

Young Mexican named "governor" at international conference



Mariel Soto Morales, a student at **PrepaTec Santa Catarina**, motivated by her desire for **social leadership**, was elected **Governor** of the [Lorenzo de Zavala Youth Legislative Session](#) (LDZ) at [Colorado State University's National Hispanic Institute](#) in the **United States**.

A **fifth-semester** student in the **PrepaTec Santa Catarina [Multicultural Program](#)**, which targets students who **have already mastered English and want to learn a third language**, Mariel **made her mark by promoting** sustainable development proposals at the international conference.

*"Last year I took part in the **PrepaTec Lead In conference** , where I won a scholarship to take part in the LDZ summer program.*

*"I was pleasantly surprised by the conference. It was a great experience requiring **a lot of work and dedication** because the activities started at 6 in the morning and ended at 12 at night," she explained.*



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The **National Hispanic Institute's** goal is to **prepare** members of the **Hispanic/Latino** community for future **U.S. leadership positions**.

In **2021**, the summer program at **Colorado State University** hosted **more than 100 Latino high school students** from different parts of the world.

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Community development proposals

The **Lorenzo de Zavala Youth Legislative Session (LDZ)** is a week-long conference where students **evaluate and develop proposals to make use of democratic processes** to improve their **communities**.

*"Basically we had to form **political parties**. We originally set up four, but by the end only two remained in the competition and one of those was mine,"* said the student.

Each political party had to focus on a **social issue** and **come up with proposals** to improve it.

"When the votes were counted, my party was declared the winner, which made me program Governor.

"Among my duties, and those of my cabinet, was to review the proposals that everyone made at the beginning of the summer: I was essentially 'governing'," explained the student.

Among the proposals approved by Mariel and her team were projects to provide **technological resources** to public school students, **support migrants**, and improve **foreign language programs**.

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Breaking down international barriers

Mariel Soto recognized that her **participation** at the conference was an exceptional opportunity to make **contacts and friendships that go beyond language**.

"I think many of the skills that I used at the conference were those that I had already learned at PrepaTec conferences.

"You learn much more (at the conference) than in a classroom and no regular subject provides such an opportunity for personal development as this experience does," she commented.

Confidence when standing in front of groups, teamwork, empathy, and integration are other **skills** that Mariel acquired at the conference.

"Now I feel much more confident. I know that I can improvise a speech and that I can listen to and involve people and their opinions," she said.

I still don't know what degree I'm going to study, she added, but this experience has me **seriously considering politics**.

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Recognition of her performance at the conference

Crisantos Martínez, director of the PrepaTec in the Monterrey region and principal of its Santa Catarina campus, underscored that the **leadership** shown by Mariel during the event is an

example for her classmates to follow.

*"Congratulations to Mariel for her **participation and the recognition she has earned**. It makes us, as an institution, very proud. Congratulations to her family too," he added.*

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