Speaker 1: If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't have passed my class with an A. With the amount of support I got from Giselle and my professor, because they work together, I managed to ask help, used what they told me to apply on my work, and overall, I was very proud of myself.

Christina Barsi: Hi, I'm Christina Barsi.

Sun Ezzell: And I'm Sun Ezzell, and you're listening to the Magic Mountie podcast.

Christina Barsi: Our mission is to find ways to keep your ear to the ground, so to speak, by bringing to you the activities and events you may not have time to attend. The resources on campus you might want to know more about, the interesting things your colleagues are creating, and the many ways we can continue to better help and guide our students.

Sun Ezzell: We bring to you the voices of Mount SAC, from the classroom to completion.

Speaker 4: I know I'm going to achieve my goals and I know people here are going to help me to do it.

Speaker 5: She is a Sociology major, and she's transferring to Cal Poly Pomona. Psychology major, English major-

Sun Ezzell: From transforming part-time into full time.

Speaker 6: Do you like the time that you spend with Julie about how to write a CV and a cover letter-

Christina Barsi: Or just finding time to soak in the campus.

Speaker 7: To think of the natural environment around us as a library.

Christina Barsi: We want to keep you informed and connected to all things Mt. SAC, but most importantly we want to keep you connected with each other. I'm Christina Barsi, Mt. SAC alumni and producer of this podcast.

Sun Ezzell: And I'm Sun Ezzell, learning assistance faculty and professional learning Academy coordinator.

Christina Barsi: And this is the Magic Mountie podcast.

Christina Barsi: Hi, it's Christina, and we wanted to share with you in this episode some clarification around different types of academic support, as well as some firsthand experiences from faculty, students who have worked in the academic support programs, and one student who decided to invest in himself to further his success in his class. Taken from the fall Flex Day breakout session, A-S-A-C SI and E-Ts-Oh My, navigating the waters of academic support, here are some first accounts. Enjoy.

Speaker 8: Students who come to the academic support and achievement center or the MARC, the T-MARC more than six hours have a success rate of almost 16 points higher than those who don't. Our students of color who come to get tutoring, whether it's from the MARC, T-MARC, or the academic support achievement center, do 20 points better than those who do not. Well, what's the difference anyway, because you've heard us talk about SI, drop-in tutors, embedded tutors and study groups. Alright, supplemental instruction is that, that bridge between the classroom and what the student needs outside of the classroom, and they work very closely with the faculty member.

Speaker 8: We like to refer to embedded tutoring as SI like, where they're not doing so much outside or a lot of the planning, the preparation work, they do the same amount of time in the classroom. They'll set in, they'll do on the spot. In addition, they hold workshops outside of classrooms and we even have some embedded tutors who will actually have drop-in hours. So for example, the student just can't make it to that study session, there are other hours available where they could potentially drop in throughout the day.

Speaker 8: So study groups is like really, really SI like. It's just regularly scheduled throughout the semester. They're standard, the students come in. It's more of a group tutoring effort where multiple students from... Classes would come in and have a problem with this, I have a question about that.

Speaker 8: And then drop-in tutoring. Probably don't know but they drop in. Drop-in tutoring is what we would probably think of when we think of the old tutoring. You go to the center, you sign in and the student helps you. That is still probably our most dominant form of academic support or what we call direct academic support.

Speaker 8: We're going to move over and talk about what the experts say. So our panel here has kindly given up their morning to come and share their experiences with us about their interactions with the SI tutoring and academic support services that we have at the ASACs.

Jen: Good morning. My name is Jen. I'm a supplemental instruction mentor, as well as a physics SI.

Giselle Navarro: Good morning. My name is Giselle Navarro and I am an SI mentor and SI leader.

Speaker 1: My name is Alexander Marquez and I am a student representative.

Keiko Appel: Hi, my name is Keiko. I'm teaching Japanese. I had embedded tutor last semester, so I want to talk about that here.

Keiko Tsurumi: My name is also Keiko, number two, Tsurumi. And I am a Japanese language program coordinator and I also teach Japanese here as well. So Japanese program that has a long standing group tutoring program that's well established. And that last semester we tried embedded tutoring for the first time and the objective was the group charting is basically like the study hall. Students come in and out as they need and then we offer extra credit and a lot of encouragement to have a student come out and to get help. But of course a lot of times the ones that you want to be there wouldn't. So that's why we try to embed a tutoring for the first time to help provide instruction and assistant on this spot in the class.

