

**Maria Fernanda  
Tovar**

**for**

**Student Leader of  
the Year  
2019**



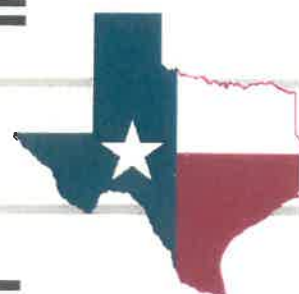
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**BROOKHAVEN COLLEGE**

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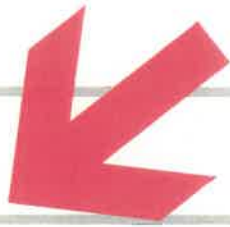
# **Maria Fernanda Tovar**

**Humans are social-creatures, thus, our experiences, ideas, and actions are affected by our own immediate context.**

**Part of that immediate context is the people we are inspired by or even led by. When things are unfavorable and long days are getting longer, we need someone to be able to lead us into the light: a catalyst for better times.**

**Someone to bring structure, order, and provide a great foundation to by which and follow and rely on. Most importantly, we need someone who truly wants the best for everyone and hopes everyone around them succeeds: no matter the sacrifice. Thank you Maria Fernanda Tovar for being that someone. -Emiliano Segura BSGA Secretary**

# WHO IS SHE?



Maria Fernanda Tovar, also known as Marifer, is a 20-year old international student at Brookhaven College—currently completing her fourth semester.



Maria was born and raised in Monterrey, Mexico, but decided to move to the United States two years ago to pursue her first Bachelor's degree. She is planning to major in Economics with Financial Applications and complete two minors of International and Environmental Studies. Her goals are to promote sustainable consumerism by having her own company and being an Educational activist involved in programs like UNESCO. Also, as she suffers from Epilepsy, she is an advocate for research and support, especially in third world countries.

# WHAT HAS MARIA DONE FOR BROOKHAVEN STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION?



## PAST

### 2017-2018



When Maria arrived to Brookhaven College in August 2017, the first thing she did was to get involved. With ambition and determination, she decided to apply as a Senator for the BSGA where she helped during the SGA fundraisers, events, and community services. Because of her commitment, Maria was awarded with the distinguished Senator Award.

## PRESENT

### 2018-2019

In May of 2018, Maria got elected to be the new 2018-2019 BSGA President. This decision was a great catalyst for our organization since Maria offered a great vision for the organization and commitment to success. Maria motivated Brookhaven students to get out of their comfort zone and run for regional/state officer positions. Also, even though she is an international student, she was worried about the lack of commitment generations have regarding voting, so she came up with new ideas on how BSGA could fight this issue. She worked hard last Fall to offer a screening of the film 'One Vote' and even got the director attend for a Q&A session and voter registration was provided for students/community- 70% of whom did participate in the November 2018 elections based upon League Women Voter Statistics. Moreover, Maria helped to host one of the National American Student Government Association Fall workshops at Brookhaven College.

# TJCSGA REGION II



**PAST  
2017-2018**

In November of 2017, Maria was elected to be the TJCSGA Region II Legislative Co-Chair. She assisted in the improvement of the Texas Junior College Student Government Association Region II Constitution. Moreover, she was also a committee member of the Resolutions Committee where different bills were discussed.



TJCSGA Region Awards  
Committee Report



**PRESENT  
2018-2019**

In September of 2018, Maria got elected to be the new Awards Committee Co-Chair. As Co-Chair of the Awards Committee, she is responsible for creating and leading the Awards Committee, writing the awards guidelines for Region II, and making sure that the process is transparent. In conventions and meetings, she is always unafraid to participate and encourages those around her to do the same. She promotes Brookhaven in such a good manner and it is an outstanding representation of what Brookhaven College has to offer. Also, one of the reasons why Brookhaven SGA is holding the Region II Presidency and Secretary position, is because Maria motivated students to get out of their comfort zone and try new challenges.

# Texas Junior College Student Government Association State



**PAST**  
**2017-2018**

In April of 2018, Maria was selected by the Region II Executive Board to represent Region II as an Awards Delegate.



**PRESENT**  
**2018-2019**

Maria serves as a motivation, she has inspired a lot of Brookhaven students and individuals. She always seeks for improvement. Thanks to Maria, student leaders at Brookhaven have taken the challenge to overcome and look for new endeavors– this is one of the reasons why Brookhaven College currently serves as the TJCSGA State Host School.



# Extracurricular Involvement outside SGA

## Alpha Delta Pi- Phi Theta Kappa Chapter



Maria is currently serving as the Vice President of Honors in Actions on her PTK Chapter. She presides over the Honors and Action Project including the actions and academic research.

