



Stories to be Heard

Stories of how parents
influenced the educational
success of current and former
college students



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How Parents Help Students

Parents and families are important for students to succeed in school. In fact, many successful students think of their parents' supports when discussing who helped them the most in their education. So, in this book, we wanted to answer two questions: **How students got to be where they are in their education? And who helped and motivated them?**

We asked college students at UC Irvine these questions and, sure enough, one common thread in their students' stories is the role their parents played! According to students, their parents helped them succeed in the following ways:

- ❖ Encouraging & Praising
- ❖ Giving Advice
- ❖ Instilling Values for Education
- ❖ Expressing Hopes & Dreams
- ❖ Recognizing Parents' Sacrifice & Effort
- ❖ Instilling Responsibility & Work Ethic
- ❖ Role Modeling
- ❖ Being Involved at School

In the next pages, read students' stories about how their parents helped them through these different supports.

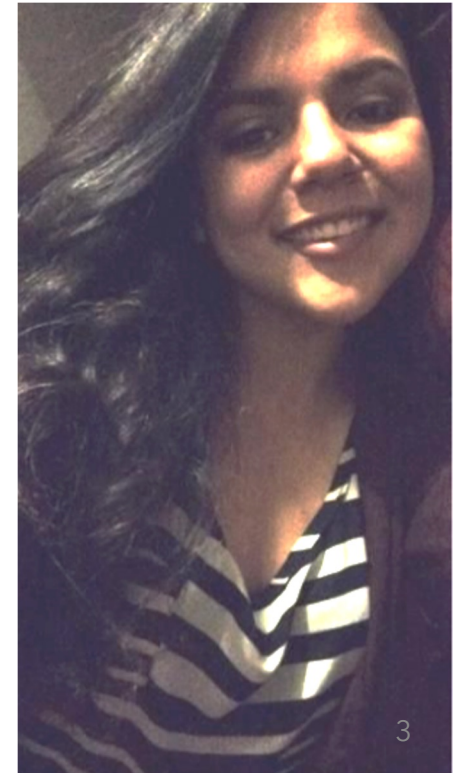
1. Encouraging & Praising

Parents provided positivity and warmth to help students persist through their education. Parents insisted that their students not give up when faced with academic challenges. Parents never stopped encouraging students even if parents were unfamiliar with what students are studying.

*"My mom would
always be
cheering me on
whenever I felt
that I wanted to
give up."*
- **Martha**



*"My parents
always
encouraged me
to never give up
and continue
learning as hard
as it was."*
- **Ana**



1. Encouraging & Praising

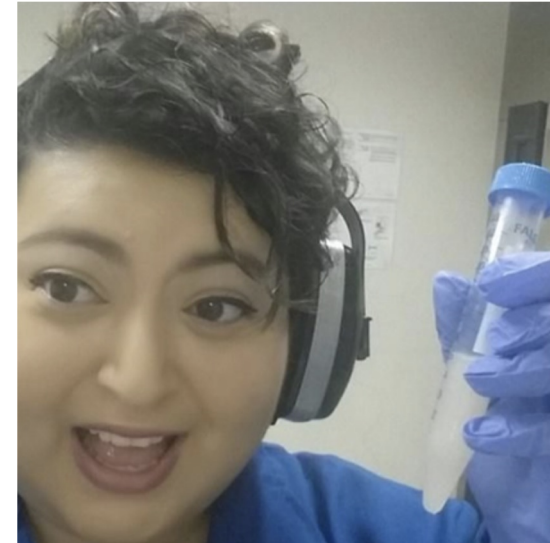
"Although my mother wasn't able to help me with my homework, her encouraging words and unconditional emotional support always kept me with a positive mentality."

- Selena



"Although my parents knew very little about the sciences, they always supported me in my studies."

- Leonila



1. Encouraging & Praising

"My parents did not have the opportunity to go to a university and because of that, they could not help me in the process of going to a university. Nevertheless, what they could give me and what they continue to give me is their love and their words of encouragement."