Keiko Tsurumi: And then, and so that they're, they're familiar with the tutor, so that they're, when tutor offers outside of the class assistance, then they'll be more inclined to accept the help. And then we also have, of course the offer extra credit. So you know, go with the tutor like right now and you can also get extra credit and the extra help. So it's a win- win situation. So, that's our strategy, is to get as many students as possible to get tutoring and help. And the Professor Appel is the one that who actually hosted, embedded tutor last semester. So, she has more to say to add.

Keiko Appel: First of all, I had embedded tutor for the first time, like last semester. So I didn't know what to expect honestly. But I asked her to walk around and then who's behind and who's shy. And then also who needs more challenge. Like I have students who are doing very well, who look a little bored. Sometimes they need challenge. And who's shy and who's behind. They need the help too. So I told her their names and then, "If you can help them, that'll be great. And the rest of the class I'll take care of it." And then she actually helped a few students during the class and that made a connection with her. And in the end of the class, like one of the students or maybe two of the students actually talked to her and then get kind of like clear like what they're wondering about because sometimes they can't talk to me because I'm talking to somebody else. And that made a little things smoother. So that was the things that then I actually asked my 18 to do and it helpful. I wish I could have more time with her.

Speaker 1: I was very unprepared for college. When I started day one, I felt that when I was reading a college level packet, I was confused. And especially that I have a specific learning disability of reading comprehension, it was very hard. Once I have heard about the SI tutoring, which was going to be held every session after class I had doubt, I was like, "Oh, I don't know," because I was like, again, I was new and I was scared. I met Giselle, which was my SI tutor that had very inspired me. She was very open, very honest, and she told me more about why she's there to help and for like any questions or if something seemed unclear to ask her. Once I spoke with her, I felt very comfortable for some reason, that's when I started to give it a chance. From there, she helped me on on my basics because even though Giselle was there for lit 3, she helped me from where I couldn't understand, which was from like the basics of English.

Speaker 1: I have a problem with comprehension, spelling, that anything with the core academics, I wasn't really sure of like I knew some of them, but not all of it. With Giselle explaining the whole process and relearning what was there that I didn't figure it out. It just opened my eyes and now that I'm at this age where I could understand more than what I didn't before, it just really helped me and I'm kind of glad I gave it a chance.

Speaker 1: If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't have passed my class with an A, which I was shocked too because I thought I was going to get like a B because I had an 80 but with the amount of support I got from Giselle and my professor, because they work together, I managed to ask help, used what they told me to apply on my work. And overall, I was very proud of myself and surprised because I never knew I could done of like a paper, like an essay paper that sounded like a college level and like in my surprise.

Giselle Navarro: Yeah. So, when I was approached by my professor, I took one course here, which was lit three last summer actually. So, I was in Alexander's shoes not that long ago when I was in front of all of them. So, that's the really nice thing about, to start with with the SI program is that it's pulling students who, not only our students, but have been in the shoes of those that they eventually get to guide, right? So, that already is training in itself of you. You've lived what you're going to eventually lead out. And then from there once you get hired on, and once I was hired on, it was, there was always support. The first thing that comes to mind is the tutoring classes. I took tutoring C, 10C, and that was, that's a six weeks, six week course that we take. And that involves so much of what an SI has to deal with, not just in the technicalities of you prepare for your sessions, how do you interact with the faculty and things like that.

Giselle Navarro: But just going even farther of what are some learning theories that are out there that students will bring out or that are helpful to know so that we're better prepared to help students. Right? So it's not just a, this is, it's not even just subject content that you're working on, but it's even deeper than that. It's, it really is learning theory and I think that's very beneficial. You know, for me in particular, I have the intention to go into teaching eventually, so I was eating that up so much because this is something that I'm going to be dealing with directly. But even for someone who doesn't want to teach because I did get to interact or I do interact with people who that's not their intention, they also enjoy or they also find it of great benefit because again, it's, it's a skill that everyone benefits from. When you understand how to work with people and more so how do people learn, that in itself is super, super helpful.

