UC SANTA BARBARA
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Supporting Future Educators

UC Santa Barbara undergraduate María Prado has been named one of nine new Woodrow Wilson-Rockefeller Brothers Fund Foundation (WW-RBF) Fellows for Aspiring Teachers of Color.

Selected through a nationally competitive process, each recipient receives a $30,000 stipend to complete a master's degree in education, along with mentorship as they complete their teaching certifications. They also benefit from continued support during their required three-year teaching stints in urban or rural school districts.

"It was one of the greatest accomplishments of my undergraduate education," said Prado, who will be the first in her family to earn a master's degree. "I have always wanted to be a teacher, but without financial help I would have not been able to go to graduate school."

According to the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, white students are no longer the majority in public schools in the United States, but only 18 percent of the nation's teachers are of color. The fund exists to combat this growing disparity in the education system.

Prado, who will graduate in June with a degree in environmental studies, has been a tutor through the campus's Family Literacy Program throughout her four years at UCSB. Additionally, for six months during her junior year, she interned at an orphanage in Chile for six months during her junior year, where she made an

important realization. “I will have different students from different backgrounds, which I need to be aware of in order to understand them and effectively teach,” she said.

The new fellows were chosen based on their academic excellence and dedication to working with youth through mentoring, tutoring and coaching. Each was nominated by one of the program’s 48 nominating institutions and 29 graduate education programs.

Said Tine Sloan, director of teacher education for the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, where Prado will complete her teaching training, “Our faculty is committed to equity and diversity in education and we are proud of the recognition of our work. We teach our future teachers how to provide all students the opportunities to learn and be successful.

“We already know Maria is on her way to being one of these remarkable teachers, and we very much look forward to working with her in the program next year,” he continued.

“I am most excited about going back to my community in Guadalupe and teaching at my elementary school, which I attended when I first moved from Mexico,” said Prado. “There are many children there who do not know English and who are experiencing the same transition I had in third grade.”

Since its founding in 1992, the Woodrow Wilson Foundation has provided grants and financial assistance to more than 400 Fellows across the country.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.