. Even though I didn't believe in my ability to pass my classes my mom motivated me that I could overcome any challenge. Every time I passed an exam or got an award, she said "Que es mi nombre"(What is my name ?). This quote provided a sense of confidence in my maternal surname because it is the name I will achieve success with. My mother prepared me how to enter

the world with full confidence.

Undoubtedly, seeing the hardships my mother has overcome has inspired me to become a biomedical engineer. As a young colored student, I want to influence other colored students to explore STEM careers.

Without a doubt, my mom has earned herself to be the most important person in my life. My mother has been a strong role model despite being a single mother. I love her because she expresses her love in multiple ways such as her sliced fruit. Lastly, she is my number one supporter to achieve the greatest in my life. For these reasons, my mom is the most important person in my life.

The Most Important Person in My Life

Devin Guevara

His red car arrived amongst broken corona bottles and the borrachos that left them in the parking lot. My teacher had driven from across the city to pick me up for our first Citizens' Climate Lobby meeting (whatever that meant). "Why would this man exert the effort to pick me up in this dump?" I thought. "What does he owe me?" He owed me nothing.

I now realize that, yes, Sigren owed me nothing, but he was paying forward what someone paid to him. I surmise that he was paying forward the time his father gave to him, which is something my own father almost never gave to me.

I'm a firm believer in the value of paying forward the good that your parents, teachers, and friends give to you, and I employ this belief everywhere. I guide my brothers on their virtual work. I guide my mom, my cousins, and friends to the polls and climate strikes. I show freshmen how to be friends with Special ED students, help Model UN newbies, and explain acronyms like GOTV and VR. I do all of these things without being asked to. I help them because I remember needing help and because multiple people helped me without my request.

It was my mom who carved this value into me. She's navigated life by being impossibly good to those around her, even if they're strangers or supposedly unworthy of kindness. Countless people scowl when she talks to cashiers as if she's known them forever or when she explains her most vulnerable experiences to console troubled people she's just met, but I smile with pride; I want to be just like her. When my mom carved my hands from the marble, I took the chisel and my pick my father neglected to use and added to the sculpture my mom was busy perfecting. I've chosen to lead like my mom, and emanate unsolicited good everywhere I go and to every person I meet.

Most people need an objective reason to be kind, but not my mom. She's never paid a thought to the self-interest her kindness may somehow eventually entertain, but I have, and I know that even the most selfless deed has an equal karmic kickback. It is true, no good deed

goes unpunished, but that's just a morbid way of saying "you get what you give"—and it takes nerve to give.

I am the product of a chain of increasingly impactful "forward" payments. My recognition of this and of my privilege in the same disenfranchised community Sigren picked me up in that day is what compels me to start chains of forward payments everywhere I can, chains that one day might loop me in once more.

In this way, I am different from my father. He doesn't have the courage to give me what he never had. I, however, will always have the courage to give the world so much more than what the world has given me.

“The Most Important Person”

Dora Peele

The most important person in my life by far would have to be my step-in father. Not my “step-father” my father, not related by blood or marriage. Through insanely complicated circumstances I found my way to him, and he gave me his hand in help.

I was in a terrible situation, suffering from abuse, neglect, malnourishment and oddly enough- cancer. He stepped into my life and was the father I never knew I deserved. At the time I wasn't as grateful as I should've been with him, after all every “parental” figure I had in my life eventually turned sour. But he never did. We had our moments, our arguments, tears were shed, words were like knives. But he never gave up on me.

Rik pushed me to attend school. He pushed me to be someone worthy of loving myself as others loved me- as he loved me. He showed me what a healthy family looks like. He made me want to redo my childhood, not to erase the abuse- but to have those unforgettable memories made with him. The moment I made the decision to do college, to get therapy, to want him to be proud of me- that was a moment I couldn't forget.

Just having the mentality of wanting to give back to someone who has done so much for me shaped my views and my values.

My main goal in life now is to be someone that's there for someone. That's pretty bland when I write it out but I want to be USEFUL to someone. I want to be someone's rock, someone's shoulder to cry on. I want to be someone's mentor. I want to teach everything that I've been taught- I WANT to have those unnerving arguments about school and the importance of it with someone.

I want to help others.

In any way I can. But even I understand that human bonds can only go so far. So how I plan to help those in need with my career path is I'm going to be a Veterinary Doctor. I know this isn't as noble as a regular doctor or even a psychologist but there's a certain bond one builds with a creature that loves them unconditionally.

Working at a clinic even now I can see the importance animals have on humans. The genuine joy of a healthy check up or the intense sobbing of a hard decision that was made, all of it pertain towards these furry creatures.

I want to help people by helping their animal companions. I want to give them as much time as I can with their animal companions. I want to give my knowledge and expertise on animals to their owners so that they can best prepare themselves for the inevitability of their loved ones passing. In doing so this would also give the owners some relief- at least they knew their furry friend was in the best possible care before they went. It's a somber bittersweet way to look at it, but speaking from experience it most definitely contributes a lot.

The Most Important Person in My Life

Esperanza Terrones

As a first-generation student and daughter of an immigrant, it is difficult to get the support and help I need, especially in my education. But that never stopped my mother from making sure I had the right resources, even if it brought difficulty for herself too. That is why it was clear to me that my mother is the most important Hispanic woman in my life and will always be. She is the strong, empowered woman that I dream to be. She always puts me first, so it would be selfish for me to say I am the most important Hispanic woman in my life when she is the one that made me who I am. But I have honestly been blessed to receive all the support my family can give me, especially my mother. My mother not only came to the United States for a better life for herself but her kids and siblings. At a young age, it was her responsibility to make sure her siblings never had the life she had. To this day, she still makes sure everyone around her is cared for, making her the most influential person in my life and many others. She sees the life she dreamed of having through my life, so it is my goal in life to help her live her own life. My happiness and success bring her joy, but also her happiness brings me comfort and motivation in life.

Heimy Dominguez
03/08/21

Elena Bathrick Scholarship

Prompt: "The most Important person in my life"

The most important person in my life is myself. We spend our life worrying about others that we forget about ourselves and what we need. Self love and respect for one self is very important. We decide what our life is going to look like and what happens with us along the way. I have taught myself many things and learned lessons the hard way. All of the hardships made me the person that I am today. We must take care of ourselves in order to live a long and healthy life. With the hardships that I had to overcome all by myself I have been able to shape my values and be open minded all the time. I have changed and made my values in a way that would allow me to live my life without worrying what others think, not judging a book by its cover and accepting and being understood by others who are experiencing things that I have yet to experience. I want to help others by reminding them that it is ok to take time for yourself and that It does not make you a coward. All of us deserve time for ourselves to unwind and destress.

The Most Important Person in My Life

Isaac Islas

On a canvas that was once blank, I can manipulate the acrylic paints to tell the story of others, including mine. I was born a blank slate, but I have created beautiful artwork throughout the course of my life.

With no professional experience in art, I fostered my natural gift of painting. I enjoyed the fact that I could create what I had envisioned. Junior year, I joined my second art class, Design 2. In this class, my art instructor annually submits student artwork to a Congressional Art Competition. That year's theme was "Unsung Heroes." With eagerness, I began to create a piece for the competition. A hero in my life immediately came to mind.

When my mother could not find a babysitter, she would have to take me along with her to work. I recall long days observing my mother working for our family. She spent hours in the beating sun, tirelessly doing manual labor. I witnessed my mom's pain from rigorous hours of picking onions from the rough dirt and tossing them into a gunny sack. The power of love ran through my mother's veins, motivating her to provide financial stability.

It taught me firsthand that nothing is given to you. What you want in life is earned through hard work. I based my art piece on my mother, naming it "Fieldworker." Every fieldworker has a story, and the pure selflessness I witnessed from these workers is genuinely heroic. These fieldworkers illustrated determination and selflessness, two qualities that I believe are signs of a hero.

The colors chosen for the art piece were intentional. The orange-yellow sunset symbolizes the determination that the workers showed through their long hours in the fields. Yellow is a color of hope and positivity and illustrates the individuals' energy to their work. The dark-green mountains and pathways symbolize the wealth to be earned. The brown straw hat represents a worker's reliability, always showing up and working for themselves, their family, and their communities. The blue jeans symbolize wisdom by how far an individual can achieve.

