



PRESS RELEASE

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ACCESS Academies Graduate Returns from Successful Cultural Immersion Program in Panama

ST. LOUIS, MO. February 17, 2014- Jennifer “Jenny” Carrillo, a NativityMiguel graduate, has returned from a cultural immersion program in Panama, thus completing the final academic requirement for her Bachelor’s Degree in International Business at St. Louis University.

“I chose Panama because of my Hispanic heritage and my abilities to speak Spanish fluently,” said Carrillo.

The only person in her delegation with the ability to speak Spanish, she was very valuable spokesperson for the group.

“When we went to the villages I was the only one who could speak with residents, and when the businesses presented, I was able to overcome many language barriers that prevented our group from having a successful conversation. It feels great to be able to communicate in two languages, and it gives me great confidence.”

Panama has been recognized by the international business world as having the strongest economic growth in Latin America. Because of its strategic location, it is an international transportation hub as well as trading, banking, and services epicenter. According to export.gov, Panama's dollar-based economy offers low inflation in comparison with neighboring countries and zero foreign exchange risk. Its government is stable and democratic and actively seeks foreign investment in all sectors, especially services, tourism and retirement properties.”

“Panama’s way of doing business is very different. The businesses there succeed because they are relationship-based, and are very encouraging to outside entrepreneurship. I enjoyed the fact that the businesses there were very social and open to ideas, which is why I believe their economy has not failed,” said Carrillo.

Jennifer Carrillo is the first in her family to go to college, and thanks to hard work and dedication, she will graduate in three and a half years from one of the most respect universities in the area, St. Louis University. An impressive feat considering the U.S. Department of Education cites the average amount of time taken by college students to obtain their bachelor’s degree to be six years and four months.

In addition to averaging 18 credit hours a semester, Carrillo successfully works a job, serves as the Vice President for SLU’s Hispanic-American Leadership Organization (HALO), and helps her family by providing additional support and care for her five younger siblings. She attended St. Cecilia School and Academy, an ACCESS partner school, before graduating from Nerinx Hall.

“ACCESS opened doors for me. From an in-depth education to tuition scholarships and graduate support, they helped pave the way for me to achieve my personal goals. I am graduating college and I am excited for what comes next,” says Carrillo.

For more information regarding this release, please contact Julie Linder, Public Relations for ACCESS Academies, by calling (573) 268-0639.

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Pictured: Jennifer Carrillo, in blue, located in the second row on the right side, with her peers and program coordinators in the cultural immersion program in Panama.