

A photograph of Katya Echazarreta, the first Mexican woman astronaut, speaking at a podium. She is wearing a blue flight suit with "BLUE ORBIT" written on the sleeve. The background is a dark blue curtain. The text "First Mexican woman astronaut reveals keys to reaching space" is overlaid on the image in white.

## First Mexican woman astronaut reveals keys to reaching space

*“Being **prepared** and ready with the necessary work experience, education, and training (and) the **love** I have for **what I do** and **helping others.**”*

These were the words of **Katya Echazarreta**, the **first Mexican woman** and the **youngest American to journey into space**, as she talked about **why** she was selected to go into space.

The **engineer** visited [Tecnológico de Monterrey’s Cuernavaca campus](#) to **share her experience**, where she also received an **award** from [Ingenia](#): Women in Engineering and Science at Tecnológico de Monterrey.

*“They were interested in the **work I do** with **women** and **girls** interested in **science and engineering.**”*

Katya was selected from among **7,000 applicants** from **100 different countries** to participate in a trip at speeds of more than 3,200 km/h, exceeding 100 kilometers in altitude, which in 10 minutes **changed the course of her life.**



## Reaching space at the age of 26

Katya was born in **Guadalajara, Jalisco**, and at just **26 years old**, she traveled to **space** in the **New Shepard** capsule, which lifted off from **Texas** at **8:26 a.m.** on June 4 for **[Blue Origin's NS-21](#)** mission, carrying a crew of **6 astronauts**.

She began by studying **electrical engineering** at the University of California (**UCLA**) and later worked at **NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL)**, participating in the **[Perseverance Rover](#)** and **[Europa Clipper](#)** missions.

About her **journey to space**, Katya revealed that she knew it was going to be **important**, particularly for **women** interested in **science and technology**, but she didn't expect so many Latino girls and young women to be inspired.

*"This has given me a **huge responsibility** that I'm ready to take on and do something about."*



## What motivated her to achieve her goals?

Ever since **she was a child**, she always had the **goal of going beyond the sky** and **motivating women and minorities** interested in the fields of **science and engineering**.

*“What do you want to do about it? That’s what I always ask myself.”*

*“Which is why when I was in **college**, I would put a **W on my hand** (to remember her question), because what do we do when we feel defeated? We look downwards. So, whenever I’d feel that way and **I would see it**, it would really **help me to carry on**.”*

Katya encouraged those present to act to realize their dreams.

*“Many people are **afraid of their dreams**, and that’s why I decided to **take the important step** of not only wishing for it but **doing something about it** to try to **achieve it**.”*



## Katya's tips for girls and women

While interacting with outstanding students and project participants from the campus, she shared a wide range of tips for addressing the challenges faced by women in their professional lives:

1. Women cannot be mediocre. They must be **spectacular** next to men.
2. To study engineering, **women must be strong enough** (and it shouldn't be like this) to handle any challenge.
3. Go from wanting something **to doing something about it.**
4. You don't have to be perfect or be the best, you have to **find that love for why you're doing it.**

## 5. Understand who you are and what you're worth.



### Her visit to the Tec's Cuernavaca campus

Katya's presence at Tecnológico de Monterrey was part of a special **trip** to the **Municipality of Xochitepec**, Morelos, **where her family is from**, in collaboration with Mayor Roberto Gonzalo Flores Zúñiga.

During her visit, she had the opportunity to **talk about her experience** to an auditorium full of students and the community in general, where **she signed autographs** and **took photographs** with the attendees.

The School of Engineering and Sciences gave her recognition through **Ingenia: Women in Engineering and Science**, an initiative **promoting gender equality** and the **participation of girls and young women in STEM** careers and subjects.

*"Katya's visit was very moving. Without a doubt, **it will leave a mark on our future engineers who have her example of work and perseverance to follow big dreams,**" said*

engineer David García, professor and the organizer of the visit.

Katya **toured the laboratories** of the campus' **flagship projects**: PrepaTec's [Iktan Roving Team](#), **TecXotic**, and **Lebotics**, where the students told her about their **achievements**.

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