## Brookhaven IGNITE

Maria has been recognized for being an a person that empowers others and who shares her vision. She is always willing to listen to new ideas. Maria is currently an active member of the Brookhaven IGNITE chapter. She just got selected to represent Brookhaven at the IGNITE Legislative Advocacy at Austin, Texas.



## Volunteer

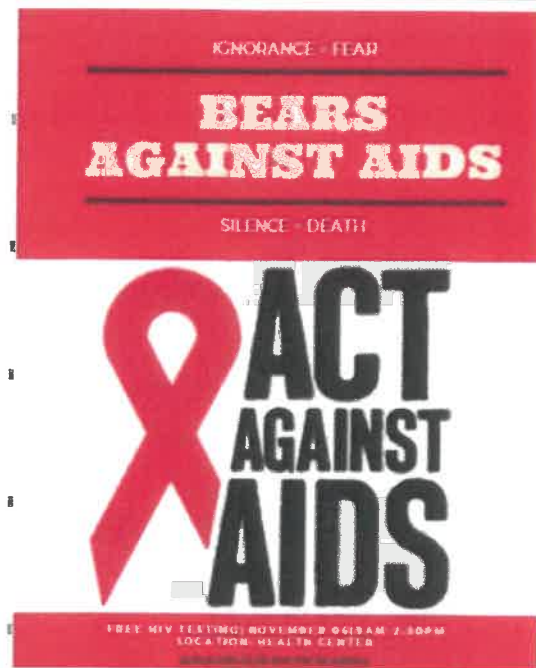


Maria loves volunteering, especially when it comes to helping the homeless population. One weekend every month, Maria volunteers with the Love, Hope, and Compassion non-profit organization. Maria helps in the preparation of more than 500 sandwiches that are going to be delivered in differen Dallas areas.

# Bears Against AIDS

## 2018-2019

“Bears Against AIDS” has been one of Maria's most significant endeavor since she arrived at Brookhaven College. Maria noticed that HIV was constantly increasing in the Dallas area, so the BSGA executive board decided to partner up with Alpha Delta Pi to create a community service project. Thanks to this idea and project, Brookhaven College is currently offering more free HIV-testing to the students and community, sex-safety kits, and a Peer Educator program for those who want to know more about HIV/AIDS.



 tjcsregionii



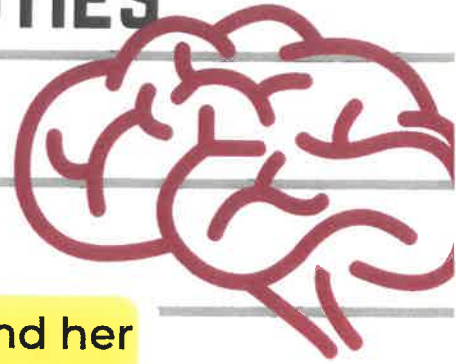
WORLD  
AIDS  
DAY  
DECEMBER 1





# ACADEMICS, HONORS, AND DUTIES

## 2018-2019



Even with her high involvement on campus and her part time job, Maria is dedicated to her academics.

She has a current 3.94 GPA and belongs to the President's Honor Roll. Also, she got selected as one of the 40 student leaders in Texas to attend the 2019 Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life at UT Austin.



Maria has been rewarded for the hard work she has done. She won the one-time Encouragement award of Erin Tierney Kramp, the Max and Rosa Goldblatt Community Service Endowed Scholarship, and the Phi Theta Kappa Dr. Mary Hood STAR scholarship.

ALSO....

**JACK KENT COOKE**  
FOUNDATION



She has been selected as one of the 2019 Jack Kent Cook semi-finalists! And, a recipient of the 2019 All-Texas Academic Team Award. Two distinguished accomplishments.

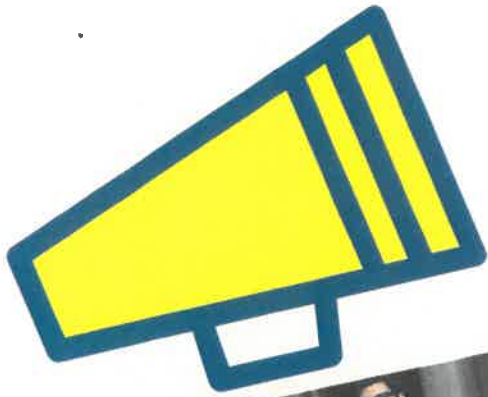
# "NEVER FORGET WHERE YOU COME FROM, BUT NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF WHERE YOU ARE GOING"

On November 1st of 2017, during her first semester at Brookhaven College, Maria was diagnosed with epilepsy. She suffered a seizure at Brookhaven's Math Lab, while she was studying for a test. Her seizure caused an immediate visit to the hospital that ended up in a total debt of approximately \$8000 dollars. She was almost forced to go back to her country since her family was not able to afford the medic expenses. Nevertheless, Maria did all that she can to find scholarships, charities, and more to help her complete her studies. Maria is the type of person that does not give up even in the hardest situation, and she is willing to accept challenges that will help her growth as a person and leader.