After submitting my artwork, my professor contacted me a month later, congratulating me on being recognized for my artistic talent in California's 51st congressional district by Juan Vargas. Along with two others, my art piece is currently being displayed in the U.S. Capitol, in the Washington, D.C. office. I am immensely proud of myself, but more so, I am pleased to have the opportunity to highlight the heroic acts of my mother and fellow field workers in my family, community, and nationwide.

I know my college years will come with their fair share of difficulties, but I am confident that I will make the most of my time there through the hard work, dedication, and positive attitude I have developed. We are all insignificant paints of colors: worthless until we leave a mark on someone else's canvas. It's only in unison when we can grow and create something beautiful, something that is filled with meaning.

The Most Important Hispanic Woman in My Life Ivett Flores

The most important Hispanic woman in my life is my mom because she shaped me into the woman I am. Without my mom, I would not be where I am today. She was born in Oaxaca, Mexico on March 13th, 1986. My mother was brought to the United States as an undocumented child when she was 4 years old. She grew up in a low-income neighborhood in Los Angeles in a crowded apartment with her parents and 2 brothers. At the age of 16, she got pregnant and became a single teenage mother. A teen pregnancy did not stop her from being an amazing mom. Having me at a young age forced my mom to grow up very quickly. She had to take a break from high school and started working instead.

My mom was part of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and it was very hard for her to seek employment. My mom worked two jobs, one at a furniture store and another cleaning houses. These jobs did not have a set schedule and required her to work long hours, in most cases 7 days a week. I did not spend as much time with her but knew it was because she was working hard to financially support me. She worked hard to afford enrolling me in private school so I could get a better education and avoid attending the local public schools that had a lot of problems. Even Though she had a busy schedule of work, she still managed to have time and energy to take me to the mall, park, school, and volleyball practice. Sometimes, we would even go to the park late at night so we could practice volleyball together. My mother and I have a great relationship, she is my best friend. My mom is my go-to person for everything. She always sticks up for me, gives me advice, encourages me, and comforts me. She is my favorite person to spend time with because her energy and personality always brightens my day.

My mom did everything she could to give me a better life and helped me face the odds of not going down the wrong path. Seeing my mom raise me while working multiple jobs and taking college courses, made me realize that things can be done with balance, perseverance, and structure as long as you put your mind to it. My mom's balance with life and her work ethic has taught me how to balance my academic work and sports. She always motivated me to be the best in anything I chose to do, which paid off because I graduated high school with high academic honors and committed to play volleyball at Central College. The strong support system given by my mother gives me the courage to pursue my dreams of graduating college and becoming a successful businesswoman. I am forever grateful for my mom, everything she did was for me.

The Most Important Person in My Life: Mi Papa

Lisette J. Pena

Echale ganas. I have heard that countless times from the most significant person in my life: my Papa. My dad was never one to share feelings, but he knew how to support me in life. He brought me comfort and it was a reminder of all the times he felt compelled to tell me to push harder. Whether it was in my soccer games, studying for SAT's, grueling AP homework, or after long work shifts. It stems from my dad's presence that I have high expectations of what I am capable of.

At some point, I realized my dad wasn't just my *Papa*. He was once a young boy that left his country and everything, he knew in search of something more in life. I could never fathom leaving your country, family, and people at 17 years old. He would tell me about leaving school to work to support his family, crossing the border, and fears of ICE. The pressure from my dad was difficult. I felt guilt knowing this and it took maturing to realize he gave me perspective about my life. My dad had courage to take the choices he had and make the best of them. My dad over the years taught me to push through and is a role model of work ethic. He has worked tirelessly for 20 years working two jobs in two restaurants as a cook. I remember the sharp ache and soreness in my legs and back after my first day working alongside him. My dad is a champ in the kitchen: leading the kitchen, lightning speed, memorizing orders, and making the best dishes, He is good at what he does, and he can outperform anyone!

It was through his support that I felt compelled to study political science and public policy. I have worked tirelessly to find my passion, so when I took AP History and AP Government, I found it. It was through history and constitutional law where I felt inspired. When there was injustice, it was leaders and communities that fought for justice. Whether it was the courts, revolutions, civil rights movements, women suffragettes, labor unions, or civil disobedience. I loved supreme court cases and my dad knew, so every day he would ask for a summary of one I was learning in class. He nurtured my interest in politics and fairness in the world. He taught me to think critically, and he kept me grounded with reality. I plan to attend

grad school, most likely law school after graduating from UC Irvine. I want to uphold fairness and the law to my community.

I am cognizant of the systematic obstacles as a Latina, child of immigrants, and first-generation college student. I've had insecurities, especially in college about whether I can compete with my peers. Instead of a burden, it's a testament to my strength and resilience. It was through my dad's support that I worked hard in school and value education. *Le echo ganas* everyday to accomplish great things.

The Most Important Hispanic Woman in My Life

As a son of an immigrant parent, I have learned the value of hard work. My mom worked on the farm in Honduras and sold food, clothes on the street to fend for herself and us. Arriving in the United States in the 1970s and having a growing family, she worked hard to ensure that all our needs were met. For instance, when I was in high school, my mom got a job as a home attendant and worked seven days a week. Even if there were snowstorms sometimes, she would still show up to work because her bosses had entrusted their homes to her. In other words, she was working so hard that she had become a crucial asset to her bosses.

Nevertheless, she was overworking herself since she did not have breaks. She had a look of exhaustion that would be evident when she arrived home, with her eyes half shut and struggling to catch a breath. Even so, she managed to get up early the next day to go to work. Seeing my mother's work ethic, I knew I wanted a better life for my family. I adore her for being there for us.

I do not come from a wealthy family, and we struggle to lead a normal life like typical families do; meeting all the basic needs comfortably. Indeed, living in public housing and surviving on food stamps means never knowing when food will run out or if there is enough to pay rent. As a child, such a lifestyle meant selling any gaming system for groceries. Though I missed my video games, a full stomach was more important to me than anything else in Harlem, New York.

In the future, I hope to establish an independent press. There is a shortage of job opportunities in my area, so through this endeavor, I would be able to create jobs for my community members.

These positions will be available to anyone, regardless of age, race, work experience, gender, and sexuality. The work hours will be flexible, and everyone will be paid a living wage because it is impossible to survive on the minimum wage. Employees will be able to set their hours, and they will have paid vacations and holidays. I hope that this system will allow employees to spend more time with their families and develop their skills and life outside of work. My ultimate goal is for each employee to have a healthy work/life balance through a stable, well-paying job.

A university education will provide me with the tools and knowledge to undertake such projects, share important stories, and show the world that Harlem isn't dangerous, but is a welcoming, community-minded place.

The Most Important Person in My Life Uncle C

Jeremy Perez

During the summer of 2019, I met the most energetic, kind, and God-fearing man in my life. I volunteered that summer at Wewoka Woods Summer Camp, a church camp where I attended as a camper. I remember walking for the first time into a cabin; there, in the shadows, a big and tall man emerged with the broadest grin. From that moment on, I knew something was different about him. His persona uplifted everyone around him, and he held authority in his voice. His name was Uncle C.

Uncle C is a man of many values, which includes his love for children. He always kept a patient heart with the campers and showed there's so much to love about children. Their innocence, recklessness, and gullibility teach a lesson. I remember a camper that irritated me, but I prayed about him and took Uncle C's views into my heart. I found myself showing humility to the camper to gain his trust. I then soon realized the camper, alongside others, were in abusive homes. Uncle C gave me a passion for children, he showed me how to serve them, and now I want to pursue a career that I will be able to help children of all ages.

Uncle C had one more semester left that summer until he graduated with a bachelor's in theology. I remember the excitement in his eyes; he couldn't help but step into many moments to share his testimony. His testimony never got old to me. I became inspired by Uncle C by every action, word, and thought. I couldn't help but feel called to serve others in ministry, but I fought the feeling off daily. One of the last few nights, I played with Uncle C in a small band for worship. In a few minutes, I saw a simple song, "Reckless Love," turn the room into a space of divinity that captivated everywhere in the room. With just a few words of gratitude towards God from Uncle C, I felt a tear streaming down my face that made me look up and see for myself how the music and words moved the campers and staff. At that moment, I realized my career had to involve ministry somehow, whether from playing guitar with churches on the weekend or helping children, God was calling me.

