

CLASS OF 2023

Outstanding Graduate



ALEXANDRA "LEXIE" ORTIZ

College of Health, Education and
Social Transformation

Las Cruces native Alexandra "Lexie" Ortiz always knew she would attend NMSU. She liked the welcoming NMSU community, the fact that NMSU is a Hispanic-Serving Institution, and its generous scholarship assistance as well as a great education.

"I aspire to support, inspire and advocate for the students I serve in the same manner that Dr. Joan Wilson supported me."

—Alexandra Ortiz

Now, Lexie will graduate with a bachelor's in education with a concentration in communication disorders and a minor in counseling and educational psychology, a bachelor's in linguistics, plus a graduate certificate in autism.

While pursuing her studies, she worked part time as a registered behavior technician for children with autism and assisted in autism research in Dr. Joan Wilson's lab. This research

resulted in Lexie co-authoring presentations at the state and national levels. While working in the lab, Lexie applied for and received a summer internship assessing data from evaluations of stroke patients at the Duke University School of Medicine.

Lexie served as vice president of the New Mexico chapter of the National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA), president of the HEST Student Council, student representative on the HEST Executive Leadership Council, and a student government senator. As part of the NSSLHA, Lexie volunteered for local organizations including Jardin de Los Niños, the Children's Reading Alliance and El Caldito Soup Kitchen.

As an NMSU cheerleader, she helped with an after-school program encouraging elementary school students to be physically active.

Lexie is especially grateful for research opportunities she's had in the lab of Dr. Wilson, her mentor and advisor. After graduation, Lexie will start a master's program in speech-language pathology at Towson University in Maryland. After grad school, Lexie plans to come home and advocate for positive change in her hometown. ▲