

**NMSU Alumni Association Outstanding Graduate | College of Business**  
**Tavyn Trujillo**

Growing up, Tavyn Trujillo was determined not to attend NMSU. It was too familiar; after all, her parents and grandparents earned NMSU degrees, and it was here in her hometown.

However, during her junior year in high school she started taking dual credit courses—and fell in love with NMSU. “It had everything I wanted. I could really communicate with my teachers.”

Since Tavyn had a head start on coursework, she had the freedom to take a wide variety of classes to see what she liked. She found her academic home in the College of Business. “I enjoy thinking through problems, and the diverse fields will let me shape my own career.” She chose to pursue a Bachelor of Business Administration with a finance major after talking to many business leaders she respects, finding that a finance degree was the common denominator.

In addition to her 3.935 GPA, Tavyn was lead author on a student-written article, “School Districts Targeted for Cyber Attacks: Is Yours Prepared?” Published by the National Alliance for Insurance Education and Research, it’s a case study of the 2019 ransomware attack on the Las Cruces Public School District. Tavyn says she just did what needed to be done, demonstrating the work ethic instilled in her by her family, but “it was reassurance that I am doing good work.” Tavyn also does good work as the treasurer of the NMSU chapter of Gamma Iota Sigma, an organization for students interested in finance careers, and as a member of the Newman Center Campus Ministry Outreach.

The unexpected death of her mother in 2021 thrust Tavyn into leadership roles she would have given anything not to have. Tavyn is an event coordinator for the Dr. Karen M. Trujillo Memorial Foundation and runs two annual events: a golf tournament fundraiser and a poetry contest for high school students. The foundation provides scholarships for education students across New Mexico colleges, and the first was awarded at NMSU in 2022. Tavyn’s view of leadership reflects that of her mother’s: “Leadership is not for you, but who you care for.”

Tavyn did not predict connecting to memories of her mother through her Testimonios from the Borderlands class. Her last assignment—a poem called “Last Goodbye”—emanated from a place she is unsure of. “I didn’t know what I was typing, I don’t even think I ‘wrote’ it. I woke up the next day wondering what I had submitted.” It took Tavyn two weeks to have the courage to read it, but the poem remains one of her favorite things. “I am so happy I got that piece of writing out of me.”

Academically, Tavyn appreciates the many communities that NMSU fosters, and the “many options for people who value different things.” The Daniels Fund Ethics Boot Camp put this into a potent professional perspective for Tavyn: “Decide what you value, why you value it, and find work that aligns with your values.”

After graduation, Tavyn plans to get some work experience, and begin an MBA program in the next year or so, with the long-term goal of entering academia.