



Update from the President

Greetings everyone,

As we put the final touches on 2018 and welcome in the prospects of 2019, I want to take this opportunity to share with you some of the highlights that have made their way across my desk here at the Puksta Foundation during what has become a truly remarkable year for us. Our year, like many of yours, has seen moments of pure joy and excitement, experienced times of hope and inspiration and we have certainly seen our share of challenges that required our strength and resolve to overcome.

In 2018 we graduated a record number of Puksta Scholars with 23 students donning caps, gowns and Puksta cords during graduation ceremonies across our 5 university partner campuses. Please join me in congratulating our graduates who have worked tirelessly to achieve their goal of attaining a higher education while at the same time working in our communities to create positive social change. At our core, we will always be an educational foundation providing scholarship funding to Colorado students who want to make our world a better place. **We are so proud of you all!**

I would like to thank our 5 university partners, The University of Denver, The University of Colorado at Boulder, and The University of Colorado at Denver, Colorado State University and Metropolitan State University who welcomed 28 incoming Puksta Scholars into their programs. Our campus partners continue to provide an incredible experience for our Puksta Scholars during their time at the universities with their deep commitment to programs that include mentorship and hands-on experiential learning opportunities. **Thank you to all of our Puksta Scholar program coordinators for your hard work and oversight of our programs.**

During the year we hosted **2 Intercollegiate Puksta Scholar retreats.** These weekend retreats, which rotate between the mountains of Colorado and Denver city center, offer

our **current class of 72 Puksta Scholars** an opportunity to get together and learn from each other, learn about each other and even learn from our Puksta alumni. At the Puksta Foundation, we are consistently identifying, investing in and supporting rising leaders in our community. These weekend retreats have become fundamentally important in our work and they are events which we look forward to sponsoring for years to come.

Another highlight from this past year was our travel to **The University of Chicago in October with 4 of our Puksta Scholars to join the Clinton Foundation at their annual conference.** Through a rigorous application process, Clinton Global Initiative University (CGIU) accepts 1,200 civically-engaged students from around the world for a weekend of programming designed to assist students at the university level to create change in their communities. As you can imagine, there is quite a bit of synergies in our work. Our scholars were able to engage with leaders from non-profits operating around the world to address some of our biggest and most challenging issues. They were able to network with each other and the program was eventually capped-off with a plenary session where President Bill Clinton, former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton and Chelsea Clinton discussed the importance of civic-engagement and community organizing to create change. While in Chicago we were able to introduce our Puksta Scholar attendees with our alumni living in the city and we enjoyed a day together exploring the architecture of Chicago and eating some really good deep-dish pizza.

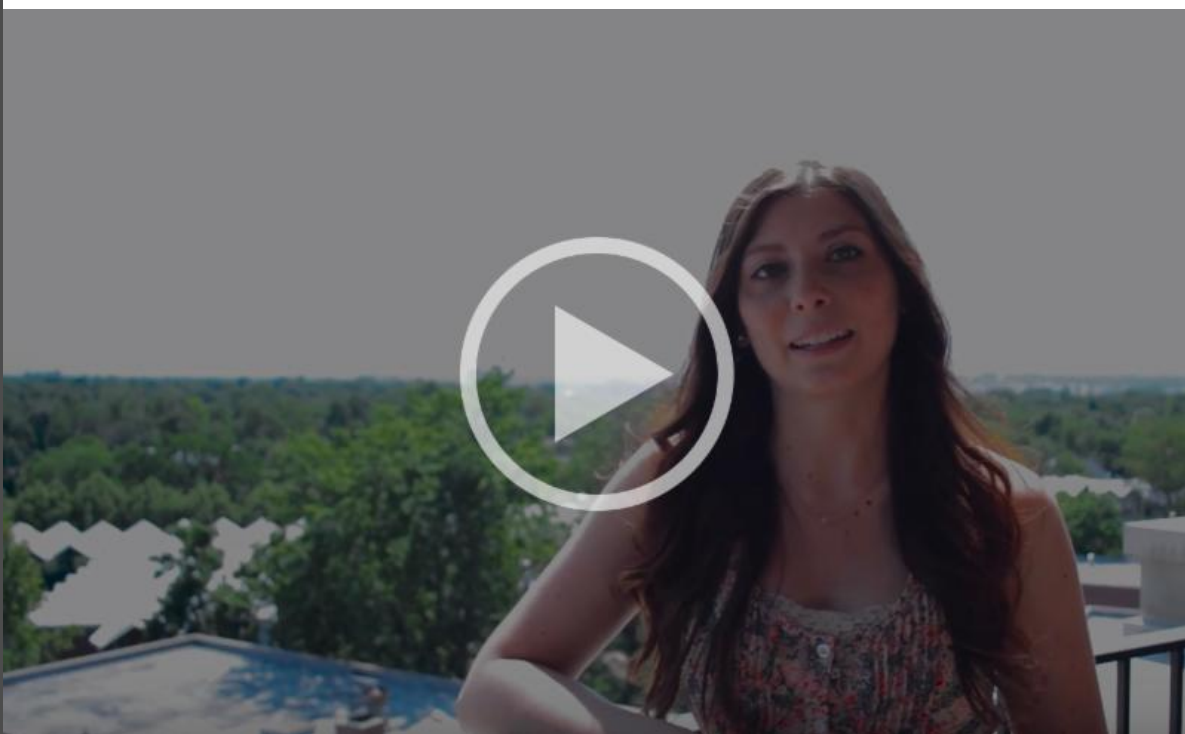
Overall, in a year which will be forever marked by increasing divisiveness, political uncertainty in the US and abroad, shifting policy and changes in public discourse, the Puksta Foundation has continued to be driven by the unwavering values that define our work. We continue with our effort to be a light of hope for all as we demonstrate the strength of inclusiveness and diversity to ignite civic-engagement and empower our change makers for social-justice. We will continue to pave a path built on compassion and love for all as we look forward to 2019 with open arms.

