



David Jensen Photography

Michaela Hernandez: Exceptional Success

Michaela Hernandez's vision for her future knows no boundaries. She wants to run for governor someday and says, "I know I can be successful in whatever I choose, even if I run for President of the United States."

Those around Michaela believe this high school senior could be president, and some consider her a legend already. Tracy Kennedy, a counselor at East High School describes a legend as "one or two very unique and special students you are fortunate to work with during your entire career that you know will change the life of others and possibly the world." Tracy Kennedy says she has met her legend in Michaela Hernandez.

Michaela is ambitious, driven and exceptionally articulate. She has built a long list of extra-curricular activities to prove it. She participates in cross-country running, soccer, drama, debate and forensics, student government, and a multitude of community service projects while achieving a remarkable 4.2 grade point average this year. Her projects include moderating the League of Women Voters Youth Vote Gubernatorial debate on live TV, serving as captain of the East High Debate team, participating in a foreign exchange program to Costa Rica and a plethora of activities with East High's "School Within a School" ranging from raising money for Kids Kitchen to organizing the Feast or Famine program.

When asked what motivates her to participate in these activities she answered, "I want to give back to the community that I grew up in." Michaela strives to set a good example for both her community and her siblings. During her sophomore and junior years of high school Michaela dealt with separate, prolonged, life-threatening illnesses of both of her parents. Michaela's father was diagnosed with cancer at the same time that her mother contracted Hepatitis C while working with special needs children. Michaela became the main care provider for her five younger siblings while taking care of her ill parents. According to Kennedy, "Michaela was able to balance the incredible load while maintaining a strong G.P.A. She never wavered at the long hours and emotional strain of this hardship." Thankfully, both parents are now doing well.

Michaela plans to attend the University of Alaska Anchorage and study philosophy or political science. She would eventually like to pursue a law degree with a focus on public policy so that she can participate in domestic reforms of homelessness, immunizations and education. Upon returning to Alaska, she plans a career in politics, including those plans for governor and president. Tracy Kennedy wrote, "There is no doubt that this remarkable young woman will be exceptionally successful in all that she does, and I am certain that we will all benefit from it."

◀ GOOD NEWS ▶ Great Kids!

***A salute to the youth of Anchorage from the Office of the Mayor,
the Anchorage Daily News, AT&T Alascom, and the University of Alaska***