

## **How I will impact minority communities by becoming a CPA**

By Emily Rebekah Vargas

Financial stability can arise through three possible means: Some people are born into a life of relative ease, others are geniuses and invent the next best product becoming millionaires, and still others fight for a better place in this world through education and a strong work ethic. I have been fortunate to fall into the first category. In the spectrum of minority lifestyles, mine has been relatively easy: I grew up in a two-parent Christian home; I was homeschooled; I went to community college and then transferred to a respected university, where I received a bachelor's degree and am in the process of receiving my master's degree; and I have an excellent job awaiting me in the fall. Given my current job trajectory and the likelihood of losing my Hispanic last name upon marriage, I could very easily disassociate myself from the minority communities. Nonetheless, I never wish to do so because I strongly believe that those who are born into privileged situations should be a driving force for change in their communities.

Additionally, many minorities are not as fortunate in their upbringing as I have been. They do not have parents pushing them to go farther. I owe my life and success to a father who was the first to go to college in his immigrant family. My father's ability to rise from his meager and daunting beginnings in the ghettos of Chicago is attributable to a mother who demanded his pursuit of education and a boy's club that inspired him to succeed. Education and a supportive community are vital to emerging from poverty. They are the foundations for honor, respect, and success. My father has instilled in me a passion and appreciation for the promotion of education.

Our school systems cannot provide education and support on their own for lack of funds and the reality of overcrowding. They are not able to fully instill the desire for higher education when parents are passive on the matter and the children see that life can be lived just as their parents lived. When asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?", some answer "I don't know," with the tone of "I don't care" emerging. It is no wonder that many of these minority children get sucked into the whirlwind of gangs and premarital pregnancies. But, a dynamic education and a support group can provide children with the passion and drive to make something of their lives, to succeed. Since the school system is not able to fully provide these on its own, citizens and the business community must help.

As a CPA, I want to make an impact on the education of minority students. While working at a large accounting firm, I want to be involved in Junior Achievement, giving those school-aged minority students a taste of what they can be when they grow up and helping them learn how to manage their resources. By enticing them with what life could be like and by becoming a mentor for a few of them, I can be a member of that supportive community that pushes them forward. In addition, after several years, I want to become an accounting instructor or professor at the post-secondary level. I truly enjoyed attending community college because of the diversity in age and ethnicity of the students, who, while not having the financial means to begin at a large university, still found a way to receive an education. While these students would work hard and seek to rise above their station in life, the instructors were cheering them on. I would like to join this cheering squad. On the other hand, if I become a professor at the university level, I would encourage my minority students to finish their education and make a difference in their minority communities.

Being a CPA will provide me with the prestige and the knowledge to help the minority community by teaching business acumen to primary and secondary level students through the Junior Achievement program and accounting at the post-secondary level. By being involved in education, I will be part of the supportive environment that will champion bringing many more minorities into the business community.