

Palm Beach State graduate receives Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship

Maria Chapado, who completed her A.A. degree this month, will receive up to \$30,000 per year to complete her bachelor's degree

(Lake Worth, Fla. - May 21, 2012) Maria Chapado, who graduated from Palm Beach State College with an honors diploma this month, has been awarded a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship of up to \$30,000 per year to complete her bachelor's degree.

She is only the fourth Palm Beach State student to ever earn the prestigious scholarship and one of only 60 people selected from around the country this year. The scholarship can be used for tuition, living expenses, books and required fees for two to three years.

"I'm just so happy that I was selected. I was shocked obviously when I found out about it," said Chapado, who plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in international relations. She has not yet decided which university she will attend.



The younger of two children, including a sister who is in college, Chapado said the scholarship is a big boost for her entire family. "It changes not just my opportunities. It changes my entire family's situation. They don't have to worry about me and my education. It's life changing for all of us. My parents can focus on (my sister)."

Chapado, a member of Phi Theta Kappa honor society, completed her A.A. degree with a 3.8 grade point average. She said she has strived for academic excellence all of her life. While a student at John I. Leonard High School, where she graduated in 2010, she took many Advanced Placement classes, and she began taking dual enrollment classes at Palm Beach State during her

senior year. Those courses allowed her to fulfill many credits she would need for her associate degree. At Palm Beach State, she also was a member of Students Working for Equal Rights and ASPIRA student club, and she served as co-editor of "Sabiduría," the Dr. Floyd F. Koch Honors College online peer-review journal.

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation is a private, independent foundation established in 2000 by the estate of Jack Kent Cooke. It aims to help young people with exceptional promise reach their full potential through education. The Foundation's programs include scholarships to undergraduate, graduate and high school students, and grants to organizations that serve high-achieving students with financial need.

Serving more than 51,000 students annually, Palm Beach State College is the largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County, providing bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, professional certificates, career training and lifelong learning. Established in 1933 as Florida's first public community college, it offers more than 100 programs of study at locations in Lake Worth, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Gardens and Belle Glade.

Editor's note: A high-resolution photo of Maria Chapado is attached.

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