

Sara Rubiano, 2023 Pride Award Winner, Is a Dreamer Who Refuses to Live in the Shadows; Studied Public Policy at Rutgers

Sara Rubiano, a 2023 graduate of Rutgers University-New Brunswick, was named that year as a recipient of the Riki Jacobs Livingston Pride Award given by the Livingston Alumni Association at Rutgers.



Rubiano and her family fled from Colombia when she was 2 and found a haven in South Brunswick, New Jersey, according to *Rutgers Today*. The family came without documentation, and Rubiano qualified for certain legal protections under the policy known as Deferred Action for Late Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Rubiano is the first woman in her family to graduate from college or high school.

"I risked everything, every day to remain in this country, and after the Deferred Action for Late Childhood Arrivals passed in 2012, I refused to live in the shadows," she wrote in her Pride Award application essay. "DACA was here, and it changed my life. I put my passions for advocacy and government to test by working to implement a dynamic civic education workshop to foster engagement outside of the classroom and into the polling centers."

At Rutgers, she earned a bachelor's degree in public policy with a minor in economics from the School of Arts and Sciences and Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers-New Brunswick. In college, she studied the effectiveness of physical and nutritional literacy curricula in K-6 populations as the student research director with the New Jersey Healthy Kids Initiative.

In the 2020 midterm elections, she created a step-by-step video in Spanish and translated voter registration information with the Eagleton Institute of Politics, where she served as a Darian Civic Engagement Fellow.

Rubiano was one of only 18 members of the 2023 class of Rutgers' elite Cap and Skull Honor Society. Part of the test was singing Rutgers' alma mater. She also participated in student leadership programs as a Douglass Residential College BOLD Woman and as a member of the Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity.

Rubiano began her career with J.P. Morgan Private Bank shortly after graduating from Rutgers. In August 2025, she was promoted to an associate with the bank's alternative investments group.