

I am the oldest of three children in my family; we were all raised by our mother because my father was an illegal immigrant that was deported to his native country. My mother is the person I look up to the most because I have seen how she has worked up to three different jobs in the same day to pay off rent, bills, and put food on the table. We live in a small one bedroom apartment that we all share because despite my mother's work ethic she cannot afford to pay for a more spacious apartment. My mother did not finish school because she had me at the tender age of seventeen. I have learned that life is always going to be difficult to endure but one must always maintain strong to pull through the toughest situations. I believe that I have always been an excellent scholar because I have maintained myself at a high academic level despite my circumstances.

I live very far from the school I chose to attend; it literally takes me two trains and two buses to get to and from school. This long distance was not an obstacle during my sophomore year as that was the best year of my high school experience. It was during my junior year that I also began assisting my mother with her job because I could see my poor mother working herself to death for us. Eventually all the stress and fatigue got too overwhelming as it reflects on my grades that year.

However, I did have some valuable experiences because of the opportunities provided at my school. I was part of nine students that were chosen to participate in a program for Junior Game Designers at the University of Southern California. As a group member I proposed ideas, gathered information, and along with my group developed a game that was entertaining, but also served as a tool to learn about college. I also emerged as a representative for the Technology Academy, at my school, during meetings with school officials or important business partners. On one occasion I presented to our state superintendent and an ex-congress woman about the Net Generation Youth Program, an affiliation between my school and schools across the country and South Africa.

I have learned to manage my time better and balance school with work. I am now a senior and I have my own part time job as well, but from previous experience I have learned to stay focused on my studies no matter what happens outside the classroom. I will be the first in my family to receive a higher level of education that is why my number one goal is to start a generation of college graduates in my family. I will keep pushing myself to reach higher levels of success not only because it is essential for my life, but because I want my younger siblings to see that any goal can be accomplished if they have the dedication to work hard in order to reach it. From now on my life will be about making my dreams a reality because I have the resiliency and determination to work for those dreams to become a reality.