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7 January 2022

Santa Visits Alviso Foundation
PO Box 1012
Alviso, CA 95002

To whom it may concern,

The Santa Visits Alviso Foundation and Judy Santiago have helped with my higher education. I could purchase books and school items and pay for my tuition costs, all through the scholarship. My experiences with the foundation have taught me the importance of giving back to the community— particularly the youth— for they are the future who need their fuel. It is a pleasure to know that my involvement with previous holiday toy drives has helped leave smiles on the children of the Alviso community.

I am currently a senior at San Jose State University. I will be graduating in Spring 2022 with a Bachelor's in Biological Sciences and a minor in Chemistry. I intend on attending postgraduate school once I complete my undergraduate studies.

It has been an honour to be a recipient of the SVAF scholarship.

Best regards,

Alejo Valle

Student, Santa Visits Alviso Foundation Scholarship Recipient

December 12, 2021

Judy Santiago
Santa Visits Alviso Foundation
PO Box 1012 Alviso CA, 95002

Dear Mrs. Santiago, The Santa Visits Alviso Foundation will always have a special place in my heart and I will forever be grateful to you, because in many ways this foundation has shaped who I am today. As you may know I was raised by the most amazing single mother, but as you can imagine her single income was only able to provide the essentials for my siblings and I. Your scholarship made what appeared unimaginable, imaginable for me and my family. Thanks to your foundation I was able to attend college and graduate in 2018 with a degree in Graphic Design and a couple years later my sister was also selected as a scholarship recipient who is currently attending UC Irvine studying biology in hopes to one day become a doctor.

To obtain a degree in graphic design you need many courses but towards my senior year, I discovered how marketing, advertising, and graphic design come together to create campaigns for multi-million dollar businesses. Currently, I am proud to say that I run a successful Real Estate business in Silicon Valley where I am able to design elaborate campaigns for each property I am marketing.

I will always be thankful to you Mrs. Santiago because when I met you, I had a rough idea of what I wanted in life. Over the years that vision changed yet, you were always understanding and encouraging. Thank you, for creating such a special foundation that has had such a positive impact in our community and for touching the hearts of each low income family in Alviso.

Sincerely yours,

Daniela Alvarez

December 3, 2021

Santa Visits Alviso Foundation has been nothing but a positive change in my life. Coming from a low Income family really made it hard for me to afford college; luckily, Santa visits Alviso foundation was able to help. Helping out in December for the foundation was nothing but joy and positive vibes as we all got together to give out toys for kids. Helping out setting up the event the night before was a huge success as we all worked together in teams.

Santa visits Alviso foundation was introduced to me by my older sister Yesenia. She told me about the program and how it really helped her afford books and school supplies in college. I then applied and got the scholarship. I was lucky enough to receive the scholarship all 5 years of college; I wouldn't have been able to do it without it.

I attended Mission College for 3 years and then transferred over to San José State University for 2 more years to complete my Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. I am currently a site supervisor at a data center with a long term goal of working for a police department. I couldn't have accomplished these goals of graduating without the help of the foundation.

Edgardo Ruvacalba

December 14, 2021

Those who are embraced by their community are the luckiest of all. The help, love, and encouragement from such impulses an individual to be their best selves. The Santa Visits Alviso Foundation is a clear example of an organization that is there for its community members. I have seen these past few years how the foundation has contributed in helping the educational development of students who are in the pursuit of obtaining a career. I myself am a former scholarship recipient. The scholarship allowed me to graduate from San Jose State University in 2019 with a double B.A. in liberal studies and Spanish. As of today, I teach English in a middle school in Madrid, Spain and with certainty I affirm that wherever I go I always try to plant the seed of giving back to my community as I am aware of the positive impact that it has on an individual to receive support from their community. All it can be said is thank you to the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation for its commitment with the scholarship program.

-Guadalupe (Maria) del Villar

12/05/2021

To: Santa Visits Alviso Foundation

From: Ivan Rodrigo Mora Fausto

Subject: Letter of Appreciation

Dear Santa Visit Alviso Foundation,

First I would like to start of by saying thank you very much for the scholarship! It has been a tremendous help in continuing to pursue my higher education. I would not be able to have been able to do so without the assistance from this amazing foundation. It has allowed me to cover my tuition and supplies during a very economically difficult time in the world. I am currently pursuing my bachelor's in biomedical engineering and intend to pursue my master's directly after I graduate in the same field. The Santa Visits Alviso Foundation has allowed me to be more academically successful by removing a student worst stressor and enabling me to work harder and focus more on my education and academic medical research. I am honored to be a part of this foundation for I have lived in Alviso my whole life and have plans to not only help Alviso but hopefully the world through my research and medical designs and devices I hope to achieve and accomplish throughout my career. I am focused, I am driven, I am ambitious, and I have a need to help other and will pass this help forward throughout my life. I thank you all and wish you all the best.

