

## Professional Staff



### Miriam Tapia Salinas

Miriam Tapia Salinas serves as Executive Director for Diversity Enrollment and Community Partnerships at the University of Denver. There she received her Masters of Arts in Higher Education Administration focused on leadership, organizational change, and diversity. Responsible for expanding racial and ethnic diversity for first-time undergraduates at DU, Miriam lead enrollment division efforts in 2014 & 2015 to achieve the most diverse undergraduate classes in University history in back to back years reaching 21-22% domestic diversity in the fall cohort. Miriam's life experience as a daughter of immigrants from Mexico and Bolivia, a graduate of Denver Public Schools, and a first-generation college student has fueled and enhanced her passion for educational equity and

higher education advancement for all. Miriam has served on numerous committees and task forces dedicated to college access in Colorado. Most recently, she was elected as President of the Colorado Coalition for the Educational Advancement of Latinos, was selected in 2015 Fellow for the Latino Leadership Institute, and served as Co-Chair of the Inclusive Excellence Consortium at DU and the Partnerships & Innovation Committee for COCEAL. However, never losing sight of her family and cultural priorities, her most dynamic, fun and meaningful job is balancing work with her roles as a loving wife and proud mother of three handsome boys.

### CLAUDIA HERNANDEZ-PONCE

Claudia's love and passion for higher education led her to work in Undergraduate Admission at the University of Denver as an Admission Counselor. Originally from Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, Claudia attended Denver North High School and went on to receive her Bachelor's Degree in Chicano Studies from Metro State University in 2006. Claudia has directly seen the obstacles young students and their families face in making decisions regarding higher education, and enjoys assisting in providing guidance to prospective students and their families.



## TeRay Esquibel



Born and raised Denver, CO, TeRay graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School where he was awarded the Daniels Fund Scholarship. As a Daniels Fund Scholar, TeRay has taken the core values of Bill Daniels to heart. He used the opportunity as a platform to give back to his community. Throughout his four years at the University of Denver, TeRay dedicated himself to helping other first generation students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds understand the importance and the process of

attending college through his work as a Fellow at the DU Undergraduate Admission Office and his role as the Student College Access Liaison with the Volunteers in Partnership program. TeRay graduated from DU in June of 2015 with a degree in Business Management and went on to become a Fellow at El Pomar Foundation where he worked on multiple projects to further uplift the state of Colorado. TeRay has recently been hired on as a full time Admission Counselor back at DU and plans to pursue a graduate degree in the coming years

## Richard Maez



I am a passionate change agent of educational access and equity, seeking to ensure student success and persistence throughout their collegiate career. Throughout my own university experience, I have realized that belonging to a community that supports and challenges you is key to the success and persistence of our students. Bringing together a variety of perspectives, diversity not just in race and gender, but in ideas, backgrounds, ideological viewpoints and more, is crucial for the cultivation of any inclusive community. I believe that it is important to bring those stories together, narratives that defy the danger of a single story, and engage in a dialogue that truly creates a sense of belonging amongst all of our community members. If students are not challenged to think about things differently, to engage in conversations with people who have had different experiences than them, then we are doing our students a disservice in

preparation for an increasingly complex and globalized society.

## Lead Mentors

### Tania Molinar

Tania Molinar-Castillo was born in Mexico and immigrated to the US when she was seven years old and has been living in Denver, CO for 12 years. She just graduated from the University of Denver in June, she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a Bachelor's in Gender and Women's Studies as well. Her passion is working with children and adolescents and their families. She is currently working at the Psychology Department at DU as a Family Coach and she loves it! Tania was the College Access and Diversity Fellow her senior year at DU and loved helping students learn more about college, one of her favorite parts of the position was working with Pioneer Prep students. Tania also loves spending time with her five year old son, Aiden, being outdoors as much as possible, advocacy work, and reading a good book. She hopes to earn a PhD in the near future and increase the number of Latinos that receive graduate degrees.



### Carlos Villagrana



Hello Everyone and Welcome to LPP

My name is Carlos Villagrana and I am a proud graduate of the University of Denver. I majored in Political Science and Gender & Women Studies, and it truly has been an amazing experience. I am driven by my passion towards helping students into higher education, but also, helping students develop themselves into passionate leaders for their communities and develop their integrity and character. I hope that this program helps in answering your questions about our wonderful university and I do hope you have the time of your lives here! Welcome and let's get after it!



