

CLASS OF 2024

Outstanding Graduate



“ With my NMSU education, I’ll work to conserve and preserve natural resources and influence future generations to do the same.”

—Sophia Fuentes

SOPHIA FUENTES

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

Sophia Fuentes will graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. This rigorous program requires a year of calculus, three semesters of chemistry and biology, and a year of engineering classes.

Sophia is a Crimson Scholar, an Honors College Ambassador, and has been on the Dean’s List every semester, receiving the Dora Blossom Gile and the John T. Harrington scholarships for her academic performance.

Her leadership activities included serving as president of the Environmental Science Student Organization, expanding its activities to include field trips, camping, native plant “seed bombing,” composting, and Earth Day outreach on the Plaza de Las Cruces. Sophia also was an ACES

Council Representative, a volunteer at the ACES Open House, and a volunteer for the Conroy Honors College Open House, encouraging underrepresented students to participate in Honors classes. In recognition of her service, she was awarded the Norma Bellows Ulery Outstanding Woman in Soil and Environmental Sciences Award and was awarded an academic and leadership stole by the Hispanic Faculty/Staff Caucus.

Sophia worked up to 20 hours each week in Dr. K.C. Carroll’s lab, training other undergraduates and conducting soil column tracer tests to measure chemical sorption. She also assisted with a literature review for teaching soil science conceptual models. She has the Seal of Bilingual Proficiency from the State of Texas, and her native Spanish-language proficiency has been invaluable in her field work as a research assistant studying well water contamination and its health effects in local communities.

According to Dr. Carroll and Dr. April Ulery, not only does Sophia “go above and beyond for an undergraduate student,” but she “exudes positive joy and energy and is always willing to share that with others.” Sophia plans to pursue master’s and doctoral degrees eventually but will first gain more field experience this summer analyzing water quality for the Department of Energy in Carlsbad. ▲