Warmest Regards,

Ivan Mora Fausto

December 18, 2021

Jessica Lorenzana
SVAF Scholarship

Accomplishments

SVAF and Judy Santiago Honorary Scholarship Fund have helped me this far to accomplish becoming a Registered Nurse. This coming Winter 2022, I will graduate by the end of March 2022, with my Associate Degree in Arts, Science and Nursing. Judy Santiago herself has given me support by giving me advice and guiding me on the correct educational path. The founders in SVAF have given me the opportunity to pursue my dream, and I will be eternally grateful for all the years they have supported me to make this dream come true.

Jose Manuel Lopez Jr
November 24, 2021

To whom this may concern,

My name is Jose Manuel Lopez Jr and I am a Santa Visits Alviso recipient graduate. I am originally from a city called Farmersville located in the Central Valley. At that time, the central valley did not have many educational choices. Being where I was from, Fresno state was the only option that was suitable to many students that were of low-income families. When I received my acceptance letter from San Jose State, it was like a dream come true. My dreams were instantly crushed a few weeks before I started my first semester. When I received my balance for what my first semester was going to cost, my initial reaction was to drop out.

My mother and father both come from agricultural working backgrounds. My mom at that time used to pick grapes, and my dad would be an irrigator for a kiwi farm. Both of my parents together made a little under \$30,000 a year. Somehow, they made it work for myself and my three siblings. With the little money they made, they somehow put me through my first year of college. It came at a sacrifice. What they didn't tell me is that they would work 14 hour days, they would go days without eating in order to feed me. Physically and mentally, I was burning them out. I didn't realize what they were going through until after my second year of college. I came home for the holidays and we didn't have enough money for food that Christmas. I remember eating alphabet soup as my parents just watched us eat. It wasn't until that moment that I realized that I couldn't put my family through that anymore. I started working in the fields with my dad whenever I got a chance. I would make just enough to the point where my parents could focus on themselves a little more instead of me. That did not take away from the mental and physical burnout that my parents were going through.

My fiancée Camille Ramirez was a scholarship recipient for an organization called Santa Visits Alviso. She encouraged me to participate and apply for their scholarship. Through the process, I was able to meet Judy and I was able to discuss my situation with her. Not once did I feel like there wasn't any help from her or the organization. Judy gave me the motivation that my family and I needed. With the help received from SVAF, along with work, I was able to pay off my college dues by myself. I was finally able to give my parents a break.

As for SVAF, I received more than just financial assistance, I received guidance and hope. From the start, Judy has helped me in an abundance of ways. I recall meeting with Judy for the first time and talking about my family and where I am from. She did not judge me and she saw what I was capable of. After hearing and seeing what she has done for the community, I made it a priority to be like her. I did graduate from SJSU in May 2020 with a Bachelor degree in Physical Education, but I knew I was not going to be able to help in the same way that Judy helped me. I am now working for Proteus which is a non-profit organization that helps farm workers receive educational, financial, and family services. I specifically work in the education division of Proteus. I am the first point of contact for anyone that is willing to attend our school. Proteus gives grants to any past or present farm workers. In Alviso, my story was one of a kind because there are not a lot of farm workers in the area. Here in the central valley, everyone has the same story and we all struggle the same way. Students drop out of school to work in the fields to give aid for their family. My work lets me give them a different route to aid their family. I finally feel the joy that Judy gets when she sees her recipients because I get the same feeling when I see one of our students graduate. Thanks to Judy specifically, I am where I am. I don't think I will ever gather the right words to thank her for what she has done for me and my family. Judy isn't just the individual who granted me a scholarship; she has become a very important person to me that means just as much as my family.

As we approach the million dollar mark, I want to thank Judy Santiago and everyone who is affiliated with the organization for everything they do. What everyone does for the community does not go unseen. We see it every day with each student being able to attend school. I want Santa Visits Alviso to know that we see that hard work everyone puts in and personally, I want them to know what they did for me was worth it. I am now giving back to my community and helping out individuals who have a similar story to mine.

As for Judy, thank you.