Uncle C has affected my spiritual and physical life significantly. He influenced me to attend a Christian university to pursue my career and God's plan. I have focused on working with children, and I've grown even more passionate about music and the medical field. Although both are separate occupations, I know God is working out a plan for me. He gave me the strength to perform a full-time job my senior year and still make straight A's. He pushed me throughout high school to get ready for college, and now I know I'm equipped to succeed. I will push myself for my God, family, and the people I am destined to serve.

Jimena Hernandez

The Most Important Person in My Life

It would be convenient to say that the most important person in my life would be my mother or my father, individuals who have seen it all already, people who can advise you on anything that happens in life since they have gone through similar situations in the past. Yet, as I live through the twenty first century, I find it to be more realistic and relatable to say that the most important person in my life is one of my generation; and that is my cousin Ana Amahirani, who with only seventeen years of age has experienced an abundance of good and evil in her life. My cousin, who we like to call Amaira, was born in the beautiful country of Venezuela, in an island in the Caribbean that goes by the name of “Isla Margarita.” In an island that was once full of richness and tourism, my cousin lived in a humble home with my aunt and her dad. Since she was a child, Amaira has struggled in school academically, and it was not because she was not intellectually capable, it was just because some teachers have not been very fond of her attitude; yet in the moments where she did exceed the expectations of those who thought less of her educationally, they were triumphant moments that determined she was an achiever and fighter, never giving up, proving herself, she was capable of doing great things. Other difficult circumstances came into her life when Amaira’s father left her teenage daughter alone with my aunt, and around the same time the rest of her family, including myself, had left to the US for a better life. Being a teenager, living with a single mother, in a third-world country who is under the rule of a socialist regime that has taken total control of the nation’s economy, food supply, gas supply, water and electrical power has caused her to worry about a bright future. However, my cousin has not stopped to work hard for her goals; amidst a pandemic in a third-world

country, Amaira has been able to attend college to pursue a career in medicine even with the disadvantages of having power outages almost every day and barely any school supplies. Amaira is also constantly helping out her community by providing food and other commodities to her neighbors who need it the most. As you can see, her life is far from being perfect, but she keeps going in hopes of one day moving with her mother here to America to achieve great things; and it is exactly her charisma, hopefulness and willingness she carries, that has taught me many good things, but has made her into the incredible person that I truly admire.

Kaitlyn Otero
The Most Important Person in My Life

My Highschool career had a rocky start; during my freshman year I lost my father to Non Hodgkin's Gastric Lymphoma. Seeing a parent in that condition, made me feel helpless, but I knew that I could make him proud by focusing on my studies. My sophomore year, my mother was diagnosed with Breast Cancer; nearly a year and a month after losing my father, I was once again being faced with the possibility of losing another parent. My mother fortunately won her battle with Breast Cancer and has been cancer free for two years. If I didn't have the love and support from my family and friends, during these difficult times I don't know if I'd be the young woman I am today.

Despite being faced with adversity, I've never lost focus on the importance of my academics; in fact I've used this devastating loss to fuel my hunger for success. I found myself juggling my school work, with the long nights spent at the hospital with my father and months of recovery spent with my mother; to my surprise I was able to improve my grades, and maintain my position in high honors. My resilience and scholastic diligence have proven to be a fruitful trait that helped me to achieve my academic goals.

Due to my experience with cancer, I felt it was imperative to have a support group for the students of my school, who were affected by cancer. As I said earlier, without the love and support from family and friends, those difficult times would have gotten the best of me. With the help of a friend of mine, we started the Wizards Against Cancer club; which a fundraising and support group for the students and Faculty at Washingtonville High School.

Through my participation with this club I've been able to facilitate the involvement of our students in the Woodbury Commons Breast Cancer walk, numerous bake sales, a Cut-A-Thon; to support the Hudson Valley Cancer Resource Center and wigs for kids, and in the spring we're planning a dance for the Washingtonville Middle school, to support the lives of both the survivors and those lost to the battle of cancer. Our Cut -A- Thon raised over \$1,000 dollars for the HVCRC and accepted hair

donations for Wigs for Kids. By raising awareness, our club stresses that “No One fights Alone”; a message that is near and true to my heart.

The lessons that I’ve learned from volunteering and my struggle with the loss of a parent to cancer, are tools that I will carry with me as a reminder that even in my darkest days I am and will be able to pursue my dreams. By being involved in my community, and pursuing a career in the medical field, I hope to better the lives of those who have been affected by cancer.

Karen Diaz Orozco
The Most Important Person in My Life

Everytime I get asked who is the most important person in my life. It overwhelms me with overthinking for picking just one person. It's obvious that the most important people are my family. I love both of my parents equally for their sacrifices. But my mother has incredibly Influenced me in various ways. She's also the woman that motivates me to be a better person.

It's my mother who I consider the most important person in my life because she's a strong woman. I admire how she's been through a lot of chaos and still manages to be capable of being strong. She's been the housewife of a man that doesn't deserve her. She's wasted almost two decades of her life to a male chauvinist. She left her country for a better life, yet she hasn't been able to do anything but be a housewife and a mother. She still manages to be a caring person.

Besides, not being able to do something with her life, she hasn't seen any of her family and she tolerates behavior from my father that she doesn't deserve. I admire her because despite all that she hasn't fallen to the deep end. She continues strong, I know she does it for me and my brother. She stays because she wants to see my brother and I pursue our dreams.

To add on, my mother is the most caring person that I know. She supports me so much and directs me to the right path. She's also my friend. I can confide with her in situations I would with my best friend. Why? Because I have that type of bond with her and I don't think many females my age have that with their mom. I'm very fortunate that I have that type of relationship with my mother. She's there for me when I need someone and I appreciate that so much.

Everytime I have a doubt about something my mother is there for me. To give me hope that everything will be alright. She's been there for me since the day I was born and like I mentioned before even if she's having a bad day due to a disagreement with my dad as always she won't take it out on me, or my brother. She knows how to handle emotions and I admire her for that as well.

To sum this up, my mother is why I want to be successful in life. I hope I get some of her characteristics like being strong, caring and patient. I want her to be there when my dreams come true. I owe it all to her and her sacrifices, she's been putting her children first and I want to give her one day what she deserves. Making her proud and that she might've not had the best life here in California but it was worth it at the end. Everything's better when my mom is around and I will always need her by my side.

The Most Important Person in My Life Karen Yaneth Espinal

My mother is the most important person in my life. She's the one that brings meaning and balance. She brings tranquility and logic when I feel tangled in a situation. She always has a solution to a problem, big and small. We have a strong bond to the point where we understand each other simply through a gaze. She reminds me to keep my head up and have confidence, without the expense of my humility.

However, the lessons that remain prominent in my memories occurred during the harshest times. During December 2015, she had back surgery as a result of compressive tissues found on her spine. Before being admitted, her sensation and movement from the waist down was minimal. I remember the feeling of uncertainty that my father, brother, and I had as we waited for the procedure to finish. Through the help of health care professionals, my mother slowly gained her strength. Yet, approximately six months after the surgery, she was diagnosed with stage IV ovarian cancer. Surgery was an option and chemotherapy followed afterwards. I was there when her thick, silky black hair vanished. I saw her physically deteriorate in front of my eyes. I was there during her breakdowns, consoling her and ceasing her tears. Nonetheless, my mother's agony didn't go in vain. She was victorious and has been cancer-free for over 4 years!

I learned that I should give acts of kindness from the heart, not pity. Pity emphasizes the destruction of a disease, causing the patient to feel like a burden. The least I wanted was to emit insecurity and surrender when I needed to be positive and supportive.

I can't express how grateful I am to have her by my side. I constantly tell her that I love her. Life can be cut short, and we shouldn't wait to express our feelings when we can today. Small actions demonstrate your love for a person and how you do anything to make them happy.

