

Outstanding Graduate Spring 2017 College of Arts and Sciences

Alejandra Lerma



Alejandra Lerma has achieved above and beyond what is expected of an undergraduate student. She is receiving not one, but three Bachelor's degrees in Biology, Animal Science, and Gender and Sexuality Studies and two minors in Biochemistry and Mathematics. Even with an extensive workload, she has maintained her place on the Dean's list and her Crimson Scholar status.

Her academic achievements elevate her from her peers. She has collaborated on several student research projects including two honors theses. Her research on the role of membrane progesterone receptors on breast epithelial cells was even published in a scientific journal. Alejandra has represented NMSU at multiple academic presentations across the country including the Harvard Stem Cell Institute Undergraduate Internship Symposium. She is the three-time recipient of the American Society of Animal Science Scholastic Achievement Award, and in 2016 she received the Undergraduate Research Award.

Alejandra is committed to helping others through her scientific research, civil liberty pursuits, and student mentorship. She has a passion for social issues, specifically women's and immigrant's rights. Last year she organized a civil liberties union workshop to educate the campus community about the changes in national policies and their impact on immigrant students. Her professors have no doubt that she will use her NMSU education to make a positive impact in science and in society.

Alejandra's parents are Enrique Lerma Martinez and Margarita Ortiz Urita of Chihuahua, Mexico.

Outstanding Graduate Spring 2017
College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences

Miguel Juan Vigil III



Miguel Vigil is described by his professors as a model student. He will earn his Bachelor's in Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management (HRTM) this spring coupled with a minor in Business Administration and Marketing.

Miguel has demonstrated his passion for NMSU and his field through his involvement and leadership in campus and community organizations. He is the President of NMSU's Chapter of the National Society of Minorities in Hospitality. Under his leadership, the club's membership grew by 60 percent. He is also a member of the HRTM Student Association. Miguel is greatly involved in community service. On campus, he participates in Keep State Great, an annual community service project. In the community, Miguel is a volunteer at the Basilica of San Albino gift store and a Vincentian for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, where he helped organize the annual food distribution on Thanksgiving.

Miguel has gained tremendous industry experience. Most recently, he completed an internship at MGM Grand in Las Vegas, NV where he was able to lead a team and experience multiple departments within the hospitality industry including guest services, transportation, and VIP lounges. In addition, he is the recipient of the American Hotel & Lodging Education Foundation Scholarship that allowed him to network with executives in the industry in New York.

Miguel's parents Miguel and Rosanna Vigil reside in Rio Rancho, NM. His mother is an NMSU alumna from the class of 1982.

Outstanding Graduate Spring 2017 College of Business

Ismael Torres



Ismael Torres comes from a family of proud Aggie alumni, His parents, Mario '91, '93 and Marina '90, '91, each have two NMSU degrees, and his older brother Mario is a recent graduate from the class of 2014. Ismael will follow in their footsteps by earning his Bachelor of Business Administration in Economics and Bachelor of Arts in Government with a 4.0 GPA this spring.

Ismael has accomplished a tremendous amount during his four years at NMSU. He is the recipient of several prestigious scholarships including the President's Associate Scholarship and the National Hispanic Merit Scholarship. As an NMSU Government Discovery Scholar, he produced a "Regional Immigrants' Rights and Services" manual currently being used in the local community as a resource for immigrant families. Ismael was one of twelve students in the nation to be selected for an internship with the US Department of Treasury. He also served on the Federal Reserve Bank's Student Board of Directors.

Ismael has taken on leadership and service roles. He currently serves as the ASNMSU Chief of Staff and a member of the Student Advocacy Board where he lobbies for student issues in the state legislature. He has held several officer positions within his fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha. During his semester abroad, Ismael participated in the Korea Social Service Organization and was an English language tutor at Korea University in Sejong. He also serves with Feeding America, where he has contributed to the collection of over 30,000 pounds of food.

Outstanding Graduate Spring 2017
College of Education
Carla Villareal



Carla Villareal will complete her Bachelor of Arts in Education with a double major in Special Education and Elementary Education. She has continuously succeeded academically making the Dean's list and remaining a Crimson Scholar every semester. She has been awarded several competitive scholarships including the Regents Scholarship and Samsung Scholarship. She already has significant experience in the education system through completion of practicums at Central Elementary, Zia Middle School, Sonoma Elementary, and Loma Heights Elementary.

Carla has been active in campus life and fulfilled several leadership roles. She was the Secretary for the Student National Education Association as well as the student intern at St. Albert the Great Newman Center. While pursuing her education, she worked in the Student Affairs & Enrollment Management office for 3 years.

Carla finds joy in providing service to others. For two consecutive years, she participated in Alternative Spring Break, which provided her the opportunity to complete service projects in Flint, MI and Albuquerque, NM. She donates her time in the community by volunteering at the Boys and Girls Club and St. Albert the Great Newman Center where she teaches 3rd grade religious education.

Carla will continue her education at Creighton University to pursue a Masters in Educational Leadership so she can teach at high-risk schools. Her professors are confident in her ability to make an impact in the lives of her future students.

