



April 13, 2020

Dear Admitted Student,

It was just three years ago when I crossed the stage, hooded by my faculty, and celebrated by my family and peers as I concluded my journey as a doctoral student. I am the first in my family to graduate from college, let alone pursue a graduate degree. It was a proud and joyous moment and certainly one that I am grateful to have made the commitment and sacrifice to pursue. I wasn't alone on my journey, and neither are you.

You may still be weighing your options and deliberating if the University of Arizona is the right place for you to start your graduate school journey. Your best bet is to make a decision that is in your best interest and aligned with your needs.

I know that everything about the world seems uncertain right now, but it's evident that you are passionate about pursuing a graduate degree in your field of interest. You likely have researched the UA and perhaps have visited the campus, but what you may not know is that me and so many others are wholeheartedly committed to supporting you in realizing your academic and career-related goals. In many ways, your journey becomes our journey.

I actually chose the University of Arizona seven years ago...not to go to school, but to work. I took a big leap of faith, left everything that was familiar to me, and moved with my family from California to Tucson, Arizona. The transition took some getting used to, but I have to say that it's been the biggest worthwhile adventure of my career and I'm happy to be here. I now serve as the Assistant Vice Provost for Hispanic Serving Institution Initiatives and enjoy working across the entire university to ensure that the UA is an inclusive and supportive place to learn and work.

As you come to make your decision, just know that there are people just like me at the UA who are thinking, organizing, and positioning their efforts to support you in achieving your academic goals. I would be happy to connect you to colleagues who can answer any pending questions that you may have. You can email me at marlafranco@email.arizona.edu using the subject line GRAD SCHOOL.

In the meantime, congratulations on being admitted to the UA! I hope that our paths cross.

Be well and stay healthy and hopeful.

Sincerely,

Marla A Franco

Marla A. Franco, Ph.D.
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