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OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

From the "Ouachitonian": Valeria Gomez



By Angela Web

October 1, 2022

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – One thing that high school does not teach in classes is what happens when your dreams do not work out. Valeria Gomez, a junior communications & media/multimedia journalism major from Alajuela, Costa Rica, has a testimony that encompasses this challenging path she had to navigate.

“Since I was a little kid, I have always wanted to be a doctor,” Gomez said. “My mom is a nurse, and she would always come home with all these fascinating stories. I knew I wanted to be on that side. I dreamed of working as a doctor and helping people for many years. I loved everything about how our bodies worked and all the things I could do to make others feel better.”

After graduating high school in December 2017, Gomez flew to Wisconsin for a five-month long exchange in an American high school. After returning, Gomez knew she wanted to pursue medical school. Due to expenses and options in Costa Rica, Gomez attended her fourth option for a medical school.

“We all had to wear blue scrubs and white coats,” Gomez said. “I still remember the excitement of buying the uniform. I looked at myself in the mirror and couldn't believe I was about to start medical school. My dreams were finally becoming a reality.”

Gomez experienced all the excitement that came from learning how to use a scalpel to getting to hold and observe different organs. But classes began to get difficult, and her mental health started to decline rapidly. It was a challenge going from high school straight to medical school.

Making friends was also a challenge for Gomez. While attending Christian schools her whole life, medical school felt like a different universe. She battled daily the feeling of failure because she was not happy doing the thing she had always wanted to do.

“After a few days of looking at different universities, praying and talking to my parents, I decided to drop out of medical school,” Gomez said. “It was the hardest decision, yet the easiest. I didn’t want anyone to know that I had dropped out. I kept it a secret for months.”

Ouachita was not on Gomez’s radar for a potential school to attend, but after meeting with a recruiter she knew this was where she needed to be.

“After I applied to Ouachita, I was consumed by a sense of peace,” Gomez said. “I was not worried anymore. Even when I was just waiting to hear back, I knew this was it. I patiently waited, knowing that everything was going to be okay. Ouachita was the answer to so many prayers.”

Although medical school was not what God had in plan for Gomez’s life, she still values the experience she had.

“My experience with going to medical school not only serves me as a fun fact every time someone asks me for one, but it transformed my faith,” Gomez said. “I have never seen prayers being answered in such a tangible way. What I didn’t know was that God crushed my dreams before they crushed me. He always has better and bigger plans for my life.”

Photo by Abigail Blankenship