



**Brillantes**  
Caminantes A.C.  
Guanajuato, GTO

SUPPORTING THE FUTURE WITH EDUCATION

Newsletter

April 2023



 *THANKS  
from Our  
Students*



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD

Greetings All,



2022 was a busy year for Brillantes Caminantes, A.C. We are proud of our accomplishments which are detailed in our [Annual Report](#) .

Of course, our most notable achievement was the successful graduation of several of our bright students. We look forward to seeing what the future holds for them.

In December, we finished the year with a beautifully presented Pastorela directed by Juan José Brado y Miramontes assisted by Silvia Salas Carreón. After a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19, the fundraising event was especially joyful and festive.

Nine new members joined BC-AC in 2022. Many of them were already hard at work. Two new members were elected to the Board at our annual meeting in February 2023: Catherine Krause, Secretary, and Euclides Santiago, Student Coordinator. Our long-time member, Carolyn Black, was elected as our new treasurer. In addition, the Community Outreach Team was formed. This group will coordinate our engagement efforts, including this newsletter, alum outreach, social media, and fundraising.

Please read on to learn more about our students and the happenings in BC-AC!

*Christina Rockrise  
Vice-President, Brillantes Caminantes A.C*

## OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

### KATHERINE KRAUSE - SECRETARY

I moved with my husband to Guanajuato in 2021 and consider this beautiful city my home. I retired to Mexico in 2018 after a career in Information Technology management. My last position was as the Chief of Information Technology for the Nevada Attorney General. Travel is my passion.

I am drawn to the organization's mission, "Brightening the Future through Education." Through the scholarship recipients, our entire community benefits, and the impact of BC is multiplied exponentially.

I am very excited to be a part of BC. As the Secretary, I will be the primary record keeper. I look forward to working with the Board and the members in 2023 to improve the organization's operation.





## EUCLIDES SANTIAGO - STUDENT COORDINATOR

I am sixty years old, originally from the island of Puerto Rico, and have been living in Guanajuato for three and a half years. My wife of forty-one years, is Kris Santiago, and we have a son, Lucas Antonio, twenty-five, who lives in Washington DC.

I have a BFA in photo illustration from the Rochester Institute of Technology and an MA in education from Sunbridge College, NY. For over two decades, I worked in NYC as a freelance photographer and later became a Waldorf teacher in rural Pennsylvania for twelve years. During those years in academia, I became very familiar with running a non-profit organization. I served on the board of trustees at River Valley Waldorf

School and its faculty leadership team. Upon retiring and moving to Mexico, I now am a cigar maker, a long time passion of mine.

I heard of Brillantes Caminantes through my wife and thought by joining BC, I would have the opportunity to work with and support young people again. For any other questions, please refer to my beautiful wife, Kris, since she remembers things as they were not the way I imagine.

## MONTHLY STUDENT MEETINGS



Brilliantes Caminantes A.C. students commit to attending a once-monthly student meeting.



Euclides Santiago, in his role as the Student Affairs Coordinator, facilitates these sessions on the first Saturday of each month. The meetings provide opportunities for the students to work together in small groups, connect with their mentors, and learn about various topics. Recent content included:

- January: Celebration of Kings' Days
- February: The Importance of Punctuality
- March: Introduction to Assertive Communication
- April: Public Speaking

Beginning in May, the students will become more active in planning and facilitating these gatherings. As a group, they will identify topics relevant to their personal growth. Small student teams, with Euclides' support, will take turns coordinating the meetings. We look forward to how they will positively contribute to this time.

Monthly meetings allow the students time to meet with their peers outside the classroom, acquire information and life skills, AND eat a little pizza too!

BC would like to give a special thanks to Casa Museo Gene Byron for generously allowing us to meet in their beautiful open courtyard each month.



**“Education is the difference between wishing you could help other people and being able to help them.”**

*Elder Russell M. Nelson*

## STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Martín Esaú Honesto Pacheco



Our students are amazing people. We want you to get to know them better! Recently, Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca, our BC-AC President, had the opportunity to visit Martin at his job.

Martin, a second-year student is obtaining his Control and Administration of Quality degree at the University of Guanajuato. In addition to his studies, he works Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays at Maxcota- a pet store owned by Max!

Martin has worked at Maxcota for over a year. His responsibilities include caring for all the animals and assisting customers. He gave Ingrid a tour of the pet store. Maxcota is a typical pet store- rabbit cages, pet food, supplements, and medications. Ingrid also got to see the “cave.” The “cave” is an area in the rear of the store where fresh and saltwater fish, a snake, and a tarantula live in semi-darkness. Martin also showed Ingrid a container of little mice sold as food for other animals. Martín has no

problem with this because “snakes and hawks need to eat too! “

Martin has learned about the different animals by researching on the internet and from his coworkers. Martin enjoys using his knowledge to advise customers when selecting a pet that is right for them.

