



Senior Spotlight FROM VISION TO VICTORY

CELEBRATING THE JOURNEY OF VISION GRADUATES – CLASS OF 2026



NATALIA MEJIA

When Natalia joined VISION Young Leaders' Academy in the fifth grade at just 11 years old, VISION itself was only beginning its journey. As one of the very first members and the youngest member at the time, Natalia quickly stood out for her energy, personality, and potential. Back then, VISION meetings took place at the park, where a small group of young leaders began building what would become a lasting community rooted in mentorship, growth, and opportunity. Over the years, Natalia blossomed into a confident leader, scholar, athlete, and role model for younger members following in her footsteps.

This fall, Natalia will attend California State University, Long Beach, where she plans to major in Biochemistry. Graduating with an impressive 3.73 GPA on a 4.0 scale and a 4.08 weighted GPA, Natalia's hard work and dedication opened doors to numerous

colleges and universities. She earned acceptance to schools including California State University, Fullerton, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Loyola Marymount University, Pepperdine University, University of Oregon, and several University of California campuses.

Throughout high school, Natalia immersed herself in both academics and extracurricular activities. Some of her favorite memories include football games, competing in volleyball and softball, participating in Triton Talk, and building lifelong friendships. She was actively involved in EAOP, CSF, AVID, ASB, Upward Bound, volleyball, and softball, which are all experiences that helped shape her into the young woman she is today.

As a first-generation college student, Natalia credits programs like AVID, EAOP, and Upward Bound for helping her navigate the college application process, FAFSA, scholarships, and the challenges that often come with being the first in a family to pursue higher education. Athletics also played a major role in her development. Through volleyball and softball, she learned discipline, confidence, teamwork, and leadership both on and off the field. Her commitment and perseverance earned her recognition as a Student Athlete all four years of high school, along with Principal's Honor Roll honors and a \$7,500 scholarship from the Ventura County Community Foundation.

Like many students, Natalia faced challenges during her high school journey. One of the hardest lessons she learned was understanding the importance of staying true to herself and recognizing who genuinely cared about her. Over time, she realized that protecting her peace, keeping a small circle, and prioritizing her own well-being were essential to finding happiness and confidence.



When asked what advice she would give incoming freshmen, Natalia shared her wisdom, "Become involved, make sure to get to know your teachers, be kind to staff, take it in, and never regret anything you do."

Perhaps the most powerful part of Natalia's story is the impact VISION had on her life. Reflecting on her journey, she shared that VISION helped her discover who she wanted to become. At a young age, she struggled with confusion and anxiety about her future, but the book clubs, lessons, and mentorship she received through VISION quietly guided her through life in meaningful ways. More importantly, she says the leaders at VISION consistently encouraged and believed in her, even during moments when she struggled to believe in herself.

Natalia's journey from VISION's youngest member to a college-bound graduate reflects the power of mentorship, perseverance, and community. As she prepares to begin this next chapter, her VISION family celebrates not only all she has accomplished, but the incredible future that lies ahead.

Congratulations, Natalia! Your journey is only beginning, and we cannot wait to see all that you achieve.

2026 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

LUZ LOPEZ
GISELLE JUAREZ
MARELI AGAMA
MAYARI MALDONADO
DALIA SANTOS
KATHERINE SERRANO
GABRIEL FERNANDEZ
IVONNE CRUZ
ALDO ANDRADE
ITZEL SERRANO
ASHLEY PINEDA
KIMBERLY SOTO

As we celebrate the achievements of our graduates, we are filled with pride and gratitude. Watching these incredible young people grow into confident, determined, and compassionate leaders has been an honor. Each of them has faced challenges with resilience, discovered their own unique path, and made a lasting impact on our VISION family and community.

This graduating class represents more than academic success, it represents perseverance, growth, leadership, and the courage to pursue the future in their own way. Some are continuing their journey at colleges and universities, while others are stepping directly into careers, training programs, and new life experiences. No matter the path, each graduate has worked hard to reach this milestone, and we are proud to celebrate all they have accomplished.

We are deeply grateful to have been part of their journeys, from their earliest days in VISION to the remarkable young adults they have become today. Their stories inspire us, and their futures are full of promise. We look forward to seeing them continue to grow, lead, and succeed in every chapter ahead.

Congratulations, graduates! Your VISION family is proud of you and cheering you on every step of the way!



Congratulations!