

PETER GUERRERO

Alliance/Merck *Ciencia* Scholar Class of 2011

Studying biology at The University of Texas at Austin

Interned at the Human Performance Lab at The University of Texas at Austin

Peter grew up in Brownsville, Texas in an Hispanic community where the road most taken involves marrying young, having kids and then finding a job to support your family. As a young man, Peter had higher expectations of himself.

Peter plays chess and admits he is “kind of good at it.” In third grade, Peter was chosen to attend a national chess tournament in Portland, Oregon. As the plane began its descent through the clouds, Peter was overwhelmed by the view. “I’d never seen snow in my life. I’d never seen a mountain in my life,” he said. For the first time, there was more to life than the confines of Brownsville.

Peter kept playing chess and kept winning. He went to other competitions in other cities, including: Chicago, Pittsburgh and Nashville. He loved exploring new parts of the country.

Apart from chess and travel, Peter has always loved sports. Fittingly, Peter found his calling in physical therapy.

With the support of The Alliance, Peter spent this past summer interning at The University of Texas at Austin’s Human Performance Lab. At the lab, he helped a doctoral student conduct a pilot study exploring the impact of different exercise intensities on skin blood flow, core body temperature and cardiac output.

Two other young men originally from Brownsville left the area to pursue their dreams and have served as role models for Peter. One now works for the Los Angeles Clippers and the other is a personal trainer to LeBron James.

“For them to get out of their comfort zone and to do something like that is just really amazing,” said Peter.

After earning his bachelor’s degree in biology, Peter hopes to get his master’s degree in physical therapy and work for either a collegiate or professional sports team. With the support of The Alliance, Peter already has firsthand experience in a professional sports lab and is one step closer to achieving his dream.