

American Ethnic Studies - Native American Studies

Erika Cruz

Submitted by Melinda Gándara

It is with great pleasure that the American Ethnic Studies Department honors Erika Cruz as our outstanding student in Black Studies. Erika has a passion for theater and her commitment to increasing BIPOC representation in cultural productions is inspiring. She wrote "Extraordinarily Ordinary," a play based on the true story of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, scored the music, and created an interactive experience that resonates with diverse audiences. Her goal is centered on highlighting underrepresented histories, fostering a sense of belonging within cultural spaces, and encouraging cross-cultural understanding. Erika aims to deepen our knowledge of how storytelling can promote diversity and inclusivity in cultural institutions. It is also a reminder that all aspects of life can be sung. Please join us in celebrating her talents and gifts.