



UC San Diego Chancellor's Scholars Program

International Study Scholarship

Sponsored by Ruth Covell, M.D. International Study Fund



DESIREE MENJIVAR

Major: Marine Biology

Cohort Year: 2022

*Plans to study abroad in
Edinburgh, UK*

Studying abroad was always a fascination of mine from a young age. To me, the thought of being immersed in another country and its culture was always exciting. Now, I have been offered an amazing opportunity to study the humanities in Europe, where I will get to learn more about English Literature in the era of Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Revolution. I found this program to be beneficial because it will help me advance in completing the rest of

my general requirements, all while providing me an early start in my upper-division courses for my major.

One of my goals for studying abroad is to travel the world as a representative of my parents. Due to their immigration status, they are unable to leave the US for fear of deportation. When I was younger, I would overhear my mother talking about wanting to visit countries like Italy and Spain. Knowing that she cannot, it always left a guilty feeling in my stomach. In recent years, my father, being the only individual who makes an income, has had fluctuations with his work. He is a truck driver, so his work solely relies on the wellbeing of his truck. He has experienced many troubles with maintenance, and the thought of getting a new truck is out of the question, given that even used trucks sell for more than \$100k. Despite his hardships, he has always prioritized his children's education, including my study abroad program. This included paying for academic conferences, school supplies, and books. Initially, I did not want to participate in the program due to the costly expenses. However, my parents motivated me to say yes, telling me that this opportunity does not come around often. From the beginning, I have dedicated my education to them. I want to prove that their sacrifices will yield lasting results. Through this program, I hope to not only continue my pathway towards my career, but to explore the world as their daughter – a culmination of their hopes and dreams.

My other goal is to learn more about the cultural differences that envelop our world. Prior to UCSD, I never really left my hometown: a quaint, low-income town that was predominantly Hispanic and African American. I rarely interacted with people outside of these ethnicities, so I never fully understood how other people generally lived. At UCSD, I was bombarded with people of all ethnicities and races. Although it was exciting to see new scenery, it was also overstimulating because of my nervousness of not wanting to offend anyone. However, I knew that I could not keep this mindset, and I knew that going abroad would be a learning experience in terms of meeting new people/cultures. I am eager to participate in this program because it would mean getting to know more about people and their lifestyles. I admit that it will take time to adjust, but I hope that in the end, I will become more open-minded and empathetic towards people.