



August 10, 2021 Report from Oblate Youth Ministry in Tijuana.

Our graduation mass was attended by 30 of our graduates for 2021. Most are beneficiaries of the San Eugenio Scholarship Program. We are excited to have our first graduating doctor, Joseline Roblero (left), along with our first education psychologist, criminologist, and physical therapist. Other students graduated with degrees in Psychology, Business Administration, Education, and Mechatronics Engineering. We will have a few more graduates this year in December, including two psychologists already working for the parish, David Rizo and Diana Villagra.



At Mass we heard about the multiplication of the loaves. This relates to the gifts that God gives us and how we can use those gifts to enrich the lives of others, when we find our vocation. Father Jesse OMI says: "When you find what breaks your heart and relate it to what you love, that's where your calling is." One of our law graduates, Yajaira Gastelum (right), is an example. Her family experienced many injustices and could not pay a lawyer to defend themselves. This broke her heart, but now she helps people who deal with similar situations. Yajaira was able to finish her high school and today her university, thanks to the scholarship program.



At the end of the mass, the young people received a blessing from their parents and relatives. Joseline Roblero addressed the following words to her family and donors but spoke for all the graduates saying: "Thanks to your support I was able to fulfill my dream of becoming a doctor and serving in my community. I have gained the experience and knowledge to stand in front of



community leaders and speak about relevant issues pertaining to our community. Without all of you I don't think I could have reached this goal."



After mass we conducted a graduation ceremony. Richard Reader represented our many donors, Miryam Ruvalcaba spoke on behalf of Covina Rotary, and Juan Diego Lopez, was our graduation sponsor. Diego graduated with a bachelor's degree in sports last year also benefiting from the San Eugenio Scholarship Program. He spoke to the graduates and donors saying "It is a pleasure for me to be part of this community and I have an even greater pleasure - to serve the community with my vocation. I did not know how a sports graduate would make an impact in my community until I started working as a physical education teacher for the Oblates' school for special children, C.A.R.E.S."

Fr. Jesse Esqueda OMI, our spiritual director, also addressed the summer class of 2021. "It is a pleasure for me to see that 4 years ago a seed was sown that fell on such fertile soil. This is evidenced by a beautiful dental student already planning to build a dental office to help her community and a doctor becoming a leader of a medical group that helps the sick."

This year a special recognition was given to Aide Berenice Perez for her 4 years of service in the scholarship program. She along with Alejandra and Adriana have administered the program, helping young people from high school and university through their academic development.

At the end the ceremony, the graduates were invited to take their photograph with cap, gown and stole. Our graduating psychologist, Alex Leal, published his photograph on Facebook with the following caption: "It was not from UABC (his university) but it was the best graduation I have ever had."



Left to right Diego, Adriana, Alejandra, Aide)

The San Eugenio Scholarship Team is very proud to be able to see the positive change the scholarships are having in the community. We deeply thank our donors for believing in us and continuing to invite us to fulfill our dreams. The sky is the limit.

Written by Lic. Alejandra Miranda, Scholarship Team

Here are a couple more quotes from graduates.



"I am a graduate from the Technological University of Tijuana with a degree in mechatronics engineering. I am very happy to have achieved a great goal in my life - to finish my university studies and be a professional who can help our community in whatever way possible. I had support from different people; my family, friends, and people who did not know me but still gave me their full support. I found that I could continue to grow professionally and spiritually. I am very grateful to the scholarship program for supporting me with university tuition and allowing me to focus on my studies and personally thank each of the donors who support this program."

Christofer Alejandro Molina Pulido (Christofer's donors were Chris & Dwight Landis)

Christofer is already working with a newly formed company we plan to highlight in a future article. He is also doing some projects for the parish, such as redesigning our Olympiad Competition electronic first-to-answer panel.



"Personally, I had already resigned myself to not having a graduation. However, the scholarship team gave us the opportunity to celebrate, which for me left an indelible memory. Although the path to this goal had ups and downs, today I can say that those ups and downs were the season that gave meaning and purpose to what I am today, a graduate psychologist.... with greater knowledge of course, but also more human than when I started. It only remains for me to thank all those people who were in one way or another present and accompanying me along the way; my donors, scholarship team, my parents, family, friends, etc. ... because when I doubted myself the most they were there, always believing in me."

Paulina Gonzalez Soto (Paulina's donors were Tony & Cindy Dorn)

In 2018, psychology services were first offered by Eduardo López, our resident psychologist, providing individuals in the community with free services through the Oblate parish. Over time, more than 400 people have benefited from individual sessions and thousands more have attended talks about mental health. These talks have been given to youth groups, pastoral groups, after masses and at other parish events.

The program has been very blessed with the community's response. So, in 2020 we took the initiative to



create a Psychology Team to better serve the people. Today we have a group of 4 psychologists and 4 students studying psychology. These students will graduate in the next two years. The students and some of the psychologists on the team are beneficiaries of the San Eugenio Scholarship program. This service not only benefits those seeking help, but also the members on the team, who are able to pay forward as they have received.

One of the main problems within the community is ignorance about the importance of mental health. People tend to ignore their mental health because of various stigmas or lack of resources. To a large extent we are used to only keeping the body healthy but neglect the importance of having a healthy mind. For this reason, we began giving talks to the different chapels in our parish, addressing topics that can help the attendees but also encouraging them to see the possible need for seeking services.

We chose to form our team from local people, believing they have the best connection to and understanding of the problems in the community. We are very blessed by the team members who, although they have graduated, give back to their community by providing free services. We give sessions to children, youth, adults, and seniors. We hope that more and more of our students and graduates will join the team in the future.

Written by Eduardo López, Psychology Team Leader