

How did you develop your interest in business?

I've always been a yuppie type, preferring the business-type atmosphere in which one wears a business coat and tie. I like Hewlett-Packard's commercials on "What if . . ." And, both my parents influenced me to go to college. My mother told me that school was very important, so to strive for good grades. She pushed me all the time and made sure that I hit the books. She told me that without college, you couldn't get a well-paying job nor comfortably support a family. My dad also influenced me to go to college. He wanted me to get a degree through a military program, but I wasn't ready for a commitment of several years of military service. I want to get a college degree and start working.

Do you have any pressure on you to succeed?

I know what's good for me. But, I also want my parents to be proud of me. It's not that I'm going to college for my parents, but I probably want to excel because I mirror my parents' desires in many ways. I also want to set an example for my 15-year-old sister. She's going to high school, and I want her to see that with a college education, you can accomplish a lot of things. I want to graduate, having had a good university experience here, so that I can tell her that college is demanding but rewarding.

What has been your biggest challenge this year?

My biggest challenge has been to get over my fears of going to college. I felt that I wasn't as smart as all the other people in the classroom. But having realized, "Hey, I'm as smart as the person sitting next to me," I no longer had my fear. I was a *B* student in high school, but high school was easy for me. The thought that college is all work and no play was so ingrained in me that that's all I thought about.

How did the Summer Bridge Program help you?

If you see a movie about college on T.V., what you'll frequently see is a college student sitting at a desk and studying alone in a dark room with a desk light on, saying, "Oh, I'm having trouble with this class. What am I going to do? I'm going to flunk!" But, Fresno State is not really like that at all. There are people here who can help you. The Summer Bridge Program introduced me to the college curriculum and to General Education and graduation requirements. Therefore, when I came here this fall, I wasn't lost. Also, the library is a "beast" if it's your first time in there. But over the summer, I was oriented to the library, and they gave me a tour to show me where references and other materials could be found, such as photocopiers, typewriters, and maps. So during your first week of classes, if you get a homework assignment that requires library research, you are already ahead of the person who didn't go to Summer Bridge and learn about the library. You can ask the Summer Bridge people any question that you have about college. And, they'll often answer your questions before you ask.

Did you find it easy to meet people?

I have met a lot of people here with the same major and with similar backgrounds. They might be from Los Angeles or San Jose, but I've made friends with them. Summer Bridge helped me, too. For example, you're not just seeing a lot of unknown people the first day of school.

I've had other friends who didn't go to Summer Bridge ask me, "How did you know him?" And I said, "I met him at Summer Bridge."

What are you hoping to do after you earn your degree?

Ultimately, I'd like to run a bank. It doesn't have to be anything big. I'd just like to be the one in charge. I would like to make loans, handle balance sheets, and do other banking procedures. My aunt works for the Bank of America, and I always used to go there and watch what went on. The bank's business procedures interest me because they insure that the bank runs smoothly.

What advice do you have for incoming freshmen?

Make sure that you have an understanding of the basic skills of English writing and mathematics, because you're expected to know it here. But, if you feel your skills are not strong enough, be sure to seek help at the university. They will help you improve your academic skills. But then again, don't worry about it because there are tutorial services on campus that can help you if you're still a step behind. The Developmental Learning Resource Center has a walk-in mathematics laboratory, and there are usually tutors there. They'll take you through mathematic problems step by step. You can also sign up for English tutors. You can designate a day and time to go see them, and they'll work with you.

Editor's Note: The Summer Bridge Program that was helpful to Lewis Wiley is administered by the university's Educational Opportunity Program Office, (209) 294-3021.