

Courage to Succeed

Some say a gust of wind could easily take my words, but I stand firm to my beliefs and project my voice louder if necessary, to be heard. I am ambitious and passionate, I strive to represent my heritage as a young Hispanic woman whose endeavor is to achieve a respectable position in government and to empower the unheard voices that yearn to be heard; my name is Stephanie Ortiz.

Humble, selfless, a man who seldom complains and smiles when obstacles surface; He is both my father and my hero and his name is Ely Ortiz. Several years ago he suffered a painful lower spinal chord injury while working in construction. Luckily he was not paralyzed, but the damage was severe enough to require an operation. My mother, three sisters and I prayed for his well being and he slowly began his recovery. Both of my parents stress giving to others even if we do not have much because lending a hand makes us value life even more so. Since his previous operation Dad has not fully recovered and is soon to undergo his second surgery, but when difficulties surface we hold firm to our faith Mom and Dad alike continue to be my greatest mentors and a beautiful example of unconditional love.

Mom became our only source of household income nonetheless she took the role as our household leader when Dad most needed her love and support; she remained strong for the entire family. It's a blessing when circumstances surface and suddenly the parental roles in our house are switched; we're lucky enough to experience the flavor of dad's meals while mom rests for a while from a hard days work. Although Dad is unable to work he willingly gives his time to help improve our community through outreach programs, volunteer service and constantly helps at church. Finances are low, but the appreciation of family unity, encouragement and love are always abundant in our home.

Leslie, my older sister is attending the University of California Riverside and my younger sister and I alike admire her continuous effort to pursue higher education. It will be financially difficult to help my sister and I pay tuition despite the fact that they are aware college is the greatest investment; it is just not within their power to pay for our education. I strongly believe that money should not be a barrier when one has the passion to succeed and the dedication to pull through, therefore receiving the 2k4Kids scholarship would be such a great help.