Inside Focus:

Sally Hughes Church Foundation

The Summer Sizzle

Philanthropy Day

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Relying on her inner determination, Claudia Garcia has used the major events of her life to chart a course toward a promising future. "As a little kid I've always wanted to know how things work," said Claudia. "Questions like 'how does radio play music?' and 'why do ants walk in a line?' were constantly on my mind and I had no one to turn for answers. Some of them did not get answered until I took physics for the first time." In looking for the answers to her questions Claudia found herself as a Science and Math Institute student at Hartnell majoring in Math.

As the oldest of 18 grandchildren that form her family's new generation in the United States, Claudia has become a role model to her siblings and cousins, encouraging them to pursue a higher education and explaining the logistics. "I explain to them that things like three hours of homework every night are normal," said Claudia.

Claudia's outreach efforts extend beyond her family members. In the beginning of the fall semester, she stood in front of over 150 kids at the La Paz Middle School assembly, sharing her personal story and explaining what science and math careers mean and why they are important. "Claudia walked off the stage and said, 'When can we do this again?'" said Alison Kerr of the Cebrowski Institute, Naval Postgraduate School.

Besides homework and her outreach activities, Claudia keeps busy tutoring in the Math Academy and assisting with the STEM Internship Program as the Student Internship Coordinator. Next summer she plans on working at the Naval Postgraduate School as an intern in Computer Engineering.