

BASIC Salutes its College Graduates

By Anne Bogardt and Joanne Ingwall

Each year, now for 25 years, BASIC has devoted proceeds from the annual Circle of Art and our other fundraising activities to its scholarship program. Basic's scholarship program is part of BASIC's "cradle to graduation" multi-prong program designed to give the children and young adults of Borrego the tools to succeed: Dolly Parton Imagination Library providing age-appropriate books monthly to children from birth to age 5; summer Learning Academy giving a boost to 44 children in reading, math and English language skills; and our scholarship program. BASIC gives two types of scholarships: *start-school scholarships* to high school graduates planning to attend vocational, 2-year or 4-year colleges and *stay-in-school scholarships* to those who continue their education and work towards a degree. Some even go on and earn masters-level degrees.

Despite all the logistical challenges of attending college from the isolated town of Borrego Springs, many of our scholars have graduated this past academic year. We congratulate them for their accomplishments! Over the next few months, BASIC invites you to join us in saluting them! In this our second article in the series, we salute three members of the Arias family who have been BASIC Scholars, including one who graduated with a master's degree this year, and a recent graduate of UCSD.

Jesus and Cecilia Arias

In addition to support from BASIC's General Scholarship Fund, Jesus was also the recipient of BASIC's first named Scholarship: The Frank Hydoski Scholarship, which he held for four years. He graduated from UCSD with a major in math, earned his teaching credentials and now teaches math at the prestigious Preuss School, UC San Diego in La Jolla. In addition to multi-year support from BASIC's General Scholarship Fund, Cecilia earned her masters degree supported in part by the Jerry Goldsmith Memorial Scholarship for a scholar pursuing studies in health care.

In their own words....

The BASIC scholarship has had a great positive impact on my life and my wife Cecilia's life. We take a lot of pride in being part of the Borrego community, especially due to all the support that we have received from it since we graduated high school in 2012 and 2013 respectively. BASIC was a very important factor that made it possible for us to achieve our dreams and graduate since it provided us with their support every year until we graduated from both our bachelors and master's programs at UCSD and Cal State San Marcos in 2018 (Jesus) and 2022 (Cecilia) respectively. Knowing that we had its constant support through scholarship money and mentorship was a safety net that helped my wife, sisters and me persevere during our years in college. Those were truly tough years to say the least with all the general education and major courses that we had to take. However, we knew we had multiple supporters including our

family, friends as well as our former teachers and of course the monetary support from the BASIC foundation. We would like to take this moment to really thank it and all its members for helping so many generations of students pursue their dreams and a higher level of education. It is truly daunting sometimes when you realize how costly it is to attend a four-year university. Nevertheless, it is thanks to scholarships like BASIC that we and all the former and new generations of students from Borrego Springs can get around this problem and still achieve their dreams. Please continue making a difference in the lives of the students from Borrego Springs!"

Clara Arias

In her own words....

My name is Clara Arias and as a BASIC Scholarship recipient, I would like to thank the BASIC committee for founding this organization. I was very happy and appreciative to learn that I was selected to receive this award for a couple of years during my undergraduate career. Your generosity helped me significantly, and it was through your kindness that I developed the pleasure of serving others. After graduating from high school, I attended Cal State University, San Marcos to major in Business Administration with an emphasis in Information Systems. I obtained my bachelor's degree in 2019 and applied to graduate school right after. A year later, in 2020, I graduated with a Master's in Business Administration from my alma mater (CSUSM). I currently work in the administrative area at the Diocese of San Diego, serving both the San Diego and Imperial counties. I would like to thank the BASIC Scholarship for investing in my education and I encourage Borrego Springs high school students to take advantage of the valuable opportunities that our small community has to offer.

Karen Garcia

In addition to support from BASIC's General Scholarship Fund each year, Karen has received several named scholarships during her four-year path to graduating this spring from UCSD summa cum laude: The Joanne and Richard Scholarship for academic excellence, The Jerry Goldsmith Memorial Scholarship for a scholar pursuing studies in health care, The PEO Scholarship for a woman pursuing an education, and The Edith A. Schmitt Memorial Scholarship for a scholar pursuing a career in nursing.

In her own words

Going to college is never easy for anyone. It's especially hard for those who have financial constraints to worry about. BASIC eased a lot of those worries for me, and for all my other former classmates who also were fortunate enough to receive their scholarships. Thanks to

them, not only are a lot of us able to go to college, but we can go without having to work a crazy amount of hours to avoid as much debt as possible.

After BSHS, I attended UCSD as a Global Health (BS) major and Biology minor. I originally intended to enter healthcare because I always enjoyed helping others. As I ventured through healthcare more, and explored jobs with patient care experience, I realized I never allowed myself to explore anything but healthcare. I began wondering if I could pursue things like engineering or computer science (a separate but equally as important field of science that can help others). So, that's what I'm doing now! Currently, I am taking courses and working to apply to other ones so that I can pursue Software Engineering.

BASIC has always been so supported in whatever path we chose to take. Furthermore, unlike many other scholarships, they allow us to "pursue educational opportunities at all levels ...empowering "from Cradle to Graduation..." and they also "help students of all ages reach their potential and realize their dreams." As I pursue more education to follow my newly found Software Engineering dream, they still offer their support and guidance, which is something I feel very fortunate to have. Continuing to seek higher education is not something to shy away from, and that's something BASIC made clear to us from a start. Because of this, I am very grateful for all BASIC does, and every day I feel more and more grateful to come from Borrego. There truly is no other community as loving and supportive.

To contribute to the education of the children and adults of Borrego Springs, please donate to BASIC's Scholarship Fund by visiting our web site www.borregobasic.org or mailing a check to BASIC, Box 1914, Borrego Springs CA 92004-1914

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