

Professor whose lifelong dedication to education inspired scholarship



When Mexican professor **Gerardo Ortiz González** passed away from **COVID-19**, his family had no idea that a **scholarship would be named after him** to honor his passion and dedication to **education**.

Conrado Campos, a [Kellogg's](#) manager and Gerardo's former student, noted that their company had decided to give him a **posthumous recognition** for his 10 years' work, and after teaching for 18 years at [Tec de Monterrey](#).

That's why the **scholarship** funded by this company and provided within the Tec's [Leaders of Tomorrow](#) program goes under the name of Gerardo Ortiz.

This **initiative** awards **100% scholarships** every year equivalent to the total value of an **undergraduate degree** at the Tec in order to improve the lives of young people through **education**, something towards which Gerardo worked every day, according to his family.

*"This scholarship is a way of keeping his **legacy alive** through something very dear to him: **education**,"* says **Yolanda Ortiz**, Gerardo's daughter.

Gerardo falleció a causa del COVID-19 pero su legado continua vivo en una beca del Tec de Monterrey

The scholarship named after Gerardo Ortiz

Gerardo passed away on December 3, 2020, at the age of **58**, after suffering from COVID-19.

He spent his final moments virtually accompanied by his family, made up of his wife **Martha Yolanda Ugalde** and their children **Yolanda, José Luis, Gerardo, and Sofía**.

He studied his **doctorate** in **Food Science** and **Human Nutrition** at the [University of Illinois](#) thanks to a [Fulbright scholarship](#), one of the most **prestigious scholarships in the world**, which has even been awarded to **Nobel Prize** winners.

*“A **scholarship** was what **helped** him to **fulfill his dreams**, and now he’s going to help fulfill **someone else’s dreams**,”* says Gerardo, who is named after his father.

*“What **better way** than to leave a **legacy** like that in his **honor**,”* adds Conrado, who holds a degree in Biochemical Engineering in Food Processing from the Tec.

“This scholarship is a way of keeping his legacy alive through something very dear to him: education.”

Conrado says that when Gerardo passed away, **Kellogg’s** began to think of a **way** to **honor** the **life** of the **“professor”**, as he was known by a few of his colleagues.

*“They came up with **8 different ideas**, but the one that came out on **top** was something related to **helping students at Tec de Monterrey**,”* he says.

That was when they were joined by **KT McCann**, Vice President of Research and Development, and **Doug Vandevelde**, General Manager at Kellogg’s.

*“He was a **teacher**. He invested in **educating** people, and then he switched to an **experience** at a **company** like Kellogg’s, where he was able to **make a difference** to people. He was as much a teacher here at Kellogg’s as he was in his previous life,”* says Vandevelde.

Kellogg’s executives worked together with Tec de Monterrey staff to establish the **scholarship program** that would bear Gerardo’s name.

Carla Eugenia Pons, director of Relations and Development at the Tec’s Central-South Region, said that they told Kellogg’s what the profile of the student beneficiaries was.

*“Conrado **fell in love with the program** because he says that he was a student who obtained an excellence scholarship. He found a great deal of empathy in what they wanted to do for Gerardo, and that’s how we started to structure this scholarship,”* says Pons.

Kellogg y el Tec otorgaron una beca en honor a Gerardo width="900" loading="lazy">

From professor to working in the United States

Gerardo Ortiz began his career after graduating from **Tec de Monterrey** with a degree in **Biochemical Engineering and Administration**.

A **food industry** investigation he carried out there earned him a scholarship to study a **master's degree** in **Science and Technology** in the food sector, also at the Tec.

After graduating, he began his **18-year** career as a **teacher** at the **Tec's Querétaro campus**, where he would run into Conrado Campos in one of his classes.

*"I studied at Tec de Monterrey in 1987, and **Gerardo** was one of **my teachers**. I remember that if you were interested in learning, he was willing to go the **extra mile** to share his **knowledge** with people,"* says Conrado.

In **2010**, Gerardo started working at **Kellogg's Mexico**, and in **2016**, he moved to **Michigan for work**, where he shared a workplace with Conrado, the current Director of Research and Development at **Kellogg's North America**.

The 4 ice cream machines Gerardo bought

Members of Gerardo's family remember some of his anecdotes.