On the other hand, as I applied to colleges, I felt trapped in a rabbit hole. I asked myself, "What do I want to see everyday in my future job? What will be meaningful to me?" I wish to become part of the rewarding and demanding career of nursing. While it wasn't pleasant seeing my mother in such a feeble physical and mental state, her recovery process was a beautiful transformation to witness. Happiness and respect overpower my emotions knowing that she trespassed those obstacles. Personally, I wish to help the same way I did with my mother. Although I acknowledge that some of my future patients may not have happy endings, I know that my knowledge and compassion will guide me in providing the care they need.

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Katherine Lemus

The Most Important Person in My Life

People don't become who they are by themselves. For better or for worse, we are influenced by the way we are brought up, taught, and raised by the people around us. There are multiple people who helped mold me into the woman that I am today, but interestingly enough this person was a man; my older brother. My older brother provided to me support, love, and inspiration. Not only that, but he taught me that we didn't have to become products of the negative circumstances in our lives. We overcame these obstacles, and we did it because we found strength in each other.

My brother Cristian and I lived through the pain and sorrow together. When my mother became depressed to the point of contemplating suicide, my brother and I were there for her. When my parents decided to divorce, it was me and him. When my grandmother and uncle passed away, we got through the grief together. I found the upmost inspiration in him because of the fact that I knew how painful it was for us to endure these situations. When my heart felt torn and broken down, when I had no more tears to shed, my brother and I shed more together. My brother also did something else for me that influenced my life a lot; he showed me that there were other paths in lives that we could take to better ourselves, and our family.

My brother was the first person in my family to go to college, and even though he didn't know if he would be able to afford it, he did it. No one in our family had attended college before, and he showed me that someone like us, from our environment and with our past could do it. We didn't have things that others might take for granted. We didn't have that "leg-up" that other

families are able to provide for their children. Yet, somehow, he taught me that maybe you don't need it.

He also didn't know much about being a woman, so it was difficult for him to relate to me sometimes, but at the same time I'm grateful for that. My brother always told me that I shouldn't fit into the stereotypical mold that a Hispanic woman like me is expected to fulfill. He told me that I should provide for myself first and foremost. He taught me life lessons, showed me other paths that are available for me to take, and took them for himself first so that it would be a little easier for me to navigate through them when it's my time. My older brother is the most inspirational person in my life for all of these reasons, but most importantly because he was there for me when I needed him, and I know that he'll never leave my side no matter what happens.

Kaylanna Guerro-Gobert

The Most Important Person in my Life

As I am trying to write this paper I am already tearing up thinking about the most important person in my life. This person has made such a big impact on me and my three younger sisters lives. I would not be the person I am today without them, I probably wouldn't be writing this paper or even going to college.

This person is my older sister Alicia. We were raised by our single mother since I was in kindergarten. Because my mom was a single mother of 5 and we don't live near our family we had to take on a lot of the responsibilities of raising our younger siblings. My sister Alicia especially had to take on a lot of the responsibilities. She is only 1 year and 9 months older than me but she still ended up being a mother figure. She influenced my life tremendously.

I find myself so lucky to have her in my life. When I think about how she had to go through everything first and alone I feel bad, because when she was a kid she was so shy and timid the school thought she was mute. When I was entering Kindergarten I had her there to teach me everything. Throughout my kindergarten year we ate breakfast together everyday. She taught me where to get my food, how to type my lunch code in, and always reminded me to not forget my juice at the end. When we sat at the table in the cafeteria it was my first time seeing a milk carton, and I could not open it no matter how many times I tried, but she was there to open it for me every morning. She taught me how to play tetherball, told me about keys you could find in the playground to get prizes from the office, and allowed me to have a good time at school in the morning.

As we got older she kept teaching me new things and is still continuing to teach me things. She has huge shoes to fill and I know I would not be capable of doing what she did, I don't know if anyone could do what she has done for me. When she went off to college in 2019 me and my sisters had a really hard time. It has always been us five, so with her gone it was very sad. I ended up being the oldest sister in the house but at least I got to share some of the responsibilities with my sister Juliana who is a year younger than me.

Alicia has taught me the importance of education, she is the whole reason I am going to college. I plan on having a very good future all because of her. If she wasn't in my life I think I would be on a very different path in life, and it wouldn't be a good one. I am so grateful Alicia is my older sister.

The Most Important Hispanic Woman in My Life
by
Kevin Omar Alvarez Mejia

Isabel Esperanza Mejia de Alvarez, that is the name of the most important Hispanic woman in my life. Isabel is my mother. She lives in El Salvador and I have not seen her since June 16, 2016. I think of her every day. Social media lets me see her and hear her voice on video, but it does not compare to being next to her. It does not compare to her hugs or her delicious cooking.

My mother put me on a train almost 5 years ago and sent me on my way in search of the American Dream. In my country the poverty, gangs and violence would make it almost impossible for me to get a college education. Her goal was to send me somewhere safe where I could get a job and have a better life. It is a dream come true that instead I am going to a university. I know my mother made a big sacrifice when she said goodbye to me. What a strong and incredible person she is.

Isabel Esperanza is 57 years old. She has 6 children. My sibling lives with her today. She also takes care of my nieces and nephews. My grandma also lives there and they work hard together to feed the family and keep them safe. They are very poor. Part of my dream is to get a great education and a great job as a teacher so that I can help her and my other family still in El Salvador live better. It would make me happy to know that they are eating good and have safe shelter. I would live better to know that my mom does not have to work so hard.

It is important to say that my mom is a humble person. Her heart is full of love. She grew up in El Salvador very poor and was not able to get a good education. My dad left a long time ago so it has been my mom that has kept the family together and has made the sacrifices to keep us not just safe but alive. Even if that meant sending us far from her. She understands my dream and supports me. My graduation from high school this month and one day from university will be in her honor. Isabel Esperanza Mejia de Alvarez, the bravest, most beautiful and most important Hispanic woman in my life.

The most important person in my life

Liana Montoya

Throughout my life, I have met friends, mentors, counselors, people who have become important to me in many ways. Some of them are still important to this day and others not anymore, but the ones that I believe were, are, and always will be important are my parents. My parents are the main reason why I am who I am. They grew up in the countryside of Durango, Mexico, in a small town called El Portento. Since there are not a lot of opportunities there, they always had a humble life and that is how I grew up, living a humble life. I am grateful for this life because it built me up into the person I am today. My parents have taught me many things and beliefs that are important, but some have had a greater impact on me. For example, they have always told me that it does not matter the race, religion, or social status, it is always important to be kind to everyone and not judgmental, but at the same time, it is good to be a little cautious with people. Like they are people that are grateful for your kindness, they are also people that will try to get the advantage of it. Another belief my parents have taught me, and that I believe it is the most important one, is that the only real heritage they are going to live me is my education. It does not matter how much money a person has, if they do not have an education, they will not get far from where they started. When I say education, I am not only talking about a diploma, I am also talking about the education we receive at our houses with our family, our friends, colleagues, and everyone in general.

Lizbeth Diaz

Luchadora

The most important Hispanic woman in my life is my mother. She moved to the U.S from her home country, Mexico, 21 years ago. She is a selfless woman who moved here to support her family. This woman taught me to be the hardworking, passionate, and success-driven woman I am today.

My mother grew up taking care of all her younger siblings since she was the 3rd out of 11. She never got to enjoy her childhood as much as others did. When she was only 13 her father died. She stopped going to school and would only show up occasionally. Soon after her mom took 2 of her younger sisters and abandoned my mom with 3 of my aunts. This is why ultimately; she came to the U.S with her older brother and her sister at the age of 17. Her first job was in the fields, working as an “orange picker”.

A few years after she met my dad. In 2003, I was born. She always managed to work, keep the house clean, take care of my siblings, and financially support her family back in Mexico without complaining.

