

# WesternU



## Meet Gabriela

2023 Recipient of the  
WesternU Board of Trustees Scholarship



Dear WesternU Trustees:

From the bottom of my heart, thank you so much for the opportunity to receive the WesternU Board of Trustees Scholarship for students of low income.

Since undergraduate college, I have always had to rely on scholarships and part-time jobs in order to get by. I am not able to rely on my family for any means of financial availability. This opportunity has enlightened my family and I with a feeling of peace as I embark on this journey to further my education.

I will become a dentist with the help of WesternU and with your help as well. I hope to serve the underprivileged communities in my area for as long as I practice dentistry in the near future.

I am also very interested in volunteering programs hosted in third world countries around the globe. I really want to involve myself not only in the practice, but also in the education that accompanies dental hygiene. I would like to educate on cost effective prevention tools and solutions for those communities with limited resources. There are a vast majority of ways I want to help any community I have the privilege to serve and WesternU is the place to do it.

Thank you once again for fueling this great opportunity, you are truly changing lives with your generosity.

Sincerely,

Gabriela Salazar  
DMD Class of 2027

Learn More About  
**Gabriela Salazar, DMD 2027**  
\$41,500/year Award Recipient



<b>Hometown:</b>	Perris, CA
<b>Undergrad:</b>	University of California, Irvine
<b>Degrees:</b>	Biological Sciences
<b>Hobbies/Interests:</b>	Painting, Embroidering, Cooking, Traveling, Ceramic/Clay Art
<b>Previous Career/Job:</b>	Dental Assistant

**What inspired you to pursue your health sciences career path?** When deciding what I wanted to do as a career while still in high school, my English teacher prompted me with two questions: who do you want to help and how often do you want to do it? These words were lifechanging as I knew immediately I have always wanted to help anyone I could every day I could do it. That led me to a health profession and looking into the dental field stole my heart.

**What is the biggest challenge you overcame on your path to WesternU?** When I graduated from UC Irvine in 2021, I tried looking for any position in a dental office and it was quite difficult. I was able to shadow two offices, but offices were not hiring due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This caused a dent in my first round applying to dental schools because I had few hours by the time applications were due in the fall. Understandingly, I did not get into any schools my first time applying.

**Why did you choose to attend WesternU?** When searching for dental schools, I researched and attended any information sessions offered. WesternU was one of the only schools to offer various links and zoom presentations with vast information. I could not apply to WesternU the time first around because I had not started working at any dental office causing lack of a dentist letter. However, this school was always on my mind and continued sending emails with information, the choice was so clear the second time applying.

**What is your proudest accomplishment?** Getting into college in the first place and graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree as a first generation Latina woman given my background was at the top of my greatest accomplishments. However, up to this point in my life, nothing has beat the feeling I got when Dr. Tabrizi called me and let me know I got into dental school. The amount of emotion I felt and continue to feel is like no other.