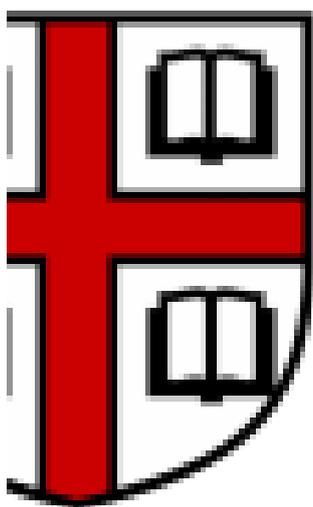
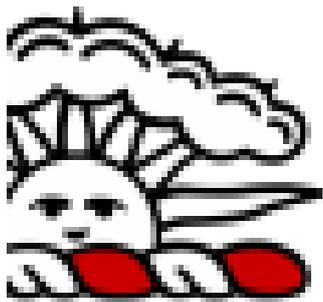


# Through hard work, perseverance, Zepeda-Sanic to finish journey from Guatemala to Ivy League

Josue Zepeda-Sanic is not a typical high school student. He has been accepted at Brown University on a full scholarship.

But it's not just the destination that makes Zepeda-Sanic stand out. It's his journey to get there.

“



# BROWN

I think that's the main thing, that nothing was handed to him, that he worked hard for it, and I think that's what grabbed them.”

– AVID teacher Elida Bonet on why colleges were impressed with Josue Zepeda-Sanic

When he immigrated from Guatemala, Zepeda-Sanic did not know a word of English. While most students would be able to join an English as a second language course, Zepeda-Sanic's school at the time offered no such class. Instead, he joined an English class and learned basic English through total immersion.

AVID teacher Elida Bonet, who has known Zepeda-Sanic his entire high school career, said that he definitely stood out to college admission counselors.

"I think that when you see a story of somebody who has overcome so many obstacles, personal and economic and is able to continue being focused, and I think that's the main thing, that nothing was handed to him, that he worked hard for it, and I think that's what grabbed them." Bonet said. "This was a kid who overcame many obstacles and always had his goal. He always aimed high for himself and he pushed himself to do it."

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Brown was not Zepeda-Sanic's first choice. He was rejected by his two top choice schools, Harvard and Stanford, but he did not let this disappoint him. Instead, Zepeda-Sanic considered the various schools to which he had been accepted (UT-Austin, Tufts, Brown University, Columbia University, the University of Chicago and Georgetown University) and thought about how comfortable he would feel on each campus. He had visited all of them and had narrowed the list of six down to two.

The way he chose Brown over University of Chicago was unconventional.

"I flipped a coin best of three and actually UChicago ended up winning, but I felt really scared and really anxious, so that's how I knew that UChicago wasn't the one," Zepeda-Sanic said. "And then I mentally committed myself to Brown, and I felt good."

Zepeda-Sanic plans to study political science at Brown.

But unlike traditional schools, Brown really stresses concentration areas rather than majors, so he also plans to focus on Latin American studies, to minor in African American studies, and to work on a small concentration in art, specifically 3D sculpture.