



Hola desde la Ciudad de México!

Rosa Aldana

Graduating Spring 2025

Associate of Arts, General Transfer

Honors Courses:

American National Government, Honors

Survey of World Literature to 1650, Honors

Art Appreciation, Honors

Music Appreciation, Honors

World Civilizations, Honors

Introduction to Research in Communication
Sciences and Disorders (CSDI), Honors*

Language Development in Children, Honors*

Communication and Aging, Honors*

Introduction to Clinical Practicum, Honors*

Introduction to Audiology, Honors*

CSDI Honors Thesis Tutorial*

CSDI Honors Thesis*

*Taken at the University of Arkansas

Introduction:

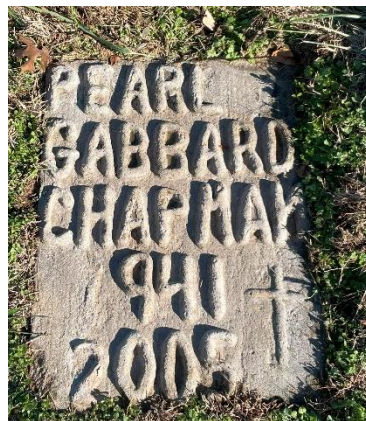
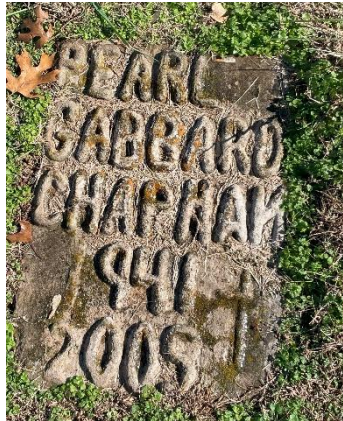
Being a part of honors has been one of the best decisions I have ever made. Truth be told, it made me a better student. When I first started off at NWACC, I was on academic probation. I was struggling immensely with my health and decided that school was the last priority in my life. To make things worse, I had lost all my financial support, and wasn't even sure I would start college. However, Lyosi Alvarado (the best advisor NWACC has ever had) and my parents, I got the push I needed to turn my life around. I started with a manageable workload and experimented with different coping strategies to balance my life and school. It wasn't easy, but it ultimately paid off. Sometimes, I don't even recognize the person I've become, because I've changed so much since my first days in college.

Section 1: Demonstrating engagement, cultivating curiosity, and exploring perspectives.

My time in the Honors Program opened up unexpected opportunities to engage with my community. For example, the Honors Student Association (HSA) consistently provided opportunities for students to live out the program's values.

Dr. Matthew Evans' American National Government (ANG) course introduced me to several service-learning programs that are on campus. I decided to sign up for two projects: Arkansas History Project and the Women's Project. These projects were unlike anything I had ever experienced. The Arkansas History Project allowed me to clean gravestones around Northwest Arkansas, particularly in Fayetteville. It was a unique experience that allowed me to make a small but meaningful difference in my

community. Cleaning gravestones became a deeply reflective and meaningful activity. It's not just about removing dirt or moss but about honoring the memories of those who have passed.



*I forgot to take a before picture.

I cleaned these two gravestones on Thanksgiving Day 2023. As strange as it might sound, I spent a few hours talking to each gravestone I cleaned. A professor once told me to stop by and say hello to those in a cemetery because they sometimes get lonely. At first, it felt a bit weird, but it turned out to be a beautiful way to reflect, process emotions, and explore different perspectives on both life and death.

In addition, I helped organize a women's hygienic supplies drive for the Women's Project.



We collected the donations and had a "packaging party" to assemble bundles of sanitary products to give to a local women's shelter and NWACC's food pantry.



I also got involved in my community with the help of HSA. One of my favorite moments was cleaning J Street (which HSA adopted). We picked up a variety of trash and I had the chance to bond with Professor Chesne and fellow member Allison Davidson.

HSA also invited students to participate in different events that were being hosted by Crystal Bridges. I was able to attend an activist art workshop that was led by The Guerrilla Girls. In this workshop, we created a poster over an issue my group was passionate about. This experience was more than just a creative outlet; it became an opportunity for us to dive deep into important social issues. As a group, we collaborated to create a poster that reflected a cause we were passionate about. What made the experience even more enriching were the stories I heard from not only my classmates but also from strangers I met during the event. Each person brought their own unique background and perspective, and in those moments of dialogue, I realized how deeply interconnected our struggles and passions can be.



We decided to make our poster about the importance of mental health. Our message: Mental health care is a right, not a luxury.



Our group alongside The Guerrilla Girls

Section 2: Preparation for the future.

The courses I took at NWACC gave me a strong foundation for my current work at the University of Arkansas. In Dr. Evans' ANG course, I learned how to write an annotated bibliography, cite in APA, and create a research poster. These foundational skills have been invaluable as I have progressed in my academic journey. Currently, I am working on completing my undergraduate honors thesis, and the skills I have learned have helped me out in so many ways. From organizing and presenting my research to effectively communicating my findings, the skills gained from those courses have made navigating the more advanced academic challenges smoother. I also gained the confidence to take on more complex projects and engage with a wider range of academic topics. I feel prepared to do the research, writing, and critical thinking that are required of me now.

