



Arizona • Florida • Georgia • Nevada

Student Spotlight 2023

Mia and Natalia Guzman

Tucson, AZ



Choosing the right academic setting for your child is one of the biggest decisions parents face. Curriculum, safety, environment and many other factors come into play. However, sometimes the neighborhood schools do not meet these needs or expectations, prompting parents to find alternative solutions. Such was the case for Artemisa “Artie” Leon and her husband Sean Guzman. AAA Scholarships helped to bridge financial gaps so their daughters Mia and Natalia could attend a school that was right for them. And when the family encountered struggles in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, the scholarships gave them a peace of mind that their daughters’ education would not be disrupted.

The family’s story began at Davis Mountain Air Force Base; Sean was serving in the Air Force at the time and Artie was working as a civilian at the base. The pair eventually married and started a family, welcoming daughters Mia and Natalia. Sean finished his military service and transitioned to a career in the IT industry, while pursuing

a degree in cyber security and business. When the time came for Mia to start Kindergarten, they realized that the schools in their local school district fell short of what they wanted for their children’s education.

“My mom always told me that one of the best gifts you can give your children is a good education, and that has stuck with me,” says Artie.

After doing some research, Artie and Sean found St. Joseph Catholic School. Aside from its convenient location to their home and work, St. Joseph’s academic programs and close, family-like environment matched up with the type of school they desired for their children. With the help from another financial aid program, the family was able to afford the tuition for Mia to attend St. Joseph.

Mia was enjoying a great start to her education until the Covid-19 pandemic hit the nation in 2020, forcing teachers and students to pivot to online learning and causing economic distress for many families. Artie and Sean both lost their jobs at one point during this time and they worried about the strain the school’s tuition would put on their already tight finances. However, scholarships from the AAA Scholarship Foundation enabled them to keep Mia – and eventually her younger sister Natalia – at St. Joseph.

Like many students, Mia struggled in the aftermath of the pandemic, causing her to fall behind in reading and math. However, once St. Joseph was able to welcome students back on campus, Mia’s teacher provided her with extra tutoring to get caught up.

“It was a challenging time for our family with financial and educational setbacks,” recalls Artie. “However, I am grateful that the AAA Scholarship gave us the ability to keep our daughter in a school readily equipped to help her overcome her challenges.”

Now rounding out her 4th grade year at St. Joseph, Mia has bloomed into a confident, happy and social child. She loves her art class and in the summer she puts her creativity to work playing guitar in mariachi.

Natalia has also enjoyed attending school at St. Joseph with her big sister. While she is naturally more shy and reserved, she has progressed quite a bit, going from a quiet student to a more confident one who is not afraid to ask questions. Currently finishing up her 1st grade year, she has developed a love for math – an area where she excels. During the summer, she also participates in mariachi and plays the violin.

St. Joseph has also helped to shape Artie’s next steps in her career. She is currently serving as a part-time teacher’s aide at the school while also pursuing a degree in creative writing and business at the University of Arizona.

“Because of the AAA Scholarship Foundation, we were able to keep our daughters in a school environment that they love and where they are receiving a quality education,” says Artie. “We are incredibly grateful for the assistance that the scholarships have provided for our family!”



About AAA Scholarship Foundation

AAA Scholarship Foundation promotes the advancement of education by administering educational choice programs. The typical AAA Scholarship student is an ethnic minority living with a struggling single parent/caregiver in a high crime community. More than 80 percent of these children are initially awarded AAA scholarships while living in households with annual incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Many are either below grade level, failing at their previous school or both when they first receive a scholarship. Parents, who find their children in these circumstances and are concerned about their future, look for viable options. They seek an atmosphere that challenges their children and will reverse inadequate learning, social patterns and potential lifelong negative impacts. They wish to change their children’s learning environment, acquaintances and the unfortunate predictable outcomes associated with school failure.

AAA Scholarships are funded in Arizona, Florida, Georgia and Nevada by companies that redirect a portion of their state tax liability to the AAA Scholarship Foundation in exchange for a dollar-for-dollar tax credit. AAA Scholarship Foundation is one of the only 501(c)(3) nonprofit scholarship organizations approved to administer these legislatively-authorized tax credit scholarship programs in multiple states. AAA Scholarship Foundation provides your company with the convenience and efficiency of a single solution for participating in multiple state tax credit scholarship programs. For more information, or to learn how your company can participate in the program, visit www.AAAScholarships.org, or contact Kerri Vaughan at kerri@aaascholarships.org or 888-707-2465 ext. 730.