

OPERATION 42

Student Success

Feb 2017

Recently, I was invited to represent student veterans and military affiliated students at a university wide leadership retreat. I was joined by other students from across the campus including the ASI President and Vice President, a representative from the Graduate Studies, VSC's very own Sue Trapp who represented SSD, and several others. The topic was student success. The definition of success and what success looks like is different from person to person, but when those definitions are combined, the result is some very powerful advice: Be determination, get involved, find a mentor, and balance life on and off campus. These are common threads I saw running through all of the student speakers. Determination is key, because each and every one of us will face challenges during the journey toward graduation. With determination we can overcome adversity, rise to meet challenges, and not let setbacks prevent success. Fortunately, none of us is required to face these challenges alone. For that reason, getting involved on campus is important to success. Getting involved allows us to use the knowledge we gained in the classroom to develop skills and networks that can be used after graduation to ensure continued success. Having a mentor as part of that network is invaluable. The guidance and support that a mentor provides through good times and bad times, fosters growth and provides a roadmap to success. Finally, many student veterans built lives centered around the military; a job that does not require a degree. Once military service has ended, obligations obtained during the military do not disappear. We have to learn to balance our old and new obligations. Completing school takes on a new dimension that traditional students do not have to contend with. While it is not always easy, achieving balance between college life and home life can bolster determination, and augment the support network that makes us successful.



Lupe Cambero

U.S. Navy veteran, Lupe Cambero (left), is a freshman double-majoring in Biology and Biochemistry at CSUSB. She shared with me some of the things that have helped make her successful over the past couple of quarters. The first thing Lupe mentioned was determination. She knows that getting an education can be a long and arduous process. There are times when she did not want to go to class, and days when she doubted her choice to double-major. Dedicated to her studies none the less, she began seeking out available campus resources and building a support network of friends. She says that her friends have been instrumental in keeping her motivated, and that they are a source of stress relief when the academic pressure is on. When it comes to test time, Lupe enjoys studying with members from her support network, because it benefits everyone. She has had a very successful freshman year thus far, and it is not at all surprising that she credits her success to being determined and having support.

After graduation Lupe wants to attend medical school to become a neurosurgeon. Lupe is on a tremendous start to a rewarding career, and the Vet Center wishes her luck in all of her endeavors!