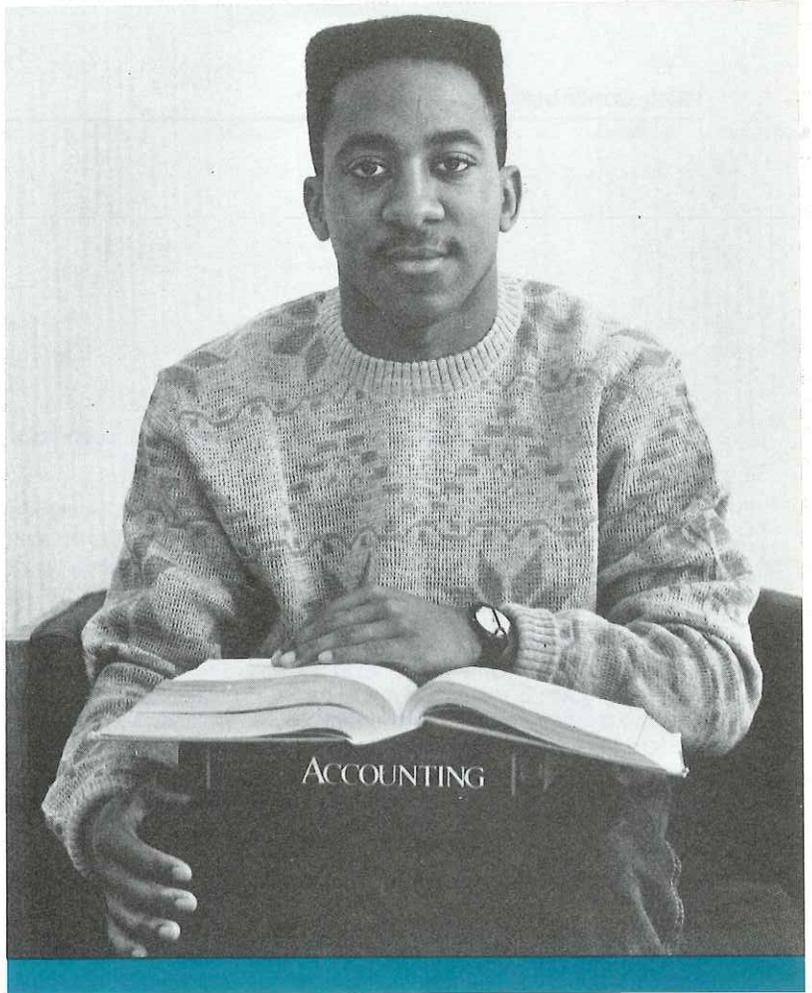


Lewis Wiley

“There’s help at Fresno State if you need it. You’re not all alone here. There’s always people here to help you out.”

LEWIS W. WILEY, JR.  
Freshman



Courage is not a requirement for college admission, but that is what Lewis Wiley needed before he applied to California State University, Fresno. “For a long time, I had feared that if I didn’t get straight A’s in high school, then I wouldn’t be able to go to college,” he says. “I always thought of myself as not being smart enough.”

Wiley, a 19-year-old freshman business major, is the first member of his family to go to college. He was born in Fresno and wanted to attend a college near home, so he came to CSU, Fresno. Preceding his first semester here, he attended the four-week-long Summer Bridge Program, which introduces high school graduates to CSU, Fresno by offering a facsimile of an academic semester, courses on academic skills techniques, culture, and mathematics, and an orientation to the campus. During the Summer Bridge Program, much of Wiley’s fears about college were alleviated. “I found out that college is like high school, but is much more demanding and requires more work,” says Wiley. “I learned that the instructors wanted you to think and to express your thoughts more.”

At Merced High School, Wiley earned a 3.0 grade point average. And during the Summer Bridge Program, he regained his academic confidence. He discovered that there is academic help at several places on campus, such as the Developmental Learning Resource Center, the Educational Opportunity Program, and the library. “There’s help at Fresno State if you need it,” he says. “You’re not all alone here. There’s always people here to help you out.”

As a standout basketball player at Merced High School, Wiley had a chance to pursue an athletic career in college. During his senior year, his basketball team won the California Interscholastic Federation’s San Joaquin Section Championship at Arco Arena in Sacramento, before losing in the Northern California Tournament of Champions at the Oakland Coliseum. In basketball, Wiley played in front of college scouts, but was discouraged when he didn’t get any big athletic scholarship offers, except from community colleges. Finally, he says, “I just knew I had to go to college somewhere. Not for basketball, but for educational reasons.” Wiley now believes that playing intercollegiate basketball and pursuing an academic degree at the same time is too demanding. “It’s not easy to get

a degree in four years and play basketball at the same time at this level,” he says. “I don’t think I could do both.”

Nowadays, Wiley concentrates primarily on his university studies. “The energy that I would have put into playing basketball, I’m channeling toward academic work now,” Wiley says.

#### **What is the biggest difference between high school and college?**

At Fresno State, I don’t have to go to class every day. I see my professors every other day here. Therefore, I don’t get tired of my classes. In high school, there’s the constant pressure of having to hand assignments in the next day. Here they treat you more as an adult and give you more responsibility, which can be a disadvantage because there’s less parental-teacher pressure to get homework assignments done on time and to get good grades. You are more on your own, so you feel a little more relaxed. College is much more laid back, too. There’s pressure, but it’s different from high school.