



## **STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Angela Ronces-Cortes '24**

By Phoenix Stoker-Graham '24

Meet Angela Ronces-Cortes ('24), our spotlighted student for this edition of the newsletter! For students in the Music Building, Angela's face is likely a familiar one, as you might have seen her playing cello or helping out Kristen in the Community Music department. What some people may not know is that Angela will be graduating later this spring with a double major in both Music and Hispanic Studies! But that was not always her plan. For her first two years at Puget Sound, Angela intended to just be a Music major, but in her junior year she decided she wanted to expand her learning and took up Hispanic Studies. The decision to double-major has been a good one for Angela, but it has not been easy, as she has needed to devote a lot of time and energy to classes, studying, and extracurricular activities. One of the most helpful ways she has managed her busy schedule is by utilizing support from friends and faculty and improving at prioritizing certain tasks over others.

When Angela made the decision to double-major, she wanted to apply a more ethnomusicological perspective to her learning. Much of the traditional academic teaching of music revolves around Europe, and Angela said she has always desired to explore Latin American musical culture more deeply. Through her Hispanic Studies major, she has had a better opportunity for doing just that. For instance, last summer, she participated in the University of Puget Sound summer research program, studying the protest music of the 1968 Mexico City student movement for her

project. Last summer, she also had the opportunity to visit Buenos Aires, Argentina, where she learned about the Afro-Argentine influence in the creation of tango and explored the musicology institute in the San Telmo neighborhood. None of these great experiences would have been possible, Angela said, without the mentorship from both of her departments.

For her post-graduation life, Angela is currently hoping to spend nine months in Mexico as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant. She is currently a semi-finalist in the interview process and has a big interview this March, so wish her luck! If she were to be accepted into the program, she says one of her goals would be to incorporate music lessons into her teaching. She also is eager to explore the country and learn more about her identity as a Mexican-American. A few more years down the road, Angela plans on applying to a PhD program in ethnomusicology or Latin American history, with the end goal of becoming a teacher.

There are plenty of moments at Puget Sound that have been special for Angela, but none more so than the Symphony Orchestra concert featuring Cuban pianist-composer Aldo López-Gavilán. Not only was Angela part of López-Gavilán's intimate and electrifying performance on stage, but she also had the opportunity to speak with him in Spanish and tell him how much she loved his concerto!

"In my time as a minority musician, I have noticed the historical lack of diversity in repertoire that we program," said Angela. "For me, that spring concert made me feel the importance of community and the power we have to make change."

The School of Music would like to thank Angela for her time and wish her good luck for her last few months of classes and her upcoming Fulbright interview!

