

TWU Generations

The Gonzalez Family



The story of the Gonzalez family begins in Laredo, Texas. Four sisters, Diana, Dinorah, Deborah and Denise would all begin their college careers at TWU. Sooner or later, all would find their career calling in the field of education. In 2008, the next generation began its association with TWU.

Diana Gonzalez Salam, B. S. Biology, 1982

In 1978 Diana began her college career at TWU majoring in Biology with minors in Chemistry and Psychology.

“After I graduated from TWU I got a job teaching English in Saudi Arabia. After eight years teaching, I became supervisor in the kindergarten section of an International School. During that time my four children were born: Dania, Ibrahim, Dinah and Dorina. Dinah now attends TWU.”

Diana has great memories of her time at TWU and even remembers the names of the halls! “I have taken with me great memories from TWU and for that reason I encouraged my children to attend. TWU helped me mature and become more independent. The TWU staff was very helpful and guided me throughout my university years. “

Diana now resides in Saudi Arabia and Denton, but still calls Laredo home.

Dinorah Gonzalez Wickstrom, B. S. 1983, M Ed 1989

Although Dinorah was unavailable for the photo, she sent her remembrances of TWU.

Dinorah is currently the Principal of Charles Borchers Elementary School in Laredo, Texas. She has 24 years teaching experience, beginning her career in teaching life science, earth science

and biology. She also was a diagnostician for about 8 years and has been in education administration for 12 years. I was assistant principal here for 4 year and principal for 3 years. “I am currently working with a group of hard working and very dedicated staff that loves working with children. My teachers and staff constantly inspire me to continue reaching for the stars! “

“My favorite instructor (at TWU) was Elizabeth Murphy. She was my adviser as I journeyed through my master's degree. Dr. Murphy was very patient, caring, nurturing and motivating. Her knowledge in the area of testing was exceptional and she was always available to guide me through the world of intellectual, achievement, fine and gross motor testing instruments. Dr. Murphy prepared me to excel in my job as diagnostician. I am indebted to her for her guidance and mentoring.”

“Now that my nieces are attending TWU I am confident that they will be well prepared for the real world. TWU will open the doors to them for great career opportunities like me. I am very proud of my nieces and I know they will excel in the career of their choice because TWU is an exceptional educational institution. “

Deborah Gonzalez Cardenas, B. S. 1983, M. S. Science Education 1988

After graduating with a B. S. Deborah taught Biology and Chemistry courses at United High School in Laredo, Texas for two years. When she married and moved to Midland, Texas and while living there she completed her Masters degree and worked as a biology professor at Midland College. She and her family now live in Allen, Texas where she is a Biology Professor at Collin College. Daughter, Ileana, enrolled at TWU in fall of 2008.

“I was given the opportunity to teach on the TWU campus as a graduate student under Dr. Fuerst. I taught Microbiology labs. This opportunity made me realize that teaching was my passion. I have been teaching ever since.”

“When I think of TWU, I think of the wonderful, caring professors I had. Their encouragement and guidance made it possible for met o feel successful and be prepared for any job opportunity. I recommend TWU to anyone interested! It makes me very proud to have my daughter, Ileana, attend TWU. It is a place where she can grow, mature, learn surrounded by the wonderful staff and professors there.”

Denise Gonzalez PhD, Molecular Biology 1991

After attending her freshman year at TWU, Denise transferred to Texas A&M to study animal science but eventually returned to Denton to receive her PhD.

After graduating with her PhD, Denise moved to Baltimore, Maryland where she did a Post Doctoral Fellowship at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in the Otolaryngology Department, researching the cochlear nucleus.

In 1993 she returned to Texas, settling in Lewisville and began teaching at Richland College. Upon the birth of her first child in 1998, she began teaching only part time and continued to do so until 2008.

Denise continues with classroom teaching at her children's school, Brighter Horizons Academy, in Garland, where she is the head of the Science Department and Biology teacher.

Ileana Cardenas, Freshman 2008, Child Development in preparation for Occupational Therapy

Coming to TWU from Allen High School, Ileana remembers her first impressions of TWU.

“When I went to TWU the first time I loved it. I thought that the staff was great and very friendly. I really liked the fact that it was a small school, and the students and faculty made me feel welcomed. After the orientation I was very sure and excited to be a part of TWU. “

“I think it is really nice to be in the same university as my mother and my aunts. It is really cool because my mom and my aunts tell me stories about TWU and my experiences are their experiences are similar.”

At TWU Ileana has been involved in the NET living learning community and Helping Hands service organization. She enjoys painting and will study abroad with other TWU students in the fall 2009 semester.

Dinah Jamal Salam, Freshman 2008, Family Studies in preparation for Occupational Therapy

Dinah attended high school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, at Global International School. AT TWU she has been involved with Helping Hands service organization and enjoys swimming.

Dinah remembers her first impressions of college this way. “At first I thought college would be fun and there would be times to party. My brother and sister said it would be easy and exciting, but once I entered, it was very hard. A lot of work from the first week! I felt that time was too short and everything went by so quickly and we were already starting to have tests.”

“It makes it a bit easier because at least my mother could give me advice and she knows what to do – so it makes me feel a bit at ease. I know that she can help me with whatever the problem because of her experiences at TWU.”