

# RUTH E. DERFLER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

## ERIKA CECILIA DOMINGUEZ MEJIA

*Intergenerational Literacy Program - Chelsea*

My name is Erika Dominguez. I am from El Salvador. I came to the US in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic affected everyone. I was 20 years old. I could not complete my higher education. I had the opportunity to be reunited with my father after many years.

I grew up with my mother, who had to leave everything behind in our native country because living there was so dangerous and difficult.

I decided to study English to improve my opportunities as an immigrant. I found the Intergenerational Literacy Program in Chelsea, where they opened their doors and gave me ESL classes, and later on, I took the HISET test. They offered me so many resources to succeed and pursue higher education. It has always been my dream to be able to go to college and help my family. It was difficult for me because I could not work for months. They connected me to a program where they helped me to work in a local nursing home. Working with seniors is a rewarding job. I am so lucky to have grown up with my grandmother. I know the elderly years could be difficult, but being able to help them with compassion, respect, and empathy makes me appreciate it.

I feel passionate about working in health care. My goal is to be a Licensed Practical Nurse. I know it will not be easy, but I am committed to doing my best and do not give up. Success is the result of perseverance and dedication. I want to help others, giving back to the community through my service as exceptional care, in a grateful way for everything that I have received from my community.



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My community is made of immigrants with different backgrounds and nationalities, and representing them in health care will be a pleasure. Therefore, I am applying for this certificate program at North Shore Community College, which I plan to attend for Fall 2024. It is a 10-month certificate that prepares students with knowledge and experience to compete for standard nursing practice in different settings.

I will always be grateful to those who helped me pursue my goals. They helped me by sharing resources, training, knowledge, time, and advice. I know the pathway is long, but I am taking it step by step and engaging with my goal and the person I want to become.