

Latinxs and Hispanics in Mathematical Sciences



Photo courtesy of the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

Dr. Denae Ventura Arredondo

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"Hispanic Heritage Month reminds me that I am not alone. As an immigrant, it is comforting to know there is a strong, talented, and supportive Hispanic community all across the country. Every time I meet another Hispanic person, I'm reminded that we look out for one another, celebrate each other's successes, and help each other through the challenges along the way. It is a time to celebrate where we come from, appreciate the many contributions our community makes, and remember that our different stories are connected by resilience, hard work, and hope."

Dr. Denae Ventura was born in San Luis Potosí, Mexico. From a very young age, she knew she wanted to be a teacher. When she was 11, her family moved to the United States in search of a better life. After returning to Mexico, she had to adapt to what felt like a new country all over again. She continued following her passion for teaching and mathematics by earning a mathematics degree from the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí. She later completed a master's degree in mathematics from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and spent a year teaching at the university level for engineering students, where she realized just how much she enjoyed helping others learn and grow. Wanting to return to research, she earned her Ph.D. in Mathematics from UNAM in Querétaro where she worked in combinatorics and graph theory. She then completed a postdoctoral position at the University of California, Davis, where she discovered the world of discrete geometry and found ways to connect it with her first research love, Ramsey theory. After that, she joined Mount Holyoke College as a Visiting Assistant Professor, where she experienced the unique culture of a liberal arts college dedicated to women and gender-diverse students.

Today, Dr. Ventura is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at California State University, Bakersfield. As a first-generation academic, she is committed to creating a classroom where every student feels supported, challenged, and empowered to succeed. She believes that mathematics should be accessible to everyone and that, with the right encouragement and opportunities, every student can develop confidence in their mathematical abilities. She enjoys both research and teaching and hopes to inspire the next generation of mathematicians while continuing to explore beautiful mathematical problems. Dr. Ventura's research combines combinatorics, graph theory, discrete geometry, and optimization. She is interested in finding patterns in mathematical structures and understanding why certain configurations must always appear. She has mentored many undergraduate and graduate students in research, several of whom have gone on to competitive REU programs, graduate school, and research opportunities.

She works hard to create a welcoming environment where students feel comfortable asking questions, making mistakes, and sharing ideas. She believes mathematics should feel like solving an interesting puzzle, not a race, and encourages every student to develop confidence in their own way. Her mentoring philosophy is simple: every student is different, every student can learn mathematics, and every student deserves someone who believes in them.

Lathisms was founded in 2016 in order to showcase the contributions of Latinx and Hispanic mathematicians during Hispanic Heritage Month, which is celebrated in the United States from September 15 and October 15 every year. During this time, we feature/reveal a prominent Latinx/Hispanic mathematician daily. See all the featured mathematical scientists at LATHISMS.ORG.

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