Because of her dedication...

Maria was the only community college student selected to attend the 2019 Annett Strauss Institute for Civic Life Great Conversation Program at UT Austin. She was selected to be a Conversation Leader, where she interacted with Texas Congress members, business owners, companies (like Toyota), and more.





# Now, let's see what the students and staff have to say about her!



"The say great things are only done by great people. Maria values leadership, compassion and ambition. She always does many things to help others before herself, and the things she has done for the school and clubs are things that only a great person could have done."- Eddie Carrizales  
2018-2019 SGA Lone Star Cyfair Secretary

"Maria Fernanda Tovar is a disciplined and dedicated lady. She is a team builder that carries her members along. Her determination to succeed in anything she does is inspiring. I have worked with her as a fellow officer and learned a lot. She is an amazing person to work with."- Chidy Nneka  
2018-2019 IGNITE President



"Marifer's leadership transcends borders, languages, and challenges."-Carlos E. Valbuena (Spicy Papi) 2018-2019 TJCSGA Region II President

"One of the most driven and ambitious people I've had the pleasure meeting."-Matthew Waller 2018-2019 BSGA Treasurer

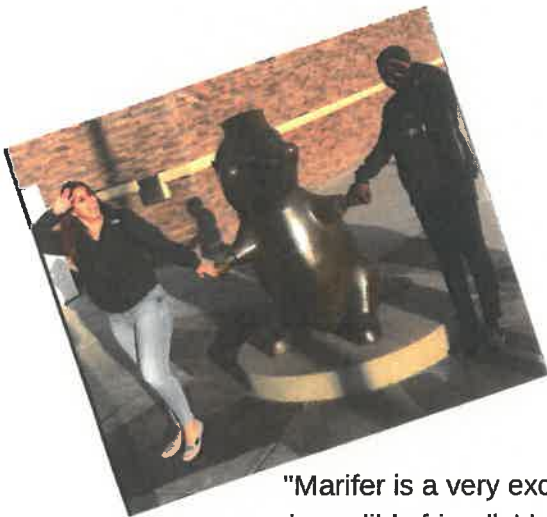


"Some of the adjectives that come to my mind when someone asks me about Marifer are respectful, smart, good friend, and dedicate. Marifer for me is an inspiration. When I started college, I wanted to more involved in college, but I was scared because of my lack of communication and heavy accent when I speak English. When I met Marifer, I found a person I can look up for any advice on how to be confident. Marifer is the one that has inspired me to be more active and be a better leader."- Jennifer Hernandez 2018-2019 BSGA Vice-President



"I have no idea how does she do this all. She is an all-rounder. it's been an year almost since I know her and she is one of the very few people who are always willing to help anyone in the best possible way she can. She is the one who makes me believe that there is no substitute for hard work. From studies to extracurricular, she has always aced it all. There are a lot of people who have dreams but there are very few who are consistent to work on their dream and she is one of them."- Rufeda Ali  
TJCSGA Region II Secretary

"But are you really happy?" She probably does not remember telling me that, but it really shows the type of person she is. Maria Fernanda Tovar is the type of gal that would inspire you with her enthusiasm and hard work, but always willing to listen to you and make you question your life choices. She has helped me personally several times, and inspires me to be greater and the world needs more people like her.- Allen Wiese TJCSGA Region II Legislative Chair



"Marifer is one of the most dedicated students I know. Being around her will encourage you to work much harder than usual because of how responsible she is. Marifer is a great leader and you can spot. She is very funny but does not mix work with fun. If you want something to be done, she is the one to call."- Ousmane Thioune 2018-2019 Alpha Delta Pi VP College Project

"Marifer is a very excellent communicator, assertive and incredibly friendly! I admire her community involvement and her positive attitude! She possesses a brilliant mind."- Nora Jandres 2018-2019 LGBTQ+ Youth President



"She has been very active on campus and participates in all the events associated with SGA and that motivates me"- Kruthika 2018-2019 UNICEF Club

"Her support in you achieving your goal is incredible, she will always make sure to give you her 110% and no less."-Mafe Febres 2018-2019 TJCSGA Host School



# Maria Tovar Hernandez

Pre-Business Student

Confident, hard-working, responsible, and international student at Brookhaven College. Completing Associate of Science and planning to transfer to a four-year university to major in Finance. Honor student forming part of the President Honors Roll at college. Extensive leadership experience since middle school. Adapts quickly and provides efficiency by solving daily challenges. Seeking for personal and professional growth.

