



## **TUTORS NEEDED FOR ADELANTE LATINA!!**

**ADELANTE LATINA! THE FIRST AFTER-SCHOOL, COLLEGE-BOUND PROGRAM FOR LATINA GIRLS IN BALTIMORE IS LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER TUTORS.**

**WHERE:** Esperanza Center at 430 S. Broadway (corner of Eastern Ave).

**WHEN:** Once a week on Tuesdays or Thursdays from 4:15-6:15 p.m. Starting in mid-September and continuing until early June 2018, with City Public School vacation breaks and snow days.

**GOAL:** To improve English composition, reading comprehension and writing skills of high performing, low income Baltimore City high school sophomores, juniors and seniors. Adelante Latina! is a 3-year, college prep program. Tutoring is one-on-one, preferably with the same student throughout the year and, hopefully, for all three years.

**TUTOR QUALIFICATIONS:** Excellent English language skills, tutoring skills, ability to get along with teenage girls. No knowledge of Spanish is required, as English is their primary language. Tutoring sessions are one-on-one or, at most, two students per tutor.

**TIME COMMITMENT:** Once a week, either on Tuesday or Thursday, from 4:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

For more information or to apply please contact:

Leonor Blum  
Professor Emerita, Notre Dame of Maryland University  
Tel: 410-591-0547, email: [blumle@aol.com](mailto:blumle@aol.com)



¡ADELANTE  
LATINA!

Spring 2018 Update

## Greetings!

We are excited to share with you the latest news from ¡Adelante Latina!

## Felicitaciones to our Class of 2018! -- *Oh, the Places They Will Go!*



**¡Adelante Latina!** will graduate its third class this May, with all nine students accepted into college with scholarships which will allow them to attend debt-free. Many of them also have enough scholarship money to reside on campus.

For the second year in a row, one of our seniors has been named a Maryland Scholar at Goucher College. This highly selective scholarship is designed to make a four-year Goucher education accessible to first-generation Maryland students from underserved socio-economic communities. Jacqueline Machado, a senior at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute (“Poly”), is among those chosen for this opportunity.

Poly senior Ashley Ruano was admitted to the prestigious UMBC Humanities Scholars Program. Yaritza Torres received a scholarship which covers tuition, room and board at Loyola University of Maryland. Evelyn Quintero will pursue a degree in nursing at Towson University, with all expenses covered by institutional, federal and state aid. Baudratte Djiogo will attend St. Mary's College of Maryland, the State honors college, on full scholarship. Rebeca Torres received a scholarship to attend Goucher College as a commuter and will pursue studies in biology. Zulma Cortez received a scholarship from the Featherstone Foundation to study at the University of Baltimore. And Clarissa Palafox and Yohanna Granados will pursue their studies at the Dundalk Community College of Baltimore County.

We are thrilled to send them on their way, each with a \$3000 ¡Adelante Latina! scholarship towards their first year in college. This amount is awarded to students who have attended the program all three years with at least an 80% attendance rate. We are enormously proud of our students and all they have accomplished and look forward to following them on their journey to college and beyond.

## More Than Just a Tutor: Ashley & Jack

*“My mother always told me to look for opportunities to get ahead in life” -- Ashley Ruano*



**For** the past three years, Ashley Ruano, a member of ¡Adelante Latina!'s third graduating class and of the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute Class of 2018, has enjoyed coming to the Esperanza Center each week because she felt comfortable among her ¡Adelante Latina! classmates, as they all faced similar challenges and she relished the focus of the program specifically on Latinas. She appreciated receiving the benefits of the weekly class with ¡Adelante Latina! teachers who worked with her on reading comprehension, vocabulary development and writing skills but the highlight for Ashley was the once-a-week, one-on-one tutoring session.

“My mother always told me to look for opportunities to get ahead in life,” says Ashley Ruano, a member of ¡Adelante Latina's! third graduating class and of the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute Class of 2018. “When I learned about ¡Adelante Latina!, it was an opportunity I couldn't pass up,” she adds.

Since her junior year, Ashley has worked with Jack Sinnigen, professor emeritus of Spanish and Latin American Studies at UMBC. Their weekly meetings often include much more than working on Adelante Latina! or school assignments. “It is essential that ¡Adelante! students stay in touch with their linguistic and cultural roots,” notes Jack. “Ashley and I converse weekly in Spanish and I provide resources in Spanish and English on Guatemalan culture and current events. When I first became her tutor, she



shared with me that she was dedicated to matters of social justice; those themes have been at the center of our discussions ever since.”

Last year, the two studied and discussed the books assigned by iAdelante Latina! junior teacher Rick Connor: *The World Between Us* (a memoir by Reyna Grande) and *Brooklyn* (a novel by Colm Toibin). Both are stories about young women immigrating to the United States. Jack notes that Ashley was “eloquent in her narratives and in explaining her own experience in relation to those of the two authors.”

During Ashley’s senior year, the two focused on college applications and the many requisite essays. According to Jack, this was a very enjoyable process “as Ashley writes very well; I call her a poet.” Under Jack’s tutelage and the guidance of iAdelante Latina!, Ashley was admitted to UMBC and received a scholarship to participate in their prestigious Humanities Scholars program. Ashley had wanted to attend UMBC long before they won their famous basketball game against University of Virginia (March Madness) and recognizes Jack’s dedication in helping her achieve her dream.

