

Aurora Flores Garcia

Student Success Coach, National Louis University

2018 Surge Fellow

Aurora Flores Garcia has found herself drawn to the field of education since listening intently to her mother tell stories of being a teacher in Nicaragua. As a Latina immigrant, Aurora's experiences as a student in the United States fueled her belief that our education system is a cornerstone of our society, yet how students experience this system is often inequitable. Aurora's desire to increase access and persistence for underrepresented college students led to her current role as a Student Success Coach for the innovative Pathways Program at National Louis University; focusing on the holistic support of predominantly first-generation students of color.



Previously Aurora served as the dynamic Postsecondary Coach at Kelly High School in Chicago's Brighton Park neighborhood, where she built the infrastructure for school-wide post-secondary planning. Through her role at Kelly, Aurora helped thousands of students realize their postsecondary goals and spearheaded initiatives that resulted in record-breaking achievements in college applications, college enrollment and scholarship dollars.

While mission-driven, many of the organizations Aurora encountered continued to subscribe to a deficit-mindset about the students they served, leading to a diminished sense of identity development in students. Her commitment to opposing the inequities in beliefs and opportunities for these students is what contributed to her partnership with the Network for College Success through their Counselor and Coach Collaborative where learned facilitative leadership and her peers named her the 2016 Equity Champion.

Aurora graduated from Chicago Public Schools' Lincoln Park High School International Baccalaureate Program and earned the prestigious Posse Foundation scholarship. She went on to earn her bachelor's degree in Anthropology and Spanish from DePauw University in Indiana before completing her master's degree in Educational Leadership and Policy with a Certificate in Non-Profit Management at the University of Washington in Seattle.

You can usually find Aurora exploring the city of Chicago with her family or in search for a great new taco spot!