



Alicia

Sunnyvale Working Scholars

BA in Business

Alicia Hamilton is an office manager and insurance agent who lives in Fremont. She started taking courses at a local community college in her late teens and had completed many of her general education courses. However, working full-time and going to school full-time in the evenings became hard to balance, particularly when her career started to pick up.

"I kind of had to put my education by the wayside while I focused on my career development," she said.

She first heard about Working Scholars she thought it was an "amazing opportunity to be able to finish my degree." She said joining was a no brainer and that the program being free meant there was a huge weight lifted off her shoulders.

"It's been on that bucket list of things that I wanted to accomplish and the flexibility and knowing that it was completely free to me was just no question," she said. "I wanted to be a part of this movement that Working Scholars was creating."

Alicia explained that she can take as many courses as she wants at a time, adding that the lessons are only about 5 to 10 minutes each. She takes the short quizzes at the end of each lesson to check her level of understanding and also uses resources like Study.com's flashcards to prepare for the exam. Thanks to the mobile app, she does some of her studying right on her phone, including during a camping trip.

"Taking a course on this Study.com platform is so easy. It's very intuitive," she said. "If you can use a computer, you can definitely use the Study.com platform."

Even though Alicia is doing the learning online, she is still able to interact with her peers. She has been able to talk to other Working Scholars participants through get togethers like picnics or informational workshops.

Alicia also has the support of her success coach, Katie, who she said is “awesome.” She provides progress reminders to Alicia along with tips and guidelines that have helped her complete her courses.

“She’s been really great and support and encouraging,” she said.

Alicia anticipates earning her business degree in about a year. She said that earning a degree will help her reach her goals, including potentially owning her own insurance agency one day. She also thinks having a degree would give her the confidence to work in another field if she ever wanted to change careers.

“With the Working Scholars program, I definitely know that I’m getting my degree in the next year,” she said. “Even with having a new baby that will be coming in less than six months, I know that I will succeed and be able to get my degree in no time.”

Alicia is happy to be able to set this example for her daughter.

“I’m just so thankful for the opportunity to be able to have my degree and also just to be that role model for my daughter that at any point in your life you can go back and get your degree,” Alicia said.

“As she gets older, I can say mommy has her degree and it’s important to stay in school and that also there’s other means and ways to further your education and not just in the traditional sense.”

Alicia’s advice for people considering becoming a part of the Working Scholars program is to not give it a second thought and just join.

“How could you miss out on such an amazing opportunity and really a once in a lifetime chance to finish your degree on your time?” she asked.

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