

Meet Lourdes

Age: 16 years old



Lourdes is a 10th grader studying to be a teacher. She goes to a public high school nearby that specializes in educating teachers.

There are 5 people in her family. Lourdes has a twin brother whose name is Jorge. She also has a sister who is 21 years old and her name is Jaqueline.

Her mother, Telma Yolanda de Ramírez, known by all as “Doña Yoly”, is a stay-at-home mom. Her Father, Don Jorge, is a handy man.

From the time she was born until she was 4 years old, the family lived in Ciudad Satelite, where her grandmother used to live. When Lourdes was 4, her family moved to TN2.

Since the pandemic started she has been studying online. The work load has been heavier because the teachers have asked for more homework that has to have more visual elements. The work for the teaching demonstrations has also increased. She has been spending a lot of money in special school supplies for completing her homework. The spending on phone data has increased a lot as well, because she has to be online for classes and has to send in all of her homework via internet. She doesn't own a computer so she has to do most of the work on her phone. When she needs a computer, she has to go to the internet café and pay for her time. She also has to print a lot of materials so she has to pay in the internet café for all the copies that need to be printed.

She is very grateful that she has been able to understand the classes online because it is very different not being in-person and not having access to a teacher. If they have questions, they have to call their teacher on the phone, which also requires paying for minutes.

When she does schoolwork in the internet café she feels more comfortable because she can present her homework better and has better visualization to be able to accommodate things better with a wider access to different programs. She has to make big drawings to hang up in the wall (to demonstrate she can create teaching materials), and also she has to print a lot of materials that are sent to her. This is expensive because the materials are printed in color.

The challenges of the pandemic have been many for her community. At the beginning people were more careful, reinforcing stronger public health measures. In her sector of the community, people organized to clean the narrow streets with soap and water. This was a very good action. Sadly, now people are becoming careless and no longer take COVID seriously. There is a lot of unemployment in the community. This is a very hard and sad consequence of the pandemic.

As a family, they were very close through this time. But when the pandemic started, public transportation was banned and they could not go visit her grandmother in Ciudad Satelite, two hours away from the community on a bus.



Lourde's grandmother got depressed because she was alone all the time, and could not have visitors because of the COVID restrictions and the lack of public buses to go visit her. Her grandmother passed away, and this caused a lot of sadness in her family. They miss her very much and wish she was still here with them. So the family had a hard time during the pandemic, not only because of the virus itself but also because of her grandmother's death.

Lourdes wants to express her tremendous gratitude for the scholarship that she is receiving. She says, "I am very thankful for this great help. This has been TRULY A BLESSING. I am so thankful but at the same time I feel responsible to demonstrate that your support is being used in the best way possible. I want to prove to you that we have good youth here in the community, that we want to change our future but because the lack of resources there are only a few people who can go to school beyond a certain level. I feel very privileged as a scholarship recipient because I know many youth wish for an opportunity like this, but only a few are able to receive it and reach their dream of staying in school."



“It is very important for me to stay in school. I know it is not always possible to continue, but I hope to become a professional. I want to thank you very much for the opportunity and the scholarship. My family doesn’t have enough resources to supplement all the expenses for my studies. I always spend a lot of money on school supplies and internet time. That is why the scholarship has been so helpful and so meaningful for me and my family. Thank you so much for your support.

I hope the brothers and sister of St Joan of Arc are carrying on in good spirits. Please know that the scholarships are a true blessing to us. Thank you for the privilege. We are people from a very low income community and, with the pandemic, we faced even more challenges than usual. For many in the global north, the amount of the scholarship may seem small, but for us it is a huge blessing.

I hope you feel proud of us. We are doing our best. We hope to finish our studies and share our joy and accomplishment with you.

I will continue to hold you in my prayers and keep you informed of my progress. I am attaching pictures of my work.”

