

Chapter 2

WHEN YOU ARE THE FIRST ONE TO GO TO COLLEGE

Being the first one in your family to go to college is a source of great pride but, as Ricardo Anzaldúa's example shows, it can also mean that you will have no role models to follow within your family and that you may have to put up with some conflicting feelings from those around you.

David Peña, Executive Director of the National Hispanic Business Association (www.nhba.org), shares a little bit of that mixed blessing: "Upon my return from college to visit family, there were sudden jokes when I made a mistake. Along the lines of: 'Oh, and that's the college educated one.' I sort of just looked beyond the comments since I knew deep down inside, my family was proud." This is not an unusual experience. Michael G. McKenzie Jr., an Information Technology Analyst at Morgan Stanley who is currently attending Pace University to get his

Masters of Science in Information Systems, says that his relatives in Puerto Rico would always try to downplay his achievements by saying they were not true. “Out of all my cousins that were my age I was the only one that did not have a child at 18 and who was actually graduating from high school and attending college on time but no one would ever really acknowledge me for my accomplishments.”

For many people the pressure comes from feeling a big responsibility for being the first one to raise the bar to a higher level. The rewards, however, are bigger than anything you can imagine. Jesús José Chávez, Principal, Thomas Jefferson High School at San Antonio Independent School District, in San Antonio, Texas, was the first one in his family to graduate from college. He says: “The emotional feeling of accomplishing a feat never attained by any other family member brought home the reality that upward mobility is possible for anyone.”

This is what you have to look forward to when you set your mind to accomplishing a goal that perhaps no one else has ever accomplished in your family. An incredible sense of achievement will accompany you for the rest of your life and that is something nobody can ever take away from you. Those “friends” who tease you about your education will eventually come around to become your biggest supporters or they will soon cease to be your friends. Because, who needs to be around people who don’t wish the best for you? As for your family, the most likely outcome is they will feel tremendously proud of you, even if it takes them a little while to come around. It’s perfectly normal, and my best advice for you is to be patient. Every parent wishes the best for their children, even if it takes a while for them to understand exactly how it all works.

Advice for Female Students

Sometimes, being a female student presents additional challenges. Lulu Wang, currently a graduate student at Harvard Business School, class of 2010 was born in Venezuela to Chinese parents. Her official name is Ke Yang Wang. She shares her experience: “The pressure that I felt was not from my family but from my circle of friends and their respective families. Most of them thought that it was pointless for me, a woman, to get a higher degree (*machista* culture), when in fact I could contribute to my family’s income by finding a job and marrying someone. Thanks to the encouragement from my parents I understood that different people have different perceptions; so I made an extra effort to connect with those who understood my career ambitions and to build my own network of support.”

And on this issue, Daisy Auger-Dominguez, Associate Vice President of Diversity at Moody’s Corporation and who received her B.A. from Bucknell University and her Master in Public Administration from New York University’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School for Public Policy says: “My biggest challenge was finding my place as a woman of color in a predominantly white institution. As I look back, that experience shaped my cultural identity profoundly and allowed me to be culturally flexible in ways that have certainly helped me personally and professionally.”

Being the first to go to college is similar to any situation where you are the first to do something: Whether you create a new club at your high school, or you’re the first person in your school to win a national science contest. In a way, if nobody succeeded before you at doing

whatever it is you are doing, you will have to create and follow your own path and you will have to contend with people's feelings about it. Sometimes, this responsibility can be a little overwhelming but that doesn't mean you will have to go it alone. You may be the first one in your family to go to college, but you are by no means the first person from a Latino family who does! So, part of what we'll discuss in this book is the importance of finding the people and support systems that Ricardo Anzaldúa failed to come across and who can be your guides and mentors in this exciting journey.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

“College is tough for sure. But it’s also an amazing journey of self-discovery. The degree will open doors for you but you will have to sell yourself. Make it work for you and be open to the possibilities. Some of the friendships you make in college might be the very ones that open up doors for you in the future. Embrace your new community and build your college family—they will see you through the next four years!”

—Daisy Auger-Dominguez

Let’s start from the beginning. What is a mentor?

I often ask this question at workshops and conferences and I’m no longer surprised when just a few people (even amongst mid career employees) can provide an answer. A mentor is someone who guides

you in your path whether it's in your educational career or later, in your professional career. It's usually someone who you admire and respect and who is an expert in the area in which you seek guidance.

