Valley Center High School, Class of 2022

Hello, my name is Donavan Ruelas. I'm a future high school graduate of Valley Center High School, senior of the class of 2022. I like to consider myself a “home grown” soccer player, as I have been able to pursue one of my passions of playing soccer within our community, starting from Recreational Soccer, to Allstars, to Club Hurricanes Soccer. I now play at a more advanced level of soccer with SouthWest Soccer Elite. I feel fortunate enough to have been able to use my soccer ability to mentor younger players from our community. One organization I have been involved in is TopSoccer where I was able to establish relationships and help the younger kids with special needs play soccer. Another community event I have participated in is Sportsquest, for-which I have spent every summer volunteering as both a junior leader and leader. Having established these relationships, it has allowed me the opportunity to assist the church with other things such as VBS, Tonto Basin Mission Trip, and Church events.

When I began high school, I became intrigued with my school's agriculture program. Alongside my academic classes, I also joined FFA (Future Farmers of America). This is where my passion of wanting to learn more about agriculture originated. Being involved in FFA has given me many opportunities to grow in knowledge and create lifelong memories. I was given the chance to hold multiple FFA Officer positions, serving as Sentinel and Parliamentarian, which displayed both my leadership and commitment. While in FFA, I was also an intern at my school farm. I had various responsibilities, such as taking care of flocks of animals, which I

enjoyed and have spent over 330 community service hours at the farm. In this past year I was able to apply and obtain my State Degree.

After graduating, my four year plan consists of attending Walla Walla University, where I intend to continue my educational learning and also have the ability to play soccer at the next level. In the town of Walla Walla, agriculture is the backbone of their community, it is very similar to our town of Valley Center. I plan to major in Business with a concentration in Horticulture and Botany. My long term goal would be to return to my community and start my own business of landscape pest control.

As a first generation College Student, I am just grateful for the opportunity to be able to have access to higher education as it is not as obtainable for other students. Coming from a large family, my sibling and I are both graduating seniors this year, and while my parents work hard, they do not have the means of additional support to send us to school. Financially this scholarship would assist me in being able to comfortably meet whatever needs I have to in order to achieve my educational goals. By applying for scholarships, taking odd jobs in our community, and working hard, I feel that it shows my commitment to my education, which is a privilege I would never take for granted.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Donavan Ruelas