

LORENA CAÑAR

Quito

How many siblings do you have?

I have 2 brothers (Carlos and Mateo) and 2 sisters (Maribel and Daniela).

Do you have any pets?

I have a dog named Scott.

What are your favorite pastimes or hobbies?

Listening to music, singing, dancing.

Are you working? What type of work are you doing?

Yes, I'm working as a freelancer in design.



Studies

Academic program: Graduated in Fashion Design

School name: UTE (Equinoctial Technological University)

Graduation date: 2016

What work will you pursue with your program?

Having my clothing brand and being a costume designer in movies or series

The Foundation

For me, the experience of meeting Mike and Margarita was wonderful. I met Mike when he was my eighth-grade math teacher at school. It was a great joy to see Mike and Margarita again at my tenth-grade graduation. After a few years, it was a divine encounter to meet Mike and Margarita, and it was like this:

After having finished high school, I was working in a bakery near my house and suddenly one day, Sofia Chicaiza, also a member of the foundation, came to buy in the bakery where I worked. After that she told Mike and Margarita about me; they visited this bakery and left a note to my co-worker. I found this note and the handwriting on it looked familiar. It was from Mike. On that note, they wrote they wanted to meet with me and they left me their number to contact them. I met with them; we talked about my dream, which was to go to college and study fashion design. They told me they could give me a full scholarship. I could not believe it because before I had lost hope of studying in college due to lack of financial resources. Getting a career, pursuing my dream, and helping my family, gave me so much joy that I accepted and my family was also so happy because it is a great blessing to my life.

DEOF helped me pay for all the costs of my college education. The foundation helped me to get a computer to hand in my homework and assignments during my college life and when the pandemic started it was very helpful for me to telecommute. Mike and Margarita, besides

supporting me financially, always gave me words of encouragement to give me confidence and self-confidence. All their support was very important to me.

The first moment I was helped the most was when I was going through a hard time in a complex and important subject in my career, and I always had economic and moral support from Mike and Margarita. Thanks to all that support, I decided not to let them down and despite how difficult the subject was, I passed it. The second moment was when I was working and always Mike and Margarita supported me even in complicated situations. While I was teleworking during the first year of the pandemic, I could meet the new members and meet again with the old guys from the foundation. I could get closer to them and form great friendships; besides I felt I could raise my sense of leadership and increase my social skills. I also improved my English-speaking skills in the English conversation club on weekends with Ruben and Caitlin. For me DEOF means a great blessing in my life; Mike and Margarita are like godparents and the Foundation represents a big family for me.

COVID Disruption

The first year of the pandemic, my last job was exhausting because they cut staff and my job responsibilities increased. The turnaround times were always short. At first, we did telecommuting and then we gradually returned to work. We got to work about 11 hours a day, sometimes on weekends, we had to take work home. And I had to get up very early, around 4:30 am, and I got home very late, like 9:00 pm. Besides, they reduced our salary to half of what we were earning. And we went through many meetings and attempts to talk to our boss to get an increase in our salaries. The following year, however, I was in danger of losing my position in the company due to staff cuts, and in fact what I feared the most happened: my dismissal because of the pandemic. It was a little unfair because they made me sign my resignation to avoid being paid any compensation as legally required for my dismissal.