You may have more than one mentor and they may not stay in your life in the long term, but rather for a specific period in which you need their help. For example, when I was a teenager, I wanted to learn everything I could about being a writer. From the printing of a book to its marketing. So, I looked for mentors in the different areas and I got an internship with a printer, a publisher, a marketing company and so forth. I looked for the best people in the industry and approached them humbly, telling them I wanted to learn their trade. Later, I had several mentors who helped me as I developed my writing career and further honed my skills.

A few years ago, when I began publishing in the U.S., I found a colleague who is now a friend, Marisol González, a producer at HBO sports, who helped me navigate the media circuit so I could be on TV and do segments on the content of my books. She introduced me to several news producers in the Hispanic market who had me as a guest on their shows. That's how I first appeared on Telemundo and Univision. Marisol would go to tapings with me and give me precious feedback once it was over. She would make comments such as: "You should try to keep your head straight when you listen to the interviewer" or "Try not to move your hands so much when you talk", "You need to slow down your speech", etc.

At about the same time, I met another colleague who is also now my friend, Alex Michell, a branding consultant, who helped me in the development of my brand. He and I had long conversations about what I had to offer that was unique about me so that it could become an intrinsic part of my message. It took several meetings to refine my

brand so that it would reflect exactly *who* I am and *what* I want to accomplish.

Arturo Poiré, my co-author for *The Latino Advantage in the Workplace*, an expert in Human Resources who at the time we met was a senior executive at Citigroup, has been my career mentor since I interviewed him for my book *How to Get a Job in the U.S.* He has helped me establish short and long term goals as well as understand the best way to work with large corporations. Arturo also spends time with me looking at an idea from different angles so that it has a larger impact when I present it to an audience.

Then I met Julie Stav, a TV and radio personality you may know, who not only invited me as a guest on her radio show but also taught me tons on how to deal with big media corporations and introduced me to her entertainment lawyer so he would help me build my career as a speaker while he protects my legal rights. She also took the time to write a wonderful prologue for the book I co-authored with Arturo Poiré.

As you see, I constantly look for new mentors to guide me along the way, people who are experts in their fields and who can help me in the many different areas I wish to explore. You need to do the same. Look for people who are college graduates, alumni of your college or upper classmen who can reveal the unwritten rules of your particular school, the best way to ace the various courses; the idiosyncrasies of certain professors; the best organizations to join on campus, etc. Throughout this book, you will meet many people whose words can inspire you to find your path. Use them as your virtual mentors until you find your own.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

*“Don’t give up. You will regret it later.
College is tough, however, a successful completion will
overshadow any ill feelings you had along the way.
Once you have completed your studies you will not remember
the sleepless nights, but you will remember your graduation and
what it feels like to make those you love proud.”*

—Jesús José Chávez, Principal Thomas Jefferson High School,
San Antonio ISD, San Antonio, Texas

You may wish to find successful professionals in your field of interest who may allow you to shadow them at their jobs (or intern in their companies) to get a feel for what it would be like to work in that sector. This will help you avoid a problem Ricardo Anzaldúa often encountered after having invested time and money studying for a particular career: Realizing that the job for which he had studied was not what he had imagined. In the end, the job was only available in a state where he wasn’t willing to live, or there were only a few positions available in the country or the job didn’t pay enough.

You may also want to find mentors who can help you set up goals and who can introduce you to important contacts. Arturo Poiré, who is now the Senior Vice President/Head of Talent Acquisition at a global financial services company, and as I mentioned before, the co-author of one of my recent books, shares this: “My experience with mentors started during the beginnings of corporate life and I have to admit that

it would have made a huge difference to have this type of advice and support before I started.”

So, you’re probably asking yourself, where do you find mentors? Everywhere around you! Besides the teachers, alumni, and upper classmen, it might be a good idea to join professional associations and attend their conferences and events to meet people in your future profession. Establish relationships with the speakers you will meet at these conferences as well as those who come to your school to teach courses or give presentations. Talk to the many professionals in your life: Your doctor, dentist, banker, lawyer, etc. Remember that you want to choose people who you admire and respect and who are experts in the area in which you seek guidance but it’s also important to have some chemistry if you want the relationship to work out. “What is chemistry?” Ponders Arturo Poiré. “You have to feel that this person understands what you are going through and can give you unbiased advice (as much as possible); someone who can engage in a dialogue with you. Most people enjoy giving career advice and telling you what they’ve done and how they’ve done it. You, however, have to make your own decisions. As a mentor, I don’t want to be responsible for the other person’s decisions. They have to be accountable for them.”

