

Young Mexican woman recognized by National Geographic



Andrea Villarreal, a former Tec Storyteller, has been recognized by National Geographic's Young Explorers 2021. She will share the experiences women face due to the climate crisis through documentaries.

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COURTESY

Mexican **Andrea Villarreal Rodríguez** went from being a very young **reader** of [**National Geographic**](#) to becoming part of this organization that **seeks to protect the planet**.

The **Monterrey campus** student was given the [**Young Explorers 2021**](#) award last month for her work in bringing to light the **experiences of women due to the climate crisis** through her 'Girl Up Storytelling Lab' project.

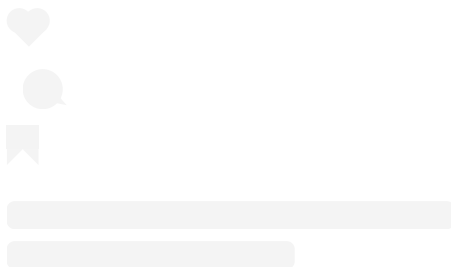
This group, which is part of **National Geographic**, works with others so they can take a stand on current issues and provide **world-changing solutions**.

*"I can't believe **I now belong to the same organization that cultivated my curiosity and love for the planet.** I used to read these magazines in my school library. It was my introduction to the beauty of the world," she said.*

National Geographic awarded Villarreal a **cash prize** after the recognition, **which she will use to support her project.** She plans to launch the pilot **this summer.**



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Another **24 young people** from countries such as **Guinea, Brazil, Indonesia, New Zealand, Kenya, the Philippines, and India** were named [Young Explorers 2021](#) alongside Villarreal.

Aim: speaking up through storytelling

In order to reach **Nat Geo**, [Andrea](#) responded to the “Young Explorers 2021” call with her **Girl Up Storytelling Lab** project, which will consist of women creating documentaries about the **humanitarian impact** of the **climate crisis**.

*“It’s designed to be a program where girls can learn to **identify a story, collaborate with communities, record, produce sound, and edit, all so they can tell their own story,**” she said.*

The work will take place as part of [Girl Up Latin America and the Caribbean](#), an organization which positions women as leaders of the **gender equality movement** and where the 21-year-old is a **regional communication leader**.

Meet young leaders inspiring global change.

Invite your learners to explore our interactive [#StoryMap](#) traveling to the 19 countries these Young Explorers call home and read all about their respective projects.

[#GenGeo](https://t.co/ne5brg6XNA#GenGeo) [#MapMonday](#)
<https://t.co/ne5brg6XNA#GenGeo> [pic.twitter.com/tykSN5XYCg](https://t.co/ne5brg6XNA#GenGeo)

— Nat Geo Education (@NatGeoEducation) [December 20, 2021](#)

*“There will be **20 documentaries created by 20 girls** in which they will explain **how they adapt, mitigate, and propose creative solutions to the climate crisis.**”*

*“The idea is to go to **rural communities** because women there are those who suffer most because of **climate change**. If there are droughts, for example, then they have to walk further to fetch water or it affects how they feed their families,” she said.*

This Tec student explained that when Girl Up provided the space, she wanted to use it to provide participants with the opportunity to **develop tools** in documentary filmmaking by **giving workshops**, as well as providing other activities.

“I think I can make change happen in other ways, and for me that would be through documentary film or other media such as design and photography.”

Andrea, who hails from Monterrey, participated in the **Tec’s StoryTeller program** at the Monterrey campus between **2019 and 2021**. In this program, students **develop their verbal, written, and visual communication skills** by producing and publicizing **the best Tec stories** on its official sites.

*“I was the first StoryTeller in the first semester at the Monterrey campus. I applied when I was still at PrepaTec Eugenio Garza Sada because **I was very excited about the opportunity.**”*

*“The program helped me take my photo and video skills **to another level**. I learned a lot and was surrounded by the most talented and creative people I know,” she shared.*



Passionate about storytelling

Andrea Villarreal, who studies **Communications**, was director of photography for “**A friendly hand**”, a documentary made for the **UN Refugee Agency** ([UNHCR](#)).

The short film was made in 2021 during a **Narrative Documentary** class given by the **Humanities Department of the School of Humanities and Education** at the Monterrey campus.

“I think I can make change happen in other ways, and for me that would be through documentary film or other media such as design and photography,” she said.

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