

Maria Gutierrez
Veridian ArtShare Scholarship

I have been influenced by a combination of people, places, and experiences, which have sparked my passion in art and design. Being born in Mexico, I was surrounded by a strong culture and various traditions. Seeing bright colors, artisan artifacts, and famous Mexican artists has played a large role in who I am as a Mexican-American artist. I have found much inspiration from powerful Hispanic women like Frida Kahlo and my mother, who in their stories have faced many hardships, but still managed to overcome them through art. No matter where I am at in the world, I will always appreciate the art and culture that formed me and the people who shaped me into the artist and person that I am today.

There is no doubt that I inherited my artistic abilities from my mom. More important than talent, I also inherited her passion and strength. As a child my mom faced a lot of hardships which made her a stronger person and a better artist. When she was my age, my mom planned on majoring in graphic design. However, she had to drop out halfway through her college career. My grandpa's farm was struggling and he could no longer afford to pay for her education. Instead, my mom helped with his farm, and had to find other ways to make money. She turned to art as an escape and to help her cope with her family situation. She would make her own clothes, teach art classes, and sell any piece she made in order to make any money she could.

My mom's love for art has carried down to her three daughters, especially to me. Even when I was young, my mom helped me realize the importance and power that art can have on a person. She is the first person I come to with an idea for my next piece, my hardest critic, and my biggest fan. My mom has helped me through my hardest

times and has always helped me see the beauty in me and in life. Just as art became an escape for my mom, it has become my escape too. With my mom's passion and guidance I have realized that I can bring good into this world through art. She never got the chance to do what she loved and was passionate about, but she did an even greater thing: she helped me find that same passion. I hope that by continuing a career in design, I will have the opportunity to make my mom proud and fulfill not only my dreams, but my mom's dreams too.