Keep in mind that the mentor/mentee relationship is a two way street. Mentors get a lot of satisfaction from helping people so it’s critical that you provide feedback on how their recommendations are helping you and that you express your appreciation for their time and insights. Make sure you keep in touch and you keep them updated on your progress and at the same time, don’t hesitate to share your ideas on anything that may help your mentor. You have the great advantage of being young, of knowing your generation and of having a fresh perspective, and these are all things mentors value immensely.

A great place to find mentors are Hispanic-servicing organizations such as the Hispanic Heritage Foundation (www.hispanicheritage.org). They have programs for high school and college students through which they identify emerging young leaders, they provide support, guidance, grants, internships and the opportunity to develop a sustainable relationship with corporations.

There are many other organizations you should look into to find mentors. Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE, www.hace-usa.org) and INROADS (www.inroads.org) are two more examples. You will find them throughout this book and in the resource section of each chapter.

Balancing Family Pressure and Your Living-Away-From-Home Experience

Because most Latinos have very strong family ties, and because many Latino families are not used to granting their children independence at a young age, moving away from home to go to college may be a struggle for you. If you add to that, the recent violent events at college campuses such as Virginia Tech, your parents have plenty of reasons to fight you on the idea of moving away.

Carla Rivera, a junior at Pace University and a former intern of mine, says that many of the Latino students at her school live on campus from Tuesday to Thursday and they go home Friday through Monday. “They can’t socialize and they miss out on one of the most important parts of their college experience. They can’t make their presence felt on campus and they miss out on the exposure to different cultures and opportunities, the independence and the growth they could achieve. They

stay close to what they know so they don't grow as much as they could. The stereotypes they have about others remain the same.”

This is very true and research shows that not living on campus is one of the factors that most affect Latino college graduation rates². If you are living away from home and you are faced with some resistance on behalf of your family, you may need to have a serious conversation with your parents where you express how stressful the situation can become for you, and just how much you will gain from the experience. Below you'll find some suggestions to help you deal with the problem.

Tips To Deal With Your Family When You Are Away In College

Here are some things you can do to get your family onboard:

- Take the time to explain the different aspects of your life in school with as much detail as possible. The less you leave to their imagination, the less they will worry and possibly bother you later. Be specific about the hours you study, the classes you are taking, what a GPA means, the importance of your volunteer work, etc. Also, tell them about your friends and how you spend your free time. This will help them craft a mental image of your new life in college and help appease their concerns.
- Take your parents on a campus visit where they can discuss with the college staff the advantages of moving on campus and where they can be reassured of your well-being. Hearing it from someone other than you will help your parents understand that this decision will be better for you in the long run.

²“Latino Youth Finishing College: The Role of Selective Pathways,” by Richard Fry, Pew Hispanic Center, June 23, 2004.

- Decide early in the school year when you will go back home to visit. This will help reduce their expectations and control their anxiety level. By letting them know ahead of time when you will come back home (and sticking to it) they will feel reassured in that you are not drifting away from your family and your roots.
- Try to figure out what you can do to pay for these return trips yourself. This will take away some of the financial burden, making reunions, all the more joyful.
- Use the information in this book to help them understand what a difference a college degree will make in your future. Explain that people with a college degree earn an average of \$1 million more in a lifetime than people without a degree. They also live longer, healthier lives and have much lower unemployment rates than people without a degree. Tell them about success stories you have heard, and share with them your inspiration. The more they understand and are a part of your master plan, the more welcoming they will be of your decisions. While sending you to college might seem daunting right now, it will no doubt be a huge benefit to you and your family in the long run.
- Teach them how to communicate via email and to use Skype and other Voice Over Internet protocols so you can communicate frequently. Send them pictures and share your experience with them as much as you can. There are many ways to remain close despite the distance!
- Clearly tell them that you wish to pursue something that may be outside of what they know, or how things were done up to now in your family. You may want to say something like: “I’m sure that when you came to this country, your parents weren’t happy that you were leaving them. But you changed the way in which things were done in your family up to then for a chance of a better future. I’m trying to do the same.”