Outstanding Graduate Spring 2017 College of Engineering

Caitlynn Roy



Caitlynn Roy began her journey at New Mexico State University studying Chemical Engineering with the intent to study medicine. It was while she was working as a researcher in NMSU's Reduced Gravity and Biomechanics Lab that Caitlynn discovered the strong correlation between engineering and its medical application, sparking her interest in Mechanical Engineering.

While pursuing a double major, Caitlynn has worked on campus in various capacities. As an Operations Assistant at the Aggie Innovation Space, she was instrumental in launching and maintaining business operations. In her current role, she helps students design projects in the mechanical engineering machine

shop.

In addition to her work at NMSU, she has completed two impressive internships as a Chemical and Gas System Engineer at Intel and a Project Engineer at ExxonMobil. At Intel Corporation, she retrofitted old equipment for technicians to train in a low-risk, nonhazardous environment. At ExxonMobil, she re-designed multiple facilities for increased oil production in the Permian Basin.

Caitlynn had the opportunity to study abroad at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom. She served as the Regional Liaison for the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and President of Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society.

Upon graduation she will travel to Papua New Guinea, and in August she will begin her career with Stryker as a medical device design engineer.

Caitlynn's parents, Francois and Dardi Roy '04, currently work and live in Papua New Guinea. Her mother received her Associates degree from NMSU Alamogordo.

Outstanding Graduate Spring 2017 College of Health & Social Services

Nicole Meyer



Nicole is already an NMSU alumna. She completed her Associate's degree from NMSU in May 2015. This spring she will earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing through distance learning in Alamogordo.

Nicole has worked full time while pursuing her nursing degree. She currently works at Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center as a Patient Service Aide in behavioral medicine. In addition, she has nearly ten years' experience as a home health worker assisting adults with developmental disabilities to lead full lives. Her professors and mentors admire Nicole's unique ability to demonstrate compassion, caring, and commitment to her patients.

She demonstrates a high level of understanding of concepts and skills, which is evident as she scored above her peers on the Health Education Systems Incorporated (HESI) exam.

Although Nicole did not have the typical student experience, she still found ways to stay involved and serve the community. She was active in the Student Nurses Association for two semesters, and she recently participated in a diaper drive to serve local low-income families.

Following graduation, Nicole plans to stay in Alamogordo so that she can continue providing care to the community she loves.

Outstanding Graduate Spring 2017 Graduate School - Masters

Trevor Harris



Trevor Harris is receiving his Master of Arts in Education with a concentration in Communication Disorders this spring. His thesis research investigates the effectiveness of a hybrid treatment approach to improve the communicative abilities in children with Autism. In May 2015, Trevor earned his Bachelor's in Education with a major in Communication Disorders and minor in Counseling and Educational Psychology from NMSU.

Trevor has extensive experience in his field through his various clinical work. Currently, he is completing two externships at Picacho Middle School and MECA Therapies, Inc. where he provides intervention, assessment, and evaluation services to children ages 3-21. In addition, he has conducted hearing screenings at NMSU's Edgar Garrett Speech and Hearing Clinic and created cognitive strategies for adults diagnosed with Dementia or Alzheimer's at Arbors of Del Rey Vista Living Community. While at Arbors of Del Ray, Trevor planned a service project where the residents created bowls for El Caldito's community event "Empty Bowls."

Trevor is described as an exceptional leader and role model for his peers. He has been instrumental in making impactful decisions that influence policy for his department, the Graduate School, and NMSU as a whole. He serves as the President of Speech Language Pathology Graduate Student Organization and Vice President of Graduate Student Council. Trevor previously served on the Student Advocacy Board, which allowed him to represent NMSU in Santa Fe to lobby for Higher Education. In undergrad, he represented the College of Education as an ASNMSU Student Senator and was the Chair of the Finance Committee.

Trevor is a Las Cruces native. His parents, Larry '82 and Tracie '79, are NMSU alumni and local residents.

Outstanding Graduate Fall 2016
Graduate School – Ph.D.

Mohamed Ibrahim



Mohamed Ibrahim has accrued an impressive list of credentials throughout his academic career. He began his higher education across the world at Zigazag University in Egypt where he earned his Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. He then moved to New Mexico to pursue his Masters at NMSU. This spring he successfully defended his thesis to obtain his PhD in Mechanical Engineering.

Mohamed has achieved notable academic and professional success. During his time at NMSU, he has published 18 journal articles in prestigious journals such as the *Journal of Applied Physics* and *International Journal of Engineering Sciences*. He presented his research at various conferences, which resulted in eight conference publications. In addition, he serves as a reviewer for several journals including the *Journal of Micromechanics and Micro-Engineering* and *International Journal of Mechanical Sciences*. His advisors are proud of his outstanding ability to conduct independent research. In 2016, Mohamed was the recipient of NMSU's Merit-based Enhancement Award given to a graduate student who is engaged in NMSU's research mission.

As a graduate student, Mohamed was a Teaching Assistant for Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering where he was in charge of the Thermal Lab. His knowledge and skills provided him the opportunity to teach classes in mechanical design. Outside of the classroom, Mohamed is a member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and Golden Key International Honor Society. Upon graduation, Dr. Ibrahim is working to obtain a tenure-track faculty position at the university level to continue his research and teaching.