

# GoFundMe Awards \$10,000 in College Scholarship To UCLA and California Lutheran University Students

REDWOOD CITY, Calif., October 20, 2016 -- GoFundMe, the world's largest social fundraising platform, today announced ten recipients of the GoFundMe Scholarship, including Alan Gomez and Bezaleel (Bez) Balan of UCLA and Sandy Gonzalez of California Lutheran University. Ten college or postgraduate students were awarded \$10,000 each to help pay for their education.

[Alan Gomez](#) loved school when he was younger, but after getting mixed up with the wrong crowd in middle school, and losing his close friends in gang shootings, Alan moved to a different school. It was there he joined the P.R.I.D.E program and turned his life around, raising his GPA from 1.8 to 3.8. After high school, Alan attended Cerritos Community College where he obtained a 4.0 GPA and made the Dean's List his last two semesters. Along with his full school load, he pursued extracurricular activities and volunteer opportunities to give back to his community. Alan is now attending UCLA studying Geography.

[Bezaleel \(Bez\) Balan](#) was born in the Philippines and grew up in Guam. Her family then moved to San Francisco so she could pursue her college education. Her parents did cooking, cleaning, and construction jobs to support her undergraduate education at University of San Francisco, where she graduated magna cum laude. Bez is now in her final year of graduate school at the UCLA College of Architecture and Urban Design. Bez has designed an elementary school in Sudan and orphanages in Haiti. She works multiple jobs and maintains straight As in hopes of continuing to pay it forward.

[Sandy Gonzalez](#) moved to the U.S. from Mexico at age 6, only to be abandoned by her mother. Her grandmother, an immigrant herself, fought to become her legal guardian and get Sandy permanent residency so she could stay in the U.S. and continue her education. Sandy is the first person in her family to attend college and is a sophomore at California Lutheran University with a GPA of 3.7.

In three years, Gonzalez will be able to apply for citizenship and will also help her grandmother become a citizen. Sandy says she wants to help those in need so that they never have to feel alone in a big world like she did. She plans to go on to get her PhD in Psychology.

“We’re proud and excited to help these remarkable, determined students achieve their educational dreams,” said Rob Solomon, GoFundMe CEO. “All of us here have been touched by the stories shared by the scholarship winners, and we can’t wait to see how they’ll continue to give back to their communities.”

Over the past several years, students, teachers, and parents are increasingly turning to GoFundMe to raise money for education expenses, including tuition. In fact, in the last two years, over \$100 million has been raised on GoFundMe for education related campaigns, making it the fastest growing category on the platform.

Every month, college campaigns raise more than \$1.5 million on GoFundMe, with the average campaign raising nearly \$2,000. In just the last 12 months, \$20 million has been raised for college tuition on GoFundMe. With the average college graduate in 2016 facing \$37,172 in student loan debt—up 6% from last year—the need is clear.

## About GoFundMe

Launched in 2010, GoFundMe is the world's largest online fundraising platform, with over \$3 billion raised so far. With a community of more than 25 million donors, GoFundMe is changing the way the world gives.

Contact: [press@gofundme.com](mailto:press@gofundme.com)

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### ABOUT GOFUNDME

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