

Paola Martinez wonders if there is any organization as helpful as EB 211 that would have helped her navigate the challenges of getting into law school. While Paola Martinez didn't continue with her connection to EB 211, this Palatine High School graduate is grateful for all the guidance she received during her first year at Illinois State University.

"It was pretty cool, being around people who could help me in the process of getting into college and those first months at ISU," recalled Paola. "But as the year went on, I wasn't sure what to talk to with my mentor, so we drifted apart."

Graduating with a degree in criminal justice and sociology and a 3.3 grade point average, Paola spent her last semester as an intern with a law firm in Cicero. She now works at a Schaumburg law firm as a legal assistant.

Paola wants to become an attorney, focusing on immigration issues. It's a personal quest for this Palatine resident who watched as her parents and other relatives struggled through the labyrinth of immigration proceedings for many years. She understands the anxiety and fear families live with and the emotional difficulties they endure.

"I saw my parents working with lawyers who really didn't care and were only interested in money," Paola said. "They were always afraid they'd get scammed and if they did, they had no legal recourse. I want to make a difference in people's lives, to become a lawyer who cares."