



## **Cristo Rey Jesuit High School Alumni Profiles**

### **Javier Hernandez, CRJHS 2001**

*Graduate, University of Notre Dame*

*Major: **Studio Art and Design***

Javier Hernandez grew up with his mom and three younger siblings in the Little Village neighborhood near Pilsen. Being the oldest in his family, Javier learned the need for responsibility at a very young age. Javier graduated from Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in 2001 with a 3.94 GPA and entered the University of Notre Dame in the fall of 2001. At Notre Dame, Javier studied **studio art and Spanish literature** and graduated in May 2006 with a Bachelors' Degree in Studio Art & Design.

During his undergraduate career, Javier was part of the Civic Engagement Research Project through a joint partnership between Notre Dame and the University of Illinois, Chicago (UIC). Javier next plans to pursue a Masters' Degree in Education. Javier credits Cristo Rey with helping him "develop the skills necessary to survive at a place like Notre Dame." Javier's younger sister, Christina, graduated from Cristo Rey in 2007 and is now pursuing post-secondary studies at Villanova University in Pennsylvania.

### **Cesar Muñoz, CRJHS 2007**

*First Year Student, University of Illinois, Chicago*

*Major: **Business Marketing***

Cesar Muñoz graduated from Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in June 2007. While at Cristo Rey, Cesar played on the basketball and baseball for all four years and played centerfield. "Cesar is a dream to coach. He always listened and leads by example. He was a player who is one of the most patient and optimistic students I have ever coached. Cesar was always a great ambassador for our freshmen and a joy to coach all four years," says his baseball coach.

Since graduating, Cesar has started his first year at the University of Illinois at Chicago where he is studying **business marketing**. To UIC, Cesar has brought with him his strong work ethic and the important skill of coupling his academic life to real-world working experience by continuing to work with his work-study sponsor, Leo Burnett Advertising, USA where he has been working since his freshmen year at Cristo Rey.

Of his job performance, Cesar's supervisor comments, "Cesar has never changed the way he performs his work and that has always been at 100 percent overall efficiency rate. He will be an asset to any endeavor that he takes on after school. He should continue to have the attitude that he brings to the job whenever he decides to go."

Of his experience at Cristo Rey, Cesar says, "Attending Cristo Rey Jesuit High School was the best personal and professional decision of my life. At CRJHS, I made life-long friends with students and teachers, learned the meaning of my values, and had the opportunity to have a taste of the business world. Getting to work in corporate America was my favorite part about CRJHS because it was more than just a job that paid my tuition. The opportunity to work in corporate America gave structure to my professional career, and it is one of the reasons for my success."



### **Ricardo Rodriguez, CRJHS 2007**

First Year Student, DePaul University

Major: **Secondary Education – Mathematics**

Ricardo Rodriguez came to Cristo Rey Jesuit High School as a newly arrived immigrant from Mexico. Having grown up for the first twelve years of his life outside of the United States, Ricardo had to overcome many barriers to get to where he is now. Through his own hard work and determination to succeed, Ricardo excelled in academics and at his work-study job.

While at Cristo Rey, Ricardo was heavily involved in student activities. Ricardo participated in Cristo Rey's volleyball team, performed for two years with Cristo Rey's Ballet Folklorico Mexicano and was a member of Cristo Rey's Student Ambassadors for three years. Ricardo is the youngest in his family and the second member to graduate from Cristo Rey and go to college. Ricardo is now a first-year student at DePaul University where he is studying **secondary education** with a focus in **mathematics**. His ultimate goal is to become a teacher.

"I would describe my Cristo Rey experience as very rewarding," says Ricardo. "Not many students can say they are immigrants themselves, but Cristo Rey opened up opportunities for me to go to college. I wouldn't have had as many opportunities at other schools." When asked about his Cristo Rey experience, Ricardo references Cristo Rey's Grad at Grad qualifications: "In terms of my experience, I definitely became intellectually competent."

### **Cristina Vega, CRJHS 2007**

First-Year Student, St. Xavier University

Major: **Nursing**

Cristina Vega is a determined young woman. Being the oldest in her family, she understands the example that she is setting for her younger brother and sister. "I am the first in my family to go to college," she says. "I'm really happy to be going to St. Xavier. I'm just happy to go to college!" During the time that she was at Cristo Rey, Cristina took on most of the responsibility of realizing her educational potential. Not only did she excel at her work-study job with Loyola University Health Systems, but she also managed to squeeze a part-time job to help defray the remaining costs of her tuition. Her four years at Cristo Rey were marked by many sacrifices that ultimately paid off with offers of admission from schools as far-flung as Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama.

Cristina's desire to be a **nurse** was cultivated over the course of three years while working at Loyola University Health Systems, a Cristo Rey job sponsor: "I always wanted to be something in the medical field. Those three years made me want to be a nurse and help people out. Ultimately, Loyola Health Systems confirmed my desire to study nursing in college," says Cristina.

