

Dear Committee,

I would like to first off extend my appreciation for the time you are spending reading my Cybersecurity essay. The journey of furthering my education has been pushing my limits in all ways. My parent's education level has been at most a 3rd-grade level. When my father died when I was 8 yrs old, I was placed in a hard situation. My mother only spoke Spanish and that is all me and my siblings grew up speaking. Learning English was a school and TV, we didn't read books and or take education seriously. When I was 18 yrs old my brother passed away from cancer after a two year battle. I was a straight-A student, but as the oldest of three siblings. I had to step it up, my mother was depressed and was barely functioning. We had no idea how to deal with feelings, I did my best trying to finish high school.

The teachers/ counselors were not as sympathetic with my situation and didn't help a struggling teenager trying to deal with a death in the family and trying to graduate. When I did not graduate from high school I felt that it wasn't necessary. My mom didn't care and I was able to get a job so no worries. After working in TV/ radio marketing for over 10 yrs, I needed to make more money. I would apply to over 100 jobs and I would get maybe two or three callbacks. When I would meet the hiring manager I would talk about everything I did. They were excited but when they asked about my education you can tell they were no longer interested anymore.

So with the help of my therapist, she then helped me overcome my trauma on education. The fear of not being able to be "smart enough for college" or even capable of college. So I went and studied everything all over again. Math was my weakest subject so for 5 months every day for 8 hours, I would self teach myself math. For the GED I had to know History, English, Writing, and Math. These would be the subjects that I had to relearn. After I completed my GED I went on to SLCC and that's

where I went on completing my associate's degree. I then went on to graduate and transfer over to Weber for my bachelor's, I will be graduating in the spring of 2022.

At Weber, I have not only become the president of our Cybersecurity club but going to college was just a dream for me. I wanted to go into Cybersecurity because I loved computers and wanted to learn more about them, and how to protect my friends and family. I want to do the master's program because not only will I be the only one in my immediate family to have a Masters degree, but even in my extended family as well. Reading the statistics for being a Hispanic female in the Cybersecurity field is extremely low, about less than 9%, to have a masters degree its even lower.

I want to further my education and I know that I can do this. When completing my master's degree I will want to be a part-time professor. I want to hopefully give hope to those that feel that education may be tough, or that may not have the means. Take one class find a field that will make you money and want to learn and grow. “If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.” — Martin Luther King Jr.