



With Mission in Mind

November 5, 2018

Joel Alvarez-Rinconero '12, the eldest of OSP Office Manager Monica Alvarez and third grade teacher Rafael Riconeño's three children, is currently in his junior year at Northwestern University. "I remember Joel as a very welcoming, outgoing, and intelligent student who was always friendly to everyone," said 8th grade science teacher Meagan Dimit.

That same friendly, yet highly purposed and passionate 20-year-old is now taking the world by storm. Ever since his freshman year in college, Joel has spent time abroad both during the academic year and his summer breaks. And while he speaks fluent Spanish and is currently conquering Portuguese, he also speaks both in action and in deed of dismantling the structures that create and perpetuate inequality—a true champion of social justice.

Joel combines his skill with languages with his heart for social justice, which was fostered at FXW and developed further during his tenure at St. Ignatius. Wherever he travels and studies, Joel not only enjoys the aesthetic beauty of other cultures, but he also always works to provide education and services to the underserved communities, as he did this past summer in Bolivia. His goal is always to cultivate and use his learned and earned social capital to improve the lives of others. Since he has been a student at Northwestern, he has interned in Bolivia and Thailand, studied abroad in Spain, and visited the United Kingdom, Ireland, Morocco, Netherlands, Portugal, and Poland. Northwestern also selected Joel to be an educational ambassador to represent the University in Qatar.



While in Bolivia, Joel worked for an organization called [Instituto para el Desarrollo Humano](#) (IDH). He was able to secure funding through an external scholarship called Diversity Abroad. At IDH, he worked directly with Bolivian adolescents and parents to inform them about drug prevention. Next up, Joel hopes to earn a Critical Language Scholarship and Undergraduate Language Grant, which would allow him to visit Brazil to immerse himself in the Portuguese language.

In addition to these remarkable accomplishments, Joel is an outspoken LGBTQ leader and voice on the Northwestern campus. In everything that he does, Joel studies and works hard to help underserved communities grapple with the enormous gap between the haves and have nots, and brings to life the stories of resilience and strength we all carry deep within us.

This FXW alum is an excellent example of the difference that our alumni are making in the world. Like our other alums, we know that Joel can and will do whatever he wants and that there is nothing stopping him from pursuing his dreams and fighting for the aspirations of others.

In his own wise words, Joel reminds us that "social justice takes time." Thank you for inspiring us to continue working together to turn this dream into reality.

We wish all of our Hindu, Sikh, and Jain families and friends a very Happy Diwali this week.

Maggie Daley Speaker Series

A sincere thank you to everyone who participated in our community dialogue on diversity, equity, and inclusion last Tuesday. The evening, led by Dr. Derrick Gay and Dr. Amanda Lewis, was a very productive step in our ongoing efforts to create and sustain a deliberately diverse and intentionally inclusive community. For those who were unable to attend, please know that there will be many future opportunities to engage in this important work. We will communicate more specifics about "next steps" very soon. Also, click [here](#) to see a list of resources recommended by Dr. Gay and Dr. Lewis.

#MotherWardeMotivationalMondays