

I recall being overwhelmed with joy when I was notified of being a Mt. SAC scholarship recipient. It was validating to hear that others believed in my ability to be successful as a student. As a Mountie, without consciously admitting or knowing, I needed others to believe in me. I recall experiencing extraneous circumstances every semester. I was worried if my family and I had enough money to pay for rent, if we had enough money to eat, and if I had enough money to purchase the monthly bus-pass that would take me up Puente Avenue, to Mt. San Antonio College. My impression of Mt. SAC staff and faculty was them coming across as genuine, authentic, and sincere. Being selected as a scholarship recipient only reaffirmed such beliefs about Mt. SAC and the greater community of support. Such investment that scholarship donors have provided was critical towards my success in college. This opportunity served to reaffirm (at that time) that I was college material. Being a scholarship recipient not only planted the seed in my head to be successful, but also contributed to the overall *tangible evidence* that my family needed to see, in attempts to show that I was progressing at the college. Just as much as I needed to believe in myself, my family as well needed to see that there were others who believed in me. Although it was my educational journey, I was not the only person that needed to be uplifted; I was not the only person that needed validation. The scholarship receptions have the power to bring families together, to celebrate, to rejoice, but most importantly—to be happy. I will be forever grateful of such memories. It is my aspiration to pay it forward in the future, for new students coming through the education pipeline.

Julio Fregoso

Mt. SAC Scholarship Recipient, 2009

My Scholar Story