

From Mexico City to Austin: Paola Soto's Unpredictable Journey to Finding PR Success



AUSTIN, Texas — Paola Soto navigates new cultures and career paths as she takes on the public relations world

Adapting to new environments was second nature for Paola Soto. As she was born in the eccentric streets of Mexico City, Soto spent the early years of her life surrounded by a close-knit community with friends and family. At 14 years old, the Mexican native's life took a drastic turn, requiring her to move to The Woodlands, Texas, a small and quiet suburban town by Houston.

Soto was forced to adapt to a new country, language, and culture, which came with its own complications yet made her who she is today.

"I had to step out of my comfort zone. Moving to a place where I didn't know the language or the culture was difficult, but it helped me grow," Soto recalls. The formative years of Soto's life were filled with never-ending change which instilled in her the importance of adapting no matter the situation.

During Soto's teenage years, she constantly learned how to bridge the two cultures that she had the opportunity to be a part of. When she moved to the United States, the social dynamics that she was a part of shifted. Due to The Woodlands being quite small, everyone knew everyone. This provided her with numerous opportunities to practice and enhance her interpersonal skills.

"I was very social during my teenage years, and meeting new people helped me learn how to communicate effectively," Soto said.

Although she was still developing her interpersonal skills, Soto's career aspirations were very unclear for the majority of her youth years. She had influences that made her wonder if she would be a good fit for a specific career but she never committed.

"I never had a specific career that I would say was my dream when I was little," said Soto as she chuckled. "But then I thought about being a lawyer just because I saw how my mom enjoyed being one"

Due to Soto not being able to make up her mind on what she wanted to study, she applied for community college and took classes there for two years. She felt that this would give her enough time to explore her options. In her final year of community college, Soto began exploring possible fields she felt like she could succeed in. Out of all the options she weighed, the path of public relations was what she went with.



“I always knew I was good at communicating and loved building relationships. That’s what drew me to public relations,” Soto explained. “It was such a full career. PR includes marketing, advertising, and so many other aspects of communication. I loved how it combined creativity with strategy.”

Soto then transferred to The University of Texas at Austin to major in public relations. This decision would then later solidify through the hands-on experience that she received from internships. They helped her build practical skills that she would need no matter what type of public relations she went into.

Following graduation, Soto immediately found success working as a public relations specialist for a



media company in Austin, where she oversees projects that help small businesses in the area. To support the success of these companies, she writes press releases, plans social media campaigns, and produces promotional materials. Her enthusiasm for supporting small businesses comes from her own experience; having grown up in a family-run company, Soto is aware of the particular difficulties faced by these business owners. She got committed to promoting small businesses entirely after seeing that they frequently face competition from larger brands for visibility.

“My dad owns a local business, so I grew up understanding how hard it is to build something from the ground up,” she emotionally shares.

To aspiring public relations professionals, “Take chances and take advantage of every chance you can,” Soto says. “Whether it’s voluntary work or an internship, every experience will help you discover your passion and impart useful skills.”

“Every experience, internship or volunteering, will teach you strong skills and help you determine what your passion is,” she said.

Soto’s path from Mexico City to then finding herself working as a public relations professional in Austin has been filled with constant change. Her ability to adapt to whatever environment she finds herself in while progressing in her career. She has leveraged everything that has happened in her past as well as her excellent communication skills to get to where she is today.