Brenda: My name is Brenda.

Janelle: I'm Janelle.

Liesel : Where are we right now?

Janelle: In the transfer center up on 9B, 9B building with student services, and we're here on a workshop, learning how to make it easy for us to transfer, and going through the process of how to transfer, and going through the application.

Liesel : How did you find out about this today?

Janelle: Actually signed up through some E-mails for the transfer workshops and anything else that they have to offer.

Liesel: It's starting. Good luck transfering.

Janelle: Thank you.

Liesel: Welcome to the Magic Mountie podcast. This is a podcast that's dedicated to helping faculty and other college employees as they try and navigate the challenging fabric of serving students, especially at Mount San Antonio college, but everyone's welcome.

Liesel: Hey everyone. Liesel here, we've got a fun and timely episode this week about student transfer. We'll hear from a variety of voices on the subject, including some of our career and transfer specialist, a former student, who's now working with a pretty big celebrity, and some other students on campus who are currently going through the process, or helping others who do. This week, how do we help students make the next big step in their lives.

Crystal: My name's Crystal Bibey, and I am a transfer specialist in the career and transfer center.

Lupita: My name is Lupita De la Cruz, and I'm also transfer specialist at the career and transfer center, and regards to what we do, we definitely assist students with the transfer process and just help them with their transfer options, and kind of advise them in that path.

Crystal: We're located on the second floor of the student services center building 9B. We have a small computer lab and a bunch of college pendants hanging from the ceiling, and our workspaces, and our student staff who can help students with the things that Lupita mentioned, as well as directing them to all of our services and activities.

Lupita: We have a computer lab there that students can utilize to research institutions that they want to transfer to. When they come in there they can see also a library of resources in our center where they can check out school's catalogs and whatnot, just brochures and information about transfer or financial aid, and different campuses as well. They can also see our transfer hall of fame, so they can get inspired from other students who have transferred in the past, and some words of wisdom that we ask them to share.

Liesel : I'm going to go up and look at the transfer hall of fame. I'm excited now. I hope ... I don't know if I helped with any of those students or not, but I kind of want to see who made the list, how many yards rushing do you have to have to make the transfer hall of fame.

Crystal: You just have to be wiling to take your picture, and want to be displayed in the center.

Liesel : Awesome.

Crystal: And be a transferring student.

Liesel : So, I do want to get into some of the practical questions, and I just want to tell you these two are so prepared. They have prepared answers to questions, so they're really great. Really help us out, what can faculty do to support our current students who are thinking about transferring in their lives.

Lupita: One of the things is definitely encouraging them to look into transfer, even when a student is not considering that option, as a professor in the classroom instill in them that option to transfer, and invite them to come to the transfer center. Perhaps take advantage of these two transfer specialists to come into their classroom to do presentations. We will be more than happy to do full presentations on the transfer process. We do transfer 101s in regards to university requirements, how to select a school to transfer to, financial aid a little bit, and how to be a more competitive transfer applicant.

Liesel : I'm going to jump in really quickly. I don't coach anymore, but when I coached the speech and debate team, we decided we wanted to start doing transfer presentations to try and encourage transfer, and so we made that a part every semester, and then we did a study, a transfer study with our research office to see, and we had unbelievable transfer rates, and I really think a lot of that had to do with creating a culture of transfer in that community, and just really reliably putting in our curriculum, this is the night we bring transfer in.

Lupita: Yes, another way to kind of support transfer, and kind of inbed that in the curriculum is I've seen professors, or English classes, one of the essays that students have to write are on personal statements. I think that's one great way also to support this, and kind of inbed that in there.

Liesel : What is the most common schools that students apply to here?

Crystal: We send the most students to Cal Poly Pomona, CalState Fullerton and CalState LA are popular CalState options as well. UCLA, UC Irvine.

Liesel : Which are the ones that our students really try and reach for that are the toughest schools for them to get into?

Crystal: It's really hard to put it in those absolute terms, because it can vary depending on so many different factors. UCLA of course is very, very competitive in terms of GPA as well as the requirements, and I'm focusing on the nearby options that a lot of students are looking into, so of course UCLA comes to mind as very, very competitive, and also of high interest for a lot of Mount Sac students. Cal State Fullerton is pretty competitive to get into because they prioritize their local students from Orange County community colleges, which creates a higher GPA cut off for non local students, which is anybody outside of the Orange County community colleges. On the note of easiest to get into, Cal Poly Pomona gives Mount Sac students that priority, so students are completing most of their units at those schools are essentially guaranteed admission as long as they meet the minimum CSU requirements, and the GPA requirement's just a 2.0. UC Riverside is the more flexible UC campus in this area. They have some majors that are pretty selective, but many of their majors can admit students with just the minimum eligibility requirements, and UC Riverside guarantees admission through the TAG program, or transfer admission guarantee with just a 2.7 to a 3.2 GPA or higher.