## Experience

- 2018-09 - present**     **Student Assistant**  
*World Languages Department - Brookhaven College*
- Guide students in the process of selecting and registering to the right class.
  - Help as a Spanish-English translator and vice-versa.
  - Assist with data entry and office duties.
- 2016-07 - 2016-08**     **Student Intern**  
*Civil Engineering Department- UANL*
- Student assistant of PhD. Mayra Zyzilia Figueroa Torres at the Civil Engineering Department in the Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon.
  - In charge of proceeding chemical practices and filling out laboratory reports for an academic research.

## Education

- 2017-08 - present**     **Associate Degree of Science- Brookhaven College**
- Expected graduation date May 2019
  - GPA 3.94
  - President's Honor Roll
- 2015-01 - 2017-07**     **International Baccalaureate Diploma Program- C.I.D.E.B**
- 36 points awarded
  - Courses: Biology (HL), Spanish A: Literature (HL), English B: Language (HL), Mathematical Studies (SL), Business Management (SL), and French ab initio (SL)
- 2014-08 - 2017-07**     **Centro de Investigacion y Desarrollo de Educacion Bilingue (C.I.D.E.B)**
- High School Diploma
  - Graduated with an equivalent unweight GPA of 3.7

## Activities

- 2018-03 - present**     **Brookhaven Student Government Association**  
*President | 20 hrs/week*
- Lead the programming and execution of all Brookhaven SGA meetings, events and conferences; preside over these events.
  - Responsible of representing Brookhaven College Student Body, and connect the students with the administration. Advocate for the students' rights and improve their experiences.
  - Lead and supervise the executive board, call meetings to order, and follow the Constitution.
- 2018-09 - present**     **TJCSGA Region II**  
*Awards Committee Chair | 2 hrs/week*
- In charge of creating and leading the Awards Committee, writing of the the awards guidelines for Region II, examining each submission thoughtfully, and making sure that the process is transparent.

## Personal Info

### Address

11527 Sonnet Drive  
Dallas, Texas  
75229

### Phone

(214) 9265652

### E-mail

marifer.thdz@gmail.com

### LinkedIn

linkedin.com/in/mariafernandatovar

## Skills

Experienced in public speaking and presentations

Leadership

Bilingual (Spanish and English)

Ethical

Problem Solver

Proficient in Microsoft Office

## Conference Presentations

**2018-11**  
Tovar, Maria. "Welcome to Brookhaven College" by Brookhaven Student Government Association. The 2018 Dallas American Student Government Training Conference, Farmers Branch, Texas.

**2018-10**  
Tovar, Maria. Others. "Transferring Workshop" by Alpha Delta Pi and Omega Omega. The 2018 Texas Leadership Conference. ETBU, Marshall, Texas.

**2018-09**  
Tovar, Maria. "Bears Against AIDS: Why do you need to participate?" Alpha Delta Pi, Brookhaven College, Farmers Branch, Texas.

## Certificates

**2018**  
HIV Peer Educator Program (In Progress)

**2018-08**  
Texas Voting Summit – Austin, Texas

**2018-06**

- 2017-10 - 2018-04**     **TJCSGA Region II**  
*Legislative Committee Co-Chair | 2 hrs/week*
- Assist on the improvement of Texas Junior College Student Government Association Region II Constitution. Attend the Region II meetings to assist the chairperson.
- 2017-09 - 2018-03**     **Brookhaven Student Government Association**  
*Senator | 3 hrs/week*
- Be the connection between the faculty staff/administrators and students to face any kind of issue. Propose new resolutions to improve the campus and community.
- 2018-05 - present**     **Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Delta Pi**  
*Vice-President of Honors in Actions | 20 hrs/week*
- Preside over the formation of an HIA committee to select a topic for the Honors in Action Project. Conduct and explain the academic research process for the project. Collect research materials on the HIA topic from the committee.
  - Assign a committee to initiate, formulate, and implant a project after the completion research on the HIA theme. Preside and Lead the events related to the HIA project.
  - Complete the writing for the Regional and International Hallmark Awards.
- 2018-08 - present**     **IGNITE-Brookhaven College**  
*Member | 1 hrs/week*
- As a woman and member, I seek to learn and improve my political ambition. IGNITE provides civic education, exposure to women in political leadership, career opportunities, and a peer network.
- 2018-06 - present**     **Brookhaven Orientation Leaders**  
*Orientation Leader | 5 hrs/session*
- Work as a facilitator for upcoming students. Help new students in their process of adaptation and registration. Provide campus tour and advises.
- 2017-10 - 2018-05**     **Brookhaven College Green Team Coalition**  
*Treasurer | 2 hrs/week*
- Preside over financial oversight of the Green Team Coalition's budget.
  - Responsible of the organization of fundraisings events.
- 2016-01 - 2017-05**     **C.I.D.E.B Pro-Ayuda**  
*Founder President*
- Preside on the organization and developing of recreational activities to raise funds that are going to be used to solve particular community issues.
  - Responsible of the logistics of the 3K race, where the student body and community participates by running and donating certain amount of money.