- Kaylee



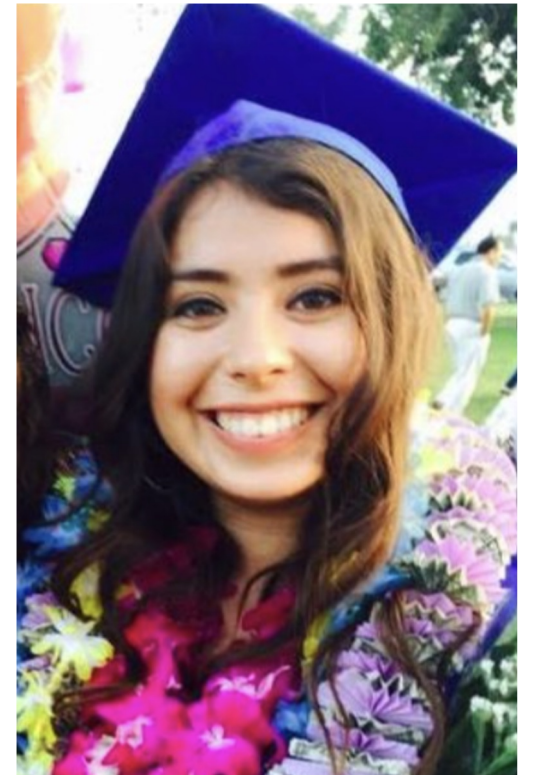
2. Giving Advice

Parents talked with and gave advice to students about the importance of taking advantage of educational opportunities that the US education system provided.

"My mother taught me to take advantage of opportunities."
- **Maribel**



"My mother would always tell me and my siblings, educate yourself so that you work in something you enjoy and take advantage of the educational opportunities offered here in the United States."
- **Selena**



3. Instilling Values for Education

One key part of staying motivated in school is seeing how education matters for students' lives, especially for their future. Students recalled from a young age learning how valuable their education through their parents.

Parents described the importance of education to students in order to be successful in the future. Students found motivation from their parents' excitement to continue their classes.



"Obtaining a higher education was something that was instilled in me since I was very young."

-Selena

3. Instilling Values for Education

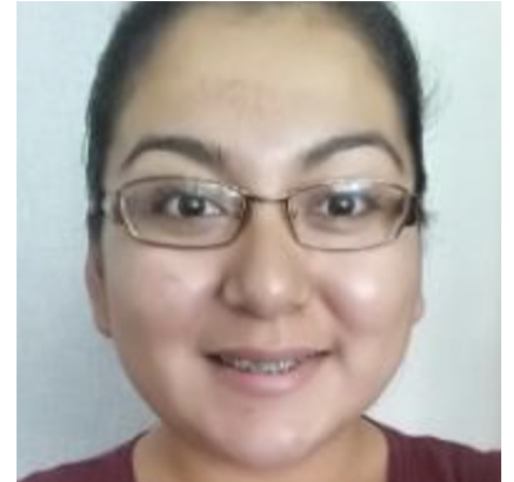


"My parents taught me to value education and I am very grateful for all that they have done to help me succeed."

- Kaylee

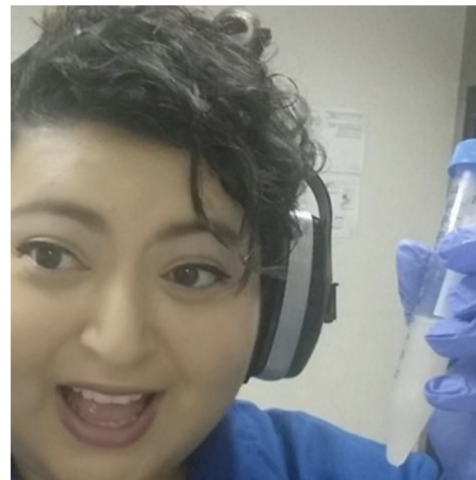
"Although my parents did not study they always instilled in me the importance of studying."

-Cristina



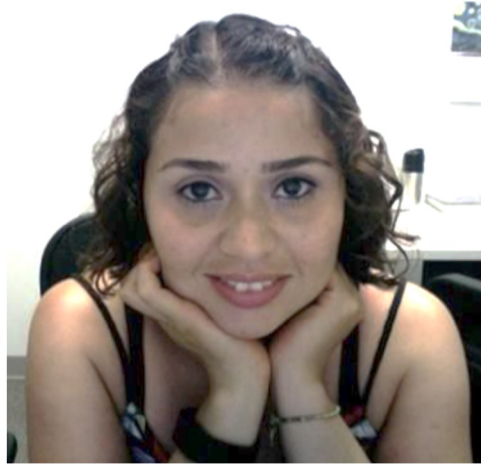
"They always say that only with an education can we be successful in America."