Liesel : That's pretty cool, and if you're an honor student and complete the honor program, we'll do a different whole podcast on that, but if you're in the honors program, we also have some transfer agreements in place with some schools. You know about those?

Crystal: Yes, we have the transfer alliance program with UCLA, which gives students priority consideration of their applications, and those students have a higher admission rate than the general population, and our honors program also has another guarantee with UC Irvine, which is guaranteed admission to UCI.

Liesel : Is that in all majors? Are there any restrictions for those?

Crystal: There are a few exceptions with UC Irvine, their nursing program does not guarantee admission, and then with UCLA's agreement with our honors program, it's exclusive to majors in the college of letters and science, so it excludes things like engineering, nursing, arts, and architecture.

Liesel : Got it, and if you want to be an actor, you still need an audition, I know that.

Crystal: That's true.

Liesel : I want to talk about college tours. I think this is so great, you know I always think about the college tours as something my east coast friends do with their kids, and they get in the car when the leaves are changing, and they drive up and down the coast, and check out the colleges. It's just such an elite thing, but our students have access of doing something similar.

Crystal: We take students on free trips to visit universities where transportation is provided, and we do that because it's really valuable for students to step foot on campus a few times before they decide to go somewhere for a few years of their life. We go to a lot of universities nearby where we try to visit two schools in one day. For example, Cal Poly Pomona and Cal State Fullerton, or Cal State LA, and Cal State Long Beach, and we usually have a guided tour and admissions presentation. We also go to the San Diego area, and we just got back from our trip to northern California where we usually visit UC Santa Cruz, San Francisco State university, UC Berkeley, and UC Davis. It's a two night, three day trip, transportation and hotel stay ar provided, and usually around 45 students get to participate in that activity.

Liesel : How did it go? What were some of the interesting things that happened on that trip?

Lupita: Oh, it was an amazing trip. I keep telling everyone it was a great experience, definitely a great year, a great group of students. We got to visit the four different schools that we had planned for. One of the fun things that we try to do as well so that it's not just transfers, it's not just academics, we take them on the Friday night of that trip, we take them to Pier 39 for them to explore, and you know, have fun. We also take them to the Golden Gate bridge, so they love it.

Liesel : What were some of the things that they were saying on the way back? What kind of comments did you hear from students?

Lupita: I had particularly one that I remember, he ... This student approached me, and he told me that he came from a continuation school, and that he was not expecting that at all. He told me I did not expect this trip to be like this, and so it really surprised me, so he's like it was great. He started telling me that now he considers transferring. He even just E-mailed me two days ago to make an appointment to start discussing transfer because he previously did not see transfer as an option. He just happened to learn about this trip, he took advantage, applied, and got selected for it, and so now he was exposed to this whole transfer option, and he sees it now as a more viable option. We're going to meet soon, next week actually, and so I hope to continue with that mentality of pursuing that transfer goal.

Liesel : So, we are in transfer season right now. What are some deadlines that we need to be mindful of as faculty if we want to help our students optimize this transfer year.

Crystal: As many of our students are considering Cal State's and UC's, October 1st through November 30th is an important time period 'cause that's the application filing period for Cal State Universities, and November 1st through the 30th for the UC's. That's a big deadline that people have in mind, November 30th. Private and out-of-state school's deadlines vary, so we can't really pinpoint those, but I think the November 30th deadline catches a lot of our students, so please feel free to send students our way for application assistance.

Crystal: Oh, on that note ...

Crystal: One thing faculty could consider doing is just taking a minute in their class to tell students to go to our website and subscribe to our E-mail updates. I have students tell me I didn't know the transfer center existed, or I wish I had come here sooner. If we can put that message out there, and they jump on our E-mails, they'll stay informed of all the activities we have going on.

Liesel : Just a mini field trip too, you know it doesn't take that long, maybe 15 or 20 minutes to jut have your class take a quick walk, you know lecture while you're walking. You can lecture about all kind ... You know, it's a walk and talk. Oh, look where we found ourselves, at the career transfer center.