## Academic Research

- Fall 2018** : Economies of Everything: "Is Crowdfunding an effective tool for raising money and awareness of HIV/AIDS in the Dallas Region?"
- Fall 2018**: Civil Liberty Crisis: "Violence Against Women"
- Fall 2017**: Rights and Responsibilities: "Where do one's rights and responsibilities fall when it comes to Dallas homelessness?"
- Fall 2016**- IB World Religions: "The Mashiaj in the Judaism" (Number of pages: 25)
- Spring 2017**
- Fall 2016**: IB Business Management: "In what way the Social Content Ratings Program will benefit Companies like Nielsen?"
- Spring 2016**: IB Biology: "Simulation of the antioxidant reaction in the human body with the use of Catalase"
- Spring 2016**: IB Mathematics: "Relationship between the muscle percentage area of the calves and the runners' performances"

Phi Theta Kappa Honors Institute –  
 Villanova, Pennsylvania

**2018-05**  
 Advance Leader DCCCD Summer  
 Leadership Retreat

**2018-03**  
 Phi Theta Kappa Membership

**2017-12**  
 Senior Course: Student Leadership  
 Institute– Brookhaven College

**2017-07**  
 DELF: French Language level A2

**2017-07**  
 CIDEB Technical Education Degree

## Honors, Awards, Scholarships

**2018-08**  
 Erin Tierney Kramp One-time  
 Encouragement Award

**2018-07**  
 Dr. Mary Hood STAR Scholarship

**2018-07**  
 Max and Rosa Goldblatt Community  
 Service Endowed Scholarship

**2018-05**  
 Brookhaven SGA Outstanding Senator  
 Award

**2017-12 - present**  
 Brookhaven College President's Honor  
 Roll

**2017-10**  
 African Culture Club inter-debate – Best  
 Speaker

**2017-07**  
 CIDEB: IB Diploma Program Academic  
 Achievement Award

## Conventions

**2018-11**  
 TJCSGA Region II, Gainesville, Texas

**2018-11**  
 American Student Government  
 Association, Dallas, Texas

**2018-10**  
 Phi Theta Kappa Texas Leadership  
 Conference, Marshall, Texas

**2018-09**  
 IGNITE College Council Meeting,  
 University of Texas, Dallas, Texas

**2018-08**  
 Texas Voting Summit, Austin, Texas

**2018-07**

## Service

- 2018**      **May 2018–Present**  
**Bears Against AIDS** – *Leader of the project 20 hours/week:* Bears Against AIDS is a project for Brookhaven College students and community that provides access to: safety kits resources, free HIV testing, and information for professional counseling services.
- 2018**      **August 2018–Present**  
**Bears Connect** – *Student organizer 3 hours/week:* The main mission of Bears Connect is to engage students and Brookhaven administration/faculty staff to get to know each other. We have been working personally with Brookhaven College President to discuss events that can engage students in campus activities and connect with the faculty/administration staff.
- 2018**      **October 27, 2018**  
**Brookhaven College Spooky Trot** – *Student Volunteer 2 hours:* This annual fun run takes donations and raises funds for the college's food pantry. As a volunteer, I contributed by volunteering in the registration and logistics process.
- 2018**      **October 2018 (weekends)**  
**Nathan Johnson Campaign** – *Volunteer 10 hours:* Engage citizens to vote. I did volunteering throughout the weekends of October by doing block walking on behalf of Nathan Johnson. Every weekend I was assigned a neighborhood where I had to knock doors and let people know about the new proposals. Each neighborhood had approximately 45 doors.
- 2018**      **September 24, 2018**  
**Brookhaven Student Government Association "One Vote" event** – *Organizer 10 hours:* Free open event for the community and students. BSGA and IGNITE club screened the documentary 'One Vote' at Brookhaven College. Our special guest was Christine Woodhouse, director of the film; she was able to answer a Q&A session. Also, we provided a voter registration drive for those who wants to participate in US government decisions.
- 2018**      **January 15, 2018**  
**Martin Luther King Day, Farmers Branch** – *Student Volunteer 5 hours:* Served by realigning the bricks of the Farmers Branch Historical Park.
- 2017**      **September 2017-December 2017**  
**Alpha Delta Pi Honors in Action** – *Student volunteer 5 hours/week:* Volunteered on Alpha Delta Pi's HIA project, which main mission was to promote awareness about the homelessness situation Dallas is facing nowadays. For this, it was necessary to do interviews, create posters, do research, and travel several times to Downtown Dallas.
- 2017**      **September 9, 2017–Present**  
**Sandwich Ministry** – *Volunteer 5 hours/month:* Volunteered one weekend of every month in the preparation of more than 500 sandwiches that are going to be delivered in different Dallas areas. The main purpose is to feed those who are facing daily hunger.

