

Featured Alumni - Alexandra Alonso (PLC '06)

October 2017



Executive Director

Colorado Latino Leadership Advocacy and Research Organization - CLLARO

Passionate and purpose-driven are two words that describe PLC Alumna, Alexandra Alonso (PLC '06). Alexandra demonstrates these characteristics in her position at CLLARO, Colorado Latino Leadership Advocacy and Research Organization, as the youngest Executive Director in the history of the organization. Alexandra's passion for equitable education opportunities for all students in Colorado is exhibited in her career pathway to Executive Director. While developing an internship program for the Denver Post, Alexandra heard about the work that CLLARO was doing providing opportunities and advocating for Colorado's Latino community. This prompted her to

volunteer with the organization and participate in CLLARO's Capitol Fellowship Program. With this program, Alexandra interned at the Colorado Department of Higher Education working on efforts to close student opportunity and attainment gaps, all while still working full time at the Post. CLLARO took notice of Alexandra's passion and offered her a job as a Program Manager. When she later applied to become Executive Director, Alexandra expressed her vision of setting up a sustainable financial model for CLLARO that would allow the organization to direct their resources in a way that would maximize the impacts of their programming.

Growing up in a Cuban family, Alexandra always knew the importance of having a voice and the consequences of not having the freedom to speak your mind. She is known for being open minded in a way that bridges gaps and fosters connectivity. Bringing together diversity of thought is what Alexandra named as the greatest strength of PLC. She felt that PLC exposed her to students who thought differently than her, that were true to who they were, and had a frame of mind that she could not find anywhere else on campus. She still is connected to the PLC community as they make up some of her "dearest friends, the people I call to share my excitement and struggles with." In her work with CLLARO, Alexandra runs into many PLC alumni advocating for change in their respective fields. She describes them as a "network of support day to day in my current career."

As a resource for data-driven research, leadership development, and grassroots advocacy in Colorado's Latino community, CLLARO is growing and expanding its impact. In her role as Executive Director, Alexandra fosters this growth by meeting with funders, policy makers, community members, the Board of Directors, and various committees. She serves as a liaison that communicates and coordinates the organization's actions operationally, in the community, and from a board directional standpoint. Alexandra loves how the many tasks, projects, and programs involved with her position allow her to use all parts of her brain. The work that she does with policy, the Latino community, and the education system to serve marginalized populations in Colorado is what inspires and motivates Alexandra. For students looking to find their own inspiration, Alexandra's advice is to start thinking about what is important to you and lights up a fire in your heart. "Find something that really speaks to you. Look for intersections between your passion and your field of study to have more meaningful takeaways from what you are learning in the classroom. This will not only bring course work to life, but it will guide students to purpose-driven opportunities outside of the classroom." If CLLARO's work interests you, Alexandra encourages you to contact her and get involved. You can help this organization as they expand their role in the community with programs including a community initiative to help give Latino parents a voice in advocating for their students and local schools.

Outside of work, Alexandra loves music (as exhibited by her three State A Cappella Group Championships with CU's Mile 21 A Cappella Group) and continues to "nerd out" about different kinds of music. Whether it's in her career or on the dance floor, Alexandra is a mover and a shaker.