May this year bring new happiness,

John Mulstay
Founder/President

Are You Curious Enough?

2018 DU Puksta Scholar graduate, Allie Grossberg



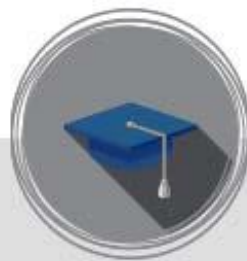
Are you curious enough? This is what one of our Puksta Scholars, Allie Grossberg, asked in relation to the health of your mind and how it relates to your susceptibility to certain degenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's. Click on the video above to learn more about Allie and her Puksta Project.

MSU Commencement Speaker Luis Paredes



Puksta Scholar and Presidents Award Recipient, Luis Paredes, gave the commencement speech for Metropolitan State University. Luis graduated with a Bachelor's of Accounting and a Master's of Professional Accountancy in 5 years. All while working 45 hours a week, buying a home for his mother and father and raising \$8,000 in scholarship funds for his Dreamer brothers and sisters. Way to go Luis!!

Click on the video above to hear his speech, the power of positive impact, finding your motivation and making the right choices for our communities.



Congratulations to our Graduating Puksta Scholars

[Click here to read more about each of our graduating Puksta Scholars](#)

Bailey Cross

Major: Political Science
Project: Gender Issues/Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence

David Purcella

Major: Health & Exercise Science
Project: Disabilities & Education

Eduardo Antonio Hernandez

Kat Goldberg

Major: Communication
Project: Poverty

Ji Hee Yoon

Major: Social Science
Project: Ethnic Studies/Education Equity

Claire Shannon

Major: Communication

Major: Social Work

Project: Youth Development Education

Stephanie Herrera

Major: Biochemistry

Project: Access to higher education
immigration

Project: Prisons/Criminal Justice

Tiffany Tasker

Major: Ethnic Studies

Project: Teaching Finance to underprivileged
youth



"The most significant take-aways from participating in the Puksta program is that change takes time, one person can start a small ripple of social justice and watch it grow, and that together, we can solve social justice challenges, even if we have different perspectives."

- **Miranda Johnson**

Kiri Michell

Major: Nutrition and Food Science
Project: Food Insecurity

Lupe Lopez

Major: Sociology
Project: Immigration

Alondra Palomino

Major: Integrative Physiology
Project: Immigration/Higher Ed

True Apodaca

Major: Ethnic Studies
Project: Civic Engagement

Binh Phan

Major: Ethnic Studies
Project: AAPI model minority myth

Miranda Johnson

Major: Communication
Project: Advocacy for at-risk youth

Miriam Miranda

Major: Political Science
Project: Immigrants/Refugees

Violet Gorrell

Major: Criminal Justice & Criminology
Project: Human Trafficking

"I plan to work for a non-profit working on strengthening anti-human trafficking legislation, or training and encouraging women to run for political office. "

- **Bailey Cross**



Alisya Rodriguez

Major: Ethnic Studies
Project: Youth on the Streets

Jessica Rangel

Major: Journalism and Communication
Project: Prison Justice/Migrant issues

Andrea Bonilla

Luis Paderes

Major: Accounting
Project: DACA/Higher Ed

Allison Grossberg

Major: Molecular Biology, Psychology
Project: Education

Aaqil Anwar

Major: Criminology and Psychology with a
Minor in Communications
Project: Gender Violence education for high
school students

Major: Finance
Project: Islamophobia within Higher Education

[Click here to read more about each scholar](#)

As the year draws to a close, please consider making a gift to the Puksta Foundation

Civic engagement is at the heart of a Puksta Scholarship because it's at the heart of each and every Puksta Scholar. If making a difference in the community is the reason why you decide to give to a cause, we would like to invite you to consider giving to the Puksta Foundation. Our lowoverhead means that 92¢ of every dollar we receive goes to defraying the considerable costs of a college education and—considering all the good that Puksta Scholars do—making the world a better place.

[Donate Now](#)