While “working and studying are two completely different things,” Martin finds what he has learned in his studies has practical applications in his work. For example, quality control is essential when he is preparing food for the animals. The food needs to be consistent and of good quality. His job requires teamwork, customer service, problem-solving, and discipline; these will be essential skills in his future career.

Martín enjoys his job at Maxcota. The extra money he earns helps him with expenses. “Even if I did not need the money, I would work at Maxcota.”



*Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca,  
Brillantes Caminantes, A.C. president*

## ADIOS FROM ARACELI

I am a graduate with a degree in Industrial Relations at the University of Guanajuato and I feel very grateful to Brillantes Caminantes for having been part of my educational process. I want to express my deep gratitude to the organization and especially to my mentor Donna Leffel, who was very supportive during the good and difficult times of my university career.

I learned about Brillantes Caminantes through my work in "El Zopilote Mojado" since BC used to have their monthly meetings there. At first, I didn't know much about the organization, but an extraordinary person named Orapan explained to me what BC was all about and encouraged me to continue studying, and to take advantage of the opportunities that came to me. Although I was afraid to apply since BC required a grade point average of nine. I worked hard to meet the requirements and finally got the scholarship.

Each monthly meeting of Brillantes Caminantes was very enriching, as I met incredible people who shared their experiences and advice with the students. The topics discussed were of great help to my personal, professional and social training, and at all times I felt supported by the members of the organization.

I am indebted to each of its members for their unconditional help to make my dreams come true. Thanks to the scholarship I was able to devote myself completely to my studies and perform my professional service at the Comisión Federal de Electricidad (CFE), where I was also offered a job until I got my degree. I am currently working in a private security company to gain experience while doing my final process to complete all graduation requirements.

Brilliant Caminantes not only provided me with financial support, but also helped me grow as a person. I am always grateful for the positive impact it has had on my life.

*Araceli Lona Garcia*



## GOODBYE AMAZON SMILE!

In 2013, Amazon began to offer customers an easy way to support their favorite charities. When an eligible item was purchased, 0.5% of the purchase price could be donated to a selected charity. Over one million organizations participated in this program, including Brillantes Caminantes A.C. Amazon has discontinued AMAZON SMILE as of 2/2023. The large number of participating organizations did not allow Amazon to make the impact they had hoped for. Amazon will now direct these funds to low-income housing, disaster relief, community food delivery, and computer science support in underserved schools.



Thank you to our donors who utilized Amazon Smile to support BC in the past. Please visit our website if you would like to donate to our important work. <https://brillantescaminantesgto.org/donate/>

## SOCIAL MEDIA

You can now find Brillantes Caminantes GTO on social media!

We are excited to share that Kris Santiago, one of our new members, has volunteered to improve the organization's presence on Facebook and Instagram. FB and IG postings will allow us to reach more individuals than ever before. In fact, this year, we announced the application process through these sites, and the response was tremendous. It is easy to find, follow, like, comment, and share with this link-

[Control Click here to link to our LINKTREE](#) or, copy and paste this link into your browser:

[https://linktr.ee/brillantes\\_caminantes23?utm\\_source=linktree\\_admin\\_share](https://linktr.ee/brillantes_caminantes23?utm_source=linktree_admin_share)

There are so many great things happening in BC-AC. We want to share them with you and hope you will join the effort by sharing them with your friends and family. Thanks!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca - President, Christina Rockrise - Vice-President, Catherine Krause - Secretary, Carolyn Black - Treasurer, Euclides Santiago - Student Coordinator

## Thanks!

- To the students, graduates and mentors who contributed to this issue of the newsletter.
- To Ex-hacienda Gene Byron for their generous hospitality in hosting our student meetings at no charge.
- To writers: Ingrid Barradas Bribiesca, Christina Rockrise and Nina Johnson
- And to you, our generous supporters and donors for your continued support!

Editor: Kimberli Isaacs

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](mailto:brillantescaminantes@gmail.com) to *unsubscribe*.

## You can donate directly to BC from if you have a traditional IRA and save on your U.S. taxes

If you are 70 ½ years or older, you can make a direct donation from your IRA to Brillantes Caminantes, A.C. (a qualified US nonprofit charity) and not pay income taxes on the amount donated. This amount also counts toward the federal government's requirement to withdraw from your IRA once you reach age 72. Consult your financial advisor or IRA administrator for details.