- Openly ask them to support your studies away from home and to avoid telling you repeatedly that you can come back home and study at a local community college if that is not what you chose to do. You can try something like: “Mom, I know you miss me and I miss you too. But I will have so many more opportunities in the future if I stick it out and stay at this college, that I hope you can support my decision. It would really mean a lot to me.”
- Find examples of professionals who are well known in your field of interest and talk to your family about them. If you can connect with some of these role models, they can become your inspiration and in some cases, your mentors. This will inevitably contribute to helping your parents see just how serious you are about building your career.

Michael G. McKenzie Jr., the Information Technology Analyst at Morgan Stanley, says: “I went to school at the State University of New York in Potsdam which is six hours away from New York City (where I grew up) by car. I think this was a great experience for me because it got me out of the city environment and exposed me to nature. I also think it helped me get the full college experience of going away and living on campus because it allowed me to open up, meet new people and build relationships, something I think I would not have done if I had gone to school in the city. I feel if I had stayed in the city I would have just gone to class and then got on the train and gone right back home where I would have stayed around my same childhood friends on the corner.”

Remember that you create your own path to success one day at a time. By getting your family on your side and by choosing the right people to mentor you and support your growth you are taking very important steps towards your future success. But, as Arturo Poiré reminds you: “You cannot negotiate your future, so, you can show your

family statistics about rates of success for college graduates and all that but in the end, you have to realize that it's your future and in this case, as much as your family loves you, if they don't support you, they are not doing you any good."

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"As the Executive Director for a national association that represents Hispanic business students across the country I would like to encourage students to go beyond their comfort zone. Attend a university outside of your city and state. Get involved in non-Hispanic traditional activities and/or organizations. Learn and explore what is beyond your family, circle of friends and larger community. What you learn from these experiences will provide you numerous options to seek personally and professionally."

—David Peña

So, if you are the first one in your family to go to college, be proud of being a trailblazer for future generations of people in your family and in the Latino community at large. Realize that even if your family can't guide you through the process, and even if sometimes you have to make decisions despite their lack of support or understanding, you are not alone. On the contrary; there are lots of people out there willing to guide you and help you fulfill your ambitions. You just have to proactively seek their friendship and seek their advice.

One more thing. You can always come back to this book and re-read the Words of Encouragement I peppered throughout these pages. We can all use a little pick me upper once in a while!

Chapter Resources:

www.firstinthefamily.org—First in the Family offers a great website where you can find videos and tips for first generation students who are in college.

www.parenthandbook.sa.ucsb.edu—Here you'll find a handbook for parents of first generation students that you can pass on to your family.

www.hispanicfund.org—The Hispanic College Fund is one of the organizations that manages many different scholarships for Hispanics. One of them is The SallieMae Fund's "First in My Family" scholarship for full time undergraduate students enrolled in approved, accredited institutions. More about scholarships in Chapter 5.

www.100hispanicwomen.org—This organization helps young Latinas become leaders by providing them mentorship, networking and internship opportunities.

www.imno.org—A virtual mentoring organization that invites college students to interview people they admire and then post the audio file on the website.

www.nextgeneratinpress.org—A website where you can download the complete PDF of the book *First In the Family* by Kathleen Cushman

www.gotocollege.wikispaces.com/advice+for+1st+generation+college+students—Offers a list of websites with articles for first generation college students.

www.hace-usa.org—Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement offers a mentoring program for high school and college students. In addition they have a high school internship program that identifies top performers for exposure to the corporate world.

www.hispanicheritage.org—Hispanic Heritage Foundation identifies, supports and develops high school students and recent college graduates by offering opportunities to connect with corporations and to get involved with the community.

Books

First In the Family: Your High School Years: Advice About College From First Generation Students, by Kathleen Cushman (Paperback, 2006)

I Am Somebody: College Knowledge For the First Generation Campus Bound, by Anna J. Leider (Octameron, 1998)

I Am Somebody: College Knowledge For at Risk Students, 16th edition, by Anna J. Leider (Octameron, 2000)

Foundations: A Reader For New College Students by Virginia Gordon and Thomas L. Minnick (Paperback, 2007)

For more information and a constantly updated list of resources log on to www.latinosincollege.com.

Chapter 3

PREPARE FOR THE CAREERS OF THE FUTURE

Choosing the right college for you has a lot to do with what your interests are. Some people know early on that they want to be lawyers, doctors or scientists, while others take longer to recognize their passion and talent. If you are still in high school you have a big advantage: You get to explore the careers that offer the best opportunities in the future. Finding out early that you'd like to work in technology, for instance, will enable you to take the right courses now, while you still have time. Let's look at how that works.

