



## Maria Ojeda

**High school:** Colegio Americano de Cali

**Hometown:** Cali, Colombia

**Majors:** B.S. Marine Biology

**Activities:** Independent Research & Tennis Team

**Internships:** I've been doing research with my academic advisor for the past year about the Amazon rainforest

**Post-grad plans:** My plans after graduation include looking for an internship or job position mainly involved in field research or marine related duties that have things in common with my independent research, which is about rivers of tropical rainforests



"I have enjoyed watching and helping Maria grow into the person that she is today. This past year, I have collaborated with her on her research project on alternative fish communities in the various water types of the Amazon River system, although it didn't start out that well defined! Through reading and discussing the primary literature, pursuing paths that led to dead ends yet still offered insight, and thinking critically, Maria is refining our understanding of alternative stable states and developing into a solid scientist. I have enjoyed our collaboration, and I anticipate the day when she tells me stories of other questions she has asked and research that she has pursued."

– Dr. Christopher Stieha

Associate Professor, General Biology, Botany, Population and Community Ecology

Why Millersville?

I chose Millersville because the Marine Biology program seemed very complete and good, I also got great support from the Tennis coach, and I decided I could play for Millersville.

Are you where you thought you'd be when you first came to campus?

Yes!

Who helped you get to where you are now?

My parents, friends, and family who supported me constantly, and the Tennis coach who also supported me since the beginning.

Peak experience?

I loved every Spring semester of my career.

What surprised you?

All the amazing relationships and people I got to meet.

Which one(s) of the EPPiC values of Millersville do you most identify with? Or which of the values do you think best describes your time here at Millersville?

Compassion because I during my time here I have developed gratitude and resilience.

What will you miss the most?

My friends and my routine which I got to appreciate so much over the course of my career.

Advice for the Class of 2026?

Push hard! It can be difficult at some moments, but even the difficulties will help you grow and will teach you.

