



As a first generation student, Brianda was determined from the start to make her way to and through college. Now as a young professional during a global pandemic, she is finding her way in the digital workforce, and calling on others to give back and support students- however they can.

Brianda Garza

KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL
CLASS OF 2015
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO
CLASS OF 2019

Brianda Garza is a graduate of Kennedy High School, and a recipient of the SAEP Scholarship.

Brianda was extremely involved in high school. She was on the tennis team, a member of the Spanish National Honor Society, and was in the top 10% of her class- all while working. She remembers hearing about the San Antonio Education Partnership in the college center at Kennedy, and learning about the SAEP Scholarship. As part of the scholarship eligibility requirements, Brianda visited caf college and attended college success activities. She felt that these sessions really benefitted her, and gave her good tips about the college application process, guidance about navigating college life, and other skills that helped her through the college process. "It was good to hear. As a first generation student I would take any help I could get, and SAEP was there."

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After graduating from Kennedy, she attended UTSA and continued to be involved by participating in the PIVOT program which provided academic and social support for students. Brianda especially enjoyed the First to Go and Graduate services, which offered programming specifically for first generation students. Through PIVOT and First to Go and Graduate, Brianda received a mentor who checked in with her and supported her through her transition into college. **In May 2019, she graduated with her Bachelors of Business Administration in Marketing, and now is working as a Marketing Specialist for the Texas Military Department.** She had been in this position for just a few months, when she had to turn to remote working due to COVID-19. She reminds students to pursue their goals, even in the face of challenge:

"If you have something in mind, go for it. Even if it takes time, go for it. Education will stay with you for a life time. Even when you have experience and education, prepare yourself and strive for greatness."

"We as graduates can go back and share our stories. We can show them it's possible."

Brianda has seen the power of education firsthand, and knows that there are obstacles that may prevent students from achieving their goals. She was very grateful to have guidance and support from SAEP, "It was the support that I needed- not just from the organization, but also with the scholarship." She encourages students to take advantage of the opportunities that come their way, and reminds them to give back to those that come after.

"Share your testimony. There's a lot of underserved high schools, but we as graduates can go back and share our stories. We can show them it's possible."



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