## **Samantha Garcia**

As a first generation, Mexican-American student at DU, Samantha Garcia is beyond excited to return for the third time as a Lead Mentor for Pio Prep. Sam is originally from the North Side of Denver but had to move to Thornton, CO where she graduated high school from Mapleton Expeditionary School of the Arts (Skyview). As a rising senior, Sam will be excitingly busy as the new College Access and Group Visit Fellow in the Office of Undergraduate Admission, President of the Multicultural Greek Council, Sister of Pi Lambda Chi Latina Sorority, Inc., and as always being a big sister to three younger boys. Outside of school, she has been a part of the United States Olympic Committee's FLAME Program and interned with the Denver Nuggets Youth Camps.



Even though she came from a low income household, Sam is not on any full ride scholarships nor merit based grants and yet has successfully financed her own way through DU all three years. She hopes to show scholars how money should not be a barrier when coming to college so long as one is willing to work harder than ever. It can all be possible.

## Mentors

### Alejandro Garcia

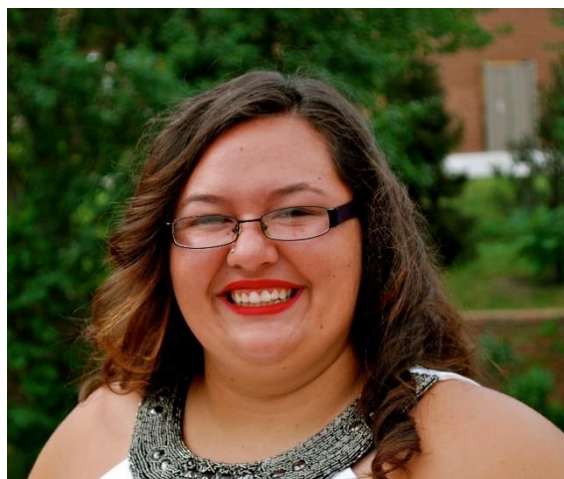


"Alejandro graduated from the University of Denver in June of 2016 with a B.A. in Sociology with a minor in Psychology and a B.S.B.A. in Hospitality Management. Alejandro was a senator on Undergraduate Student Government for three years and was the President Pro-Tempore of senate during his senior year. He was on Diversity Committee for four years and served as the Chair for two years. During his senior year, Alejandro was the Chair of the Student Commission on the Co-Curricular Experience. While at DU, Alejandro was involved with the Queer Student Alliance and the Latino Student Alliance. Alejandro was also a Resident Assistant and a Desk Manager for the residence halls. Next year, Alejandro will be attending Harvard Graduate School of Education for a master's program in Higher Education. Alejandro hopes to

one day be a university administrator and a professor."

### Kayla Medina

Kayla Medina is a sophomore in the Daniels College of Business. She is a Business Information and Analytics major with double minors in English and Criminology. Kayla is originally from Pueblo, CO. Some of her passions include swimming and cooking. At DU Kayla is involved in the Pioneer Ambassador program, as well as a program called Si Se Puede Law School. Kayla hopes to graduate a year early and go to law school.





### **Miriam Castillo**

My name is Miriam Castillo, I am a Colorado native. I graduated from Arrupe Jesuit High School. I'm a first generation college student and a second year here at DU. I am a part of the Excelling Leaders Institute and play Club basketball. I am currently a double major in Psychology and Spanish with a minor in Biology.

### **Amado Delgado-Manzanares**

Hello my name is Amado Delgado-Manzanares. I am an upcoming second year at the University of Denver. I am a Denver native, and I am currently going to major in Business Analytics but this may change in the future. I am involved with the program Volunteers in Partnership (VIP), I am an Undergraduate student Ambassador, as well as I have served on student panels for prospective students, I also was a student in the Social Justice Living and Learning community my first year. I work for the Undergraduate Admissions office as a Tour guide, as well as I work for



Volunteers in Partnership as a student assistant to the office. In the fall I will start as a Resident Assistant in Centennial Towers for the 2016-2017 academic school year. I love to watch and play football, I love to watch stand up comedy, and the Walking dead!



### **David Garcia**

So, my name is David Garcia and I was born and raised in Dallas, TX (technically Grand Prairie, TX but Dallas for simplicity). Both my parents were born and raised in Mexico; my father is from Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua and my mother is from Durango, Durango. I would like to believe that I am quite proud of heritage and do my best to

express that. While here at DU, I am currently starting my Senior year, double majoring in Psychology and Computer Science with minors in Mathematics and Film Studies. On campus I'm involved in Greek Life, and actually serve as the Director of Programming on the Interfraternal Council, so I over see a lot of fraternity life on campus. Additionally, I serve as one of the co-chairs of DU Service and Change, which is one of volunteering organizations on campus. I also had the wonderful experience of going abroad to the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand. I've had the time of my life here, and I would never change it for the world!