"Something remarkable about Cristina is her ability to live in today, mindful of what she needs to do to be a leader today and in the future. Cristina has demonstrated a thirst for learning. I often see her in the hallway carrying extra books, because of her love of reading and exploring 'what else is out there' in the world... As a nurse, Cristina intends to continue to help empower others through education and compassion," says Molly Grant, former Nurse Practitioner at Cristo Rey.

"I would describe Cristo Rey as being one of the best experiences of my life because so many good things came out of my education. Even after high school, they don't just leave you hanging."

In fall 2008, Cristina hopes that her younger sister will follow in her footsteps and attends Cristo Rey.

"I wouldn't have it any other way or go to any other school!"



## **Cristo Rey Jesuit High School Corporate Sponsor Quotes**

### **What Corporate Sponsors are saying about student employees in the Corporate Internship Program...**

"It would be my pleasure to evaluate the Cristo Rey Interns. My question to you is ... are they human? Whether it's lifting boxes or sharpening pencils, their reactions are always the same -- never a cross word or unpleasant expression. Always cheerful, courteous, alert. On a scale from 1 to 10, I would still have to give them a 15. Thanks for allowing us to be a part of the Cristo Rey Experience."

*---Mercer Human Resource Consulting*

"Tracy is mature, creative and a quick learner. She has assisted with training incoming students and worked on special projects for us over the years. We wish her the best of luck in college and are looking forward to working with her this summer!"

*---Citadel Investment Group*

"Our Finance customers have been very impressed by Jared's professionalism and have appreciated the assistance he has provided. One of Jared's best strengths is that he is not afraid to ask questions when he is presented with a new concept that he is not familiar with. This has allowed Jared to catch on very quickly and complete high quality deliverables in little time."

*---Blue Cross Blue Shield*

"I had a tough day today and Michelle stayed right on task and kept going to complete a job for me that I really needed to have done, not to mention her other scheduled fill-ins for our switchboard. Her initiative stands out- she always wants to be busy and productive and to do it right the first time. Thank you, Michelle!"

*---Cheryl Boetti, Lawrence Savings Bank*

"It's been a pleasure to work with all of the CIP interns. It is amazing to see timid teenagers grow into professional Call Receivers, competing in phone skills with veteran employees of our company. You have to stop and make a conscious realization of how mature and structured these students are compared to their care free and more privileged peers. I really respect these young men and women and what they are doing in order to have a better education and grow into responsible and professional adults. The CIP program is genius and should be praised and made well known. Congratulations for making us stop and think how often we take things for granted in life, even employees."

*---Lito Savvas, AAA*

"Edwin continues to win staff support with his work ethic, perseverance and that smile of his. He is an incredible young man with the ability to add great value to an organization like the United Way. Our staff looks forward to Edwin's work day and everyone wants his help with computer projects."

*---Diane Franz, United Way*



## **What students are saying about Corporate Sponsors in the Corporate Internship Program...**

"I work at the American Cancer Society and it was a great experience. It was great because they would challenge me to do the best I could, and they would trust me with big tasks. My co-workers were great, they would help me with anything that I didn't understand. They were more like friends to me by the end of the year."

*---Elmer De La O, American Cancer Society, Class of 2010*

"I work at Equity Lifestyle Properties and I have been working there since my freshmen year and will be working there during my senior year. I love my C.I.P. job because the environment there is very comforting. Everyone there always greets you with a smile. I have had great experiences working in the mailroom, filing in the legal department and answering phones. I believe I have grown from a quiet intern to one who has conversation with some of the most incredibly kind and polite people. Sometimes when I walk past the CEO, I remind myself that I am only a high school student in a big corporate company and I feel proud to be the first in the family to work in that type of environment."

*---Marco Magana, Equity Lifestyle Properties, Class of 2008*

Recently I helped my company with making sure the files are in the right box and even though it was an easy job I had to be very careful. I was able to catch several mistakes and I am very proud of myself because if I didn't catch those mistakes then those files would never be found."

*---Jacqueline Hernandez, Chicago Underwriting Group, Class of 2009*

I have learned a lot from my co-workers. My co-workers have taught me a lot about Marketing and how tough it is, but at the same time how rewarding it can be. They have also helped in advising me about my future career interests because I want to major in Marketing."

*---Charlene Pineda, Mesirow Financial, Class of 2007*

In the morning I have to restock all the printers and change the color toners. From 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. I have to be at the reception desk and transfer incoming calls. At 2:00 p.m. I have to do deliveries to the dock messenger and to all our properties downtown. I am always doing something throughout the day, my schedule is busy."

*--- Joshua Acevedo, The John Buck Company, Class of 2009*