



STUDENTS | April 20, 2022

## **Getting to Know Two Members of the Chavez Class of 2022**

Ever and Jessica have both been attending [Chavez Multicultural Academic Center](#) in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood since they were in pre-k. Now, all these years later, they have just a few months of elementary school left before they attend high school on full scholarships. They attribute this success to the support of their surrounding community.

“Within my neighborhood, I love seeing people do stuff that I want to do in the future,” said Ever. “I feel like I have the potential of doing those things right now, and I’m really happy to have these opportunities that I dreamt of growing up.”

Back of the Yards and Chavez have been instrumental in shaping both of these students, especially culturally and linguistically. They entered Chavez as bilingual in English and Spanish and have been able to progress in both languages, even taking the Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy test earlier this school year.

“I think it’s just really exceptional to see bilingual students like Jessica and Ever see the success that they have had,” said Chavez Principal Barton Dassinger.

“Being in an environment that helps them maintain their ability to speak Spanish is an important foundation for their future goals.”

As they reflect on all the time they have spent in the classrooms and hallways at Chavez, Ever and Jessica start to develop a long list of adults who have helped them excel. There’s Ms. Velasco, Ever’s third-grade teacher whose class he attributes as the starting point for being an exceptional student. There’s Ms. Lancki, Jessica’s sixth-grade math teacher who she knows she will always remember.



And, of course, they believe that school administration—Principal Dassinger and Assistant Principal Joseph Rosen—have been there to support them every step of the way.

“Everyone at Chavez is helpful. They’re always super nice and welcoming,” said Jessica. “They push you to be your best, and that’s why I feel prepared for the new environment of high school.”

Jessica has developed passions for swimming and water polo while at Chavez, noting that she enjoys the challenge of competing alongside all the friends she has

made through these activities. Similarly, she looks forward to her challenging science classes during the school day. Taking interest in science may directly connect to a future career that she has her eye on.

“People have told me that I would be great in the medical field,” said Jessica. “I’m planning to continue working hard, joining as many programs as I can, and helping the community.”

Ever has become known for his welcoming presence at Chavez, and he is always ready to converse with both his peers and school staff. He explains that math is the subject that he likes the most because, while it is challenging, putting in the work to understand the advanced topics he is studying is what helps him learn and grow the most. Outside of the classroom, he is a big fan of visual art.

While Jessica and Ever will graduate from Chavez this year, the experiences that they will take with them will continue to impact them positively long after they walk across the stage and receive their diplomas.

“My journey at Chavez has been absolutely amazing,” said Ever. “I’ve gotten to know very supportive people. I’ve had great friends. Everything is just so good.”

