

## MARIBEL CAÑAR

Quito

### How many siblings do you have?

I have two sisters (Daniela and Lorena) and two brothers (Carlos and Mateo).

### Do you have any pets?

I have a dog named Scott.

### What are your favorite pastimes or hobbies?

Spend time alone, stroll in nature and get to know new places.



### Studies

#### Academic program Education

**School name:** Private Technical University of Loja - UTPL

**Graduation:** 2024

#### What work will you pursue with your program?

I want to be a teacher at a bilingual institution in an English-speaking country.

### The Foundation

I was a student at CMT more or less in the third grade. I had health classes; usually, we had classes with the teacher Angelica, but one day she didn't come to class and in her place was someone sweet-looking and very warm who had a guitar. Here was Margarita, she gave us health classes; she sang to us with her guitar; she used a gecko puppet. I thought it was a crocodile, but later I learned it was a gecko. Also she spoke very good Spanish, so it was amazing to me. We always sang a song about cleanliness. I also remember that her classes were always vivacious, with music and stories. Until one day we did not see her again. Then sometimes I remembered her classes that were super fun.

I didn't know Mike very well; I saw him sometimes at CMT and I knew he was my sister Lorena's teacher, in the subject of mathematics. She said he was very good, and that he was passionate about mathematics. Sometime later we withdrew from CMT. Many years went by until I entered the university and I had a little more contact because Margarita and Mike had contact with Lorena, so we saw them sometimes, usually at picnics. I remember that one day while I was studying my preparatory level for my career in Chemical Engineering, I remember that Margarita and Mike invited me to a McDonald's where they asked me how I was doing, both in my personal life and in my studies. I remember I was not doing very well in college; I was very sad because I had difficulties with mathematics, which wasn't my forte, and I wasn't very good at mathematics. But after leaving that aside, we ordered a small breakfast and talked for a while. I remember Mike was telling me he was reading a book about birds and Margarita was showing me pictures of the adventures they had already had in Quito; it was a very emotional moment. Then we went to a nearby bookstore to buy books on calculus and mathematics, books to help me with my difficulties. That day was incredible for me, I had my classes in the afternoon so I entered from the first hour very excited. From that moment, they told me I could count on their unconditional support.

They have supported me greatly, from the moment we met until today. I remember the first time they helped me with books, which helped me a lot especially a book of mathematics and geometry to understand hard mathematics, I also remember when I wanted to be a police officer and they supported me throughout my process to train, even when I injured my foot by jogging on uneven terrain, as well as the tests that I needed to pass, but unfortunately that opportunity was not given and I had to abandon that path.

DEOF has not only supported me financially but also on an emotional level. I remember that after having failed in these two paths; I felt super bad. I left that path and started working full time, leaving the education path aside. It was then when Mike and Margarita wrote to me again, and they suggested to me the idea of not leaving education aside since it opens many doors. By then I was going to quit my job and dedicate myself to study, but I couldn't because I already represented economic support in my family, and leaving it would bring some difficulties. This idea I told Margarita and Mike. So they suggested I study online where I could work and study at the same time. I found some universities, which were adjusted to that modality. Then we concluded I would enter UTPL. In the beginning, I was very afraid. I thought that between university and my job, I couldn't do it all, but I did it and today I'm in my third semester, in the career of teaching.

The most memorable moment for me was seeing them again and I'm referring to the fact of seeing them up close talking with them about your life, your experiences. Receiving classes with Mike about geometry for me was something very memorable because it impressed me how he developed in the subjects with numbers and the very noble gesture of elaborating a whole manual for me where he explained step by step how to understand the "algebraic language". As well as listening to Margarita's stories, they are so interesting and with her touch of warmth. Another memorable moment is when I failed in my first two paths.. DEOF never abandoned me, they always reminded me that even if the situation is difficult, I can count on them, with their help and support. DEOF means a great opportunity to be part of a great family, a family made up of people with excellent values, who support you in difficult moments and adversity, who listen to you and encourage you, and who celebrate with you in those moments of triumph.

#### **2024 Update:**

I have finished my studies at the Private University of Loja, I am waiting for the date in April when I will soon graduate. This makes me very happy because, after four long years, I will obtain my Bachelor's degree in Basic Education. To gain experience in the work field, I attend the Seneca Private School, a truly admirable institution, since it has a great commitment to welcoming students with special educational needs, in addition to regular students. They educate them with love, respect and professionalism. I have been there for approximately five months, which have been a lot of learning and very nice experiences with the students. I hope that by obtaining my degree, I can get a job where I can develop and demonstrate my skills as a teacher and help educate many students. My dream is to be a teacher in a small town in the mountains of my country.