
Crayons. Markers. Pieces of scratch paper in various shapes and sizes scattered over the floor of my room or living room. This was a normal environment for me growing up; I was always creating, envisioning, and imagining. There was no coloring book untouched and no school notebook without a doodle or three. Since I could hold a pencil for the first time, I have always been interested in art and spent almost all of my time sketching.

As time went on, and I began thinking about what I wanted to be when I got older, I excitedly told my parents at the age of 11, "I want to be an artist!" To which they replied, "*Eso es muy bueno, pero eso es mas como una hobby.*" (That's good, but that's more of a hobby.) My dream was shot down and I was left wondering what to pursue, until a teacher strongly expressed their belief in my creative drive and encouraged me to really look into all the career paths an artist can go down. If it wasn't for my 8th grade AVID teacher, Mr. Beltran, I more than likely wouldn't be where I am today. With the help of another teacher throughout my highschool years, I went from wanting to become an Animator for feature films like Ratatouille to wanting to become a Concept Artist for video games like Overwatch or Valorant. After being exposed to so many paths and having attended a prestigious art school, Otis College of Art and Design, where my skills and passion grew, I finally settled into my dream field of Visual Development for feature films.

With this generous grant, I feel less intimidated and less uncertain about my future and feel as though I am headed in the right direction. It has grounded and motivated me to continue doing what it is that I love and to continue sharing it. I plan to use this grant to boost my ability to break into the industry - which is always the hardest part for any artist. Last year, I had the wonderful opportunity to be able to attend an event called LightBox. It is an event specifically made for artists to showcase their work, attend panels presented by those already in the industry, and above everything to socialize and network! I will use the grant to purchase admission to the event for all three days, print out resumes and make them look amazing, as well as order some high-quality business cards to hand out as I network. If time allows, I would like to use the grant to purchase my own booth at the event to showcase my art to really get my name out there and seen by industry professionals!

I am forever grateful for the consideration to be awarded this grant and I appreciate Dr. Alina Olteanu for creating a foundation that will nurture the creative lives of many other artists like myself!

Sincerely,

Aurora Escobar

Visual Development Artist
