

# Diversity *is* Strength



## Christyna Maria Serrano

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*I am a mother, future wife, a scholar-activist and social justice crusader. I am the first person in my family to graduate from college and now am a doctoral student at U.C., Berkeley.*

*I initially accessed higher education because I was an excellent athlete; my goal when I transferred to UC was to be a student-athlete, really less about being a student and more about becoming an Olympic track star. When these dreams changed into becoming a Hollywood actress, I dropped out of school.*

After I had my son, I realized that it would be important to obtain my degree. I appealed to the UC Dean's Conference to be readmitted after receiving all A's in community college as a single parent and working as a waitress. I was successful.

I believe my educational opportunities have been given to me so that *I can make sure that others have equal access to higher education.*

I am also motivated daily to make this world a better place for my son to grow up in.

At UC, *I worked with under-represented students to achieve entry into four year universities.* I spent six months this year as a UCLA Law Fellow and this past summer I was a graduate student assistant for the Transfer Alliance Program assisting first generation community college students with faculty mentor research.

