

NEWS RELEASE

Hispanic Scholar Charges Houston's Energy and Diversity Transition

Atlas Scholars High School Student Isabella Garcia Represents the Next Generation of Energy Changemakers at Houston's Innovation Incubator Greentown Labs

HOUSTON, December 8, 2021/ -- Hispanic student Isabella Garcia represented Houston non-profit [Atlas Scholars](#) on December 7th at [Greentown Labs Houston](#) during an event hosting industry policymakers, entrepreneurs, investors, academics, and business leaders, brought together by [ALLY Energy](#)TM. The current Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Jose W. Fernández, addressed the crowd and answered questions regarding the role of innovators in the energy transition. Following the session, Juliana Garaizar, VP of Innovation of Greentown Labs, led a tour of the facility.

Following the tour, Garcia, a third-year Atlas Scholar and high school senior at Westchester Academy for International Studies, pitched to prospective corporate partners in a rapid-fire presentation. She was joined with leaders from the community non-profits Black Girls Do Engineer, Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation, RedM, and Texas Relief Warriors, emceed by ChampionX Director of Enterprise Brand and Sales Communications, Laura Davidson.

In her appeal for corporations to sponsor and host internship, mentorship, and scholarship opportunities for Houston high school students, Garcia stated, "Data proves that high school alone is not preparing students to be successful in their college and careers; efforts to include more diverse and inclusive workforces that focus on college recruitment are simply too late. The reality is that there are much bleaker outcomes for students of color and those who grew up economically disadvantaged." Data provided by the [Texas2036 Initiative](#) reflects today, 90% of Texas students graduate high school, but only 50% are considered college or career ready. Only 39% of economically disadvantaged high school graduates are postsecondary ready, compared to 61% of non-economically disadvantaged peers. By race, 32% of Black students and 44% of Hispanic students graduate post-secondary, compared to 61% of white students. "Therefore, more needs to be done earlier..." claimed Garcia. "Programs like Atlas Scholars introduce students to the problems that industries are working to solve right now. Atlas Scholars is a transformative development program designed to prepare high school students for the realities of the corporate environment they will encounter once they reach the workforce. We work in partnership with lapetus Holdings to get exposure to real-world projects, professional environments, and potential career paths." Garcia discovered her passion for sustainability during her internship while researching the Paris Climate Change Agreement, which has led to her desire to pursue a career ensuring sustainability across urban cities.

Welcoming its tenth class of scholars this summer, Garcia presented the program's invitation for additional partners, space, and funding. Jenna Moon, Atlas Scholars' Executive Director, stated, "During what has been coined 'the great resignation', the current shortage of workers resulting from massive numbers of employees quitting or accepting early retirement, becoming a partner of Atlas Scholars represents an opportunity for Houston host companies to benefit from a summer internship program, while feeding the pipeline for a diverse new generation of motivated workers to learn about and showcase their workplace. This program is simply the most direct impact a company can make on affecting the quality of diverse prospects they can hire



while transforming socioeconomic disadvantages into opportunities for the next generation of energy leaders”.

About Atlas Scholars

Atlas Scholars is a 501c3 non-profit, founded by Craig Taylor and Tejpal Singh in 2013, that provides mentorship and internship opportunities for motivated students of diverse backgrounds to participate in hands-on professional development. Sponsorship supports the expansion of the program in the form of scholarships, admission-test tutoring, mentorship support, and overall reach of the program for high school students beginning the summer before junior year through their third year in college. To date, Atlas Scholars has benefitted 87 scholars and has awarded over \$450,000 in scholarships. Students from across Houston come together to learn in a competitive and collaborative environment that pushes students to create their own success. The program creates a holistic ecosystem for success through a problem-based learning structure that includes mentorship from industry leaders from a variety of backgrounds and sectors, college and scholarship support, guest speakers, and field trips. Students move on to become leaders at their high schools and universities. 28 high schools and 31 colleges are represented by the current class as well as the 62 Scholars alumni. From the class of 2021, 100% of the Atlas Scholars were accepted into selective universities, two received full ride QuestBridge scholarships, and \$72,000 was awarded in four-year scholarships. Program alumni hold positions with leading companies such as KPMG, Amazon, TC Energy, Crumbl Cookies, Lion Fund Capital, J.P. Morgan and Aveva, to name a few. The program’s plan is continued growth in number of beneficiaries, scope, and years of continuous, integral support to program alumni. Atlas Scholars also aims to widen the reach of the program outside of Houston. For more information on applying for the program, as well as offering workplace tours, speakers, or mentorship, follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) or visit atlasscholars.com.

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Contact: 281-407-2500 info@atlasscholars.org

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