

Angelica Avalos

Angelica Avalos, 19, has not had the easiest life, but yet she has risen above it. Despite being raised by a single mother of five children and growing up in a neighborhood where drugs and gangs are prevalent, she dares to dream for a better future. Most importantly, she dreams of a better future not only for herself, but for her family. At a time, when most teens were worried their next math test or school dance, Angelica was faced with the decision of dropping out of school to financially help support her family. However, Angelica quickly realized that she had to continue with her education to be successful in life and do what's best for her family. In January 2008, Angelica enrolled in the Boys & Girls Club's Youth Empowerment Program (YEP), which is funded through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). She successfully completed all Job Ready workshops and was an active participant, who attended class everyday and on time. It was apparent that Angelica was very detailed oriented and worked very well with Microsoft Works. Because of Angelica's exceptional computer skills, the Boys & Girls Club gave Angelica the opportunity for subsidized work experience with a local small business. This opportunity gave Angelica the work experience she needed and a chance to gain additional skills that she can use in the workforce. Since participating in the Youth Empowerment Program, Angelica has gained employment as an administrative assistant with the very program that she started with, YEP, and has also attained her GED. She is currently enrolled at Oxnard College and is working on attaining her Legal Assisting A.A degree, with the hopes of ultimately becoming an attorney. She also realizes the importance of giving back to her community and volunteers as a tutor at La Colonia Housing Authority.

More recently, Angelica was awarded \$1,000 from the Dwight Brydie Scholarship. The Scholarship named in memory of longtime California Employment Development Department employee Dwight Brydie and encourages educational and workforce advancement for youth planning to continue their education after high school. The program teaches youth ages 16-21 the skills needed to get a job, get back in school or stay on track to receive a high school diploma. This program is funded by the Workforce Investment Board of Ventura County and has operated for 4 ½ years.