

I am a 25-year-old single mother who became extremely motivated to return to higher education following the birth of my beautiful daughter in 2024. I found dissatisfaction in my previous career path as a Early Childhood Educator as I experienced financial instability and burn-out, especially following the Covid-19 Pandemic. I witnessed first-hand the adversity many children experience outside classrooms which often included violence, neglect and abuse and felt disheartened by inability to help. As a childhood SA survivor, I felt a strong urge to advocate on behalf of children from a capacity outside of teaching. Now I am pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology with a Minor in Public Service from the University of New Mexico. I also have goals to enroll in a master's level program of psychology, criminology or related field at a PBI or HCBU.

I have many great ideas on how to apply my college education towards making a positive impact on the world. Specifically, I want to focus on reducing the prevalence of sexual violence by conducting research on victimology as well as the relationship between experiencing trauma and entering the American prison system. About 71 percent of Americans will spend time behind bars at one point in their lives and it is important to understand the causes and implications of this reality. I want to become a corrections officer, post-grad to enhance my understanding of crime and the respective sentencing punishments, so that I can make equitable recommendations for public policy and criminal justice reform. I know with increased financial support I will be able to achieve my pursuits with greater ease. One example of a professional development program I want to complete is the McAfee Institute's Certified Human Trafficking Investigator Certificate.

The epidemic of Missing People is undeniable especially in my hometown of Albuquerque, NM where indigenous women go missing at incredible and sickening rates with not enough effective leadership, resources or support to aid in these tragic instances. I believe nobody deserves to be stolen or mistreated and that the issues of human trafficking and sex crimes should be concern for every single American. I plan to use my education to become a soldier in the war against sex predators who terrorize communities so that they be made held accountable and eliminated from continuing to cause harm.

My greatest commitment is to my daughter, loved ones and to fellow female survivors who have endured the pain and evil of sexual violence. By pursuing higher education I am once again defeating my enemies, protecting my family and empowering women. I do not take for granted that I was able to survive and was blessed with a second chance at self-worth through the birth of my baby girl following an excruciating period of self-deterioration. I wake up each day with the will to show gratitude towards motherhood by pursuing a career that will make me an excellent role model for young black girls and women.

