

Monica Rosas

Trainee

LIFT

A typical day for high school student Monica Rosas consists of class in the morning and work in the afternoon. She works two part-time jobs, and some days she has cross country after school.

“I try to keep a very tight schedule,” said Rosas. “One of my part time jobs schedules me almost all the time. At my other job, I just pick up shifts whenever I can.” The Saturday of our conversation, Rosas had a cross country meet in the morning, and worked in the afternoon.

As active as she is, her parents ensure that she knows which portion of her time is the most important. “In my house, school always comes first. And will always come first,” explained Rosas. “So if work is too much, I will back off so I can focus on my education.”

Prior to joining LIFT in July 2020, she became aware of the advantages to working in manufacturing through her dad, who assembled car seats for Lear. Though her father is now retired after working 12 years in the industry, Rosas finds inspiration in him. She knew that companies employed people and robotics to create products and equipment for a variety of industries. The moment she joined LIFT, she was excited to learn skills that she could use to build things.

“The training was very similar to what I experienced in school, because I was in a welding program over there, too,” described Rosas. “It was the same teacher. I like learning from this teacher, because he was very informative. He would show us everything in the book, but when the lessons were over, we would go to the machine. We’d learn everything and see everything hands-on. It made learning a lot more fun.” Rosas

believed that the practical work with the machines helped her to remember the theoretical work from class.

It also helped that she had been in a welding program at her high school since her junior year, which made it easier for her to pick up on the training at LIFT. “I would say it took me about two weeks to adjust,” she recalled. After she became comfortable with the program, the defining moment came when an industry partner came to speak to the class about career development. The presentation gave her ideas for what she could do after high school.

“I really love welding, and I knew I wanted to do that as a career, but I didn’t know which route to take. Just hearing people come in, like the rep from Miller Electric, talking about what he did inspired me to want to be a welding engineer,” said Rosas, who plans to get an associates degree at Washtenaw Community College. “It just excited me to know that there was that option to go into.” Rosas loves the idea of welding one day and being in the office the next.

Where does Rosas see her career leading to? The automotive industry. “I’ve always liked cars, because they seem really cool to me. When I was picking my classes out my junior year, I didn’t know if I wanted to take welding or the auto body shop,” she explained. “Learning more about welding, how welding is a big part



of automotive, and seeing other kids from the auto body shop helped me to see I can do what they do too.”

If you think the clarity of vision that Rosas has for her career development is impressive, wait until you know how far she’s willing to go to achieve her goals. One of her teachers helped her see things clearly. “I hope to get into a large company. With my Hispanic background and being bilingual, I will be able to travel out and help other companies,” said Rosas. “There’s a lot of automotive companies in Mexico, so sending me out there to help communicate with these workers and show them what to do is what I hope to do.”

When asked if entrepreneurship is something that she may want to pursue, Rosas is not sure, but is not prepared to rule it out. “A lot of my family run their own businesses. My grandma, she has her own store, and my aunt has her own tech company. So this is something I will feel competent in doing because of the support of my family, and knowing what business is like.”