My mom pushes me everyday to stay on track and continue my education. She is the one who pushes me to always do good and help the community. My senior year of school I was depressed. I stopped showing up to classes and when my mom found out she started dropping me off at school and encouraged me to quit my job so I could focus. She hates driving and I was working to pay for my gas but she said “la escuela y tu felicidad es mas importante. Yo quiero que logres todods tus sueños, algo que yo nunca pude hacer.”, which translates to “school and your mental health is more important. I want you to accomplish all your dreams, something I wasn’t allowed to do”. She is the reason I want to major in psychology. My goal is to help other with mental health illnesses, addiction, and more. I was planning on taking a semester off, but my mom pushed me to keep going because she

knows how much I love learning. She is always willing to sit and listen to me talk about all the new stuff I learned in my course classes.

I am striving for a doctorate degree not just myself and to help others, but for my mom, whom 21 years ago moved to a foreign country with nothing but the clothes on her back and the desire to give her family, and now us, what she never had as a kid. I hope that with the courage and dedication she passed to me will guide me to help other first-gen college students who not only struggle financially, but also physically, and mentally. I am going to do good and in the future be a role model to the Hispanic girls all over the world, just like my mom is my role model.

"The Most Important Person in My Life"

Madeline Gonzalez

- The most important person in my life is my mom. She is a strong woman who fights for her rights and others' rights in her work. She works as a janitor for a company that treats janitor's poorly. My mother helped several other janitors in their place of work for equal treatment. She has encountered many who have wanted to knock her down or fire her unjustly. She has inspired others to seek the justice they deserve, whether it be a money problem or a treatment problem. There is not one situation in which my mother does not get the justice she is fighting for. Even when my neighbors had their own work problems, they often approached my mother for advice on how they should approach the situation. My mother is extremely inspiring to me because she works hard to make sure my siblings and I are given the best opportunities to overcome the struggles she went through. She works a night shift and wakes up early to make food for my siblings and my dad. She is really a soldier in my eyes, strong and justice lead, hard-working, and overachieving

The Most Important Person in My Life

Why is my Mom The Most Important Person in my Life? Often, the most important person in our lives is someone who inspires us to be better, teaches us the value of love and the importance of taking care of each other. My Mom is all of that; she is my inspiration, one of the biggest expressions of love, and my protector. My Mom is the most important person in my life because she has taught me the most valuable lessons in my life.

Throughout her life, my Mom has faced various challenges. Her biggest challenge has been being a single mom. Most people call it a challenge, but I call it "her virtue." Raising three children wasn't easy for her, yet she still managed to do a great job. I've been a witness to the hardworking woman she has been. My Mom worked two jobs because she wanted to give us a good life. Sometimes, she sacrificed herself to provide us with essential needs. The most fantastic thing about this is that she never gave up. Not only she provided for us, but she also educated us to be great citizens with her example. Now, she loves to talk about her children's achievements; little does she know that those are not our achievements, those belong to her. Without her, we wouldn't be here; we wouldn't have accomplished anything.

My Mom has always been one of the greatest expressions of love. When she divorced my dad, all she asked for was to keep us. She always fought for our well-being, even when she wasn't doing okay. My Mom showed us how much she loves us by praying for us, encouraging us to challenge ourselves, disciplining us when needed, and making dinner after a long day of work. Moreover, she gave up on some of her dreams and goals to make our goals come true. My Mom is the purest and most sincere form of love.

My Mom's best lesson so far has been never to give up; even when the road seems to end. We came to the United States five years ago. We came to an unknown country with an unfamiliar language. My Mom works at Casa del Lago, where she has grown even more. Sometimes she finds herself struggling when working with English speakers, but she hasn't given up. My Mom's biggest dream was to finish college, but she couldn't because she put us before herself. Now, she has started going to college again; even with a language barrier, she's still looking forward to bettering herself. My Mom taught us to strive for the best. No matter what is happening in your life, there will always be a way out.

Maria Castro
mfscastro2001@gmail.com

The Most Important person in My Life

My Mom is the light in the darkest nights. My Mom is the umbrella that protects me from the rain. My Mom is my Godsent angel. My Mom is everything in my life. My Mom is the most important person in my life because I wouldn't be here without her.

The Most Important Person in My Life

My name is Maria Torres, but most call me Luly. I am the daughter of Ruben Torres, the most influential person in my life

My father has been present all of my life. He has always been a kind, hardworking, selfless, and courageous father. Even though he has had to dedicate a large amount of his time to work, he has made sure to spend whatever time he had left to fostering a community. Whether that be making sure my sisters and I understood our math homework, teaching himself how to repair cars to help a neighbor in need, and fundraising for my school field trips. These activities may seem standard or even mandatory for parents. Still, as someone who has personally witnessed my father wake up at 2:30 am for seven consecutive 12-hour shifts, I know it must take an extraordinary amount of discipline, strength, and love to do all that he does.

As a “stay-at-home” parent, my mother has also played an essential role in my family’s life. While I’ve been alive, she’s dedicated most of her life to making sure my sisters and I were raised “right.” My mother made sure we were properly fed with home cooked meals, that we were able to make it to soccer games or school, that we knew how to take care of ourselves, and that we were kind. Her job is incredibly challenging and stressful, but part of growing up is beginning to realize the limitation of your parents who you once thought were superheroes. Unfortunately, although my mother has devoted every moment to raising my sisters and I, there are some things she is unable to provide.

My father inspires me with his fervor for learning and selflessness. Apart from the expectation of working his day job at Johnson Controls at least 60 hours a week, my father comes home to a myriad of responsibilities. He goes over homework with my three younger sisters, he helps my mother with whatever chore needs to be done around the house, and he tends the neighbors garden. On frequent occasions, like the autodidact he is, my father will perform any service needed for community members. He is unquestionably extraordinarily selfless.

I dream of finishing my degree in economics; I dream of establishing a career in economic development; I dream of protecting families from the stress of deportation and financial instability. My ultimate dream is to provide for my own family so the inescapable feelings of guilt for watching a movie on a Sunday evening instead of working to pay the bills disappear. My dream is not far-fetched. Much progress is being made with excellent academic performance at Wellesley College and my role as an economic research assistant at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

It is only through my father, Ruben Torres, that I am who I am today. I know I have a bright future ahead of me, but only because of my father.

Sincerely,

Luly

"The Most Important Person in My Life"

Mila Torres Santillan

My father is one of the few most important people to have in my life; One of my earliest memories I recall of my childhood is my father waking me up on a Sunday morning to practice my vocabulary in English as he gathered his Side by Side: Learning English language textbooks on our dining table. Being only four years old at that time, I did not understand they were actually laying down a base. This base, I used to step off and improve my English reading and writing which I would need for the years that followed like the time my parents informed me at the age of seven that we had to move to America permanently.

The thought of a transition terrified me more specifically having to pick up a tongue, English. I was born and raised in Mexico therefore Spanish was my primary language in which I was spoken and taught in my early years at school. Moving to America was a challenge as I was unfamiliar with the area and lacked fluency in the language. My first day of school taking place in an American institution was alarming from the moment I walked into my class, to the end of the day. For my first three years attending this school, I was ridiculed and mocked by both teachers and students for my deficiency that many of my peers seemed to master.

I walked myself home that noon, contemplating the sound of cars driving past me. Meanwhile recalled a late memory of me and my father sitting on the kitchen floor, near the fridge, as my father held out a pack of magnetic alphabet letters to me and said "You will learn many things throughout your life, many which are fun-- like these magnet letters-- and some that are not so much. But always find value in the things you do and learn. There is no such thing as perfect so allow yourself to be 'you'." A big part of me felt encouraged and restored my motivation to move forward, and prove to myself, that I can do better; that I can educate myself. Since that day, I promised myself to enrich my vocabulary and speech with my father's help all along -- just like in the old days. Additionally, as I familiarized myself more with the language the easier it was to read words like; cinema, grocery store, or shopping mall. My father that learning is something fun and ongoing. My father suggested I listen to others speak the and pick up simple phrases that helped expand my vocabulary along the run.

Not only did he raise me but also contributed to my growth and expansion in the English language. Since day one, my father has had an impact on my upbringing and development as an individual. If it were not for my father, who has always believed in me, like and for learning a foreign language, it would have been harder for me to believe in myself and my capabilities as a person.

