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Student Connection



CUYAHOGA VALLEY CAREER CENTER

Isabela Melendez

Cuyahoga Heights



Isabela Melendez, a junior at Cuyahoga Heights High School, is making strides in CVCC's Health Careers program under the instruction of Mike Zana. With a deep-rooted passion for the medical field, Isabela's career aspirations are inspired by her family. Her grandmother is a clinical neurophysiologist (EEG reader), her uncle works as an EMT at a steel mill, her aunt is a nurse, and her cousin is also pursuing a career in healthcare. So, when it came time to choose a CVCC program, Health Careers was the perfect fit.

"I love that I can understand my family when they talk about work now—their days, their experiences," Isabela shares. "It's amazing to see the things we learn in class apply in real life." Some of her favorite moments in class are lab days, where students collaborate with the Sports Medicine Exercise Science (SMES) program. These sessions allow them to practice vital skills such as taking vital signs and bedside positioning, while also giving SMES students the opportunity to work on their skills in return.

Isabela's ultimate goal is to become a pediatric surgeon, and she's already laying the foundation for success. Next year, she plans to take advantage of CVCC's work-based learning opportunities for seniors. "My aunt really wants me to work with her, which would not only be great experience but also a blast," she says. She encourages others to consider CVCC, emphasizing the real-world experience gained through hands-on learning. "You get such valuable experience here—whether you go straight into the workforce after high school or continue your education, you're ahead of the game. I'll graduate as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), which gives me a huge head start toward my career."

Beyond her academics, Isabela is actively involved in HOSA (Future Health Professionals), recently securing 1st place in Medical Spelling at the HOSA Regional Competition. She will compete at the HOSA State Conference in April, where she and her classmates have already planned a pickleball tournament for some friendly competition. Isabela is also highly involved at Cuyahoga Heights High School, participating in Art Club, Electrical Strings (playing electric violin), Scarlet Angels, and Drama Club—where she is currently working on The Wizard of Oz musical. A creative and artistic individual, she has even painted two murals at her high school. Outside of school, Isabela stays busy with her church, babysitting, and picking up occasional shifts at Le Petit Triangle Café in Ohio City, a summer job she enjoys. Keep up the amazing work, Isabela!

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