



Natalia María Rodríguez Méndez

"I am working toward my college degree, and FirstGov en español can help me find information on scholarships."

Age: 18

Profession: Student, University of California Los Angeles

Born in: Los Angeles, California

Location of Residence: Los Angeles, California

Marital Status: Single

Siblings: One brother 16-years-old, one sister 14-years-old

Hobbies: Reading, music, going to the beach, and dancing

Computing Environment: Cellphone with SMS and Email, dial iPod Nano, PowerBook G4 Laptop, 12 inch monitor, IE 6.0, high-speed wireless connection at the library or Internet cafes.

User Type: beginner intermediate advanced expert 6 hours a day mostly at her school's library or at Internet cafes. She is constantly on her phone text messaging and sending emails.

Online Fears and Frustrations: Email and text message spam, slow Internet connections, websites that do not work on a MAC.

Profile:

Natalia is a student at UCLA. She was born in Los Angeles and lives in Los Angeles with her parents. Her parents and grandparents emigrated from Colombia 35 years ago before Los Angeles became a center for the Hispanic community in the U.S. She is bilingual and speaks both English and Spanish comfortably and without an accent but has some trouble reading and writing Spanish as she has never formally studied the language. Nonetheless, she speaks English with her friends, her two siblings, and at school while her parents insist that she speaks Spanish at home.

Natalia's parents came to the U.S. as children and they still feel more comfortable speaking Spanish. Her parents instilled in her a love for books and she is constantly reading fiction in English and wishes that her Spanish reading skills were better so she is taking a Spanish Literature class at school. Her parents also made sure she knew the importance of higher education and becoming a successful, productive American without forgetting her Latin roots.

Natalia is thinking about majoring in Ecosystem Science and Policy at the University of Miami and would like to work in a career focused on Preservation Management of Ocean and Marine life in Latin American countries. She has always been fascinated with science and also loves the ocean and everything that lives in it. She is a good student and graduated from high school with honors and was able to apply for a scholarship through a government program for Hispanics.

Natalia has a part-time job at Virgin Records in the mall to help her pay for books and part of her tuition. She loves all kinds of music but favors Reggaeton and other Latin music. Her idol is Shakira, a Colombian born Latin crossover pop star. Some of her friends have moved from Colombia and are trying to get green cards so they can stay in the United States. She knows how lucky she is to have been born in the United States and not to have to worry about being able to stay.

Internet Usage:

Natalia primarily uses the Internet in English and her primary activities are checking email and surfing the web. She loves gmail she can store all of her emails and search for important ones. She also exchanges emails with her professors when she has questions about her classes. Her mother and father don't really understand the Internet and at first were against buying her a computer, but they finally gave in because she needs one for school.

Natalia uses her cell phone constantly to send text messages to her friends. She is constantly sending them messages and can also access the Internet from her phone. Her parents like to know where she is at all times so they purchased a phone for her once she started attending college.

Some of Natalia's professors use the Internet to post assignments for their students online. They also recommend web sites to look at to gather information for research papers. Natalia is able to look up this information online and then do research regarding her intended major and classes such as Spanish Literature.

Some of her friends are from Colombia and are worried about their immigration status. They are not as bilingual as she is and feel more comfortable looking at information in Spanish. While Natalia was doing research online she found FirstGov en español and told her friends about it.

Natalia is concerned about her college tuition for next year. She was able to get a scholarship for her first year at college, but will have to apply again for the coming year. She does research online to explore all of her options for scholarships for Latinos from the government.

FirstGov en español Usage Profile:

Once or twice a month

Needs from FirstGov en español:

- Search for government scholarships and grants for Latinos to pay for her college education
- Search for government-related information in English and Spanish for her family
- Look up information on the National Marine Fisheries and Latin American fish export policies for a school research project
- Search for immigration information for her Colombian friends on FirstGov en español
- Search for information on national parks and beaches

Favorite web sites:

- www.google.com - searches for information
- www.friendster.com - socializes on the networking site
- www.gmail.com - sends emails to her family and friends
- www.batanga.com - listens to Latin music
- www.shakira.com - watches videos and gets information on appearances and new releases

Personal and Professional Goals:

- To do well in college and be the first person in her family to graduate from college
- To start her career and get a good job so she can be self sufficient and help to support her family
- She feels lucky that she has been able to go to college since her parents did not have that opportunity
- To get married and have children in the future