**Welcome to Rice! Tell us a little about who you are. What are some of your hobbies, interests, and favorite things?**

Hi! My name is Iñaki Arango. I'm a freshman from Buenos Aires, Argentina. I haven't yet decided what I want to study. I am between Computer Science, Economics and Cognitive Science. I have been working in a VC firm for the last (gap) year and all the companies I have seen really opened my eyes in terms of areas of interest. I find Decarbonization, Computational Genomics and socially impactful applications for AI specially interesting.

Outside of school my favorite thing is to hang out with friends. What we do isn't as important as spending time together. I like going out to eat and also doing more active things, like playing golf or padel.

I also like to go to the gym, it helps me clear my mind and feel generally better, both mentally and physically.

**Why did you choose Rice University?**

I have two cousins who were seniors at Rice when I was applying (the ones in the picture). They told me many wonderful things about their experience. One that stood out to me was the residential college system. I have grown a great deal from being on a specialized track and with a cohort in my high school and I look forward to a tight-knit environment within which to form meaningful relationships with students in all areas of study. Another aspect I liked was that Rice's small size encourages the development of close relationships with faculty. I have benefited enormously from the mentorship of my teachers in the past and hope to engage with professors at Rice in similar ways.

Research/Initiative-wise, I was really attracted to the Lilie Lab, since I have always been interested in entrepreneurship and was, and still am, creating my own recycling startup.

**What are you most looking forward to this year at Rice?**

What I am looking forward to the most is meeting new people. I was surprised during the initial intro calls with other students by the degree of diversity in terms of origin, culture, language and interests. I want to be exposed to as much of this as possible to expand horizons and change the way I look at things. Would love to meet you too, if you're ever available.

**What message do you have for the Rice donors who made your scholarship(s) this year possible?**

First of all, I want to thank you very much. You are the reason I am able to not only come to Rice, but also to America. I decided to come here because I saw it as the "land of opportunity", and have really enjoyed my experience so far, the work I'm doing and the people I've had the pleasure of meeting.

I would like in the future to do what you have done, and enable the students that come after me to afford this education. I encourage you to read the following thread I came across a couple days ago (https://twitter.com/kevinleeme/status/1422025247105060867?s=21). It made me reflect about all the people that have supported me all the way to where I am now in my journey.