Lupita: We of course would appreciate if professors also give extra credit to students to participate in our different activities and services that we offer, 'cause I feel like that's how students get encouraged. They get motivated to go, and once we get them there, then we can expose them to the other different range of services and resources that we have for them. We want to support every single Mount Sac student on campus by just looking into our transfer rates, and the segregated data in those reports, and looking at who's transferring and who has lower rates of transferring, maybe focusing a lot on those students, reaching out to those students, so definitely our African American student population, or Pacific Islander students, or Latin X student population as well, especially the males.

Liesel : Absolutely, and you know one of the thing that was surprising to me when I first saw transfer data, that it's kind of low, right, and I know there are some students who come to Mount Sac and that's not their goal, they're here for a certificate program, or for personal growth or development, but we do have a lot of students who say their goal is transfer, who for whatever reason don't. We know there's lots of reasons why that can happen, but if it was there stated goal, I think it's sort of worth all of us asking how can we make sure that they achieve their goal. It's not just their goal once they become students, it's our goal.

Lupita: Absolutely.

Liesel : Well thank you so much for your time and effort. When students transfer, not only does it change their career, but they're going to meet the person they're going to marry, they're going to make their friends for life, their business connections. I mean, it's a defining experience in someone's life, and you're a big part of that, so thank you.

Crystal: Thank you.

Liesel : Okay, as promised I am here at the transfer hall of fame, outside the transfer center, and I'm looking at the board. We've got North Ridge, Cal Poly Pomona, USC. One of the cool things on this transfer board is that they ask the students who are their transfer scholars to leave encouraging words for future transfer students. I thought I'd share a few of these. This is a student named Ricardo. “Be patient with yourself. Be disciplined, be committed to your education. Ask for help, and talk to counselors. You are not alone, and apply for scholarships.” Here's another one, “Don't worry about how you finish your story, just stop when you're done.” It's a quote from our journalism professor, Tony Albertson. It's from one of undoubtedly her student's from our successful journalism program. This student said, “That's whaz up.” here's another one. This student writes, "It's never too late." All good advice, and I'm sure if we shared some of that with our students, they'd probably appreciate it, especially that's whaz up.

Liesel : Tell me your name and what you do here.

Alexis: My name's Alexis Heridia. I'm a transfer specialist, and I'm also a Mount Sac student. I'm a child development major and ASL major. While working in the transfer center, what I do, I help students kind of break down their requirements to see if they have their requirements when transferring. Different schools offer different things, so we'll work together on that. I also helped them put together the application if they're not so sure, even though the questions are verbatim on what they're asking for. If they're kind of second guessing or need a second opinion, then I'm there to help them.

Liesel : For students, how do you think they feel when they come in?

Alexis: Pretty much most of them are stressed. I kind of tell the students okay, if you don't know what's going on, or if you don't know what the whole application process is about, feel free to join our workshop. Some students, they'll come and do last minute, and when they come in last minute then it's stressful for us, and it's stressful for them because they're trying to get everything rushed out before the deadline, so it's a pretty stressful event, but personally I love to see student transfer out. I give them all the respect that I am as a still student here, and watch them transfer kind of inspires me to transfer.

Liesel : Do you think your bosses at the transfer center are secretly trying to make sure you don't transfer so that they can keep you as an employee? I'm just kidding.

Alexis: Working here, I feel like I know so much about the transfer, not so much, I'm still new, but there's still more to learn. Personally, I have a story behind it, I want to do better for my siblings.

Liesel : That's your story, tell me your story.

Alexis: Yeah, so my mother has four kids. I have an older brother. I have ... It's me, I'm the second oldest, and then I have my little sister, she's 13, then the baby's three. Kind of being the first generation college student in my family, it's really emotional, like this process is really emotional for me, and I just kind of want to do better for them, 'cause my parents did not go to college, and to know that I'm setting that pathway for the young girls in my family, it kind of motivates me to go further and beyond in my education, and say hey, just because we're coming from what our background is, that doesn't mean you have to stay there.

Sona: My name is Sona Movsesian, and I am a former student from Mount Sac.

Liesel : At some point you decided you wanted to transfer. Sona, what was your dream school?

Sona: Yes, USC was my dream school. It was definitely not a possibility after high school, I was a very below average student, and then I did great at Mount Sac, and I thought this ... I could actually transfer to USC, so that was my dream.