*"Once, I had to do a **school project**. We had to make a product and my team chose to make (flavored) **ice cream**, one banana and one beer.*

*"The **banana ice cream** turned black, and I asked my **father** (why), and he began to **investigate**,"* says Gerardo, adding that his father was interested in his **children's projects**.

On that occasion, he gave himself the task of searching for **chemical products** that wouldn't alter the product and would keep the color, **finding the right formula**.

Gerardo era reconocido por compañeros y alumnos por su labor como profesor width="900" loading="lazy">

The **success** of the banana ice cream led to the **project passing**, and there were even people **looking to buy the ice cream**.

Back then, his father bought an **ice cream machine**, but then he invested his money in **another 2**, and ended up buying **an extra one** to support the project.

The family smile as **Yolanda** and **José Luis** tell **stories** about their **father**, like when he once used a **machine** to **cut ham** to the exact same size as some potatoes for one of José Luis's projects.

There were also the times that **Yolanda** told him that **she didn't understand a school assignment** and her father stayed up all night **revising** and **learning** about the **subject** to wake his daughter up at 5 in the morning and teach her what he'd learned.

“A scholarship was what helped him to fulfill his dreams, and now he’s going to help fulfill someone else’s dreams.”

*“It was **really lovely** that he was so **dedicated** to helping with **school projects**. He was very meticulous. He paid a lot of attention to detail and tried **to solve problems in the best way possible**,”* adds José Luis.

*“Now, we have **a lot of ice cream machines in the house**,”* says young **Gerardo**, amid laughter from his mother and siblings.

*“He always tried to **support us in whatever** we were **interested in**. If anything is clear to me, it’s that he always told us **to reach for our dreams**, and he always supported us in doing so,”* adds the young man.

Gerardo fue profesor del Tec por 18 años y luego colaboró en Kellogg Co. width="900" loading="lazy">

“He’s happy, despite not being here anymore.”

Martha says that **Kellogg’s** opportunity to give a **Leader of Tomorrow** scholarship to someone to study their **degree course** at the Tec is a source of **pride** to her and her children.

*“Gerardo’s goal at work was basically **to teach, learn, communicate what he knew to everyone, and help people**,”* says Martha.

*“Helping someone else fulfill this **dream** fills us with **pride**, and we can’t say anything other than **thank you for this opportunity**. We’re certain that he’s **happy**, despite not being here anymore,”* adds Yolanda.

In the same way he stayed up **late** to teach **Yolanda** what she didn’t understand, Gerardo is remembered by his **family, Conrado**, and even other Kellogg’s managers, as a **passionate teacher**.

*“He was very passionate about **learning** and **sharing** with us as students and attempting to spark our **curiosity**. I enjoyed learning to work with him when I was a student, and later on in the industry together,”* says Conrado.

“Gerardo’s goal at work was basically to teach, learn, communicate what he knew to everyone, and help people.”

Vandevalde es uno de los directivos de Kellogg que se unio a la iniciativa de Conrado width="900" loading="lazy">

The legacy that will impact a student's life

One **talented young person will receive** the **scholarship** equivalent to 100% of the total value of a degree course at Tec de Monterrey, which is one of **190 distinctions** awarded in the **eighth year** of this program.

Conrado says that Gerardo's **scholarship** also had an **impact** on his **life** for an additional reason to the **friendship** he'd established with his **former teacher**.

*"In 1986, I was awarded a **90% scholarship** at **Tec de Monterrey**. My family couldn't afford the course and I remember getting that call and I was speechless.*

*"**Gerardo would be very touched**. He'd have a very **positive reaction** if he knew that someone was going to make a **difference** in the world, and he'd be **proud** of the things he sowed that someone will benefit from in the future," says Conrado.*

Conrado fue alumno y compañero de Gerardo y reunió a ambas organizaciones para otorgar en conjunto

The manager also notes that they'll **follow up** on the **student** who receives the Leader of Tomorrow **distinction** and will offer **mentoring** from The Kellogg Company.

*"I want to thank **Kellogg's** and **Tec de Monterrey**. Thank you for the **opportunity** to hear what **other people thought** of my **father**," says José Luis.*

When asked how they would describe their father, after reflecting for a moment, he answers,

*"People described him as **someone** who **left a place better** than when they found it. That would be something I'd say to them: we must leave this world that we share a better place," he concludes.*

READ MORE ABOUT IT HERE:

<https://tec.mx/en/news/national/education/tecs-100-scholarship-promoting-social-mobility>