Texas Honors Institute, Dallas, Texas

### 2018-06

Phi Theta Kappa Honors Institute ,  
Villanova, Pennsylvania

### 2018-04

TJCSGA State Convention, Austin, Texas

### 2018-03

Phi Theta Kappa Texas Regional  
Convention, Houston, Texas

### 2018-03

TJCSGA Region II Spring Conference,  
Dallas, Texas

### 2017-10

TJCSGA Region II Fall Conference,  
Dallas, Texas

### 2017-10

Phi Theta Kappa Texas Leadership  
Conference, Seguin, Texas

### 2017-09

LeCroy Leadership Summit

## Hobbies

Literature

Running half-marathons

Tae Kwon Do



February 19, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to recommend Maria Fernanda Tovar Hernandez for the TJCSGA Region II Student of the Year. As the Director of Student Life at Brookhaven College I had the pleasure of working with Maria throughout the past two academic years. She got involved on campus immediately upon her arrival and has stayed involved since then. I have had the opportunity to watch her grow throughout the last two years as she adapted to life at Brookhaven and I look forward to continuing my work with her this semester as she leaves her final marks and continues to make a difference on the Brookhaven campus.

From her arrival on campus Maria has taken the initiative and gotten involved. She joined Student Government immediately and within weeks she was named a senator. During her first year she was very active in SGA helping them plan and execute countless events and activities for the Brookhaven community. She volunteered for the SGA Angel Tree at Christmas, the Color Run and was also one of the students selected to represent Brookhaven at the TJCSGA 2018 State Convention and the DCCCD Summer Leadership Retreat.

Her leadership ability was recognized by her peers, and she was encouraged to run for a student government executive position this year. I am pleased to say she was elected SGA President and student body president, and then she got Brookhaven College elected as the Texas Junior College Student Government Association (TJCSGA) state Host School and Region II Secretary school for 2018-2019. She volunteered to serve on the Awards Committee at the TJCSGA State Convention last April. She even ran for a Committee Chair position last fall and currently serves Region II as one of the Awards Committee Chairs.

Maria Fernanda takes initiative. This past summer she found out about a conference to encourage college students to vote and found funding so she could attend the conference. While there she learned about a movie titled 'One Vote' and not only found a way to show the movie on Brookhaven's campus for free, she found a way to get the director of the movie to Brookhaven to do a panel discussion after the movie. She has been very active with SGA and IGNITE to help register hundreds of voters for the mid-term elections this past fall. What's even more impressive about this is that Maria is a citizen of Mexico so she herself can not even vote in the election. That's just the kind of person and leader she is.

Outside of Student Government I have also had the opportunity to work with Maria Fernanda through Brookhaven's Student Leadership Institute (SLI) and our Phi Theta Kappa chapter. All students have the opportunity to participate in the SLI program where we bring in various guest speakers and trainers to work with students on a variety of life-long leadership development skills. Maria Fernanda has been an All-Star member where she has attended every presentation often times bringing other people with her. She is one of the few students who genuinely wants to learn more and strives to be a better person and leader all the time. I also got to attend the PTK Honors Institute in Philadelphia where Maria Fernanda was selected as one of two student leaders to represent Brookhaven as we prepared our Honors in Action project for this year. She represented Brookhaven very well at the training and returned to campus to train the rest of the Phi Theta Kappa executive board about the Honors in Action project.



'Bears Against AIDS' is Maria's project and she has rallied the entire Phi Theta Kappa organization, Student Government Association and part of the student body and Brookhaven community behind her in this endeavor. This is a national endeavor the students are attacking and I have no doubt they will raise both awareness and money at Brookhaven College. Maria has been able to partner Phi Theta Kappa with SGA working on this project, and she has utilized her academic research abilities in economics, crowd funding, rights and responsibilities, business management and more. With this project Brookhaven College will: 1) offer free HIV testing in conjunction with Prism Health for the remainder of the 2018-2019 academic year; 2) distribute of Safe Sex kits to students; 3) provide medical supplies to students who need them; and 4) make a donation to Bryan's House, a non-profit organization that helps children with HIV/AIDS. I know how hard Maria worked and how successful she was working in getting Brookhaven students to register to vote, so I am fully confident that this will be an outstanding Honors in Action project for Phi Theta Kappa and SGA.

