



## Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### Financial Hardships No Obstacle for Santa Fe High Senior Who Wins Full-Ride Scholarship

**WHITTIER** – Daisy Nahoul has faced significant hardships in her 18 years, including living out of a car as her family coped with financial difficulties. However, instead of letting her situation determine her future, the Santa Fe High School senior saw it as a challenge – one that would push her to unprecedented academic heights at the top of her class.

The summer before her freshman year at Santa Fe, Nahoul and her family struggled to find a permanent place to live, at one point living out of a car and a room within a garage. Once they could afford an apartment, Nahoul took over many of the household duties while her mother, Juana, worked to support the family. Despite the obstacles, Nahoul’s mother never let her children’s education fall by the wayside.

“The experience we had made us more unified as a family,” Nahoul said. “Even though my mother didn’t go to college, she recognized the importance of getting an education and always encouraged me and my siblings to aim high.”

Nahoul didn’t disappoint.

Her hard work and determination — including excelling in every AP and honors class she’s taken and achieving a 4.35 GPA — has paid off as she has been awarded a \$70,000-a-year QuestBridge Scholarship to the University of Chicago. She will be the first in her family to go to college.

“This scholarship is going to change all our lives,” Nahoul said. “My mom won’t have to worry about paying for college or going into debt and I will be able to accomplish amazing things in Chicago. I want to make my family proud.”

The QuestBridge College Match Scholarship is a four-year scholarship offered to students who have faced financial hardships and are still able to emerge as top scholars among their peers. The program facilitates direct links to higher education and scholarship opportunities to increase the number of low-income students attending top universities.

QuestBridge allows scholars to pick their desired schools and rank them in order of preference — the top college on their list that accepts their application becomes that student’s destination. Once a finalist is matched with a college, their scholarship covers tuition, room and board and additional expenses.

While at Santa Fe, Nahoul has served as a math and science tutor in the school's after-school program. In addition to her academic successes, Nahoul is one of the founders of the Fellowship of Fandoms club, which helps others pursue their passions, and was even an intern for a political campaign and a community representative for the City of Whittier.

"Daisy is an extraordinary example for her fellow classmates," Principal Kevin Jamero said. "Her ambitions and desire to continuously learn have helped her thrive under circumstances that might have held others back. She is definitely someone to watch out for."

Nahoul hopes to study molecular engineering in Chicago so that she can help facilitate progress throughout communities, tackling issues such as water resource problems in the University of Chicago's top facilities. She also plans of minoring in political science and applying to the university's policy debate team and Model United Nations, which will add to her goal of positively impacting society.

She said she's always optimistic regarding the potential for positive change within the world.

"Other students in situations like mine are unprepared for college, but like me, they should take that leap and have some aspirations for the future," Nahoul said. "It's better to have hope than give up altogether."

**PHOTO CAPTION:**

**NAHOUL:** Despite financial hardships, Daisy Nahoul will become the first in her family to attend college as she has been awarded a four-year QuestBridge Scholarship to the University of Chicago. There, she hopes to study molecular engineering to implement progress throughout society.

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