



A top Scholar - West grad heading to elite school

By Mercy Lopez

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Photo Caption: Greg Medina, a West Las Vegas High School senior, will graduate Saturday. Medina, 18, holds a GPA of 4.04 and plans to attend Neumont University near Salt Lake City. He has received the presidential scholarship for the private university in the amount of \$54,000. He also received a \$10,000 scholarship from the Los Alamos Foundation. Medina, raised by a single mother, decided to attend Neumont despite getting letters from Ivy League universities including Stanford, Yale and Harvard.

Greg Medina can be found in a local coffee shop when he is not tinkering with computers. But he'll have to put his computer tinkering on hold for a few hours on Saturday morning. Medina along with the senior class of West Las Vegas will find themselves walking across the stage on Saturday morning, marking the end of their high school years.

For Medina, walking across that stage will open up the door to an exciting future. Medina, 18, will depart to Neumont University to study computer science in a few months.

“If I have a computer I am usually messing around with it,” Medina said. “I really enjoy programming.”

During his school years at West, Medina has been active in National Honor Society, Key Club and MESA. In addition to taking his high school classes, he has also attended Luna Community College. His grade point average at the local high school is 4.04 — tying him for second place in his class.

At Luna, he has completed 28 credits with the majority of his classes being in computer science. Two weeks ago, Medina tested for a networking certification, and his score was in the top ten in the nation. This certificate allows Medina, the youngest child of a single mother, to start working

on computer networks immediately, but he plans to enjoy the next few months before moving to Neumont — located near Salt Lake City —just having fun.

At Neumont, Medina will study computer science for two and a half years. Medina had lots of options but decided Neumont University was the place he wanted to continue his education.

“That was the only place I applied,” Medina said with a laugh, despite being contacted by Ivy League colleges including Yale, Harvard and Stanford. “We were hitting the whole alphabet when it came to hearing from universities, but not one letter from New Mexico.”

Despite the overwhelming joy of being accepted into the private university, the funding of his education was an issue. The tuition, room and board and fees at the private college would cost the Las Vegas native roughly \$90,000 for the two and a half years.

“When I applied to Neumont they said I was accepted. They also said that when I got my acceptance letter there would be a little something for me,” Medina said.

Well, that little something else was not a shirt, a bumper sticker or a hat. Medina received a letter informing him that he is the recipient of the \$54,000 presidential scholarship to the private university. The presidential scholarship is the top scholarship available to Neumont students. In addition to the presidential scholarship to Neumont, he received a \$10,000 Pete Domenici Scholarship from the Los Alamos Foundation.

“The Pete Domenici Scholarship is supposed to be paid out for four years, but I convinced them to give it to me within the two years that I am at Neumont,” Medina said.

Upon graduating from Neumont, Medina will have a bachelor of science. He said the university has various networks that will hire their students upon graduation with positions starting with at least a \$60,000 per year salary. Medina’s ultimate goal is to work at the National Security Administration.

Medina’s graduation is not the only one within the family this year. His sister Amanda recently graduated from New Mexico Highlands University with a bachelor of fine arts degree.