

## 2024 HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST – 3RD PLACE

### Suture Your Future

By Ariana Miranda

I love needles. Their versatility is incredible. From creating vibrant designs out of piles of yarn to providing life-saving medical treatment, the power a simple metal rod holds is astounding.

Each needle I own represents a different phase in my life.

When I was 6, I was given two small pink knitting needles. During the summer my parents went to work so I stayed with my grandmother, Serafina; wherever she went I followed, and whatever she did I copied.

*“¿Qué estás haciendo?”*  
( *what are you doing?* ) I asked her

*“Estoy tejiendo, ¿quieres que te enseñe?”*  
( *I am knitting. Do you want me to teach you?* )

Knitting requires using two or more knitting needles working together to create something out of yarn. My grandmother held my hands in hers and showed me how to knit. While she was cooking dinner, I would sit on her stool, and start knitting, just like her. When I was first learning, I would constantly ask for guidance and be terrified of ruining our creation. Row by row, we completed them together.

After my grandmother left America, those needles became meaningful to me. Whenever I use them, I am reminded of our time together. I remember the sound of metal rods constantly clicking against each other and the smell of her *humintas*—a Peruvian cornbread wrapped in corn husks—coming from the oven. It was truly perfect.

*“Tengo dos agujas de tejer, uno para mi y uno para ti.”*  
( *I have a pair of needles, one for you and one for me.* )

Crochet needles and hypodermic needles are currently my most used needles. A crochet needle stands on its own, a singular tool used to create a diverse array of new things. I taught myself how to crochet during the global pandemic, when navigating a new and unknown normal, isolated from both friends and family. They have become a personal talisman of mine representing my growth and development from constantly depending on my family, especially my grandmother, to an independent teenager. Although a crochet needle isn't alone, it's independent and capable of creating so many things. While many people fear hypodermic needles, to me they represent healing and my future career path in the medical field. This powerful yet simple needle is used every day to save and protect lives, with vaccines, EpiPens, and more.

Suture needles are the needles that I strive to use in my future career. Only specially trained medical professionals can properly wield them. They literally put people back together

with a needle while using incredible technique.

Needless to say, needles have constantly been a part of my life. They have been with me in the past, present, and hopefully the future. They have been a physical reminder of how I've developed as a person.

No matter the distance, I know my grandmother and I will always be connected through the needles she passed down to me, and as a first generation American, someday I will pass down needles of my own.