Mirian Rojas

5 August 2021

For many people, the most important person in their life is celebrities, artists, and entrepreneurs. There is no doubt that there are many things that we can learn from these people. For example, Oprah Winfrey lived in poverty her early life, and now she is an influential billionaire woman. Bill Gates founded Microsoft and became a millionaire at age thirty-one. These are people that have left marks in this world. However, the most important people in my life are my parents, Jose Alejandro, and Adelina Rojas.

I am lucky to have such wonderful parents that have loved me and only wished me the best. My father Jose died earlier this year due to Covid-19. Leaving my family and me devastated. My mother and father immigrated to this country to give all of their kids a better quality of life. My father was the breadwinner in my family. He always provided for us and made sure that we weren't in need of anything. He had a wonderful sense of humor and was always carrying. One of the many things I'm going to miss. My mother is a more serious lady, but always makes sure we feel loved. She is one of the strongest people I know and the reason for me to keep on going.

My father always told me, "You can become anything you want if you believe in yourself". This can sound cliché to other people, but this is the truth. Many of us doubt ourselves but don't realize that we are the solution. Along with that, he mentioned, "Do what you love". I loved the support my father always gave me. However, at the time, my head was all over the place and

didn't know the career that I wanted to choose. I know now. I wasn't able to tell my father that I want to be a teacher. My father's words have helped me choose the right path

My goal in life is to become a teacher and help students grow in knowledge. I want them to discover their full potential and be a bridge toward their success. It's important to give back to your community and help others being a teacher will help me shape the minds of future leaders.

The Most Important Person in My Life

Natalia Capella

Fierce. Brave. Strong. These words are just a few I would use to describe my mother. Elaine Avila was the daughter of an Argentinian immigrant. Raised in New Mexico, she enjoyed her sister's company and playing in my grandfather's local store, which was his brick and mortar attempt at achieving the American dream. When he passed away from a sudden heart attack when my mother was in the third grade, she was thrust into the foster care system. Moving from home to home, she grew out of the system without knowing a permanent home. Soon after graduating high school, my mother had my sister and I. Not only did she work hard to ensure our bellies were full and we had a pillow to rest our heads on, but she also was studying to get her college degree. Though we grew up in poverty, my mother worked hard to ensure my sister and I never realized it at the time. Her dedication to giving my sister and I a better life ultimately led to her receiving her master's degree and becoming an English Language Learner's teacher in the public school system, where she works to ensure that all students, regardless of their acclimation to the United States, socio-economic level, or home situation, have a chance at thriving in America.

My mother's empathy and understanding for those of all backgrounds has inspired me to use my education to create a more equitable and just society, by sharing my opportunities with others, and ensuring I leave every space I encounter filled with more love and happiness. I currently study mechanical and biomedical engineering, where I concentrate my studies in designing adaptive biomedical devices that are cost efficient and affordable. My mother's kindness showed me that everyone should have a fighting chance at a high-quality life and designing prosthetics that are accessible to the more than 30 million people in the world that need them is a huge impact I hope to have. I learned from my mother that being a positive influence in one's life can greatly impact what good they are able to do in the world. I have observed many of her students who have been worn down from poor home lives, blossom into incredibly intelligent and bright students through her encouragement. Because I want to see minority communities thrive, much like the ones I was raised in, I founded the Young Professionals' Club, where I and another student provide programs and lectures to local schools with high minority populations. These programs work to aid students in how to write a resume, practice job interviews, receive tutoring and other skills that they may not learn from family, friends or school. I desire to impact my community by ensuring no child finds that they cannot succeed due to factors out of their control. My mother is the strongest woman I know, and I could only pray that I am half the woman she is one day.

Nick Belmonte Soto

July 24th, 2021

The most important person in my life.

Childhood Hero

I have looked up to many people throughout my life, but there was one person I looked up to the most, my father. When I was a kid I would watch television and see how superheroes had all these superpowers and how they would save the world. I looked up to those heroic cartoons because of how they did all those amazing super heroic things, but with time I realized that such things do not exist in life. Growing up brought a lot of hard life lessons along the way for me to learn from. Such lessons in life taught me that superheroes do exist but just not in the way we would imagine as kids. Seeing what my father did to give me a better life, made me look up to him more than anyone.

When I was recently born, my mother took me away from my father with the purpose of him not being able to see me or knowing where I was. He wanted to see me and be able to be with me, but it was nearly impossible because I was far away from home. My mother came to the United States for better opportunities, leaving me behind, on my own with strangers, at the age of three. While I was alone with people I barely knew, my father was doing everything in his power to find me. About two years later, he was able to locate me and for the first time had the chance to see me, but unfortunately my mother found out. When she heard the news, she came back and took me away to a different home without my father knowing again.

My parents played hide and seek with me, my father being the seeker and my mother hiding me. Nothing stopped my father from doing his best just to spend some time with me. He was working hard, and he kept on fighting for me even though he had a lot to deal with in

his life. All those efforts and all the work my father put into being able to be with me made me admire him, more than the heroic cartoons I've seen as a kid.

My father is the most important person in my life, I look up to him as a hero. Due to the problems my parents had with each other, my childhood was rough. I had no stable home, I lived with people who cared about money more than me. I was given ultimatums such as "If you go with your father, you have to forget about me forever" Which was said by my own mother. My father fought for me all those years and never gave up. I'm now 18 years old and thanks to him, my life got better. He showed me what a father would do for their kids and the amount of love a father has for them. He's important to me because he gave me love and a stable home.

Statement word count : 500

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The Most Important Person in my Life

Who is the most important person in my life? This question has caused confusion, hesitancy, questioning, and wonder. How do I measure who is important? What do I measure this person by? Is it how often I see them, what they do for me, how they nurture me. If so, my mother. But if it is the person who guides me, teaches me, inspires me, then it would be my eldest sister. Yet if the most important person is who I'd call in an emergency or when I simply need to talk. Then it would be my aunt. But if I measure importance by who I want to be with, the most important person would not be a single person but people. I'm preparing to move away from home in a few weeks. All I want is a few days with the friends I made in high school. These people raised me, pushed me, and I appreciate them more than words can describe. Important would not begin to define them. Important could not define any of these people. They all inspire, motivate, and know me better than I could have hoped. The dictionary defines important as having great significance or value. If so: I would be the most important. I learned my self-worth while in high school. I struggled to get where I am, and although all the people I listed were there, it was me who fought the battles. I was the one who had to learn my importance. My friends and relatives all knew my significance. They were there to show it to me. As selfish as it sounds, I am the most important person as I hold the most significance in my life. Yet that does not mean that no one else matters. I care for my people greatly, and they care for me. Our shared importance is what unites us; we all have had our wars nevertheless we still fight for ourselves and each other. Importance expands far beyond what one does; importance reaches into the heart and speaks value.

The Most Important Hispanic Woman in My Life

Our story begins with a fateful choice my father made in the spring of 1989. Just like the thousands of other high school seniors across the United States, he was planning what life post graduation would look like. In his hometown of Port Arthur, Texas, the options were slim. As the son of Mexican immigrants, university was not in the cards. Instead, my dad made the decision to schedule an appointment with the local military recruiters.

That first appointment turned into a twenty-six year long career serving the country in the United States Air Force. His hard work has given us so much in the many long years of his successful career. However, out of all of his achievements since the fateful spring of '89, he is the first to tell you that the crown jewel was meeting my mom. He truly struck a home-run. Good naturedly, she agrees.

They met at my dad's second duty station and did not waste much time. Thirteen months after their first date, they were married in February 1994. When they met, my mom was teaching English as a second language in her community. With her clever wit and infectious charm, my dad was completely sold.

As many fellow military children can attest, this life is one of constant moves, deployments, and absences. In fact, my mom represents the only stability I have ever truly known in my life. Though her passion is teaching children and adults in underrepresented communities - and possesses multiple degrees and certifications in her field - she recognized the emotional toll of this lifestyle on a young child. As is her way, she made the quiet sacrifice of leaving her career to stay home with me due to the volatile nature of my dad's military career. To say that everything I am today is because of the time she invested in me does not even come close to giving her work justice.

