This is me at the left. I was at the X-STEM Symposium in Washington DC, competing against other schools in a Robotics competition.

The first Latina astronaut, Dr. Ellen Ochoa said "Don't be afraid to reach for the stars." Indeed, I wonder what would become of this world if men and women didn't dare reach for the stars.

My name is Karina Romero, I am originally from El Salvador. When I moved here to the U.S. at 8 years old, I was fascinated by how advanced technology was here. In school, I struggled to learn English, so I sought refuge in the one class I could understand: Math. Since then, I have loved learning about Math and Science. Someday, I want to become either an engineer or scientist.

I also love astronomy. I love looking at the stars at night and learning about the planets. Unfortunately we don't have a Space Science/Astronomy class in our school so In my free time, I read about outer space as much as I can.

I am inspired by the many men and women who attempt to find other inhabitable planets. I am inspired by the bravery of the astronauts who venture out into outer space

to perform experiments that are valuable to human knowledge. I think space exploration is very important because it allows us to discover what is outside our planet.

When I did research I was surprised that not a lot of girls work as scientists and engineers. I wondered why. I do not want to be part of this statistic. I want to prove that girls CAN do Math and Science. Girls CAN be engineers, scientists, and leaders in space exploration.

I think space camp would be a great opportunity to meet people of the same age, from different countries and cultures, but who have the same interests that I do in Math, Science and space exploration. I want to acquire knowledge to contribute to my future education and to future research in the Space Program.

I want to inspire my classmates. Many of them don't think they can do it, but I know if you try to reach for the stars, you just might do so someday.