

# Nontraditional path to degree inspires ASU grad's mission to expand access to health education

**First-generation transfer student Chloe Reyes to use intersection of technology and psychology to reach others**

By Kimberlee D'Ardenne, ASU News  
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**Editor's note:** This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [fall 2025 graduates](#).

When Chloe Reyes graduates from Arizona State University, it will mark the culmination of a nonlinear trajectory that required balancing taking classes part time while working full time to help financially support her family. When Reyes transferred to ASU and joined the [Department of Psychology](#), part of [The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences](#), as a full-time undergraduate student, it was the first time in the 10 years since she graduated high school that she had allowed herself to go all in on her education.

As she walks across the stage this December to receive her BS in psychology, it will also mark a beginning. She plans to continue work she started at ASU, of expanding access to information about health and health care to those who need it. She intends to attend medical school to become a physician patients trust and who makes them feel comfortable.

“Growing up, I saw how much fear and confusion families can feel when they do not understand what is happening with their health or cannot access care. That feeling stays with you, becomes part of how you move through the world,” she said. “It should not be that way. Health education is not just information. It is safety and dignity, the feeling of knowing that your life and your story matter. If we could give that to more people, especially in underserved communities, the impact would last far beyond this generation.”

Reyes, who will be the first in her family to graduate from college, described how from the moment she arrived on campus, she found mentors who believed in her, student communities where she belonged and research labs that challenged and fascinated her. While at ASU, Reyes worked in the [Embodied Games Lab](#), led by Research Professor [Mina Johnson-Glenberg](#), where she helped write two grant proposals that were funded, and oversaw a research project creating and assessing virtual reality games. She also participated in a radiology internship with Mayo Clinic, where she helped analyze incorporating artificial intelligence into patient care and workflow.

“ASU changed the way I see myself. I used to feel behind because my path was not traditional, but being here has shown me that growth does not need to be fast to be meaningful,” she said.

We spoke with Reyes to learn more about her time at ASU and her goals after graduation.

**Question: What inspired you to study psychology?**

**Answer:** Psychology made me curious about challenges people face, choices they make and ways they try to move forward. Studying it taught me to value the experiences of people from different backgrounds and to look beyond my own viewpoint.

**Q: What research experiences impacted you as a student?**

**A:** In the Embodied Games Lab, I learned how to design studies, collect data, run participants and communicate findings. I am also co-designing a relationship building video game with the [Sanford Harmony Institute](#), which focuses on helping students practice communication and relationship-building skills. This collaboration blends psychology, education and creative design, and I am grateful to contribute to work that will reach classrooms and families.

I received two impactful research grants while at ASU. The first was a \$25,000 PacVec Training Grant, which supported a full research project that I co-led from start to finish in the Embodied Games Lab, and I was also awarded a [Psi Chi Undergraduate Research Grant](#).

**Q: Were you involved in any student groups?**

**A:** Leading Minorities in Medicine has been one of the most meaningful parts of my time at ASU and taught me the value of representation, connection and showing up for both our members and our community. Our group supports students who want to enter health care and may not always see themselves represented in those fields. Last year, we won a \$2,500 grant for the “Liquid to Gold” project at the [Change the World showcase](#). The initiative focused on addressing health disparities in underserved populations through sustainable practices, and it reminded me how much impact a student group can have when we work together.

**Q: Did you benefit from any specific scholarships or grants during your time at ASU?**

**A:** I am very grateful for the scholarships that supported me throughout my time at ASU because they gave me the financial room to stay enrolled and support my family. These included [The College Alumni First-Generation Scholarship](#), the [John D. Rockefeller First Generation Scholarship](#), the [Jenessa Shapiro Undergraduate Research Scholarship](#) and the Gretchen M. Bataille Internship Scholarship. I was also a two-time recipient of the Keep Your Chin Up GK Legacy Scholarship, and I received the Cinthya Felix Scholarship for my commitment to equity in health care.

There were moments when I questioned whether I could afford another semester or if I should step back to work more hours. It often felt like I was choosing between school and stability. Scholarships and grants did not just help with tuition. They eased pressure at home, gave me breathing room and made it possible to stay in school without sacrificing everything else. All of this support made it possible for me to take on meaningful opportunities instead of choosing only what I could afford at the moment.

Looking back, the financial struggle shaped me in a way I am grateful for. It taught me strength, patience and how to show up even when things are uncertain. It also made every milestone feel real and earned, because I know how hard I worked to get here.

**Q: What advice would you give current students?**

**A:** Give yourself permission to grow at your own pace. Everyone's path looks different. It is OK to take longer, to start over or to take a different route than the people around you.

Also, ask for help when you need it. Mentors, advisors and supportive communities can make a huge difference, and you do not have to navigate everything alone. Some of the biggest opportunities in my journey came from reaching out, asking questions and letting people guide me.

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*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

**Text image(s)**



Chloe Reyes, courtesy photo





Chloe Reyes participates in a burr hole and cranial plating activity during a Underrepresented Women in Neuroscience workshop hosted by Mayo Clinic. Courtesy photo



The student-run group Minorities in Medicine supports students who want to work in health care. Chloe Reyes (front row, fourth from left) led the group this past year. Courtesy photo