



Natalie Amaro
North Park University
A. Montgomery Ward Foundation Scholarship



Natalie Amaro's grandfather has been a significant influence in her life, and she says his experience is the main reason why she chose to study nursing at [North Park University](#) in Chicago. Facing numerous health-related issues – some serious -- Amaro says her grandfather has spent considerable time in hospitals or seeing physicians and specialists. "It caused me to want to pursue a degree where I could give back to my community and be there for someone when they're in need of support and guidance," she says. "I wanted to help those like my grandfather that had a lot of health issues achieve a better quality of life." Amaro also wanted to be enthusiastic about her career and love doing the work, she says.

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Amaro and her family live in Chicago. She grew up with four children her parents adopted, who are now adults. She chose North Park because of its small classes, a well-regarded nursing program and opportunities to work in different clinical settings in the city. It also gave her the opportunity to grow in her Christian faith. She expects to graduate in December 2022.

In addition, she chose a leadership and management minor, which she says fits well with nursing. "As a nurse, you need to be assertive, direct and upfront with all the things that are going on with patients. My minor has helped me figure out how to do that," she says. After college, Amaro plans to work as a nurse, and eventually return to school to earn a graduate degree and become a nurse practitioner.

Amaro finances much of her own education, which includes the fees and expenses that come with a nursing major. She works to earn money throughout much of the year as a receptionist at a Chicago boatyard. Among the scholarships she earned is an A. Montgomery Ward Foundation Scholarship through ACI, which definitely helps ease the stress of paying for college and navigating a challenging degree program, she says.

"I want to say thank you to your donors and everybody that takes the time to think about others, Amaro says. "It truly helped me out. I really can't emphasize enough the impact it has made on me and my family. It's such a nice feeling to know that there are some people out there who want students to pursue an education, regardless of their financial situation. It truly is God's work."

Amaro is grateful her mother raised her to value what she has "She raised me to work for the things that I wanted in life, so that I can appreciate and know the value of money," she says.

At the university, Amaro participates in the student nursing association and a mentorship program that pairs upper class students with students just beginning the nursing curriculum. She attended a public high school in Chicago, Hyman G. Rickover Naval Academy, which led her to join and become a team leader with the Sea Scouts, a program of the Boy Scouts of America.