



STEM Student Profile



Alexandra Garcia-Godos

Biology major

Future Plans:

- A career in science that helps people.

Advice for Students:

- Join MESA to meet other students and have off-campus experiences.
- Participate in study groups and meet with professors.



Alexandra Garcia-Godos was born in the U.S. but lived in Peru until a few years ago. She always wanted to help people and was interested in science, so her initial goal was to become a doctor. She graduated from high school there, but eventually decided to come to the U.S. to study because of the ultra-competitive process to get into medical school, the high costs, and the political situation in Peru.

The first step in her U.S.-based education was to learn English, so Alexandra attended ESL classes for a year then tackled transfer classes. She used the Assist.org website to decide which courses to take. She now wishes that she'd known about the Puente program at the time and recommends it to all ESL students.

Alexandra took a Pre-Calculus class with Professor Angel Pilar where she and her classmates learned how valuable it was to help each other, and to meet with a professor during office hours.

“Everything I learn makes me want to know more. Sometimes I look at what I’m doing compared to two years ago and I can’t believe what I’m doing now!”

Now she helps other students as a math and chemistry tutor at CSM and also has a job in retail.

Her biggest challenge is that work and classes keep her very busy, so when CSM’s MESA Director Olivia Viveros first told her about an internship opportunity at Stanford in a medical research lab she didn’t think she could handle it. But she applied and was chosen for a 10-hour per week role during the spring semester.

Alexandra was assigned to a lab that researches proteins in living cells and viruses like SARS-CoV 2. At first, her mentor Rebekah Gullberg, guided her through all the lab procedures but then Alexandra worked independently with some supervision. She was offered full-time work in the lab during the summer and continues to work there 10 hours per week.

“Every time that I meet someone who is a science

or STEM major, I tell them to try to join MESA,” she says. Not only did the Stanford internship opportunity come to her via MESA, but she values knowing other MESA students because they have a lot in common. She also benefits from off-campus MESA experiences, like going to the SACNAS Conference.

Alexandra doesn’t know her specific career goals yet but knows that with a biology background there will be a lot of options to choose a more specific major and career later. Working in medical research and earning a Ph.D are two possibilities. “I’ve always been interested in science,” she says, “and everything I learn makes me want to know more. Sometimes I look at what I’m doing compared to two years ago and I can’t believe what I’m doing now!”