



**JOSE
RODRIGUEZ
ARANAGA**

FINANCE,
ECONOMICS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

SUGARLAND,
TEXAS



RECIPE FOR SUCCESS



JOSE RODRIGUEZ ARANAGA was born in Houston, but he grew up around the world, in Venezuela, Brazil, Russia and Texas, thanks to his father's job.

"The one thing I picked up from living in all these places and being able to travel is that although everybody speaks different languages and we have different mannerisms and different cultures, there's always something to learn," he said.

And Rodriguez is always learning. At Baylor, he doesn't want to miss hands-on learning opportunities that will help him achieve his career goals of becoming an investment banker and, eventually, an entrepreneur.

At the end of his freshman year, the

triple major joined the Hankamer School of Business Undergraduate Research Assistanship (UGRA) Program. The UGRA Program provides undergraduate business students with the opportunity to work directly with faculty members on research and receive hands-on experience in the research process.

"It opened the doors for me to be able to learn how to do research in a way I can use in the future, as well as learn something I won't be able to learn in any of my classes," said Rodriguez, who chose Baylor, in part, because of its R1 status. "That's something that I believe is invaluable."

Working with Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship Gabriella Cacciotti for more than a year, Rodriguez has gained experience collecting articles related to entrepreneurs' and C-suite executives' fear of failure and how it affects the business risks they take.

"I consider Jose's contributions highly valuable to our research project," Cacciotti said. "The value of his work lies not only in the tangible outcomes, such as the extensive database of relevant articles he has compiled, but also in the intangible aspects, such as the enthusiasm and fresh insights he brings to our research meetings."

Rodriguez continues to find ways to gain real-world experience. This year, Rodriguez is "over the moon" to be an

intern for the Baylor University Office of Investments, which manages the University's endowment.

In the Business School, he aspires to become a student analyst for the Baylor Angel Network, an investor network with student analysts that provides early-stage capital to strong entrepreneurial teams with developed products or services and early customer traction. He hopes to have the opportunity to enroll in the Large-cap Portfolio Management Practicum—a course where students manage a multimillion-dollar investment fund—before he graduates, too.

When he's not in class or managing a portfolio, you can find Rodriguez playing intramural soccer, volunteering at a dog shelter, hiking or baking. In fact, he plans to own his own bakery one day, as one of his entrepreneurial endeavors.

"No matter what, even if you don't speak the same language, everybody speaks the language of food," he said.

Rodriguez has been using his research expertise in the kitchen, too. He's putting his friends' banana bread recipes to the test—ranking their baked goods using some of the research methods he has learned.

As it turns out, research skills are useful for evaluating the delectability of banana bread in addition to being beneficial for coursework and internships. ■