

# Community

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## Mesa man wins rare scholarship to complete degree

TRIBUNE NEWS STAFF

Ivan Quintana is one of 61 community college students nationwide who have won a scholarship that basically pays all their expenses to get a bachelor's degree.

The Mesa resident, who is finishing up his studies at Mesa Community College (MCC), will receive up to \$40,000 a year for three years from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

Noting that only a third of community college students nationwide end up continuing their education to get a bachelor's degree, the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation offers its Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship.

In addition to the monetary award, the recipients get advisors and opportunities for internships, study abroad and graduate school funding.

"Our recent 'Persistence' report highlights the vast potential and achievements,



Ivan Quintana of Mesa is one of only 61 community college students nationwide to earn a scholarship that will enable him to transfer to a university and get a bachelor's degree. (Special to the Tribune)

of community college transfer students who go on to outperform their non-transfer peers at selective four-year institutions" said Seppy Basili, executive director

of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

Quintana graduated in 2015 from Academia Juárez in Colonia Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, a dual-immersion institution run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"It was created to produce great global leaders, the latter is something that I constantly want to live up to," said Quintana, who plans to attend ASU this for a bachelor's of science degree in criminal justice and criminology with a certificate of cross-sectional leadership.

"After that I will attend law school, my top choices right now are: Stanford, UCLA, Yale, Columbia and Vanderbilt," he added.

He recently completed a second term of service with AmeriCorps, serving under the Arizona Ready for College & Career Program in which he worked to get more young people in impoverished regions of the state prepared for some form of post-secondary education.

"I am the team lead for a summer bridge

program designed for incoming high school freshmen called College Starts Now," he said.

That program is spearheaded by Monica Margaillan, the community outreach coordinator for MCC.

Students in her program participate in two weeks of building leadership, teamwork and communication skills to develop "a college-going mindset and know more about career exploration," he said.

Quintana will also execute a one-month science-technology-engineering-arts-math program through the East Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce designed to educate underserved high school freshmen on potential careers in the STEAM field.

Quintana also is a leader in MCC's Net Impact Engagement Team, a chapter of a global organization.

Quintana learned of his scholarship

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award on his birthday after Duane Oakes, director of the Center of Community and Civic Engagement at MCC, "led me to President Rich Haney's office to surprise me."

"It is really a dream come true," Quintana said. "My parents and family have invested so much love, support and money in order for me to have a good education. Without them, I could not have made it this far."

"This scholarship is so much bigger than me, because I can now focus on lobbying for initiatives that will improve the education multiple generations of students across the state. As of right now, there are DACA and Dreamers facing insurmountable odds trying to complete a college education," he said.

Noting also there are many schools with high poverty levels and "students filled with immeasurable potential, but have countless of odds stacked against them," Quintana added:

"I believe that the quality of education and amount of opportunities should not be dictated by the color of your skin or zip code. My mission is to work hard in improving the education system in the state and making it equitable for its people."