Liesel : How did it go?

Sona: So, I'm riding high. I have a great GPA, I have fantastic extra curricular activities. I'm thinking I'm a shoe in, so I apply, I make the deadline, and then they start sending notices out, I believe it was in March, and I didn't get anything, all month of March I didn't get any notice. Then, April comes around, all of April, nothing, no acceptance, no rejection, nothing, and then I start calling the admissions office starting about April. April, May, June, July, I mean at this point when it comes to July, I am calling the admissions office every single day, and they are telling me the same thing, which is your application is still under review, which is crazy, so you know, I at this point, I have to choose my backup school, so I had sent in the deposit and everything for my back up school, and I was getting ready to move to San Diego, and USC started in August. I remember, and finally you know, I'm calling. I'm calling them every ... I called them every single day all summer long, and then school starts. USC's semester begins, and I still don't know if I got accepted or if I got rejected.

Sona: I mean, at this point ... At this point I'm still holding on to a dream. Every time I called them they said your application is being reviewed. You're still under review. I think she felt really bad 'cause she always had to just check and see, and just tell me that they had not reached any sort of decision on my behalf, so it was really, really frustrating, and then I ended up going to another school for the fall semester. I come back for Christmas vacation. I'm at home, I'm sick with the flu. I'll never forget this, and my mom hands me a giant envelope from USC, and it's my acceptance letter, and at this point I was only going to be home for a few weeks 'cause I was going to go back to San Diego, so I had to completely switch gears, and get ready for going to USC in the beginning of the Spring Semester, which was such a headache. I mean, it was unbelievable, it was such a mess.

Liesel : So you said I want to give these people over 100 thousand dollars of my money.

Sona: Yeah, I thought okay great, where do I make out this giant check. Tell me where I can draw out as many loans as possible to be in debt for the next 15 years.

Liesel : By the way, what happened recently?

Sona: Recently, I paid off my college loans, which is very exciting.

Liesel : What ended up happening to you afterwards? What are you doing now? You can even ... You even involved with a new podcast I understand.

Sona: Right after graduating USC, I had an internship through USC at NBC, and I worked as a page, and then I worked at NBC as an events and operation coordinator for a few years, and then I got a job working for Conan O'Brien as his assistant, and I've been working for Conan for the last almost 10 years, and just recently in November, he's going to launch his own podcast called Conan O'Brien Needs A Friend, and I'm going to be on the podcast with him, so there you go.

Liesel : Wow, so this is all just a plug really.

Sona: So, you know wherever you get your podcast, just look up Conan O'Brien Needs A Friend, and subscribe.

Liesel : There you go.

Conan O'Brien: Hey. This is Conan O'Brien, and this is my new podcast Conan O'Brien needs a friend. Let me explain, I been doing a TV show for 25 years. I've done over 4000 episodes with celebrity guests, you'd think I'd have friends, but I don't. I have my assistant Sona who's been with me ... How many years you been with me Sona?

Sona: Almost 10 years.

Conan O'Brien: Yeah, you and I are like peanut butter and what ...

Sona: Something that doesn't go with peanut butter.

Conan O'Brien: We're like peanut butter and white out. Mix those two together, and you've got a sandwich that would probably kill you if you ate it.

Liesel : So, what do we need to say to students to help prepare them for this experience they're about to go through?

Sona: USC couldn't come up with a reason to reject me. I think that they begrudgingly accepted me, and that was always in the back of my mind, and I think that because of that I did everything I could to prove to them that I deserved to be there, that I ... That they made the right choice by accepting me, and I graduated with honors. I really used that to fuel me throughout the whole process, and Mount Sac really prepared me, and I think the most jarring thing for a lot of transfer students is if from a community college level if they will be prepared for a university level for coursework on a four year university level, and honestly a lot of people I met at Mount Sac were smarter, and had more to offer the four year universities than the kids I met when I ... That had been there since they were freshman, so I think that's probably what I came away with, as cliché as that sounds, aim high.

Liesel : Hey, thanks so much for joining us for the Magic Mountie podcast. We love your likes, we love your shares, and we love your comments, so please engage with our community. Download from wherever you love to get your podcast, iTunes, Google, rate my professor, we're there, and we want you to be back with us next week. Remember, any opinions that are expressed in this podcast do not necessarily represent Mount San Antonio college or any of its agents. We'll see you next time.