In March of 2021, our family received the most devastating news: my mom was diagnosed with Stage IV breast cancer. My whole world shattered that day. But even sick, she is the good humored and

optimistic woman that I know and love. As is the circle of life, I recently resigned from my position as a veteran's benefits counselor and enrolled back in online graduate school so that I can care for her myself full-time.

I am especially reflective these days. Like my mother before me, I want to make every person I meet feel special. I want to be the kind of person that immediately sees the positives. I want to laugh so infectiously that others feel compelled to join in. And most of all, I want to be the kind of unwavering support for others that is so consistent that it is as expected as the sunrise in the morning and the sunset at night. I want my empathy to know no bounds.

Thank you sincerely for your time and consideration.

The Most Important Person in My Life Priscilla Aleman

The most important woman in my life is my grandmother because she is a strong woman who helped me and took care of me when I was just 15 days left. She is a hard working person who always works hard to get what she wants and dreams. I admire her because she started working when she was 12 years old to try to help my great grandmother with the house, food and bills they have to pay. She helped her 6 brothers with their education in Mexico, she paid for their school, and everything. Even though she was working at the age of 12, she was studying cosmetology.

When I was 5 years old she was taking care of me because my mom was working but my grandmother was also working in a "Taco restaurant " and she still had me on my baby carrier besides her. She does the best things to make my sister, and my family happy even though she had to work hardest to make us happy. She is one of the most important people for me because she has always helped me to get ahead in life and in education. She sent me to study middle school and learn english to Texas with my aunt and it was too difficult for me because I was used to always being with her. I know that everything she does is the best for me. Unfortunately, at that time she could not travel to the United States because of legal problems and I had to spend 3 years going to Mexico for only weekends. It was hard to visit my family and then after a day leaving them.

Finally, we came to holcomb missouri, to work in agriculture, like in the cotton, beans or soybean plots, when the 2019-2020 school year began it was my year as a junior and in the winter after work in the plots my grandparents began to working on the cotton gin only the winter season after the hard times began. My grandfather began to work a few hours and was barely enough to pay the rent or bills for electricity and water. My grandmother did her best to look for work in restaurants, but even so she was not enough to pay all the expenses, she began to sell food to help the house and I also began to ask for work. Then, the agricultural work started again and there we started paying bills and rents again. I started working with them too in the cotton fields in 2020, and I helped them to pay bills and rents again so that they won't be so stressed about financial money. My grandmother is a super hero and she is one of the most important women in my life because she makes everything possible. I know that she is one of the most important women for the whole family too. This is why I think the most important woman in my life is my grandmother because she is such a hard working woman and I admired her.

“The Most Important Person in my Life”

It was the first day of my sophomore year of high school, and I was about to enter my ninth-period class when I was first greeted by the ghost of fresh-brewed coffee and a bald man with a smile as warm as a cup of tea welcomed me into the room. I checked the folded schedule on my left hand. Room C266, AP World History with Mr. Alberto Guerro.

The man proceeded to stand behind a podium. “Good Afternoon students, my name is Mr. Guerrero,” he announced. “Before we begin, I want to ask you all a basic question, and I want honest answers,” he cautioned. “Who likes history?” Students began raising their hands, and although I doubted my answer, I raised it too. “Good, who in here doesn’t?” A heavy silence weighed on the room. Two students confidently raised their hands. “Why?” He asked them. “It’s pointless,” one of them offered. “Mhm,” mumbled Mr. G. He walked to the left side of the room and picked up a hockey stick leaning against the wall. He widened his stance, embodying his last name (a warrior), and launched the hockey stick to the back of the room. “History is all around us. What I just did right there? That’s history, and it will shape your view of this class.” He paused. “History is far more than timelines to memorize—it builds our understanding of the world around us.”

And after that, Mr. Guerrero’s impact on my life grew to be extremely significant. Not only was he a walking encyclopedia that taught us all about the Qing Dynasty or Alexander the Great, but he saw us as people, not just students. His classroom was open to anyone, and if you had a question concerning his lessons or life in general, he listened to what you shared with care and re-explained himself if needed. His class became my refuge after school, and his passionate words became the propeller that moved me through high school. When he heard my creative writing pieces, he was the first to push me to pursue my writing passion and supported my

decision to declare English as my major. He reminded me, “Knowledge is power” whenever I doubted my potential, and it is with that in mind that I approach my post-secondary education and life. Whether I face a class that feels too challenging or an emotional hardship that feels as though I may drown in my anxiety, his message reminds me whatever I learn will enlighten me and give me the strength to move onto greater challenges. So even though I’ve graduated high school, and he will no longer be my teacher, he continues to be the most important person in my life. A part of him will always reside in me because he is part of the history that has shaped how I view my future and the world, and I can’t thank him enough for it.

Samira Umpierre (born in Lima, Peru to parents of Peruvian and Puerto Rican origin)

Essay:

For many, one's own mom would be the most important person in their life, and in all honesty, she is the most important person of mine. I know it might sound corny, but, alas, it is true. My 'mami' is the person who has never failed me and supported me throughout my life. She, who has taken me to 13 years of ballet classes, cooked 'arroz con leche' and 'mazamorra morada' for middle school multicultural day, and sewed my Sharpay (High School Musical reference) Halloween costume from scratch is the wonderful woman responsible for who I am today. Five years ago, I nearly lost her to an accident on the highway while she was on her way to pick me up from my Nutcracker performance. We spent months at the hospital and in rehabilitation while my mom learned how to walk again and recovered from her brain injury. It is moments like these when you realize the value of a mother in your life. She is the glue of my family and an integral part of our lives.

What happened to my mom was a wake-up call for my family and me. It made us all realize just how quickly life can pass by and how a loved one can leave you in an instant. My biggest fear of losing a family member may have been inexhaustibly heightened that night, but the following years brought about many changes. My mother's accident not only deepened our relationship, but it helped me discover a passion for giving back to others. For instance, I spend time volunteering at several pediatric offices and hospitals, including the same rehabilitation center my mom was a patient at. I choose to believe my morals and outlook on life have overcome a major shift as well. Before my mom's accident, it was as if my head was only in the textbooks, never paying attention to my surroundings; now I know about the importance of working towards benevolence through service to better the lives of others.


My passion for helping is one of the reasons I hope to one day work in the medical field and give families the opportunity to be reunited, because that is exactly what the doctors that helped my mom did. They gave my family and I another chance to be graced by her warmth and beauty for many years to come. Although it was a difficult journey, I now know that every daunting adversity opens the door to equally great things. My mom is--and forever will be--the most important person in my life.

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Sabrina L. Dion



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Sierra Urbaez

My mother is the bravest woman I know. Everyday, she shows a tremendous amount of bravery and serves as a great role model for me. This makes her the most important woman in my life. Following my father's infidelity in their 20+ year marriage, my mother has stuck to her values and morals, and hasn't budged. Infidelity is not something she puts up with or takes lightly, and this is evident in her decision to file for divorce. She's had her triumphs and her disappointments throughout this process of divorce, but nevertheless, she persists. Despite my father's pleas to win her back, she stands her ground in her decision. This is what I admire the most about her. She has stood her ground, and remained strong in her tough choices. Divorces are never easy, especially one due to a partner's infidelity. It's hard to remain strong while facing a plethora of despair. In these actions, my mother inspires me. She inspires me to never take less than what I deserve, or to ever put up with something that I don't think is right. As a future educator, I plan to instill these same values in my students. No one should accept less than they deserve. When these situations do come up and someone is in a tough situation, I'd like to instill in my students the importance of having a support group in their life. As a member of my mother's support group, I know that being someone she can rely on is valuable to her. With her inspirational qualities, my mother is the most important person in my life. My mother deserves better than what my father did to her. Although we can't go back in time and change his actions, for now, I can be the best daughter I can be. I support and love my mother with all of my heart. After all, she doesn't deserve anything less.

Sofia Ceballos Suarez

A Force in Human Form

An incredible Colombian woman wakes up every morning ready to face each day's challenges with a heavy heart, and a tenacious force. This person finds power within her to be there for her family while giving all strength and courage to the reality that encompasses her life's challenges. This woman is my sister, and her resilience is what makes her the most important woman in my life. When many people picture their future family, it is composed of healthy children and a loving home, but for many that may not be the case. My sister's daughter, Cristina was born in 2006, and she was a beautiful baby. As she grew up, we noticed she began to face many challenges including sensory deficit and hyperactivity. My sister and her husband looked for help as soon as they could to help her daughter lead a happy life.

