Fifth-year PhD student Claudia Escobar is a first-generation college student whose parents immigrated from El Salvador. She has a bachelor’s degree in government and a master’s in public policy. Claudia was working in institutional research at the UC Office of the President when she realized she was going to need a PhD to open up new opportunities and new career trajectories.

“A PhD is a career investment,” Claudia said. “However, if I won the lottery tomorrow, I would still be doing a PhD because I get personal fulfillment from it. I want to be able to think deeply about something—I find that really rewarding. That personal fulfillment is very much grounded in the type of change I want to see in society.”

Claudia’s research focuses on retention, persistence and completion for first-generation college students. “My research sits at the intersection of belonging and motivation,” she said. “When I think about how students are motivated, for example, if you don’t know how this chemistry equation matters to you, you don’t care about learning it.”
Katelyn Guy ’18 (Cred. ’20, MA ’21), a fluent Spanish speaker, has a mission that goes beyond helping students succeed. “As a future dual-immersion teacher, I want to break down the institutional barriers that prevent English language learners from accessing higher education,” she said. “I’m making sure my students see themselves in my curriculum. I want my students to study the contributions their communities have made to this country.”

Before beginning her credential studies at UC Davis, Katelyn taught English courses in Guanajuato, Mexico as a Fulbright Scholar. Her time in Guanajuato taught Katelyn how integral community is to obtaining academic success. “I believe language is the glue that holds communities together, and dual-immersion education helps to preserve culture and close intergenerational communication gaps,” she said.

Katelyn is earning a Bilingual Authorization Teaching Credential and her goal is to teach U.S. history and government/economics at a Sacramento Valley or Bay Area high school serving a high proportion of Spanish-speaking families.

Receiving a scholarship allowed me to jump right into graduate school and focus all my energy on learning rather than stressing about money.”
Center for Shakespeare in Diverse Classrooms

The Center for Shakespeare in Diverse Classrooms supports teacher professional development programs for our students and practicing teachers in our region. The Center empowers teachers with research-tested, innovative practices that help unlock the power of Shakespeare’s timeless literature and other complex texts for all K–12 learners. The Center’s practices benefit educators throughout their careers—from their teaching credential year through ongoing professional development workshops—and benefit thousands of students.

Since 2005, more than 200 credential and preservice teachers and more than 100 teachers have received professional development through programs produced in partnership by the School of Education and Globe Education, Shakespeare’s Globe. This programming has reached over 20,000 K–12 students in 31 school districts. For more information, visit education.ucdavis.edu/csd.

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