

## **Biography of Diana C. Caicedo**

Diana has devoted a significant portion of her young life to her education and service to others. Her father, a former governor and doctor of San Andres Island, Colombia, who is well remembered for his lifetime efforts in helping the most needy in the island, and her mother, Ms. Laura Caicedo, were the first people to instill in her a sense of community responsibility and social awareness. Diana has demonstrated her commitment these ideals in her accomplishments as a student, activist, and exemplary citizen.

She has served in numerous scholastic honor societies, including several while still completing high school, where she attended both the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and the Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities. Throughout high school Diana helped her fellow students by tutoring at-risk and at needy children at Fletcher Elementary School and through the non-profit organization, For Love of the Children. She has helped the homeless by volunteering with the Houston Food Bank and the Youth Ministry Leadership program.

After discovering a passion for ballet, Diana has been practicing her craft since the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Over the years she has performed with Mademoiselles, New Dance Ensemble Modern Dance Company, and more recently the Colombian Folkloric Ballet and South Belt Dance Company. By using her scarce free time to perform with the TALENT on Wheels project at local retirement homes, Diana was able to participate in Adopt-A-Grandchild, forming bonds with the senior citizens in her area.

Now as an International Studies student at the University of St. Thomas, Diana continues her community and social involvement. With the Alternative Spring Break Program she helped to rebuild the devastated homes of hurricane victims in addition to her other obligations.

Diana has learned the value of hard work despite giving so freely of her time over the years. For nearly ten years she has helped perform housekeeping services and worked as a baby-sitter. All of this while maintaining a schedule of commitments that most professional adults would find daunting.

Diana's Colombian heritage is also vital to who she is and how she lives her life. Her commitment to her community is reflected in many of her extracurricular activities, which include working with the Colombianet program that helps solidify and establish links between the Colombian community in Houston with the Colombian Consulate. She has made contributions to Literal, a magazine dedicated to Latin American issues, as an assistant editor. Diana can often be seen at various Hispanic book fairs. Through her work with the Colombians Across Borders, a Colombian student association which she founded, Diana has helped create workshops and outreach programs for local schools as well as

events to raise funds for Colombian children displaced by the civil war. She and her organization also work with the Colombian Student Alliance at the University of Houston on such projects as the Minuto de Dios, a non-profit organization that builds homes and provides education to the most needy in Colombia.

For a young person to have achieved and given so much of herself and her time, Diana stands as a truly remarkable young woman and an example for all Houstonians.