Ms. Chesne's World Literature course exposed me to an advanced level of reading. To be honest, this course was by far the most difficult course I took at NWACC. However, this course taught me how to read critically and at a true college level, bettering my ability to analyze texts beyond surface-level understanding. One of the most valuable skills I gained was learning how to annotate my reading.

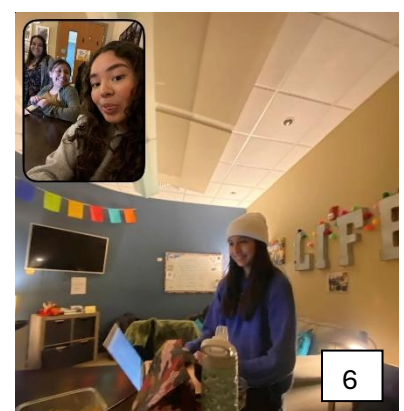
effectively by breaking down key themes and reflecting on the author's intent. This skill has proved to be indispensable, not only for my literature courses but for almost every assignment and task I've faced since. Whether I'm working on research papers, analyzing academic articles, or engaging in class discussions, the methods I learned in Ms. Chesne's course have made it easier to process complex material and communicate my thoughts clearly and thoughtfully.



Debate over Virgil's Aeneid in Ms. Chesne's World Lit course

Section 3: A few of my favorite moments

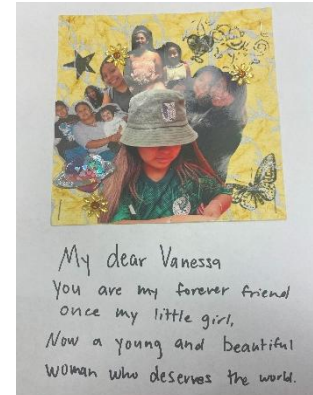
Although I gained many valuable skills while at NWACC, I am grateful for all the connections I made that will last a lifetime. From game nights to speaking on panels, my favorite moments occurred alongside a few of my friends:



1. I was a panelist for The Hispanic Women's Organization of Arkansas. I was on the youth panel with my friend, Jeylene G. We had the opportunity to share our stories about the transition to college from high school.
2. Fall Fest 2022! We faced painted and joined different clubs on campus for a fun evening!

3. Pan dulce sale for the Latin Culture Club.
4. I had the opportunity to visit Arkansas' State Capitol with the LatinX program. Picture here are fellow honors member Daniela E.Q. and Yullyana L.
5. I carved a pumpkin for the first time with a few friends I met through the LIFE program. Many inside jokes were created on this day.
6. One of the many study sessions I have had with my very good friends Jackie, Gwen, and Lyosi.

Honorable mention: I had to make a haiku poem and collage for World Lit. I dedicated the poem to my younger sister, Vanessa. It has been my favorite assignment I have ever completed.



Section 4: Words of wisdom for future honors students

1. **Take everything with a grain of salt.** There were multiple times when I thought my life was ruined and those roadblocks were ultimately blessings in disguise. I would not be where I am today if it wasn't for my past experiences.
2. **Find a good crowd to surround yourself with.** College can get scary or overwhelming and a good support system can help make the journey a little less daunting
3. **We are young adults, and we still have a lot to learn.** You might make a mistake or two, but don't beat yourself up about it. Move on and learn from them.
4. **Hold yourself accountable.** Sometimes things are out of your control, but your choices can greatly impact how things turn out. If you wait until the last minute to start an assignment (guilty), it's no one's fault but your own.
5. **You will have moments when anxiety gets the best of you.** When that happens, remind yourself, "It's not that serious." As someone who struggles with anxiety, I've found that mindset helps calm my nerves..
6. **Take care of yourself, both physically and mentally.** Balancing school with life can be tough, so cut yourself some slack when you need it.
7. **Be proud of everything you do, no matter how small the accomplishment is.**

Alright, I'll wrap it up now...

My time at NWACC was cut short, as I decided to transfer a semester before completing my associate's degree. As I mentioned earlier, I started off college on academic probation, unsure if I would even make it, and now I'm incredibly proud (and sometimes still in disbelief) to say that I am an honors student at the University of Arkansas; studying communication sciences and disorders, a competitive program I applied to and was accepted into. I'm also preparing to apply to audiology graduate programs, something that once felt impossible. It's amazing to see how much can change in such a short amount of time. The journey wasn't easy, but that only makes it all the more meaningful.

Looking back, I see how every challenge, setback, and obstacle was an essential part of my growth. If I hadn't experienced the tough times, I wouldn't have developed the resilience and determination that I rely on today. I've learned that progress doesn't always happen in a straight line, and it's okay to stumble along the way.... as long as you keep moving forward.

As I continue my academic and personal journey, I am incredibly grateful for the lessons I've learned, the people I've met, and the experiences that have shaped me into who I am today. The road ahead may still have its challenges, but now, I feel more prepared than ever to face them head-on. My time at NWACC,

especially through the Honors Program, has been a foundational part of my story... a story that I know is only just beginning.



January 2025, right at the start of the spring semester of my junior year. Here I am standing in front of Old Main after a rewarding day of volunteering at a local school, where I conducted hearing screenings for students. Wearing scrubs and a smile, I'm proud to contribute to promoting hearing health and gaining hands-on experience in the field of communication disorders.