

American Ethnic Studies

Vanessa Estrada Saldana

Submitted by Melinda Gandara

It is with great pleasure that the American Ethnic Studies Department honors VANESSA ESTRADA SALDANA as the 2020-2021 outstanding student in Chicano Studies. Vanessa is not only a high-achieving student in Chicano Studies and Spanish but has served our Santa Barbara community as a critical care worker during the pandemic this past year. She has provided generous compassion with ease and grace to those who shelter in place and on a moment's notice has been able to offer her services to those in need – all while balancing a full academic course load. We admire her for her outstanding academic achievements and community service, she serves as an inspiration for all of us.

Vanessa's Words of Gratitude

I want to thank SBCC and everyone involved for selecting me to receive this award. But I want to thank with great humility and respect, particularly my mentor Melinda Gandara. The passion she shows every day in her work and the support she provides to the students is admirable. Professor Gandara has helped me understand my dreams and goals are possible and have shown me the education path I did not know. Studying in the United States in a foreign language has been a challenge. But at Santa Barbara City College, I have found a platform that has helped me develop and exceed my expectations. I promise not to disappoint those who have supported me outside and inside the institution. And I would like one day, as a future teacher, to help other students and expand my knowledge received at SBCC.

Thank you! Gracias!