I have had the opportunity to speak with Maria regarding her career goals. She wants to establish her own business that promotes sustainable consumerism. In order to achieve this goal, she will need to develop tools (classroom knowledge and outside experiences) to assist her in every step she takes. That is why she has decided to specialize in Economics with an emphasis in Finance, to have a better understanding of the administration required in a business, and apply what she learns to promote sustainable consumerism. Moreover, she believes that by having her own capital, she will be able to create community programs to encourage education in low-income families, fund epilepsy research/support, sustainability workshops, and leadership development. Her ultimate goal is to be an educational activist at the UNESCO that looks up for improvement in society, and reach out to help those who need it.

It is without reservation that I recommend Maria Fernanda Tovar Hernandez for this award. Her dedication to SGA here at Brookhaven is outstanding. She stops by my office daily and asks me what she can do for SGA or the office. She volunteered to spend most of the 2018 State Convention as a part of the Awards Committee and even chaired one of the sub committees. She worked to get Brookhaven elected to both a state and regional position. She has been selected to serve as one of only 40 students from across Texas to serve as a Conversation Leader for the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life at the Capitol in Austin. Maria is also one of the very few students to be selected as national semi-finalists for the very prestigious Jack Kent Cooke scholarship.

Maria Fernanda is one of the more pleasant and eager students I have worked with at Brookhaven and she is committed to furthering her education. In addition to her extensive involvement on campus she has been able to maintain her 3.94 GPA here at Brookhaven. Her energy, work ethic, organizational skills, creativity and willingness to help others and her leadership make her a strong candidate to help others.

Thank you for taking the time to review Maria Fernanda's application. I honestly believe she will be one of your top candidates. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance. You can reach me at 972.860.4116 or [bborski@dcccd.edu](mailto:bborski@dcccd.edu).

Sincerely



Brian Borski  
Director of Student Life  
Brookhaven College



# Brookhaven College

DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Dedicated to Student Success

September 20, 2018

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of the applicant Maria Fernanda Tovar. I met her a year and a half ago when she began attending Phi Theta Kappa and Student Government Association meetings. She helps out in Student Life, volunteers for Service Learning projects, promotes sustainability with the Green Team Coalition, celebrates the diversity on our campus as an ambassador of the International Club, and plans events with the Campus Activities Board. One day, after a Phi Theta Kappa meeting, she introduced herself to me and said she planned to be involved on campus as much as possible and get the most out of her time at Brookhaven. She was even considering running for an officer position in both Student Government and Phi Theta Kappa.

What has impressed me the most about the applicant, is that she has kept her promise of getting involved and beyond that. As I have had more opportunities to learn about who she is, what her values are, and how she wants to impact those around her, I see her style of leadership emerging and evolving. While she values and embraces servant leadership, she also wants to be a good steward of her community and the world.

She has discovered a passion for business because of her strategic and analytical strengths; this has led to her chosen field of study in Economics with Financial Applications with a career goal to own her own business to create sustainable consumerism. Her purpose in this goal also stems from her personal motivation of promoting equity and integrity. She wants people to know that they have a purpose and place in this world. That their lives are meant to be lived, celebrated, and recognized for the individual contributions they bring to society. Her vision is to encourage people to ask what their mission is and be purposeful about how and what they do. While it may sound like a tall order to fill, as someone who has mentored and worked with student leaders for more than ten years, all it takes is just one person to be a catalyst of change.

Not only does the applicant strive to maintain a balance between her academics and extracurricular activities, she also faces the challenge of being an international student from Mexico. She decided long ago that she wanted to study and complete her higher education in the United States. She did her research and chose a school that she felt would be the best fit for her and could help her reach her academic goals. Making a decision to leave your home country and family is tough, but even more so when you know you have to learn another language, integrate into a new society, adapt to a new culture, and familiarize yourself with a strange place. On top of that, a recent medical diagnosis revealed that she struggles with epilepsy which can strike without warning and incur steep medical bills if a hospital visit is needed. While her family has been able to do what they can to support her financially, a hospital visit in November because of her epilepsy has almost destroyed her dreams in the form of a hospital bill.

At a time when she is on her chosen path and within reach of her goals, she has found a way to put a positive spin on this. When people are telling her to quit and go home, she sees it as a challenge to find a way to keep moving forward, when she felt like she was defective, she chose to believe in her own potential, and when she thought about quitting, a friend gave her the support and strength to be persistent.



