



## Interview with Blanca Gutiérrez

Middle School: KIPP Bayview Academy

High School: Urban High School, San Francisco

College: In 2011

### **How have you grown during your years at KIPP Bayview Academy?**

When I first came here (at part of the school's founding 5<sup>th</sup> grade class), I was not ready to be a part of it. There was a lot of work, and I thought the teachers weren't really serious when they told me to do my homework. So I didn't do it all, and they put me in detention. I was shocked! The next week I started doing my homework, and I have ever since. The values I learned at school have also helped me a lot at home.

### **How have you learned to balance your school work with responsibilities at home?**

I take care of my younger siblings after school and on weekends, so in 5<sup>th</sup> grade I really started using the values from KIPP - like responsibility, integrity and initiative - at home. This past year I was doing high school applications, which was a lot of work, so I had to be really good with time management. At school I started homework during lunch and anytime I finished a test. I tried to do as much as I could, because I knew it was difficult work, and that I also had to take care of my sisters and myself.

### **What are you most passionate about in school?**

Ms. Akincilar, my writing teacher, made me really excited about reading. I didn't like to read a lot before, but she was an awesome teacher and we read really interesting books. I started reading over the summer, and it was great to be reading on my own.

### **What other activities have you enjoyed at KIPP Bayview Academy?**

The past two years I have volunteered as a homework checker. I got to school at 7:15, and from 7:30 to 8:00 I checked the 5<sup>th</sup> graders homework. It was funny because sometimes they tried to hide that they hadn't done it, and I thought, "Oh my gosh, I remember when I was a 5<sup>th</sup> grader!" With that role came a lot of responsibility, because I had to get my morning work finished by the time I got to class, so I had to manage my time really well.

In sixth and seventh grade I helped our Principal, Ms. Wood, with summer school. We taught the fifth graders the KIPP chants and the school's values, to give them a sense of what KIPP is about and how the year would be at school.

### **Do you ever think about becoming a teacher?**

I have considered it a lot, because I like giving advice and teaching. After I learned my KIPP chants in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, I taught them all to my sister, because it was just so fun. Being a teacher seems like a lot of work, especially if you're a KIPP teacher, but I think it would be a great job!

### **Do you have any advice to incoming KIPPsters?**

I like school. Even when it's difficult, I still like to learn, because in the end you can know that you worked hard for it. I think the best part is when it gets challenging. So my advice to the 5<sup>th</sup> graders is that, well, it's going to get harder, but you just have to keep trying.