

## **Alejandro Aguirre**

**Alliance/Merck *Ciencia* Scholar Class of 2009**

**Majored in Mechanical Engineering at Massachusetts Institutes of Technology, Cambridge, MA  
Product Analyst at Liberty Mutual Insurance**

In his sophomore year of high school, Alejandro built a mousetrap racecar that could zip up a 30-degree incline. It was his first solo endeavor as an amateur engineer.

Years later, Alejandro is still using creative problem solving strategies, but instead of racing cars, he's building abstract models, cobbling together different data to create business solutions.

As a student, Alejandro excelled in math. He joined a math, science and engineering program where students built bridges, gliders and catapults. He spent hours after school and even on the weekends at home perfecting his models for competition with other schools. The projects involved more physics knowledge than he or any of his friends really had at that time. "We were all kind of winging it" said Alejandro.

Alejandro was accepted at MIT, his dream school. He knew his family couldn't pay the tuition, so he did some investigating, applied to the Alliance/Merck *Ciencia* Scholars program and was selected to be a scholar.

As an M.I.T. student, he chose to major in mechanical engineering. The summer just before college, Alejandro worked at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratories, testing the durability of electronics being sent into space.

For one of his summer internships through the Alliance, Alejandro worked with General Electric Transportation on its Diesel Engine Fuel Systems team, performing tests on engine components, identifying flaws and implementing new designs.

Alejandro enjoyed his internship experiences, but found the pace of engineering too slow-moving. So, he chose to remake himself as a businessman, adapting his skills to a new industry.

He spent a year at Accenture, a management and consulting firm, before transitioning to insurance. He was nervous about leaving Accenture, and worried he might lose out on a promotion; but, looking back, he believes it was the best decision.

Today he works at Liberty Mutual Insurance on the countrywide analytics team. As a product analyst, he develops pilot programs to see how effective certain insurance frameworks will be in different states. Instead of building concrete models from everyday objects, he uses data sources to tell a story. Sometimes that story shows the company is losing money and sometimes the story illustrates a demand for a type of insurance in a certain state.

"Being able to tell a story out of this huge amount of data that otherwise would not be comprehensible is really interesting to me," he said. By sharing these stories, Alejandro helps his company to take action to capitalize on its successes and correct problems.

Alejandro is considering getting his M.B.A. but he's exploring other possibilities as well. He's uncertain what his next move will be but he is excited about what the future will bring.