Here are a few questions for you: Do you know what you'd like to study? Do you even know what intrigues you? Have you taken any of the interest inventory tests that are available in most high schools, such as Coin, Choices or Discover? If you haven't, ask your guidance counselor

for a password to access the website and take the test. It will give you a variety of careers that might peak your interest.

There is no question about the fact that you need to take a long look at yourself to try to figure out what you would like to do. And a good place to start is with what you are good at, what activities you enjoy. There are books that can guide you in this soul-searching process and I'll give you some of them in the Resources at the end of the chapter.

Another good idea is to take a look at the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH) at www.bls.gov/oco. This wonderful directory published by the Federal Government offers a list of every single imaginable occupation in the United States along with a description of what the job entails, what kind of education you need, what the average salary is and the projected growth of that job in the future. You will discover careers you didn't even imagined that existed! In addition you will find a link on the OOH's website called "Jobs of the Future" where you can search by looking at the fastest growing industries.

Unfortunately, in the past several years, not enough students are choosing to get on the pathway to an engineering, technological or science career, perhaps because they don't see the kinds of careers they could have if they follow the so called STEM field, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

Yine de la Cruz, Project Engineer at ExxonMobil Fuels Marketing, who recently graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Manhattan College, decided to take the road less traveled: At the advice of her guidance counselor in school, she took every available course in the math and science departments in her high school. "The truth is, that by choosing a heavy work load in high school I was more than prepared for anything that I faced in college. My first Calculus class was a review of all the material I had learned in high school. Thus,

I had a head start and felt confident in my abilities to succeed in the engineering program.” she says.

Not having the right preparation by the time you get to college might close important doors for you as some interesting options may be out of reach. In addition, not being able to choose a promising career path will not only impact your future; it will also impact the future of our country. Why? Because the fact that we have entered the era of globalization and are rapidly advancing through the information age, has increased the demand for employees with higher technological skills. For instance, it is estimated that in the next ten years, half a million engineers will retire and we will need an additional half a million to fulfill market demand. Yet, the US is only graduating around 70,000 engineers a year. Do you see now that there is great need for more students to take advantage of this opportunity?

Yine’s determination and a clear understanding of her goals early on, allowed her to tap into key resources which she leveraged once she graduated.

As her family had limited financial means and couldn’t afford to pay for college, Yine applied to several scholarships and received the Exxon-Mobil Math and Engineering Award through the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, an organization that identifies, supports and develops emerging Latino leaders. (This award totaled \$22,000 for four years plus a laptop.)

While in school, Yine interned at STV, Inc., a company that offered engineering, architectural, planning and construction management services, and she received a job offer from them upon graduation. A few months later, however, Yine was invited to talk to young students at the Hispanic Heritage Foundation gala. There, she reconnected with one of ExxonMobil’s representatives who recognized her from the

ceremony at which she had received her award a few years earlier. He asked her to interview with his company. “I didn’t know much about the corporate world and he took the time to talk to me about career development and job opportunities and many other things I had quite honestly never learned in college or at home.”

After a series of interviews with ExxonMobil, Yine de la Cruz was offered a project manager position.

As Yine’s example shows, if you wish to stay ahead of the game, you need to seriously explore where the greatest employment growth will be in the next few years and try to match that information with your interests and talents. Then, you need to look for the best schools to prepare you for the challenge and you need to find available resources for your area of interest.

Here are some insights on future career trends as described on the Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition:

- Healthcare and social assistance—This sector is expected to grow by 25.4 percent and add nearly 4 million jobs due to an aging population and longer life expectancy. 7 of the 20 fastest growing occupations are expected to be in healthcare. There will be a great need for medical assistants, registered nurses, substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors, health care aids, mental health and substance abuse social workers, etc.
- Professional and business services—This super sector, which includes some of the fastest growing industries in the country, is expected to grow by 23.3 percent and add 4.1 million new jobs. Jobs with high levels of growth will be computer and mathematical occupations, healthcare practitioners, technical occupations, education and training.
- Professional, scientific and technical services—This sector will grow by 28.8 percent adding an estimated 2.1 million new jobs by 2016.

Employment in computer systems, design and related services will grow by 38.3 percent and add nearly one-fourth of all new jobs in this sector. Management, scientific and technical consulting services will grow at a 78 percent. Demand for these services will be spurred by the increased use of new technology and computer software and the growing complexity of business. There will be a need for: systems analyst, designers and developers, computer programmers, web developers, information managers, software and hardware engineers.

