

# Support the University Scholars from Santo Tomás!

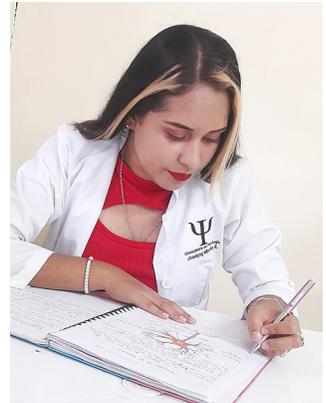
The current 22 university scholars we support with our sister organization in Santo Tomás are in five year programs, public and private. These culminate with an additional half year final project, practicum, or special coursework, at the end of five and a half years of hard work to earn degrees. For most of the students, their greatest challenge has been lack of access to computers for their studies, taking classes online using their phones, scrambling to use classmates' computers or paying for time at cyber-cafes, while saving their work to thumb drives. **To date, we've assisted over 50 young scholars,** mostly first generation students who also work part time to full time, and are all in need of funding to reach their goals of becoming professionals in Nicaragua. **Please help them finish their education.** Here are brief introductions to a few of the scholars:

**Nallelys Ordoñez Aguilar** is in her second year of clinical bioanalysis. She travels early in the mornings by bus to the city of Juigalpa to take classes and then travels back home in the afternoons, sometimes staying later to complete labs and projects with her colleagues. She often studies late into the evenings. Nallelys's advice to future students: there will always be problems and challenges and you'll have to work through them. It will be worth all the effort!



**Yisbi Mejía Murillo** (center) and her family. 5th year of Environmental Engineering

**Joselyng Miranda Espinoza** is a third year student of psychology, the youngest of four siblings and the first to graduate from high school as well as enter university. She works more than full time cleaning in a business but squeezes out time to attend a Saturday academic program and get her homework done. Joselyng enjoys developing friendships with her fellow students and she'd love to serve her community, even as she recognizes the possibilities of employment in her field in the small town of Santo Tomás are few. She'll likely move to a city to work.



**Aimar Rivas Bravo** is in his third year of Graphic and Multimedia Design. He credits his parents with supporting and encouraging him and his younger brother to have and pursue their dreams. One of Aimar's largest challenges is having to travel to work when his cousin offers it, to help support his family's expenses. He focuses on homework whenever he can. One of his best moments at university was being asked to represent his class and submit his designs in contests. Aimar is very optimistic about securing work in his field when he graduates in 2026.

**Carlos Alfaro** is a second year student of engineering design and construction. His father is a mason while his mother runs the house and cares for her aging mom. Carlos has worked in construction since he was twelve to contribute to his family's expenses. He grew up attending the *Comedor Infantil* and was encouraged to have goals to reach for. He attends a Saturday program, which allows him to continue working full time. Not having a computer sometimes hinders his ability to complete his homework but he's been creative about borrowing time on his classmates' laptops. Carlos will have no problem finding work as an engineer.



**Maribel Oporta Gaitan** is in her final year of the Saturday-only nursing program at the local university in Santo Tomás. She works twelve hour days, five days a week, at a roadside stand selling *quesillo*, which is a national delicacy of a specialty soft cheese wrapped in tortilla, covered in *crema* and pickled onions. It was very challenging to dedicate time and resources to complete her

nursing practicums in the city of Juigalpa (catching the bus at 3AM) but she did it and hopes to soon enough have permanent work in her field. She never missed a day of class, even when ill, and not having a computer has been extremely rough.

**Jasmery del Carmen González** is in her second year of medicine and surgery studies. She hopes after she graduates to specialize further in neurosurgery, cardiology or pediatric medicine. Her university studies in Managua run every other week in person alternating with online classes. So she lives in Managua (four hours away) half the time, and with her family in Santo Tomás the other half, working half time in a pharmacy during those weeks. Studying online is hard because she only has her phone and the internet connection is unstable.



**Javiera Sandoval Morales**, (2nd from right) and classmates, 3rd year of Pharmaceutical Engineering

**Junior Alexander Dávila** is in his third year of natural science studies, in anticipation of a career in teaching. He was inspired by his sister, who taught children far from town, that he could also inspire students to pursue their dreams. He spent formative years receiving meals and much more at the *Comedor Infantil*. Alex thanks his hard-working mom for teaching him resilience and perseverance, Sean and Olympia for support over these many years, and everyone else who has extended a hand on his journey, reminding him that he could make his dreams real.



**Greyna Ríos López** (above, right, with her mother) 2nd year of Pharmacy studies



**William Hernández Flores**  
2nd year of Social Sciences



**Dany Lazo Lazo**  
5th year student of Education, Science major



**Osler Rodríguez** 2nd year student of Architecture

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