

## GUE Fundamentals: A Key Step in My Journey as a Scientist and Diver

My name is Ivonne Trejo Ventura, and I am one of the recipients of the **GUE Next Gen Legacy Project 2026**. I hold a Master's degree in Marine Sciences and have been working with organisms that inhabit subterranean ecosystems. As I prepare for the next step in my academic career a PhD. My objective is to continue focusing on these fragile environments and their conservation. Diving plays a fundamental role in this path, as it allows me to access these ecosystems and continue conducting scientific research.

Thanks to the Next Gen scholarship, I had the opportunity to take my first **GUE Fundamentals** course in December 2025, taught by **Emoke Wagner** in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. The course was intense, demanding, and required full-time dedication, both physically and mentally, but it was also incredibly rewarding.



Throughout the course, we worked extensively on buoyancy control, four different propulsion techniques,



emergency procedures, mask removal and replacement, no-mask drills, and diving using the GUE regulator configuration. Many of these skills and approaches were completely new to me, and they challenged me to rethink the way I dive. Emoke was an exceptional instructor: always attentive, deeply committed to our learning, and consistently supportive. Her positive attitude, kindness, and strength as both a diver and educator made a significant difference throughout the course.

The theoretical component of the course was equally thorough and well-structured. The material was clear, detailed, and designed to be revisited as many times as needed. Whenever questions arose, Emoke was always available, demonstrating a strong commitment to teaching and to our individual progress.

I feel truly grateful to have taken this course with Emoke Wagner and to have had the opportunity to dive in two new cenotes in

Quintana Roo. This experience has motivated me to continue improving, refining my skills, and moving forward toward my long-term goals as a researcher, explorer, and conservation advocate.

This course was not just training; it was a pivotal step in my journey.