# Brookhaven College

DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Dedicated to Student Success

The applicant is the President of the Student Government Association, VP of Honors in Action for Phi Theta Kappa, and she is also a New Student Orientation leader. She seems to have a never ending supply of energy and innovative ideas. While most students were enjoying their summer vacation, Maria spent her summer in the Office of Student Life planning out activities for both SGA and PTK. When her fellow officers in both organizations found themselves running low on motivation, she encouraged them to push through and reminded everyone that they were a team and that they were working for a higher purpose. During new student orientation, she showed up to all fifteen sessions over a two week time frame and helped over 1,000 students learn about life at our campus and how to make the most of their experience. While these positions may seem like a lot on top of her academics, she manages her time well and is constantly seeking new opportunities to further her leadership skills and knowledge.

Each time I work or chat with her during quiet times in our office, I always learn something new about her and find myself constantly amazed. I realize it's students like her that make all the extra time I spend as an advisor to PTK worth every minute. When we travel as team, she's one of the main ones that makes me laugh. Even when she's tired, she still finds the energy to smile and try to brighten someone's day.

In the time that I have known her, it has been my privilege to watch how much she has grown as an individual and a leader. She has vision and purpose; and I feel that if she is given the opportunity, she will go far and really make an impact wherever she goes. She has demonstrated time and again her initiative and commitment to furthering her academic and on-campus experiences. I feel she is an ideal candidate for this award based upon her extra-curricular involvement, skills, and dedication to her studies. I am always willing to support her endeavors and hope that you will consider her application. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Rebekah Benavides  
Office of Student Life Coordinator  
Phi Theta Kappa Advisor/Student Ambassador Advisor  
Brookhaven College  
[rabenavides@dccd.edu](mailto:rabenavides@dccd.edu)  
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Elizabeth Whatley

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Southlake, Texas 76092  
817-658-3860  
ekwhatley@gmail.com

November 2, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to write a letter of recommendation for Maria Tovar. I highly recommend Ms. Tovar.

I have known for Maria for quite some time as she has taken my Speech Communication course. As her professor, I have had an opportunity to observe her participation and interaction in class and to evaluate Maria's knowledge of the subject matter. She is an outstanding student in all respects. Maria has proven that through hard work, follow through and team work, she can accomplish tasks in a courteous and timely manner.

Maria is exceptional in many aspects. I have personally seen her in the classroom, and on campus. I have witnessed first-hand her ability to motivate fellow classmates in the classroom. Maria works tirelessly as a student leader. While at Brookhaven College Maria was a part of a winning SGA and PTK. Anytime a student government leader is in my class I know I will have an exceptional semester. Student leaders on the collegiate level make wonderful additions in the corporate world, balancing social, academic and extra curricular responsibilities is unmatched.

Maria was a major part of her group/team in class and has always managed to get along well with people from all over the world. Maria has never missed an assignment or class – she was punctual and responsible. It has been my honor to know Maria.

Another aspect in Speech Communication, besides course work, is the daily interaction that takes place amongst the students. Maria is exceptional with her interpersonal skills, her ethical behavior in the classroom and her ability to adapt and work well with a broad group of people. I don't take writing recommendations lightly, and I don't just do it for any student that asks, Maria is an exceptionally talented and bright individual and I am honored to write this on her behalf.

Maria has done so much for and with the Brookhaven College community since going to school here. Everything she is involved with has improved with her touch. She is wise, empathetic and chooses to make her community the best it can be.

One of the endeavors that Maria has created and worked tirelessly on is the "Bears Against AIDS" campaign. Maria's academic research abilities helped her SGA and PTK chapter develop this campaign. The campaign will offer free HIV testing to our students and community. The campaign also provides safety kits with resources students can use to protect themselves. Donations of medical supplies and support for Bryan's House, a non-profit that helps children with HIV/AIDS will also benefit.

Despite many obstacles her vision and leadership is unsurpassed. I think we can safely say that Brookhaven College is better because of Maria. I am certain that whatever she does and wherever she goes, that too will be better because of her.

Maria has many career goals that she has shared with me, one of my favorites is her desire to become a part of the UN and develop programs to benefit community. Maria also is concerned with sustainable consumerism, an endeavor she will implement wherever she ends up. Maria has many goals, I am certain she will obtain them and be successful.

Maria is well equipped to grow from challenges that she is presented with. Her best traits are her communication skills, her patience and her ability to motivate and encourage others. These traits, I feel, will prepare her to be an active part of any organization. We will be blessed to have Maria as one of the distinguished alumni to go through Brookhaven College and the DCCCD system.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth Whatley

Speech Professor, Brookhaven College

p.s. If there are any specific questions, or if I can help in any way to help make this decision an easy one for you, please do not hesitate to call me at 817-658-3860. I don't feel like a two page letter is enough to truly relay what an amazing person she is.