-Leonila



3. Instilling Values for Education

"My father told me: The only tool we can give you to have success in life is your education. Promise me that you'll make the effort to go to college."
-Cynthia



"Growing up, my parents valued and encouraged higher education."
-Fernando



3. Instilling Values for Education

"My parents knew the importance of having a college education so they pushed me to do my best in my classes."

- Destiny



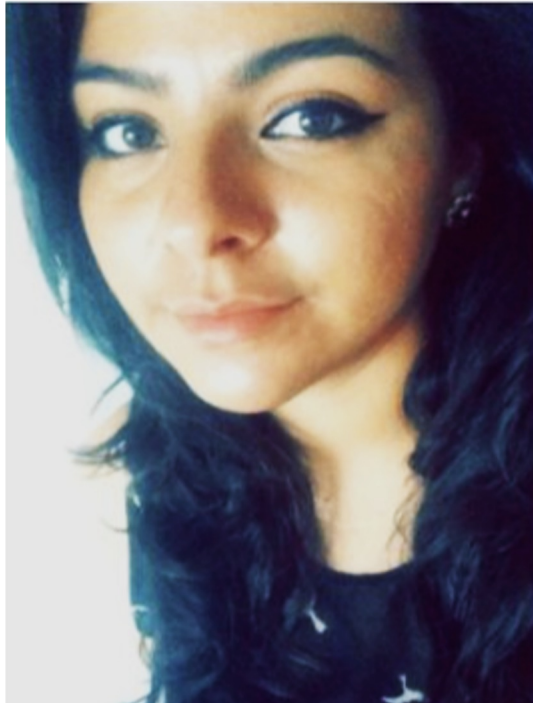
"The day I told my parents that I was accepted into UCI is a day I'll never forget. It was the first time I had seen my dad cry in my entire life. He couldn't contain his excitement, and seeing that really pushes me to continue my education today."

- Karina

4. Expressing Hopes & Dreams

Many parents have hopes and dreams for a better future for their children, and students are incredibly aware of these hopes and dreams. Parents' hopes and dreams for students' education are a driving factor for students' aspirations and goals in getting a college education.

"My parents always wanted to give their children the opportunity to go to a university."
-Kimberly



"My parents hoped I would do well after high school because their dream was one day they could study abroad for college, but they did not have the chance so that I thought that I could help them to make their dream become reality."
-Rina

5. Recognizing Parents' Sacrifice & Effort

Students recognized and expressed their appreciation for the hard work and efforts parents put in to make sure they were successful in school.

Students recognized that opportunities they have now were not accessible for their parents when they were in school. This recognition helped students see how important obtaining an education was.



"I realized from a very young age that my parents sacrificed a great deal so that my sister and I could get an education and so that we could have opportunities that they never had."

"I learned to appreciate their actions from a very young age. I decided that the best thing I could do to repay them was to do the best that I could in school."

-Lesly

5. Recognizing Parents' Sacrifice & Effort



"Working with my mother, I saw how tired the children's parents came from work and I would often hear them discuss their struggles in regards to barely making enough to cover basic necessities. This realization motivated me to pursue my education."

-Maribel



"Seeing all the trouble and effort they (parents) were going through to provide for my brother and I is what really motivated me to work hard in school so I could go to college in the future."

-Destiny

5. Recognizing Parents' Sacrifice & Effort

"I realized that my parents could not obtain better employment opportunities because they had not gone to a university, so I decided to get a college education that could provide for me as well as for them."

-Ana



"College is definitely harder than high school, there are many days where I am overwhelmed with all my assignments or tests, but I have to remember how privileged I am to be here. Had my parents not made their sacrifice, I would be in Mexico working on a farm from sunrise to sunset, with nowhere near the beautiful life I have now."

-Karina

6. Instilling Responsibility & Work Ethic

Parents aid in the development of a hardworking student by sharing how their work ethic in education will benefit their success as future professionals.

"My dad would say that going to school is like having a job, and that instead of paying rent with money we would pay our part by getting good grades."

-Martha



6. Instilling Responsibility & Work Ethic

"She (mother) doesn't know how to read or write very well. Despite her limitations, she always taught me to work hard"

- Gaby



"My parents taught me the importance of hard work and education."