As my niece got older, there began to be difficulties in her behavior, and she felt like she didn't fit the mold in this life. When the challenges started unraveling, my sister, Maria, looked to educating herself on mental health and the realities of what a child with poor mental health looks like. For many Latinos, the topic of mental health can be really complicated and is sometimes overlooked and can even be a factor of ignorance. This is what my sister works so hard to advocate for, justifying that just as our bones can break, our mind can be unstable too. Maria's abundance education over the years has inspired our family and I to truly educate ourselves about what mental health is and why it affects so many people.

For my sister, it is an ongoing battle, Cristina is in her teenage years, and it has only gotten harder. Her beautiful soul has sometimes faded to darkness unwillingly and has led the family to desperate moments, specifically a day where with heavy hearts, we found out we could have lost her to overdosing on her prescribed medicine. My sister actively does everything in her power to re-introduce the beauty of life each time. It is hard to put into words the work my sister puts into keeping herself together so that she can have the power to be there for her daughter, and to hopefully be able to show her daughter that although she may be different, there is a place in this life for her. My sister's strength has inspired me to advocate for mental health in people of all ages and to normalize the acceptance of such diagnosis. I've started this process by being a leader in my university's organization "Active Minds". For my future, I hope to be to others who my sister is to me, an educator, and a resilient advocate for mental health. She has inspired me to use my art and technological communications degree to create a platform for communities in need of support in all areas of mental health.

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August 14, 2021

To Whom This May Concern,

“The Most Important Person in My Life”

Without a doubt, my mom is the most important Hispanic woman in my life. She has taught me through example how to love and understand others compassionately. She is kind, strong, smart, and positive. She is filled with light, happiness, and solutions. Every time I think about her, my heart fills with love and motivation to do things right for others and myself. I hope that she is proud of the young woman I am becoming.

Transitioning from high school to college is not easy. I am a first-generation college student and have been experiencing quite a lot of anxiety along with this and many more processes, but my mom has made me more optimistic about these things. It has been a roller-coaster ride of emotions for me the past months deciding about college. Although I really want to go, it is a new financial cost for my parents. They have sacrificed so much for my siblings and I already, that I have gotten frustrated many times thinking about whether to go to college or not, since my dad is the main source of income in my family.

My mom has taught me the importance of a greater education. She has motivated me in times where I felt like it would not be possible to experience such a privilege. She gave me encouragement that it could be possible if I looked towards the right people for guidance and support. All her encouragement led me to amazing charities like this, that help and support people like me, who long for a brighter future, not just for oneself, but for the world.

The world needs more human beings like her. I hope that every person has or has had a person like my mom in their lives. Because of her, I am much more positive and try to be a better person than I was yesterday. I value and cherish my mom immensely. I do not get tired of thanking God every day for her existence and well-being. I pray that she be filled with countless blessings throughout her life.

I am pursuing a degree in business. I hope that I can be a true example to others, especially young women, that a Latina who only had dreams in the beginning can surely become

a success in the business world. I want to help others realize that their dreams are only the beginning of their success story, and that if they really want to pursue something, to never give up because if they want it, it is possible. It only takes faith, positivity, perseverance, consistency, discipline, and the help of others to get there.

Victor Perez

8 March 2021

The Most Important Person in My Life

Scholarships can provide hope and fulfil a first-generation Latino student dream. Growing up I didn't have it easy; money was always a problem and I never thought I would see myself where I am today. Remaining humble always played a big role in my life, but I never lost hope. Wanting to pursue a degree at such a promising school has always been a dream, one I am eager to manifest into a reality. Being the oldest, my eyes were always set on a more fulfilling prize: paving the path for my younger sisters. This scholarship will provide me with the means not only to sustain myself through finances, meals, textbooks, and other living expenses, but most importantly it would propel my next steps in my education. With this assistance, I would not only be able to help myself attain what many have told me is simply unattainable given my circumstances, it would help me inspire others around me and create a change for the world. With my Business degree, I would be equipped with the proper means by which I could create opportunities for not only myself, but for those in my community.

Being the first to ever go to college in my family has been a long journey. Growing up I didn't have the best role models to look up to, much less the money or financial wealth to help me achieve the high standards in life I had set for myself. A 10-hour shift— as exhausting and demanding as it would be— wouldn't help my parents do anything but the bare minimum. As a child it has not only humbled me to be where I am at today, but has worked to motivate me to help make a change for my family. My family has always pushed me and inspired me to keep on going no matter what. With two sisters following in my footsteps, graduating at an empowering university has been one of the last pieces of my puzzle. Yet not only do I want to do this for my

family, I want to do it for my Latino community, becoming a beacon of hope at a time of despair and anguish and showing them that everything is possible, no matter one's color or race.

Having to help my family throughout these years has placed quite some weight on me, as I have not always been able to do what I am passionate about. School has always been my top priority and will always be. My extremely diligent work ethic and determination to see things through are facets of my character I take great pride in. I have always been taught that hard work and determination will take you far in life as long as one is persistent in their efforts. Having to work, go to school, and be involved in soccer has helped me manage my time. This time management is sure to be imperative in other realms of my life as I manifest my dreams into reality and take the initiative to do increasingly better in all of my efforts every day.

Receiving this scholarship would help me change my life for the better, affording me one step closer to achieving my goals and most importantly reaching new heights. This will allow me to continue to set the bar high for my sisters as I work to navigate the puzzle of life. The money would help me and my family tremendously as there is no blessing greater than the means of education, working to relieve countless hours of stress and duress. This would provide me with ample opportunity to displace the weight that has been on my shoulders all this time, working to aid in the creation of change for my community and my studies. Being Latino imparts within me the strive and the motivation to put my culture and my heritage in a better societal standing, showing my community that truly anything is possible. As a first-generation student, I welcome the challenges this will bring, yet I am assured that the sky is the limit and I will forever be motivated to do whatever it takes to reach the top, *para mi familia, para mi comunidad, y para mí.*

Wendy Melany

The Most Important Person in My Life

I have a mother, a father, two brothers, and a little sister. Let's zoom into that. I have an abusive, mentally ill mother, who loves me but shows it through hate. I have a loving father who was detained by ICE and deported when I was 14 years old. Oh and he recently had a little girl, my first sister. And I have two brothers; one's 25, and the other is 9.

As a kid the most important people to me were my parents. I hardly ever saw my Dad because he was always working. But my parents were polar opposites, so he was my favorite out of the two. As the youngest and only girl, my mom paid more attention to me. I loved my mom so much that I always tried to be a good girl, but unfortunately I always seemed to mess that up. As a cabrona I was always punished and shamed for it. I always tried to prove my love for her by trying to be a good girl.

At 11 years old I became a big sister for the first time. My mom had a baby boy. When my brother's Dad left I soon learned to care for him as my own. For the longest time I cared for him like a parent rather than a sister. Luckily, eventually, my mom got the hang of it.

You see, my favorite people have always been other people. I'm currently 21 and for the longest time my little brother was my favorite person. I didn't feel like I could leave him because I was afraid that my mom would forget to be responsible. I felt like he would suffocate living by himself with

my mom. I think part of it is because that's how I felt, to the extent that I always dreamt of someone saving me.

I have the tendency to put others before me. As an adult I'm realizing that I put too much effort in a relationship with friends and significant others. And I know now that it's not what I want or need anymore.

The most important person in my life is myself. I love her so much and I want to take care of her. I make sure she takes her antidepressants in the morning. I make sure she eats, because sometimes she forgets. I make sure she does things that she loves like write, draw, and go out for a run. I make sure that she puts herself first when need be, because in the past she has struggled immensely with that. Wendy Melany Aguilar is currently in the process of moving out of her mom's place. Even though her mom and brothers have a healthy relationship, her mom still treats her very poorly. I'm so proud of her for taking care of herself, working, and continuing on going to school. She will forever be the most important person in my life, because it's about damn time.