

Chino High senior named Gates Millennium Scholar

Having parents with limited English speaking skills caused Andrea Ruedas to grow up fast and learn quickly.

The Chino High senior's efforts have made her second in her class of 2015 and earned her the title of a Gates Millennium Scholar.

As a Gates Scholar, she will receive full tuition, up through her PhD, to Stanford University or another college of her choice, where she plans to major in economics and international relations.

The scholarship, awarded each year to 1,000 students, is funded by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Mr. Gates is co-founder of Microsoft.

Andrea hopes to work for a technology company or a banking firm in Northern California. She may also pursue a political career, she said.

She came to the United States from Mexico with her family at the age of 7 and often translated for her Spanish-speaking parents. Andrea said it was tough going at first because her parents weren't familiar with American culture or educational practices.

Andrea said her desire to attend college increased after attending a summer college program designed to get low-income students into higher education.

At Chino High, Andrea has served as an officer for the Associated Student Body, Science Club, and National Honor Society; and is a member of the California Scholarship Federation.

She has also volunteered in the Citizenship Class at Chino Valley Adult School, providing adults who are not skilled in English an opportunity to do mock interviews, practice citizenship questions, and prepare for their naturalization exam. She is a member of the Kiwanis' Key Club, a community service group for youth; is serving as an intern for Congresswoman Norma J. Torres; and is an Advisory Board member for the Pomona College Academy for Youth Success for students who are traditionally underserved in higher education. Andrea is also a member of the Young Senators Program, a group of students who meet monthly to discuss local issues, the government, and personal experiences within the community.

She is also an AP (Advanced Placement) Scholar with Distinction, a National Hispanic Recognition Program recipient, and was named an Emerging Woman of the Year of the 32nd Congressional District in 2014.

Andrea is the daughter of Aida Ramos of Ontario.

This is not the first time a Chino Valley Unified School District student has been named a Gates Millennium Scholar. Illan Rodriguez, a Don Lugo High graduate, received the prestigious scholarship during his senior year in 2013.