- Public and private educational services—This sector will grow by 10.7 percent and add around 1.4 million new jobs by 2016. This is due to the rising student enrollment at all levels of education. Teachers will be needed in all areas, particularly in math, science and technology.

Percent Change in Employment in Occupations Projected to Grow Fastest, 2006-2016

- Network systems and data communications analysts
- Personal and home care aides
- Home health aides
- Computer software engineers, applications
- Veterinary technologists and technicians
- Personal financial advisors
- Makeup artists, theatrical performance
- Medical assistants
- Veterinarians
- Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors
- Skin care specialists
- Financial analysts

- Social and human service assistants
- Gaming surveillance officers and gaming investigators
- Physical therapist assistants
- Pharmacy technicians
- Forensic science technicians
- Dental hygienists
- Mental health counselors
- Mental health and substance abuse social workers

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition

Another industry where Latinos need to continue to make gains is the financial markets. It's a field you may not know much about and something that your parents may not have encouraged you to do, not because they are against you working at a Wall Street firm, but because they many not be aware of how Wall Street can influence the well being of millions of people. Yes, I know that the recent Wall Street collapse has probably made a strong impact on the way you see the industry. But the truth is that you could bring a different perspective and help shape the way in which this sector conducts its business.

Mina Pacheco Nazemi is the Vice President of the private equity division of alternative investments at Credit Suisse, and one of the highest-ranking Latinas in her company. She graduated from Stanford University with honors with a degree in Economics and Political Science and has an MBA from Harvard Business School. She shares how her work makes a big impact in the community: "Wall Street is about supporting and financing companies to help them expand, grow or meet their ongoing capital needs. Wall Street firms have not traditionally invested in minority businesses. Among the challenges in investing

behind minority firms has been a ‘people issue.’ Wall Street firms and asset managers work with people they know. They finance deals that are brought to their attention. It is much more difficult for a minority company to get the attention of a financier if they do not have the relationship or connections. The research shows that management teams with women and minorities makeup tend to hire more women and minorities and manage companies that operate in these communities. These businesses provide economic development in their communities. With billions of dollars available for investment but few Latinos in Wall Street managing those funds, this capital will have a harder time being funneled down to Latino businesses and hence Latino communities. So, getting into finance is a great way to contribute to the development of your community.”

Mina’s work has a strong multiplying effect. She just raised \$300 million dollars from one of the largest institutional investors in the country to be invested behind women and minority owned businesses. By choosing every investment carefully, she can ensure that the capital is being designated to businesses (and managers) that are women or minority owned.

The best way to get your foot in the door at a Wall Street firm is through an internship. Mina was initially exposed to Wall Street through an organization called Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO) www.seo-usa.org. They recruit the best minority students from all over the country and place them in internships at leading Wall Street firms. This program does more than just place you in an internship, it also exposes you to high-ranking executives at receptions and it prepares you to interact with them. It actually provides you a network, a “family” of other minorities on Wall Street. If you look at the minorities in Wall Street, about 80% of them are graduates of the SEO program.

Mina, a board member of this organization, shares: “The SEO program is your training ground to learn what Wall Street is; it teaches you accounting, financial analysis, and gives you the skill sets needed to become a good investor. Before the start of your internship you go through a rigorous training process to make sure each intern is well equipped to succeed. And more importantly it provides you with an invaluable network that will aid your success on the Street.”

Occupations with the Largest Numerical Growth, by Level of Postsecondary Education

Bachelor’s degree

- Elementary school teachers
- Accountants and auditors
- System engineers, applications
- System analysts
- Secondary school teachers
- System engineers, software
- System administrators
- Intermediate school teachers
- Human resources specialists

Bachelor’s or higher degree plus work experience

- Management analysts
- Financial managers
- Computer and information systems managers
- Medical and health service managers
- Training and development specialists

Master's degree

- Clergy
- Physical therapists
- Mental health and substance abuse social workers
- Educational, vocational and school counselors
- Rehabilitation counselors

Doctoral degree

- Postsecondary teachers
- Clinical, counseling and school psychologists
- Medical scientists
- Computer and information scientists
- Biochemists and biophysicists

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition

Some students think that math, science and technology are boring subjects, yet they couldn't fathom their lives without products and services created and developed by people who dedicate their careers to these areas.