Both Ashley and Jack look forward to continuing their friendship and staying in touch. “He was there for my journey this year and I look forward to keeping him apprised of my journey going forward,” says Ashley. Jack recognizes that the UMBC Humanities Scholars program has excellent advising and that Ashley will be in good hands. “She will now be a busy university student balancing pre-med, an English major and a Spanish minor; in her junior year she will study abroad. Having had no children of my own to shepherd through college, I hope to learn about and through Ashley’s experiences. Ashley knows she can always count on me if needed.”

## The Distance Between Us: Yohanna's Story

*"She could only recognize her mother from photographs she had carried with her."*



**Yohanna** was born in 1997, in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador. When she was three years old, her mother, Dora, decided to go to the US, leaving Yohanna behind with her grandparents and uncles. Her plan was to establish a home in a safe environment where Yohanna would join her once she was settled. Yohanna’s mother had always wanted her daughter to get an education and in El Salvador that seemed impossible.

Constant harassment by gangs and drug dealers made going to school in El Salvador dangerous. So, at age 13, Yohanna dropped out to stay in the relative safety of her grandmother’s home. She would keep in touch with her mother by email and phone, and the two never gave up the dream for Yohanna’s education.

When Yohanna was 17, her mother encouraged her to try to come to the U.S. with a coyote she had hired to help with border crossings. Led by the coyote, Yohanna and a small group started the long trek to the United States border. They went by bus, by car and by foot, traveling hundreds of miles, often in regions that were unsafe and perilous. At times they had to pick up and run on the shortest of notices, fearful that they would be discovered or attacked.

Mid-way through Mexico, they were detained by the Mexican authorities. Hungry, dirty

and tired, they sought refuge in a migrant shelter, where they were given food to eat, and a place to shower and rest, before being deported to El Salvador.

Two days after arriving home, Yohanna started her journey north again, this time, with a larger group. Traveling by night, they would remain hidden during the day, out of the sight of those who could harm them. The coyote was able to pay off guards at both the Guatemalan border with El Salvador and then again to enter Mexico. However, once they arrived in Merida, they were caught. This time, Yohanna spent more than a month in a Mexican detention center under terrible conditions, before being once more returned to El Salvador. At that point, she was ready to give up her dream of coming to America, until she spoke with her mother on the phone. "Try one more time," her mother pleaded. "Because you are 17 you will have an easier time getting in. Once you are 18, you will no longer be considered a child, making family reunification impossible." Almost immediately, Yohanna embarked on her third journey "al norte".

This time, the group made it to the Mexico/Texas border. They crossed the Rio Grande on a small boat and, once on US soil all the children, including Yohanna, sought voluntary detention with the hope that would be reunited with their family. But Yohanna's nightmare was not quite over. For reasons she still does not understand, she was transferred from Texas to Arizona, to Los Angeles, to Washington DC until she was finally transported to Baltimore where her mother, father, brother and sister picked her up at the airport. She could only recognize her mother from photographs she had carried with her. Finally, Yohanna could feel safe and secure.

With the help of a good lawyer, Yohanna receive a student visa within a few months of her arrival. Six months later she had her work permit and within a year and three months, she received her green card. Her persistence had paid off.

In June, Yohanna will be receiving her high school diploma. That also required persistence, since Yohanna knew no English when she arrived. When she first started going to school, she was often taunted because she could not speak the language. Every night, her father helped her learn English for four hours. Then Yohanna's mother learned about ¡Adelante Latina! through Sister Linda Stilling who teaches at Notre Dame of Maryland University. Despite the distance, Yohanna was eager to participate in the program, where she worked with two dedicated tutors, Patricia Dwyer (pictured) and Joan Schoppert. During her senior year, Yohanna was even able to take some Advanced Placement classes and will be completing her high school degree with a GPA close to 3.0.

In the fall, Yohanna plans to start her college education at the Dundalk campus of the Community College of Baltimore County. After two years, she hopes to transfer to a four-year institution. She is interested in studying mathematics or engineering. Given all that she has gone through to get to this point, there is no doubt that she will be immensely successful in anything she pursues.

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**QuestBridge Scholar in Our Midst!**



**Congratulations** to Nayely Rivera, a junior in ¡Adelante Latina! and at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, on being named a Questbridge College Prep Scholar. This national program gives low-income high school juniors an early advantage in college admissions. These students, identified through a highly competitive selection process, are “uniquely prepared to gain admission and full scholarships to top-tier colleges through Questbridge.”

Nayely applied with the support of ¡Adelante Latina! Selection was based on essays, short answer questions, academic performance, standardized test scores and a letter of recommendation. Being selected as a College Prep Scholar is a notable distinction that celebrates a student’s academic achievements and gives them an early start in applying to college.

Over 11,000 students applied and 3,986 students were accepted into the program which will provide guidance in the college application process to highly selective college and universities.



### **¡Adelante Latina!...Out on the Town**

**Each year**, ¡Adelante Latina! Students are provided with the opportunity to attend cultural events in Baltimore and venues close by to expose them to the creative arts. This December many of our students attended the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company's production of Charles Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol”. This spring, many attended Center Stage’s production of George Orwell’s allegorical novel “Animal Farm”. We are grateful to our corporate sponsors who helped make this happen: Gordon Feinblatt, LLC and Maryland Hispanic Bar Association.



**MUCHAS GRACIAS TO OUR CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION DONORS!!**

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