

## Karla Robles

Karla Robles is very excited to be returning this fall to her alma mater: "I am very grateful to be employed at Palatine High School! I will be teaching AP Spanish and Spanish for native speakers and coaching tennis. My time at Palatine shaped me and guided me to the various paths that led me to be the person I am today. As an undocumented woman of color, I am happy to contribute back to the community that did so much for my family and me. "The journey back to Palatine High School was not always an easy one. It began far away: "Education was always the main propeller for me and my family. We knew that through education, we could acquire a better life, one that we could not acquire in Mexico. Therefore, education for me was the only way to better myself and my future generations."

Karla's greatest challenge came years later during her second year at Loyola University after her initial two years at Harper College. As she explains, "I was living in a single and had various events that happened that lead to me losing motivation for my school work for the first time. I then came to realize the importance of mental health. I had been keeping my emotions and negative thoughts to myself so much that my body could no longer handle it." Karla feels that difficult time in her life helped her to grow as a person. She now speaks to her students about the importance of mental health and self-care.

Although her mentor had to withdraw from the program, she never felt alone as other mentors frequently checked in to shine light on various opportunities. She feels grateful to have been a part of the EB 211 community and fully appreciates its role in enabling her to walk across the stage as a first-generation student.

Karla is also grateful for the family members, teachers, mentors, and friends who have guided her along the way. As she sees it, "Because education meant so much, I decided to become a teacher. I want to be a resource for students and their families. I want them to know I am here to represent them. They will soon grow and continue representing their communities to fight for a more equitable and just society.