

**Mia Isabel
Melendez-Ruiz**

**Certificate in
Global Leadership**



**WESTTOWN
SCHOOL**

Mia Isabel Melendez-Ruiz

Senior
West Chester, Pennsylvania
Entered Westtown in 2005

Global Leadership



Personal Statement

Completing this Deep Dive Certificate has been a very personal experience that I have truly enjoyed. The thing I am most thankful for is the opportunity it gave me to thread together a sequence of projects and opportunities on and off campus that strengthened my self-identity and gave me perspective in terms of my place in the world as a global scholar. Being a Puerto-Rican bred North American growing up in a historically white institution gave me a platform for thinking about my own identity, the duality of my experience and the multiple layers of my identity. Having the opportunity to learn about issues I am passionate about has allowed me to open my eyes and heart and gain a stronger interest in social justice. I will carry all of the aforesaid experiences into my college experience, where I plan to pursue a degree in Psychology in hopes of offering culturally-literate and equitable services to underserved communities.

Coursework Required for the Certificate

Certificate Courses Taken Junior Year

- Contemporary Fiction 1:
Womenspeak
- French 4 Adv
- Modern Latin America Adv

Certificate Courses Taken Senior Year

- Business and the Good Society
- Asian-American Experience Adv
- African-American Experience
Adv

Project Work Required for the Certificate: 1

Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria

- This research centered around the relationship between the US and Puerto Rico.
- It focused on issues of second-class citizenship and crisis response from the US into the commonwealth.
- The focal point was the sequence of natural disasters that took place in 2017: Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.

Project Work Required for the Certificate: 2

The Carbon Monoxide Effect: Neoliberalism, its global reach, and its impact on Latin America

- Focused on Neoliberalism in the world, more specifically in the context of Latin America.
- Based off of Subcomandante Marcos' Essay *The Fourth World War has Begun*.
- Is centered around the effects of hegemony and capitalism that fed into neoliberalism, creating the world we live in today.

Project Work Required for the Certificate: 3

The Asian-American Experience: A testimonial project on the experience of Asian-Americans at Westtown School

- Historiography Research based on testimonial accounts.
- Interviewed Westtown community members on their experiences regarding race and being Asian at Westtown.

Project Work Required for the Certificate: 4

Second Chance: A restorative approach proposal for ex-convicts to re-enter the workforce in dignified ways

- Group research and proposal for a socially-responsible and restorative business model for restaurateurs.
- Restaurant that functions off of non-discriminatory hiring practices and helps ex-convicts reintegrate themselves into society seeing them for who they are and not their past.

Extracurricular Off-Campus Opportunities

- *Westtown à Montreal/Quebec* = Spring of 2018
- National Hispanic Institute's "*The Great Debate*" = Villanova University, Summer of 2018.
- "*Celebración*" = National Hispanic Institute's National Conference, November 2019.

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Extracurricular On-Campus Opportunities

- Head of Latinx Leadership Forum.
- Hosted Julio Cotto, National Hispanic Institute's VP for recruitment at Westtown School.
- Lunch Buddies: Volunteered every other Tuesday at Westtown Lower School during lunch connecting and creating an affinity space for Latinx students and speaking Spanish.

Bringing It All Together

- All of my global leadership certificate projects reflect issues and topics I am truly passionate about. Each experience and project has made me a better person, ally, friend, and scholar. Without these experiences I would not be the person I am today and would not have been able to make such an impact on not only my own community, but those around me as well. I am glad to say that I will continue working on my commitment to building more equitable communities and attacking issues of early childhood education and literacy in underserved communities by working at the Academia Antonia Alonso this summer. The Academic is Delaware's only dual-language charter school and serves a population comprised of 98% students of color. I will also carry this experience forward as I pursue my undergraduate studies at UNC Chapel Hill in the fall.