



G E O G R A P H Y

ALUMNI

Chris Aldana

Geographically speaking, where do you come from?

My entire family originates from Guatemala City, Guatemala. My parents and siblings immigrated to the U.S. in the late 70s. Nearly a decade later I was born.

How did you become interested in Geography?

I can credit two significant events. The first was reading a book titled 'Guns, Germs, and Steel: the Fates of Human Societies' by Jared Diamond. The second occurred a few years later in a college classroom where an inspirational professor left a lasting impression on me and motivated me to want to see the world and experience life as a geographer.

Where are you studying Geography now? How is Geography there different than at Cerritos?

I recently graduated from CSULB. The only difference in geography is the workload. I found myself having to manage time wisely to that I could read and write a bit more.

What type of Geography are you studying now? Do you have a specialty? Any research experience? If so, tell us about it.

I chose Human Geography as my concentration. However, there is a possibility that one may earn either a GIS or urban studies certificate concurrently. So as my specialty I chose Urban Studies. My second semester, I had the opportunity to work on an individual research project regarding urban tree canopy coverage and the effect of urban heat islands. The personal project took a lot of research but being able to submit my result into the Green Generation Mixer for review is probably one of my highlight experiences at CSULB so far.

What would you tell a student at Cerritos College interested in potentially majoring in Geography?

I am sure, as any potential geography knows by now the discipline consists of a lot more than memorizing cities and capitals and at the university level the discipline gets even more interesting. It becomes less sugar-coated and raw. The geography departments at all universities are waiting for you with open arms.

What do you hope to do professionally once you have your Geography degree?

I am an inner-city kid, and as a student of urban geography, I am acutely aware of the changes, for better or worse, occurring in the neighborhoods where I grew up. I'm currently pursuing a Master's in Public Administration at CSULB.