### **Priscilla Chavez**

My name is Priscilla Chavez. I am an International Business major at the Daniels College of Business. I went to Mapleton Early College in the Skyview Campus in Thornton, CO.

My hobbies include: playing tennis, cooking food (mastering my recipes and exploring new foods and flavors), and spending time with my friends and family. I am a sister of Sigma Lambda Gamma National Sorority Inc., so I love spending time with my sisters. I also have three siblings including a gorgeous twin sister (also here at DU).

I am *muy Mexicana* and enjoy keeping alive the traditions that I know and love. I proudly represent my parent's native states of Chihuahua and Zacatecas, Mexico."







### **Chris Florez**

Hi Everyone,

My name is Chris Florez and I am an incoming second year here at DU. As of current, I am majoring in Business and Sociology, with a minor in Leadership through our PLP Program, something that I will be using as an RA (Resident Assistant) for next year. During my time at DU, I have been involved with a plethora of activities including being a member of our Programming Board, Men's Club Soccer Team, Roosevelt Institute, and Tour Guide for our Admissions Team and Co-Founder of the First Generation Trailblazers. All these hold a special place in my heart, especially the soccer and first generation

club that I started with my friends.

When I'm not doing any of that, I like to work out, play soccer, work at my internship or just relax with friends. I serve as a manager-ish role for our DU Gymnasts, so I go to their meets and practices when I can to cheer them on and help where I can. Overall, I cannot wait to meet all of you, as I was also a LPP Member a couple years ago, and that is how I found DU actually (Funny Story). Let me know if you have any questions about anything at DU, I promise that either I know the answer myself, or I know of someone who does.

### **Gladys Juarez**

Hi everyone! First and foremost, I'm so excited to meet you all very soon! My name is Gladys Ivon Juarez and I'm a rising senior at DU, majoring in Business and minor in Spanish. I've been involved in a variety of organizations on campus, such as Pi Lambda Chi Latina Sorority Inc., the DU Programming Board (which is like Student Council), the Excelling Leaders Institute and the Latin@ and Black Student Alliances among other organizations. I also currently serve as one of the Daniels Fund Scholar Ambassadors at DU and I work at the Study Abroad office too. I'm one of three girls in my family, first generation student and second in my family to attend college. I also have a Yorkie named Gizmo and a Poodle named Princess, and I think waffles are better than pancakes because they hold the syrup better! (:







## **Fryda Faugier**

My name is Fryda Faugier Ferreira and I am from Mexico City, Mexico. In the fall I will be a sophomore at the University of Denver; however, in reality I will be a junior. I'm currently majoring in International studies, socio-legal studies and Spanish. And so what do I plan on doing with these degrees you ask? Well after graduation I hope to go on to law school and specialize in international law. My experience at DU so far has been far more amazing than I could have ever imagined. Everyone that I have met has been so welcoming and I feel right at home. Academically I'm thriving at DU and socially I have found amazing people on campus as well as clubs and organizations. But it hasn't been easy. Being a first gen and DACA student has made getting to college and staying a very difficult task. The process itself was challenging but now that I am at DU staying hasn't been

easy. Everything is great but financially it has been a major struggle. But I'm not alone I have found amazing people on and off campus who are doing everything they can to help me pay for my education. So what do I do besides study? A lot of the work that I do on campus is to help DACA and undocumented students. I myself am a DACA student. DACA stands for deferred action for childhood arrivals. DACA allows me to study and work legally in the US. What a lot of people don't know is that being DACA or undocumented in college comes with a whole 'nother set of obstacles. More obstacles than the ones we already face as first gen students. All the work that I do goes towards raising awareness about these students and their struggles. I'm currently working with many different clubs, orgs, and faculty/departments at DU to raise awareness and help better support these students.

## **Alejandro Chavez**

Hi my name is Alejandro Chavez, I recently finished my first year at DU. Born and raised in Denver, Colorado. Currently I'm majoring in International Studies and Spanish with minors in Leadership and French. I believe that my passion for my education stems from my curiosity to learn about other cultures and having the opportunity to experience new and exciting things. On campus I'm part of the Pioneer Leadership Program, Excelling Leaders Institute, DU Democrats, and Latino Student Alliance.