January 3, 2022

Madyson Gross

I am writing this letter to express my gratitude to Judy Santiago and the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation for supporting me on my journey to becoming a registered nurse with my Bachelors of Science in nursing. I was accepted into Azusa Pacific University's accredited Nursing program back in 2017. Tuition was outrageously expensive and fortunately this scholarship helped me afford my rent and textbooks over the past 4.5 years. This was a huge weight off my shoulders and allowed for me to alleviate some of the financial burdens of college. I graduated on December 18th on the Dean's list (GPA of above 3.5) and I am already working as a covid testing supervisor for the Santa Clara County school system so that I can quickly repay my loans. I am using all my extra time to study for the NCLEX, which I will be taking within the next two months. I am also in the process of applying for new graduate RN residencies at hospitals across the bay area. My goal is to work in pediatric oncology and eventually go back for my masters and become a nurse practitioner. Thank you again to the foundation for helping me to pursue my dreams!

To Judy and Santa Visits Alviso Foundation

I always dreamed of graduating from a university and obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree the minute I learned about higher education in middle school. It was my goal after I graduated from Liberty Ranch high school and I thought about what I want to do for a career. I took the long route when I choose to enroll in Sacramento City College because I took a lot longer than I expected to transfer to a university. I am glad that I did enroll in community college because I was able to take general Ed classes at a lower cost and the tuition was affordable compared to the university. At first, I was majoring in English because I wanted to work, possibly in publishing as an editor in books, but as I needed to take electives, I was able to take courses that piqued my interest, and it was by attending community college that I found my love for film. I switched my major and wanted to work as a screenwriter. I also had interest in developing books into television and films, but I knew that I needed to learn more about the craft and the industry. The next step was obvious and that was to enroll in the university. Thus, before transferring to a university, I had to ensure to meet the requirements to meet my new major in Film and I also took advantage to acquire an Associate of Arts in English Literature but, while I did this, I had to figure on how I would pay for my tuition for the university as I had to do it all on my own. I knew part of my tuition would be covered by financial aid and having a job would help pay for a part but I still had to worry about startup costs in a new city. I decided to move ahead back to my hometown, Alviso, and work for a while waiting for the results of what universities had accepted me. My cousin Jessica, a fellow scholarship recipient, told me about Santa Visits Alviso Foundation and how the foundation helps students with a scholarship to reach their goals in higher education. She told me to apply and I did in the following spring 2019. After submitting my application, I waited to interview with Judy and the board members at George Mayne Elementary which was nostalgic because I had attended George Mayne as a child, and it was right there I found out I would be receiving the Santa Visits Alviso scholarship. I was overjoyed and it was an amazing feeling to think that I was one of the scholarship recipients and that it happened at my old school. Being accepted was one of the best things to have happened to me because it meant that I can still chase my dreams and not have to worry excessively about paying for my tuition and school related expenses. I soon found out I got accepted by my safety schools and my dream school put me on the wait list but I did not want to wait anymore and thus I chose San Jose State University.

Going to San Jose State University had its costs but the scholarships given by Santa Visits Foundation helped with the burden of paying for the tuition. I was able to attend full time and enjoyed my courses immensely because I got to learn more about film and participate in school clubs. I got to live my dream as a university student though it was short-lived because of Covid-19 interrupting my studies and forcing all of us students to switch entirely online. Online changed everything and the pandemic was hard on all of us, especially as I was not able to take labs anymore making my studies even more difficult than it already was. The pandemic made everything uncertain, but Santa Visits Alviso foundation did not. They immediately did everything to continue to ensure the scholarship recipients received the scholarships and even contributed more to help us continue our dreams and goals. The foundation has done so much for us and especially for me that I am filled with gratitude of what they have done for me and have continued to do for me. Santa Visits Foundation helped me continue my dream of obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in Radio, Film and Television and I am eternally grateful to them for helping me in reaching my goal because if it wasn't for them, I would have taken longer to accomplish my dream and I would have to possibly taken out loans. My mother, my family, friends, Judy and the Santa Visits Foundation gave me all the encouragement and support to reach my dream because there were so many moments, I wanted to give up on school but thanks to them I did not give up and kept going till I walked on that stage to receive my diploma from San Jose State in December 2021.

I am eternally grateful to Santa Visits Foundation and Judy who have helped me achieve my goal and dream who continue to encourage and help me with my dream of education as I am taking an online class to teach English abroad as I want to venture out into the world to work and still learn more about the world. I am still going to write screenplays and submit in contests while teaching English abroad but I am highly considering of attending graduate school although that card will still be on the table as I have not decided yet but this option is possible because of the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation and I want to say thank you, thank you for helping making my dream and goal come true for me, Natalie Vizcarra, the daughter of Jose and Leticia Vizcarra, the first generation in her family to receive a Bachelor Arts degree in Radio Film and Television. Thank you, Santa Visits Foundation and Judy, for helping me in my journey and know that you have made a positive impact on my life.

