

Mar Giner-Calabuig



"Ever since I was a child, riding scooters with a smile on my face, my family knew I was a free spirit. I'm from Denia, in the Spanish province of Alicante, and the only one from my family to have left home. At 16, I came to the U.S. for a year-long foreign exchange program and fell in love with this country. So I'm not 100% sure where 'home' is.

I came to Yale because my PI in Alicante needed someone for a short stay in a lab abroad. Even though I was the youngest person in the lab, I was the only one who wanted to travel, so they picked me. It was to be a 4-month stay, but I really loved my supervisors & what I was learning. I felt much more productive here, so I found ways to stay even longer-I'm on track to finishing my PhD. I'll graduate from the University of Alicante with an international degree & will become a postdoc afterwards. I was doing some analysis for the labs in Spain while at Yale; my PI back home didn't want me to leave, but he knew it was selfish to ignore the fact that I had better career possibilities here.

I feel I've grown so much by meeting so many career-oriented people here. I used to live in an international house with 13 other med students. Learning how driven and perseverant they are helped me realize being here is a huge opportunity, and I should give my best in everything I do.

Being here alone, I also learned to care for myself, and find my own space & time-which is something many of us forget to do. At home, it happens less often because I have social and family obligations. Here, you're able to choose what you want to do & find yourself enjoying unexpected activities. For me, it's hiking and being outdoors.

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I'm also a foodie; I love to cook, and try different cuisines across New Haven's restaurants.

If I could give advice to my 10-year-old self, I would remind her to not be so self-conscious, and to take care of and love herself a little more.”- Mar Giner-Calabuig, YMS #HumansOfOISS

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