



BRILLANTES CAMINANTES

GUANAJUATO

Supporting the Future Through Education

Newsletter

May 2022

Greetings From Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca
Brillantes Caminantes' New President

I am delighted to greet you as your new president in our first newsletter of this new administration.

My first contact with Brillantes Caminantes A.C. was in December 2017 when I attended the *pastorela*. I enjoyed the *pastorela* enormously, and learned enough about Brillantes Caminantes to want to become involved. Since 2018 I have served on the Board of Directors—first as the Students' Affairs Coordinator, and now as your President along with Christina Rockrise as Vice-President. Also on the Board are Jeff Tashman, Treasurer, and Nina Johnson, Secretary. There is much to be done, and we face new challenges as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our Association is strong, and I know that with our BC members and friends we will be able to overcome all obstacles that we might find on this journey.

Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca, President



Left to Right:

Jeff Tashman, Treasurer

Nina Johnson, Secretary

Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca, President

Cathy Lehman, Mentor Coordinator

Silvia Salas Carreon, Former Student's
Affairs Coordinator

Christina Rockrise, Vice-President

A Winter/Spring Recap

After two years of living with the challenges and isolation of online and hybrid classes, our students' grades continue to indicate that they are thriving academically. As was true a year ago, many conferences and extracurricular activities have not been available to students.

Although some professional internships have been delayed, graduating students continue to move forward toward completing their final requirements.

Our mentors continue to be invaluable when it comes to maintaining communication and connection between the organization and the students. Of note: BC added nine new mentors over the past year.

The scholarship application for the coming school year was posted on our website in January, with the first application received three hours after it was made available! Thirteen scholars were selected for in-person interviews in April, and of those, eleven will be eligible for home visits by the Scholarship Committee in June.



On the administrative front: The BC annual meeting was held on January 29. What had been planned as an in-person outdoor meeting, was rescheduled at the last minute to Zoom. Attendance was high and included one member who signed in from Washington, as well those of us anchored in Guanajuato.

The president, vice-president, and treasurer—AJ Buckingham, David Spencer, and Jorge Castelazo, respectively—resigned after serving one year each of their second two-year terms. Elections for their offices were held: Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca was

elected president; Christina Rockrise was elected vice-president; and Jeff Tashman was elected treasurer. The two-year term of the secretary, Anna Adams, concluded and Nina Johnson was elected to replace her. The two-year term of the coordinator of student affairs, Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca, also concluded, and Silvia Salas Carreon was elected to the office. In the intervening months however, Silvia has had to resign due to health issues, and the Board of Directors is currently looking for a qualified replacement.

The annual financial report showed a healthy bottom line: budgeted revenues were exceeded and expenses were lower than budgeted. Overall, 96 percent of our 2021 expenses supported the students: 82 percent went to scholarships and 14 percent to other student-related items like computers, healthcare, and student meeting expenses.

Click [here](#) to read the full 2021 Annual Report.

Life Stories of This Year's Scholarship Applicants in Their Own Words

"Time and experience have taught me that I need to work hard to get what I want. After trying unsuccessfully to get into medical school for a year, I decided to try something new. I took the entrance exam for nursing and obstetrics, and I passed it on my first attempt. That made me realize that one must fight for one's dreams, and not just hold onto a single option. In life, there are many different roads from which to choose."

"Previously, I made up excuses for situations I couldn't manage. I now realize that these obstacles in my life are put there by me alone, and I vow to not to submit to those obstacles, but to overcome them."

"My mother abandoned my brother and me when I was four years old. With the passage of time, I've learned to live without her and to appreciate the great people that I had in my life – my grandmother and my father. My father is for me the most important person in my life because he knows how to handle difficult situations. As a schoolchild I was very insecure and didn't work hard, but I've come to be one of my class's most outstanding students."

"Besides studying, I work in a restaurant. I work so that I can have the things I'd like to have, because my mother can only pay for my studies. It's not easy for her to support my sister and me all by herself. Our life is a little hard, but we always try to get ahead."

"Since I was young, I have worked to help my parents with the expenses. But now that my sister has a good job and can support my parents, I've decided to continue my studies."

"[One] of my challenges is not having a laptop to do my schoolwork and homework. It's very difficult to do all that on a telephone. Also, I feel bad because my single mother has done everything to support me. Sometimes I wouldn't tell her about materials I needed for school so that she wouldn't spend so much on me."

"The greatest obstacle that I have had in my studies is [living in my rural neighborhood]. In my community there are very few services. We have no telephone signal, very little transportation and very few jobs. Public transportation only offers three buses per day."

The Gift of Reading for Three Kings Day



All of our current students were invited to celebrate Three Kings Day on January 8 in the Casa Museo Gene Byron Garden. It was the first time all of them had met together as a group since March 2020; recent graduates were also invited, so that they could have the opportunity to bid farewell in person.

All the necessary precautions were taken and all of the necessary treats procured.

Dianne Romain, a longtime BC mentor and sponsor, donated copies of *The Trumpet Lesson*, her novel that was published in 2019 and is set in the *callejones* of Guanajuato. Students were invited to help themselves to a copy, along with selecting another gift—a Spanish-language novel from the pile of gaily-wrapped books that were bought with money from the Colleen Cote Memorial Book Fund.