Natalie Vizcarra

December 10, 2021

Right now where I am in life:

I have been in the SVAF scholarship program since 2016. I graduated from the University of San Francisco in 2020 with a BA in Psychology and Minored in French Studies. Right now, I'm in my second year at Santa Clara University for my Master's in Counseling Psychology. I recently made a program switch, so I am an aspiring therapist. SVAF scholarship foundation has helped me tremendously over the years, especially during the pandemic. It has helped with my tuition and school supplies as a full-time student. I'm so thankful for Judy and the Board of Directors of SVAF!

Phylicia Nguyen

December 6, 2021

I first heard about the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation through a counselor in my third year in college. My college experience had been very rough before that; I was a first-generation student and DACA recipient so I had very limited resources and support. When I received information on the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation, I applied for their scholarship program right away. Soon after, I met Judy Santiago, the most supportive and caring person I have ever met. I am eternally grateful for having crossed paths with Judy, an angel on earth, who continues to support me with so much love and encouragement. I graduated college in 2021 and with the program's help, did not struggle financially. I majored Human Biology and earned my CNA certificate thanks to the foundation's financial help, for which I will forever be grateful. I am currently in the process of applying to BSN programs so that hopefully one day I can become a Labor & Delivery nurse. I am so grateful for Judy because I have been able to accomplish so many goals with her help and for helping me come this far. Thank you, Judy, for believing in me!

Samanta Hernandez

December 6, 2021

As one of the first scholarship recipients of the Santa Visits Alviso foundation, I am happy to share how this scholarship helped me reach my academic goals. This scholarship not only helped pay school tuition fees, books and even school supplies year after year. I never had to worry about coming out of pocket for any school expenses while attending community college. The scholarship was a big help in continuing my education and earning my Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Palo Alto University. I can't express in words the full gratitude I have for being able to have received this scholarship throughout my years in college.

I really can't say enough good things about the program itself and its continued reach to the youth of Alviso up until today. Now my younger brother has also been lucky enough to be a scholarship recipient, while he continues to pursue his degree in engineering. I know the program wouldn't be what it is today without care and leadership of Mrs. Judy Santiago. She is an amazing woman, with such a big heart! Her drive and compassion towards helping others has really made an impact in the Alviso community, especially with its youth. Judy is a true gem!! I hope the scholarship program will continue its mission in supporting Alviso's youth through college for a long time to come.

Warm regards,
Sonya Ortiz Valles

December 29, 2021

Judy and the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation have gifted me the opportunity of pursuing my Bachelors at the University of San Francisco. With the scholarship, I was able to afford the cost of tuition for all four years. Having the aid of Judy and SVAF alleviated the stress of not knowing if I could afford school, and I was able to focus on my studies, discover my passions, and learn how to be more independent.

"I just recently graduated with honors from the University of San Francisco. During my time there, I majored in Computer Science and minored in Philosophy while also starting the foundations of Hackers Club and Game Design Club. I took a small break after graduation and am currently job hunting."

Theodora Nguyen

December 11, 2021

Where can I begin? The support offered by Judy and the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation has been invaluable. Not only for myself, but to those around me who have been fortunate enough to have received the scholarship and mentorship offered by the foundation.

As you can imagine, juggling school, work, and just life in general can be overwhelming. In those difficult times, sometimes all you need is a helping hand to make things a little better— and that's what SVAF does. In exchange for service to the Alviso community, you are granted support towards a higher education. It's totally a win-win, right?!

After 6 long years, I earned my BA Design Studies degree at San Jose University and am now working full time at a job in my field. And, although this means I am no longer a recipient of the scholarship, that by no way means I no longer have the support of the foundation. Especially Judy, who always welcomes us at her door with a smile, and lets us play with her adorable dog while we catch up on everything we've been up to.

To all those who contribute to Santa Visits Alviso Foundation, THANK YOU!

Vanessa Esparza

November 20, 2021

Hello, I'm Yazmin Contreras, currently a sophomore at SJSU. Being from Alviso and knowing someone involved in the scholarship program, I've known about SVAF for a few years now. I was accepted into the program in 2020, which due to the COVID 19 pandemic unfortunately didn't allow me to be as involved with the community as I would have liked to. However, I was able to volunteer for Santa Visits Alviso in 2019, just before the pandemic, and see the impact this foundation has on the young children within the community. This experience was particularly meaningful to me because I myself was once one of those children. Thanks to the foundation and the scholarship program, I am able to attend college without worrying as much about the financial strain that my enrollment into higher education would put on my family. By doing so, I am able to focus more on my academic studies which has allowed me to be involved, commence a minor, and personally develop; while obtaining an above 3.0 GPA. I am immensely thankful for the opportunity I have been given.

