

# Telling Our EOP Stories

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Educational Opportunity Program



40 years of service



## Driven to Succeed

by Auvonnie Wood

Ebony Pearson, who likes to be thought of as a “super duper senior”, has attended Fresno State for 6 years. She has been a student since 2004, studying family consumer science with an emphasis in family science. Most people believe that you “must” graduate in 4 years, but Ebony has been through a journey. Ebony has experienced numerous low points and high points throughout her college career. She has earned good grades, has had to repeat courses that she failed and lost financial aid once due to disqualification. However, in spite of all her trials and tribulations, Ebony has persevered and will graduate this fall. She has also been accepted into the University of Southern California (USC), and will pursue a Masters degree in Education with an emphasis in Post-secondary Administration in Student Affairs.

In addition to just focusing on her education, Ebony has been involved on campus. She is a student leader and has been a part of the Fresno State Leadership Program since her freshmen year. She has held positions in the leadership program such as volunteer board member and student director. Ebony has also served as an EOP peer mentor for the Summer Bridge program as well as during the academic year. Being active and engaged in the university challenged Ebony to learn how to manage her time, prioritize and balance school, work and social life. With her involvement on campus, Ebony feels that she has grown personally, professionally and academically. She explained, “My extracurricular activities within Student Affairs is what led me to discover how much I like working with students on a college campus.” She also stated, “My work experience & community service helped me discover the populations I want to serve and helped me realize my calling to go into administrative work within Student Affairs in Higher Education.” Being exposed to how programs in student affairs affect students made Ebony realize how important it is for her to contribute to the development of programs at a university. Ebony’s ultimate goal is to become a Vice President of a University.

Ebony explained that college opened up a whole new perspective on being social and meeting new people who can help you succeed. Being an EOP student, Ebony felt that the EOP counselors were there no matter what. She stated that, “EOP has taught me that when you feel there is no one to support you or believe you, there are always EOP counselors who genuinely care and want to see you succeed”. Ebony also declared that EOP is her family away from home.

Despite being in college for 6 years and going through numerous ups and downs, Ebony stayed in college even though she wanted to give up at times. Ebony endured which allowed her to finally achieve her goal of obtaining a Bachelor’s degree. She said, “as long as you stay disciplined and have courage, you can make it.” Her most important message to other EOP students is to “not give up.”

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