

Cristian Arcega, one of the four students profiled in this year's PC Common Reading Program book *Spare Parts: Four Undocumented Teenagers, One Ugly Robot, and the Battle for the American Dream*, in his own words:

“I am Cristian Arcega, I want to be an Electrical Engineer. I was born in Mexicali, Mexico and moved to Phoenix at the age of six. Despite deficiency in English I learned well and have performed at the top of my class consistently.

Years later I found a place to put my talents to action. In high school I joined the Falcon Robotics Team. We Focused on STEM competitions to challenge ourselves. One year we entered an Underwater Robot Competition where we would be tasked to complete a series of tasks underwater with a robot of our creation.

This competition was unlike anything any of us had ever attempted so we entered the University Class of the competition. Even though it was our first time building an aquatic robot and with a budget a percentage of everyone else's we had a dream. Regardless of the low expectations of our team, our robot and ourselves we went for it. In spite of our minimal budget and competing against the likes of MIT among others we won.

We've leveraged that victory to inspire ourselves, our community and youth to create a system where everyone who can dream big believes themselves capable of great things. They believe in their futures, that they can be the best.

This story of success has been retold numerous times; by Wired Magazine in *La Vida Robot*, by Mary Mazzio in the documentary *Underwater Dreams*, the book by Josh Davis *Spare Parts*, and most recently by Lionsgate and Pantelion Films *Spare Parts*.

My goal remains as always to get an Engineering Degree and should political climate in the USA provide, work for a company where I can challenge myself. If not I plan to start my own consumer electronics company. Regardless, I hope to one day use my successes to uplift my community.”

Learn more about Cristian: *La Vida Robot Magazine Article*

<http://archive.wired.com/wired/archive/13.04/robot.html> *Underwater Dreams*

Documentary <http://www.underwaterdreamsfilm.com/> *Spare Parts Book*

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/20518979> *Spare Parts Movie*

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3233418/>

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