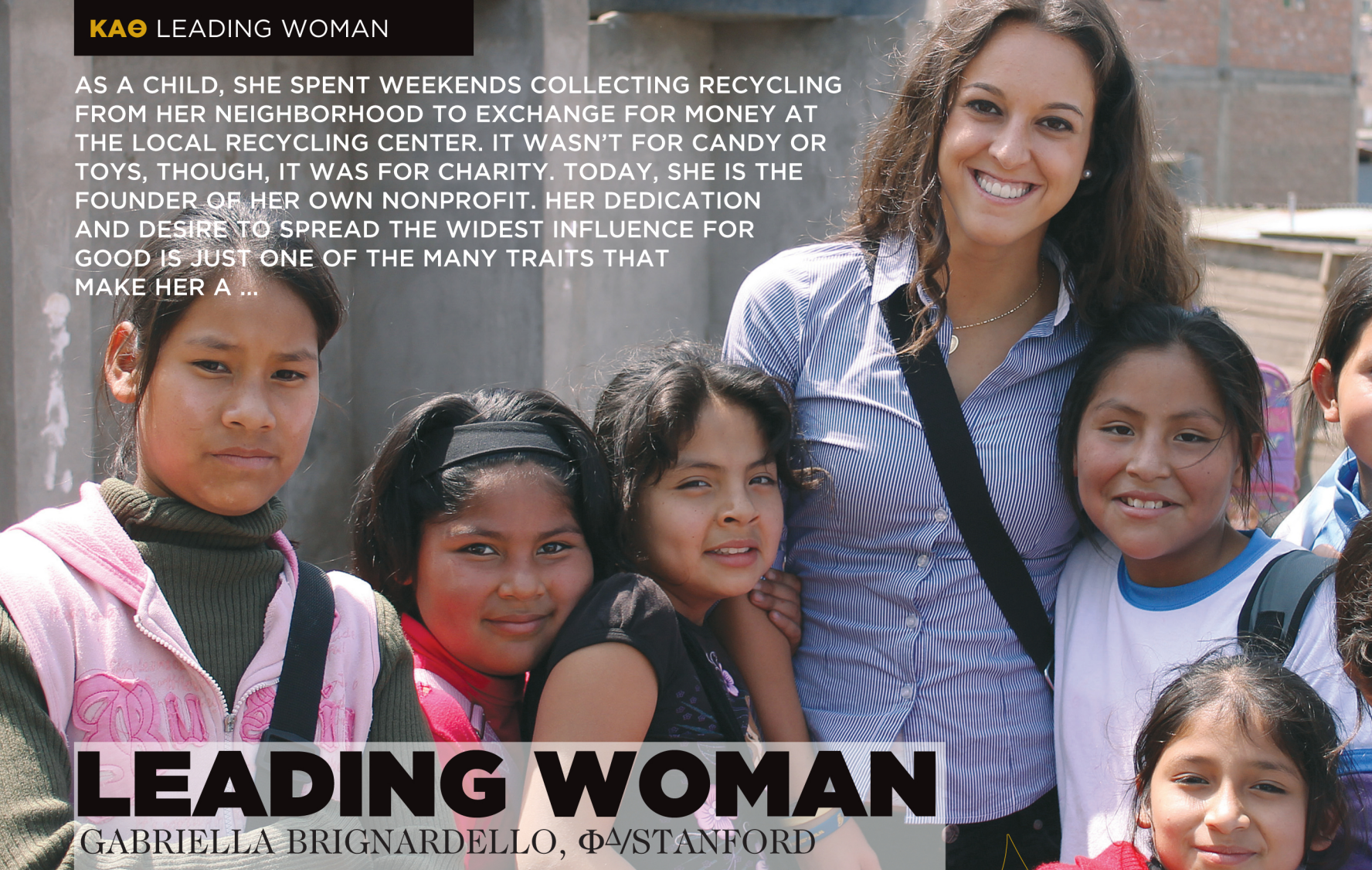


AS A CHILD, SHE SPENT WEEKENDS COLLECTING RECYCLING FROM HER NEIGHBORHOOD TO EXCHANGE FOR MONEY AT THE LOCAL RECYCLING CENTER. IT WASN'T FOR CANDY OR TOYS, THOUGH, IT WAS FOR CHARITY. TODAY, SHE IS THE FOUNDER OF HER OWN NONPROFIT. HER DEDICATION AND DESIRE TO SPREAD THE WIDEST INFLUENCE FOR GOOD IS JUST ONE OF THE MANY TRAITS THAT MAKE HER A ...



LEADING WOMAN

GABRIELLA BRIGNARDELLO, ΦΔ/STANFORD

Drawn to the entrepreneurial and social impact opportunities that Stanford University offered and its unique interdisciplinary attitude, Gabriella Brignardello, Phi deutron/Stanford, knew it was the perfect place for her to pursue her education and learn how to grow her organization, Mi Casa de Angeles—a nonprofit with the mission of building schools and supporting a higher quality of education in impoverished areas throughout Peru, her father’s home country. After two quarters at Stanford, she participated in recruitment and found her home in Kappa Alpha Theta.

“I was drawn to Kappa Alpha Theta for several reasons,” said Brignardello. “Many of the girls shared similar interests to me and were also so passionate about their academics, extracurriculars, and of course, Theta. It was contagious, and I felt that in an environment filled with these types of people, I could learn so much and also share so much.”

It wasn’t just the passion for education and involvement that drew Brignardello to Theta. She was excited to learn the large role that fundraising played in the Kappa Alpha Theta community and that Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) was its charity partner.

“I believe that it is so important to empower children and young adults who are less fortunate and are not receiving the attention and tools that they need in order to thrive. The fact that Theta also valued this made me even more excited about joining.”

The philanthropic values of Theta align well with Brignardello’s 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization Mi Casa de Angeles, which has raised more than \$200,000 since November 2009. In addition to fundraising both in the United States and Peru, the organization works closely with Peruvian non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to support projects in Peru that are focused on improving the quality of education for impoverished children.

“When I first had the idea for the nonprofit, I would always say that I wanted to create a safe environment, or ‘home,’ for the underprivileged children in Peru, and that I wanted to be their ‘guardian angel’ of sorts—and so that’s what led to the name: Mi Casa de Angeles.”

As Brignardello continues her pursuit toward providing higher quality education and opportunities to Peruvian youth, she also hopes to inspire others to make an impact.

“I think it is important that everyone knows they can make an impact if they set their mind to it, if they remain dedicated, and if they are passionate,” she said. “It doesn’t matter how young or old you are, or how much money you have or don’t have to support your cause. If you see a problem that you want to fix, do something about it and be proud you are doing something to make an impact, because that’s the only way problems in this world are going to change. Your passion will inspire others to follow in your footsteps, and their passion will do the same—it’s a truly beautiful ripple effect.” ◇

Want more?
micasadeangeles.org

