

## **Moses Ramirez**

### *Blog 1 - Departure:*

I'm excited and scared but simultaneously I feel confident. I come from a very low-income background and top of that I'm former foster youth. I'm extremely humbled and grateful to be given this opportunity. Not many former or current foster youth can say they had the privilege of such a grandiose experience. Being a cultural anthropology major, this trip will also be useful in my future academic endeavors. The trip will definitely be lucrative in my experience as an anthropologist, but in all honestly I'm not going on the trip purely for anthropology or academic motives.

This trip means a lot more to me than that. I am going because I know in the Kenyan desert there will be no light pollution, meaning I'll have a clear view of the stars. This will be a perfect opportunity to stargaze. Stargazing is extremely relevant because I'm minoring in Astronomy for the purposes of finding the most beautiful objects in the universe. My motivation for searching the universe for these objects of captivating beauty began when my mom passed away in 2014. In my opinion, my mom is the most beautiful anything in the universe, but because she is gone my heart longs to find something that can imitate her beauty. I realize limiting my search to Earth would make this task impossible, but if I looked to the stars it may be possible to find something that remotely resembles her beauty. I hope once I can fully experience and appreciate the light of the stars, maybe then I'll be a step closer to filling the hole in my heart that exists because of her absence. This isn't just a study abroad trip; this is my chance to finally see something in person that I could relate to the presence of my mother. I would travel to the ends of the planet for that opportunity.