Sincerely,
Yazmin C.

December 5, 2021

My name is Yesenia Ruvalcaba, and I am a graduate from Sacramento State University. As I started my journey at Sac State, I was nervous yet stressed for what was next. With the support of the Judy and Santa visits Alviso foundation I was able to become the best student I can be by helping reduce some of the financial stress. In fall 2017 I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology and decided to further my education and return to school to obtain a Physical therapist Assistant degree. I am now a licensed Physical Therapist assistant, and I am currently working at Stanford Lucile Packard children's Hospital as a PTA for their Ortho/ Sports Physical Therapy department. I want to congratulate the foundation for this new milestone and I am excited for what's next. Thank you so much for all the help and support.

January 11, 2022

The Santa Visits Alviso Foundation helped me tremendously by granting me scholarships every semester. Without their help, I would not be where I am today. I managed to finish with an associate degree in Liberal Arts from Mission College and I am now working at Intel Corporation supporting a Corporate Vice President. I thank the foundation every day because without their help I would have probably not continued with my schooling and would have not received an education. Thank you Judy and Thank you Santa Visits Alviso Foundation!

Thank you Judy! I appreciate you

Lizette Avila

"I am so thankful to have received a great amount of support from Judy Santiago and the Santa Visits Alviso foundation throughout my college years. They helped me immensely with my journey through Mission College and then with my transfer to UC Riverside in Southern California. Thank you to the foundation for providing for us community members of Alviso in this way and allowing us to achieve more. The foundation has always brought a great sense of community to Alviso. I personally, have received my Bachelor degree in Sociology the summer of 2021 and I currently work as a Behavioral Interventionist for children with autism. I love my job, working with kids and seeing how much they can learn. It's really amazing work and they can teach us so much. It wouldn't have been possible without your support and your help. Cheers and congratulations on this milestone!"

Ishmael Ramirez

The foundation's scholarship helped me with my studies in a couple different ways. The first way was that it helped lessen the burden of paying for full time classes and the books required. The second way that it helped, especially when I was attending the university, was that it allowed me to work part time. The money I received, along with the amount I was making at my part time job allowed me to focus more on school. I originally attended Mission College in Santa Clara, then graduated and went to San Francisco State University. It was there that I received my bachelor's degree and then continued on to the credentials program. I feel very fortunate to have been able to graduate (2015) and now teach in the same elementary school I attended as a child. I am very grateful to Judy and the foundation for helping me along my journey.

Gustavo Esparza

Santa Visits Alviso Foundation,

My name is Camille Ramirez. I graduated high school in 2014 and immediately went to Mission College to pursue my degree. I would have not been able to afford community college if it wasn't for the help of the Santa Visits Alviso Scholarship. With the help of this scholarship, I was able to afford all of my textbooks, school supplies, and anything I needed to help me get through my first year of college. I applied every year for this scholarship to help me succeed and accomplish my goals in my college career. Fast forward six years, I graduated from San Jose State University in May 2020 with my Bachelor of Science in Public Health Degree. It all was possible with the help of Judy and the Santa Visits Alviso Scholarship. I have known Judy Santiago since I was in elementary school, from attending Santa Visits Alviso to later becoming a scholarship recipient helping at the event. She is the main reason why all scholarship recipients made it to graduation day. We all owe a huge thanks to Judy Santiago, to the woman that started it all and made so many students' dreams come true. I have much appreciation for the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation and Judy Santiago for helping me achieve my college journey.

Love, Camille Ramirez Lopez

Santa Visits Alviso, what does this foundation mean to me; Opportunity, Hope, A chance, Support, Community, Connection, Encouragement, most importantly Judy's Love!

Santa Visits Alviso has given me the opportunity I needed to get to where I am today. I accepted the financial support that Santa Visits Alviso had to offer because I needed that help in order to get through school. As the years went on my thoughts and feelings changed. It was no longer the financial support that kept me applying, but the support, smile, and some frowns too that were given to me. I graduated from San Jose State this past December 2021 with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Environmental Science.

Santa Visits Alviso is not just for giving back, Santa Visits Alviso is for an opportunity to learn from and meet Judy. Santa Visits Alviso is not Santa Visits Alviso without Judy!

Jose Ruiz