

Student Profile:

Mylene Magallanes

Skyline College – Allied Health



Mylene was working part-time and expecting a child when she first enrolled at Skyline College. Her goal was to become an accountant, but the pre-requisite courses didn't inspire her; she felt uncertain about her direction. After taking a new job at Mills Peninsula Health Services as a newborn hearing screener, however, Mylene was drawn to a career in nursing. "When I started working, I saw how the healthcare professionals worked with families and made differences in people's lives," she says. "I chose health as a pathway because I always wanted a career that would last a lifetime, and I wanted to make a difference where it really mattered."

Mylene soon discovered Skyline College's Career Advancement Academy (CAA) in Allied Health. She met with the CAA counselor, who gave her information on the range of healthcare professions and the classes she needed to attain a certificate. When she learned about the support provided to CAA students, it all felt achievable. She recalls, "They supported me and said, 'We'll get you through it, every step of the way.' And they did."

The CAA counselor helped Mylene develop an academic plan and secure financial aid. Mylene enrolled in the CAA "bridge" courses and quickly developed relationships with a cohort of peers who encouraged her persistence; even as she struggled to hold onto multiple jobs while raising two young children. Mylene shared: "If we needed help, we knew we could talk to one another, and we knew what each other was going through."

Mylene's classes in English and math were contextualized for the healthcare field, immediately relevant to her long-term goals. Her introductory healthcare class helped her fine-tune her academic plan and identify which credentials were sought after by employers. Following the semester "bridge," Mylene earned her certificate in Sterile Processing at Skyline College, then graduated from Skyline with an associates of science in Allied Health. Later she began her Associate Degree in Nursing at The College of San Mateo.

Today, Mylene has earned her degree, passed the licensure exam to become a registered nurse, and transferred to San Francisco State University. She expects to earn her Bachelor's degree in Nursing in a single year. Mylene is currently working at Mills Peninsula as a registered nurse.

"If I didn't have all the support that the CAA gave me, I wouldn't have been able to finish," Mylene reflects. "A lot of people think, 'Oh, I have to work, I don't have time, I have kids...but it can be done. The Career Advancement Academy supports that.'"



Career Advancement Academies

The California Community Colleges' Career Advancement Academies (CAAs) were established in 2007 as bridges to college and high wage careers for low-income young adults who face academic and personal barriers to postsecondary education and employment. The CAAs integrate several elements that work together to accelerate student progress:

- Contextualized basic English and math instruction
- Technical training in high-demand occupations and industries
- Work readiness training and career guidance
- Academic and retention counseling
- Support services and financial assistance
- Peer support from a cohort of CAA students

