

Venus Cruz is pursuing her B.S. in Geology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She is in her last year of her undergraduate. Following her graduation in the spring semester, she plans to continue her studies in aqueous geochemistry by pursuing a master's degree in hydrogeology. Venus' studies will help her in becoming a versatile researcher and by contributing to the investigation of Mars.

To investigate potential life beyond our planet, she will be researching potential biosignatures this year for her Space Grant project. Venus will examine the chemistry, mineralogy, and geomorphology of the clay-rich samples from the Curiosity rover to search for the ability to potentially detect biosignatures on Mars. To do this, she will compare selected CheMin samples to metallome data and will supplement her observations from Curiosity's corresponding ChemCam and Alpha Particle X-Ray Spectrometer files. Overall, this will further the search for potential past life on Mars.