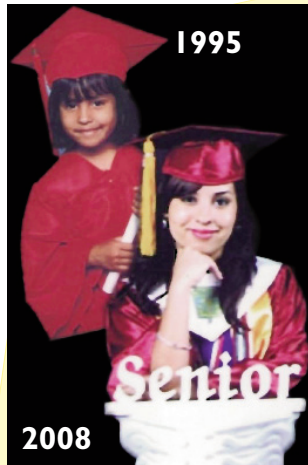




Project GRAD Houston Spotlights a Reagan High School Scholar



SEEING THE FUTURE FULL OF OPENED DOORS

Claudia Rodriguez, 2008 Project GRAD Scholar from Reagan High School, is on her way to the University of Texas in the fall. During her four years at Reagan, Claudia dedicated herself to her academics by studying vigorously and involving herself in extracurricular activities. Now she is able to enjoy the fruits of her labor, having realized that all her hard work and dedication have paid off.

Claudia attended the Project GRAD/Rice University: Business 101 Institute and was also a participant in the Management Leadership for Tomorrow program. Both experiences opened the door to the business world for her. Not only did she visit numerous companies (i.e., Merrill Lynch, Conoco Phillips, Exxon Mobil), she spoke with their employees and executives about leading business issues and their affects on the community. As a result, Claudia's future areas of study were clear.

Not only is she looking forward to majoring in International Business at the University of Texas, McCombs Business School, she will minor in Social Work. She is thankful that there are still people in the world willing to take time out of their busy lives and assist those in need, and is so inspired by her College Institute experiences that she too plans to give back one day.

"Dreams are never impossible," is just one of her messages to Project GRAD Scholars currently in high school. She also hopes they never underestimate themselves and trusts that anything is possible if one believes in the power of their own capabilities.

Finally, she is grateful to GRAD for allowing her the opportunity to attend the college of her choice, and from a financial standpoint, she feels a step ahead of other first time college students. She is optimistic about her future, believing that this is just the first open door of many yet to come. In a recent letter of thanks sent to GRAD's Scholarship Department she stated, "I feel as if a new path in my life is just opening; new friends, experiences and above all an education... I know that saying 'thank you' is not enough for everything you have done for me but I will make it up to you by being successful in the future. Once again thank you for opening doors for my future and for believing in my success."

GRAD is fully confident that Claudia will keep working hard and achieve a high level of success when she begins her collegiate career this fall. She has, and will continue to make a difference, one door at a time.