Think about it for a minute: TIVO, all MP3 players, the Wii and XBOX 360 consoles, as well as your favorite social networks such as Facebook and My Space; You Tube, iTunes, Google and all the other search engines were all invented by scientists and engineers. The fact that you can download your favorite ring tone to your cell phone and that you can use your cell phone to navigate the Internet, text your friends and purchase jeans off a billboard (soon to be available in the U.S.!) is all thanks to people who took advanced high school math classes (such as trigonometry and calculus) that are prerequisites for admission to

competitive colleges and for career success. Interesting, isn't it? That your choice of courses in high school can make such a difference in your career path, in your future and in the level of success you achieve. Remember, no matter where you are in your studies, it's never too late to start thinking about the possible career choices available to you.

Encouraging Words

Yine de la Cruz, the engineer at ExxonMobil says: "The world of engineering is filled with opportunities and there is nothing but room to grow for any Latinos entering the field. The fact is that the country needs a more diverse group of engineers with ideas that could revolutionize science and the practical world of today. My favorite quote of all time is: 'Knowledge is power'. That's how I feel about an engineering background: it's a problem solving skill not just merely a profession. Thus, having the skill to approach problems in an organized way, following processes and arriving at productive conclusions could get you any job. Engineers could be bankers, financial analysts, scientists, teachers and any other profession that requires the skill to learn and to solve problems. At this point in my life I am positive that the best way to solve problems on the spot and to think critically is by expanding your mind. Treat your mind as you would any muscle. If you want tighter abs, do sit-ups. If you want to become a better intellectual, push yourself to think outside the box. Begin thinking on your own. Don't stop at completing your homework tasks. Go above and beyond. I truly think that pursuing a degree in an engineering field is the best way to helping you achieve this goal."

Chapter Resources

www.seo-usa.org—Sponsors of Educational Opportunity—An organization that provides support in grades 9-16 by preparing students of color for competitive college admissions and graduation. Their SEO Career Program recruits, selects and trains college students of color for summer internships that lead to full time jobs with investment banks, corporate law firms and other leading global companies. They have several other programs you should look into.

www.nationalmathandscience.org—National Math and Science Initiative—This organization was formed to address one of America’s greatest economic and intellectual problems: the declining number of student who are prepared to take rigorous college courses in math and science and equipped for careers in those fields. It’s a public-private partnership led by private donors such as Exxon Mobil Corporation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation. Visit the site to find out how you can benefit from their programs.

www.hispanicheritage.org—Hispanic Heritage Foundation—This organization identifies, promotes and prepares Latino role models through national leadership, cultural, educational and workforce programs. They offer programs such as: the Hispanic Heritage Youth Awards which annually identifies and honors youth role models in various categories from 12 regions in the country; LOFT (Latinos on Fast Track) Workforce Program, which was created in partnership with Hispanic College Fund to identify and prepare emerging Latino professionals in specific industries or jobs; and the Hispanic Heritage Awards, which is one of the most prestigious Hispanic awards events recognizing successful Latinos in various categories.

Books

What Color Is Your Parachute for Teens: Discovering Yourself, Defining Your Future by Richard Nelson Bolles, Carol Christen, and Jean M. Blomquist. (Ten Speed Press, 2006)

If You Could Be Anything, What Would You Be? A Teen Guide to Mapping Out the Future by Jeanne Webster (Paperback, 2004)

For more information and a constantly updated list of resources log on to www.latinosincollege.com.

Appendix 5

Additional Books About College

Confessions of a College Freshman: A Survival Guide for Dorm Life, Biology Lab, the Cafeteria, and Other First-Year Adventures by Zach Arrington

Entrar en la Universidad: Una Guía para el Estudiante Hispano, by K.Patricia Aviezer

Everything you Ever Wanted to Know About College: A Guide for Minority Students, by Dr. Boyce Watkins

The Everything College Survival Book: From Social Life to Study Skills—All you need to know to fit right in! by Michael S. Malone

The Real Freshman Handbook: A Totally Honest Guide to Life on Campus by Jennifer Hanson

What Teens Need to Succeed: Proven, Practical Ways to Shape your Own Future, by Peter L.Benson, Ph.D., Judy Galbraith, M.A. and Pamela Espeland

Winning Scholarships for College, an Insider's Guide, by Marianne Ragins (winner of more than \$400,000 in scholarship money)