-Maribel

7. Role Modeling

Students fondly remembered how their parents introduced and showed them the value of a given career. As a result, students saw their parents as role models who set the example for them to go into a certain career path.

"Growing up, I always wondered how my father was capable of fixing and constructing things. As a young girl, my father took me to a construction site where he was building a house. On this day, my curiosity grew for understanding how to build and take things apart."

-Maribel



"My parents both started work early and ended late, I remember most of middle school and high school they would have to drop me off as early as 6:30 AM just so they could make it to work and I wouldn't be picked up till after 5PM...Seeing all the trouble and effort they were going through to provide for my brother and I is what really motivated me to work hard in school so I could go to college in the future."

-Destiny

8. Being Involved in Schooling

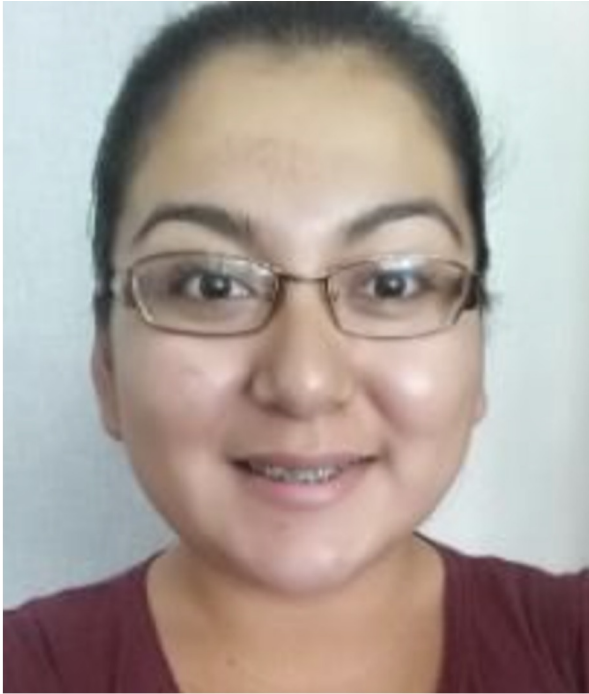
Finally, some parents supported their students' education by attending school-related events and helping with coursework.



"Displeased by the slow progress my mother would see, she pushed to have my brothers and I placed in better schools. I don't think I would be at a 4-year University if it wasn't for my parents. My brothers and I were put into the magnet program at our elementary school with the hopes of sending us to better schools."

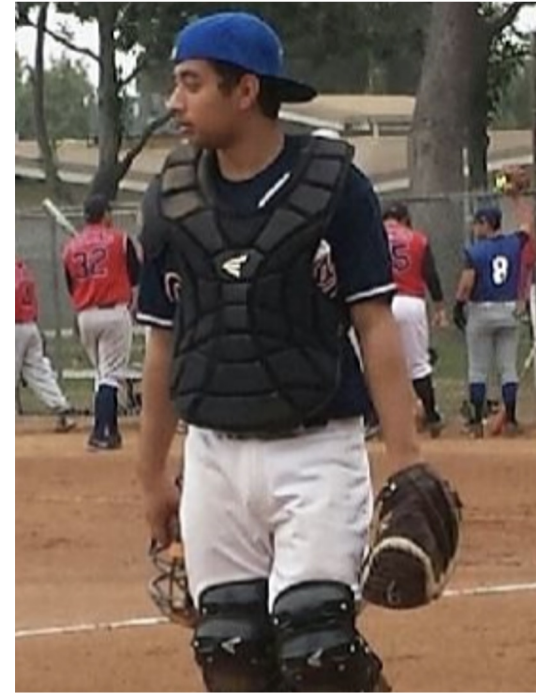
-Martha

8. Being Involved in Schooling



"They always gave time to go to the school parent meetings."

-Cristina



"My father and my cousin dedicated hours to helping me with my math homework."

-Luis David

As educators, we know how powerful parents can be in helping students in their education. This message is clear from the stories that college students shared with us. The students take to heart the simple messages, sacrifices, and help their parents gave them and these supports motivated them to push forward in their education.

We hope you were able to relate to these stories and that these stories serve as a strong reminder of how important your role is as a parent. Thank you!



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