BC Participates in Local Social Service Fair



The Division of Social Action AC, a local nonprofit organization, invited Brillantes Caminantes to participate in a social service fair that was held in the Jardín de la Unión in November 2021. We were one of about a dozen nonprofits that publicized their missions and needs over the course of the afternoon. It was a great opportunity for BC to promote itself to Guanajuato's citizens.

Left to Right: Cathy Lehman, Anna Adams, Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca

Dulce María Molina Frías Gives Her Thanks to BC

"I am graduating from the University Institute of Central Mexico with a bachelor's degree in Social Psychology.

I'm thankful for all the support that Brillantes Caminantes has given me throughout my academic training—not only financially but also personally—and for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this great family that is B.C.

I got to know this organization through the director of my high school, SABES Puentecillas. I applied, and I had the great opportunity to become part of BC when I was in my third semester. I was working and studying at the same time, and the scholarship made it easier for me to pay my monthly school payments. All of the members were so pleasant—they really made me feel happy to belong to this organization.



I really enjoyed our monthly meetings, which allowed me to meet the other students and hear about their experiences within their different schools. I also had the opportunity to participate in the *pastorela* fundraising event, which was very emotional. Unfortunately, the pandemic happened, so it was difficult to continue with the meetings. Still, I'm happy for the moments shared and for the kindness of my peers and each one of the BC members.

I am currently in the process of doing the paperwork for my certification: I'm very happy to have achieved an Academic Excellence Degree [Editor's note: the result of having a GPA of 9.6 out of 10].

I also want to thank my mentor Deb Lander, as she was part of my professional growth. She always checked in with me and was aware of whatever I needed.

I am very grateful to God for allowing me to meet people like you who are willing to help each of us students in all areas.

Brillantes Caminantes is for me a great family that I will always remember with much affection and admiration for helping me and other young people achieve our goals.”

Dulce María

Josué Emmanuel Sánchez Quintero Dances Through Life



“Since childhood, I’ve been instilled with a great appreciation for dance and dancing. My family has been dance’s greatest promoter, and today I consider it to be a part of me.

I currently belong to a dance group of Indian “barbarians” named Chopitantehua, led by Raul Sanchez Almanza and Ismael Almanza. This is a family group, meaning that it has been passed down from generation to generation in the community of Yerbabuena, Guanajuato. In this group I dance with my father, brothers, uncles, and cousins, among others. For all of us, belonging to this group represents respecting our roots and traditions, as well as maintaining the importance that our cultural heritage deserves.

Additionally, I am a member of the Ballet Folklórico Saucedá, a group directed by Lucia Sanchez. Along with other teenagers and young people, we develop skills and techniques to learn the dances of different regions of our

country. The thing that I like most about belonging to this group is that I can experience the diversity of Mexico through its dances.

Throughout my life, dance has become one of my greatest passions, and I am very proud to be able to share it with you. I invite you to admire, promote and attend one of our dances so that dance, in its many different expressions, can reach more people.”

Josué Emmanuel

An Old Friend, a New Restaurant

Estela Cordero Cabrera, the proprietor of the Casa Museo Gene Byron, has been extremely generous to BC over the years, welcoming students to the Gene Byron Sunday concerts and, more recently, inviting us to use their patio for outdoor student meetings.

Estela visited with Anna Adams and her mentee, Valeria Vizguerra, when they met recently for a delightful breakfast at *Casa Estela y Virgilio*, Estela's newly-opened restaurant and hotel just up the hill from the Gene Byron Museum in Marfil.



Left to Right: Anna Adams, Estela Cordero Cabrera, Valeria Vizguerra

Our Board of Directors

- Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca, President
- Christina Rockrise, Vice-President
- Nina Johnson, Secretary
- Jeff Tashman, Treasurer

Thanks!

- To the students, graduates and mentors who contributed to this issue of the newsletter.
- To writers: AJ Buckingham, Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca, Anna Adams and Rob Fleming

Editor: Rob Fleming

Design: Agota Page

We hope you enjoyed reading this issue of our newsletter, but if you don't want to receive it in the future, e-mail brillantescaminantes@gmail.com to unsubscribe.

DID YOU KNOW?

- We never commit to new students until we know that we will have the required funding to support them for the duration of their academic careers.
- You can pledge to be a long-term donor, helping us ensure that we have a continuous and reliable source of funds.
- Full sponsorship of a student costs \$6000 USD or \$1,200 USD for five years; half sponsorship costs \$3000 USD, or \$600 USD for five years
- Donations of any amount and duration are, of course, welcome.

More information on donating and making an ongoing pledge at

<https://www.brillantescaminantesgto.org/donate>

WHEN YOU SHOP, AMAZON GIVES!

Sign up for Amazon Smile and BC will receive 0.5% of your eligible Amazon (U.S. only) purchases. To sign up, log onto [AMAZONSMILE](#), search charities for “Brillantes Caminantes AC” and select it. Donations will begin with your first order. For complete details about the Amazon Smile program, [CLICK HERE](#)