Giselle Navarro: Honestly, the reason why I've only done it for two semesters, but once it was first suggested to me and once I got to know the people in the program, I've fallen in love with it because everyone is there with the best intentions to help. It's a great program and the people that are there, what gets carried on or passed on because it's not, this is not something that just happened in the past year. This is something that has had to be built up over time, right? So it's something that I know that is going to continue being of benefit and it's always just going to grow. Even in our discussions over the summer of talking about how things can change and how much more we can add to it so that it's going to continually just prosper and help students to prosper. So yeah, there's a lot that goes into it.

Jen: And as an SI mentor, our primary goal is to create meetings that can support SIs throughout the semester. And in these meetings, we specifically target common issues that SIs will face when it comes to creating their sessions for their students, how they can navigate working together with the students and professor and the and the professor to create a collaborative learning environment where the students can grow and become self-sufficient learners. Our primary goal is, in fact, to create students that can succeed hopefully sometime in the future without us. So, we do continuously, in a way, train our SIs as they're doing the job through these meetings where we can further enhance or some of the learning theories or techniques that they learned in those tutoring classes beforehand.

Jen: I'm currently a full time student. I'm projected to maybe transfer sometime next year. Actually, academia in general has been a really wild ride for me.

Jen: I'm thinking I'm considered a non-traditional student. I'm actually 25 going through my undergrad. So I guess more recently in life, academia has just blew up for me. It's been something that I've been incredibly passionate about, especially since I've experienced the very struggles you hear about from students, time to time. So it's, it's given me an opportunity to not only grow as a student, but also grow as a potential educator since I'm also interested in going to education once I'm done with school.

Giselle Navarro: Well, so for me, I'm actually about to start my master's program at Laverne for education. But the way that I ended up at Mount SAC to begin with was I actually was here to finish off my bachelor's degree. So I was set to graduate in 2012 from another institution and I failed the one class that I needed to graduate full on. And that was a crazy ride for a lot of reasons.

Giselle Navarro: But I came here to finish it off and I was really happy to, not just for the sake of finishing my degree but also because I got into contact with a professor who thought I could be of benefit to others. And so it was that very professor that I took a class with that I ultimately ended up becoming an SI leader for. And part of not only is the program that I'm, you know, very thankful to be a part of just because it's so organized and the people are so great to work with. But also because for me in looking back, I would have loved to have this in my classes. I'm not a part of this program just for the sake of, you know what it could benefit for me as someone who wants to go into education. But also I want to make self-sufficient learners.

Giselle Navarro: I want to help students become self- sufficient. And the core ideals of the SI program are that they collaborate with each other. I don't stand in front of the classroom and do read lectures. I get to have students talk to each other and I've, and I've forced them out to be like, "No, you tell me what it is that you know." Right. And then we work from there. Cause I think a lot of the times you just need that little push to have the student realize, "Oh I actually know a lot more than I do." And that was a thing with, if I could speak to Alexander, if it's okay for me to share what we talked about from the very beginning of, he came to me saying, "Should I? I don't think, I don't know if I should be in this class." I think for anyone who's ever had a student or if you know, anyone asks them this very important question and you're like, "Okay...".

Giselle Navarro: And all I asked was like, you know, "Well, why? Why do you think that?" And then we kind of went from there and just reassuring him like, "Yeah, it seems pretty crazy, right? I mean, you're a freshman. This is a new adventure. You're taking a 16-week course in six weeks." Like that's, I don't know if I could have ever done that as a freshman sort of thing, but just letting him know that, that he had a lot more to get, right? And I wasn't really sure what that even meant at the time. But, I think mean something that I would repeat to all students is if you're asking that already says that you, you want to try, or you have that drive to try it. It's just a great program. It's not just about let's help the student get an A in the class, let's help this student become a lifelong learner.

Christina Barsi: Thank you for listening to the Magic Mountie podcast. Remember to subscribe on Apple podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you'd like to get your podcasts. So you can listen in the car, in your office, or however you like to listen. Once you subscribe, we'd love to hear what you think by leaving us a review. And don't forget to share your favorite episodes.