Huntsville resident pioneers app, accepted to Yale

By Mark Humphrey Record Editor

Eighteen-year-old Kelvin Orduna of Huntsville has been described by his older sister as "an impact-driven trailblazer dedicated to empowering under-served communities."

The visually-impaired might agree whole-heartedly with Maribel Orduna, who works for the Family Advisory division of Walton Enterprises, when trying to cross intersections.

Pedestrian Safety App

Orduna, son of Eric and Andrea Orduna of Huntsville, developed ClearCross, an AI-powered app designed to enhance pedestrian safety for visually impaired individuals using computer vision and augmented reality.

"It uses (artificial intelligence) AI on an iPhone and it's free to use," Orduna said.

"It's not published to the app store yet, but we plan to get it there," he said.

Meanwhile ClearCross can be accessed by visiting clearcross.org.

Orduna designed the app to empower those dealing with vision impairment to "navigate crosswalks with confidence." The app's logo assures users, "ClearCross is your personal safety buddy."

The app provides real-time guidance to help the visually impaired safely navigate intersections through a four-step process, point at signal, detect crosswalk, wait for a cue, then cross safely.

- Point your iPhone at the crosswalk pedestrian signal;
- ClearCross automatically finds the signal and begins detecting its status;
- ClearCross will display "Safe to Walk" when it detects a WALK signal; and
- Cross safely while being mindful of potential hazards to foot traffic. The app emphasizes, "Always pay attention to your surroundings and follow local laws."

Visual Signals

On-screen visual images guide users through a crosswalk. A red outline around a stationary figure will appear in the app's crosswalk guide when it's not safe to cross. That changes to a green outline around a figure shown walking when it's safe to

Orduna created Clear-Cross to make public spaces more accessible and empower users to navigate crosswalks independently, enhancing their mobility.

Audio Instructions

Users will also receive audio instructions through vibrations and alerts. Clear-Cross uses audible synthesization. Users will hear the word "Walk" or the word "Stop" alongside "haptic feedback" that is described as a technology that uses vibrations, forces, or other sensations to simulate touch and provide users with feedback about their interactions with a device or virtual environment

Free Service

There is no charge to use ClearCross. Orduna has researched the competition and said, "The next alternative is a subscription-based model that costs \$50 a year."

In addition to not having a cost associated with using the app, ClearCross does not collect data from its users.

Orduna explained that ClearCross detects signal statuses using an AI model on a device. The app promises, "No images or video ever leave your iPhone."

"My model is [for] an individual device. It's private, we're not collecting any data and because we're not processing any data that is how we're able to keep it free," Orduna said.

Capstone Project

ClearCross was developed by Orduna while attending the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts (ASMSA) in Hot Springs.

"You're required to have a capstone project at ASMSA. It was my year-long project for a science fair," Orduna

Orduna recently walked through graduation ceremonies with the Huntsville Class of 2025 and graduated from ASMSA on May 19. State law allows ASMSA students to walk through graduation ceremonies at their hometown and Orduna said he was welcomed by his hometown faculty and students. Many of his classmates told him they were glad that he had chosen to walk through the ceremony with them.

Maribel sent out a press release to celebrate the milestone and stated, "Our family has proudly called Huntsville home for over 30 years, and we are incredibly grateful for the education and encouragement Kelvin received from the Huntsville School District and its teachers. His story reflects not just his own commitment, but also the strength of the public school system here and what's possible when small-town students are supported to dream

Coca Cola Scholarship

Orduna entered an elite company as the recipient of a Coca Cola Scholarship. Past notable winners include Vivek Ramaswamy and Senator Ben Sasse. Orduna was among four students from Arkansas honored with this designation in 2025. He is among 150 winners selected to receive a \$20,000 college scholarship and join a family of more than 6,900 alumni noted as leaders for inspiring positive change in their communities and around the world. Less than 1/6th of 1% of applicants were chosen to receive a highly sought-after

Yale Early Decision

Orduna received early admission to Yale University where he will study Ethics, Politics and Economics this

Gaining admission to the prestigious Ivy League school was challenging and getting tougher

Maribel noted, "This year, Yale received 6,729 early action applicants to the class of 2029, and of those, 10.82% were admitted, marking one of the lowest early acceptance rates in Yale's history. Last year, Yale admitted 9.02% of early applicants, the lowest



Cubmitted Dhat

Kelvin Orduna of Huntsville walked with his hometown class during graduation.



Submitted Photo

Kelvin, son of Eric and Andrea Orduna of Huntsville, has been accepted to Yale.

early admit rate in more than two decades."

Philanthropic Work

Orduna's philanthropic work has been highlighted as the founder of "Empowering Rural Progress," an international initiative that provided first-time internet access to remote indigenous communities. His pilot project began in December of 2022 and was completed in June of 2024.

"That was a passion project for me last summer. It was to install almost 300,000 square feet of Internet coverage in a rural mystic town in Oaxaca, Mexico," Orduna said

The process involved a lot of conversations with engineers and people who did networking to "Put out this network in a town that has never had Internet coverage before."

Orduna was able to tie in

to a cellular tower installed by the order of former Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obradoras, who served in as the country's leader from 2018 to 2024. "The tower had been in-

stalled about four years ago, but unfortunately it had been inactive ever since it was installed so it was kind of just sitting there," Orduna said.

He recalled the optimism when he heard the tower had

been placed in his parents'

hometown.

"We thought it's going to be up and running in a couple of months. This isn't going to be an issue for the town anymore. [We were] incredibly grateful. Four years later it was still inactive so we had to

do something," Orduna said.

Maribel points out that
Orduna also "advocates for
expanding gifted education opportunities, working alongside legislators
and stakeholders to ensure
high-achieving students—
regardless of background—
have access to rigorous academic environments.

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