

I've worked at the circulation desk the whole time I've been here at UCA. Both of my children are UCA graduates. So once I got here, they stayed here. And I guess I was supposed to tell a bit about being a first-generation student. My mother quit school in tenth grade because she lived on a cotton farm in Mississippi. And her dad would pull her out of school every year to work on the farm, and she just got further and further behind and finally just gave up. And my dad did graduate from high school. But college was never part of either their plans. And honestly, as a child in school, it was never mentioned in my house. It was never thought that I would go to college. So it was a real big surprise to my family when in eighth grade they, the guidance counselor came in and said tomorrow you gotta decide if you're going tech or you're going college. And I chose college. So it was a big kind of surprise. And my dad said, I don't know why you're going to college all you're going to do is get married, have children, and you're going to waste our money. And so that was sort of his opinion. My mother was if you want to do it, do it, but don't mess up. Because if you do mess up, you're gonna wind up working in shirt factory the rest of your life because I'm from Hamburg and that's really the only thing that was there. And I worked one summer in the shirt factory and that was not what I wanted to do the rest of my life. So I was a honor graduate from college. I made very good grades because I did not want to spend the rest of my life in a shirt factory. And I wound up here in a library. So I think that's pretty good. It's definitely not a shirt factory. Awesome thank you. Pansie? Hi, my name is Pansie Johnson. I graduated from the University of Central Arkansas in August, so I'm a fresh alumni I graduated with.. Thank you! With a Bachelor's of Science in Public Relations and a minor in marketing. I am a first gen, I am the oldest on my mom's side, I had two younger sisters and on my dad's side I actually have an older brother, and he's at UCA, and he should be graduating in December, so I'm excited for that. And then I have a younger sister on that side also. UCA was great for me, I was very involved there. I was a member of MMP, minority mentorship programs, student orientation staff, students by the propagation of black culture. I'm a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority incorporated. So I did a lot at UCA. Really as far as like coming to college, it was always like I'm going to go to college because I want to do more for myself. I did not want to be working paycheck to paycheck because I am from a small town and it's easy to get caught up in that. So yeah, that's pretty much my background. Hello everyone. My name is Pearlie Williams. I am an alumni of UCA And I've worked here for 14 years. I started out in the library at the circulation desk. With Miss Sandra. And I just wanted to work individually with students in the advising center. So my story when I came to college, I didn't really know I was really a first gen student. I came to college not just because I wanted to, but because it was the next step after high school. So I chose a major which I did not finish, Not really giving much thought to it. So I did not finish in the four years. I actually dropped out for a long time, but I wanted to prove to myself and that I was valued and smart enough to complete a degree. So due to my experience, I'll call it my wandering in the wilderness experience. I just kinda always felt like I was just too close not to finish. And so my not finishing was just a series of poor decision-making, not asking questions. And actually that's something I really thought about not helping my advisor to be a good advisor. When I decided to come back, there was purpose behind my returning. I didn't want students to go through what I had actually gone through wandering in the wilderness just because one degree didn't pan out as I thought. So this is all just a part of part of personal development and maturity. And so if I could do it all over again, I would ask, ask, ask questions. Everybody who knows me know, know that I'm an introvert at heart and so I'm just kind of quiet and shy. And it was worst back then, oh my gosh. And so my biggest advice to students is ask questions. I tend to pay, really pay attention to my students. I can kinda tell when, when they have something really on their heart that they would like to share with, but everybody does not do that. And so I would just, because we're not

mind readers. So it's just really important to ask questions. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Ask questions in class room, ask questions outside of, outside of classroom. Talk to your advisors. I don't care, bug them. I have students that contact me "Miss Pearl, I'm having trouble." And sometimes I really feel like a Mom. "Miss Pearl okay, I'm having trouble with people here..." but I think I would rather for them to do that than to sit back and not ask questions, to have the information, or even just give up and say, you know what, I'm just done with, I can't connect with anybody. And so I just think it's really important. You as a student, you have to help your advisors and help us be better at our jobs. Help us to be a good advisor, help us to get big, get direct us. Help us to be great professors. This is what we need from you guys, and so you know, ask questions, what careers are out there, what things are out there? You know, because growing up in a small town, where, where do you typically see? You see a teacher using a policeman. You see a Principal. And so, you know, students have no idea what careers are actually out there that they could best match with your interests. Nobody even asked me about my interest. What? I bet, you know, that was just foreign to students. And so we have the resources here in place, not just to keep us busy, but we know that all of these things work together to make you who you want to be, you know what your interests when it is you'd like. Even we talk about listen to this television shows that you watch all the time. Why do you watch that? What interests you about? And so just ask questions. Don't be like me, you know, and just sit back and, you know, walking around as if you know, everything and you don't believe me you don't, I had brothers and a sister that actually attended college and I didn't ask them a darn thing. That's crazy. You know, I knew my mom didn't know, but some of you may have some siblings or cousins or somebody in your family that you can just pick their brain, just ask them, Okay, who do I go to this if I'd, if I need an answer for this. So don't just sit back. Please ask us questions. That's what we're here for. Thank you, thank you. Lance So can you guys hear me? Alright. Hi, my name is Lance Phipps, I'm currently a senior here at UCA. I'll be graduating next semester actually. And man, ... I have two really big things, I kind of want to touch on being a first gen college student. No one in my immediate family has completed any kind of degree beyond just going to high school. So for me, it was all kind of, you know, you're on your own, do it yourself, learn as you go kind of thing. And I've learned a lot through that. I've made quite a few mistakes myself because I didn't have first-hand experience people that kinda go to. I didn't have those older people that I could turn to and ask, what do I do in this situation? How should I go about this? So really, the biggest things that I have to say, one that really got me is I came in as a business student and I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do. I just chose something. So I had something to kind of work towards. And that wasn't my passion. And I feel like some people can get stuck in that situation where, you know, they're kinda unsure on what they want to do. So they just kinda pick something at random. You know, this sounds are alright and I, I, my biggest tip is go undeclared. And so you know, because you will find out something, it just kinda happens. It's a weird moment, man. It may not happen until like right then at the end of your sophomore year right when it's time to pick pick something and choose that path and go into your upper division. But man, I'm telling you if you're like, if you're just actually involved in your studies, you're going to have that moment. You're going to take a class that's just going to click like that for you. And It's just a, it would've saved me so much money had if I just like gone in the classes that I truly would have appreciated. Instead of taking something just to pick something and find out, oh, never mind, like this is actually all really bland to me. And another thing financially is, you know, as, as much as I love the university, especially I love UCA. I do wish I would have started at a community college if you can't afford going to a university instead of just going straight to a university, try to knock out basics at a community college near you, and then go and get your upper division, you know, at a more prestigious

university like this one. Because even though I've, I've loved my time going straight into university, I definitely think I would have saved a lot more money and it would've helped me not be so much in debt. But at the same time, man, you know, I did learn quite a bit. So is you get, you get kind of a trade-off. You make better decisions. You know, it's like you gotta make that choice. It's like, do you want to go ahead and just don't get that full university experience, or do you think you need to save a little bit more money and then go and get the last two years because you're still going to get the experience regardless. If you're going for a bachelor's, you're getting that experience, no matter what. So that's really, those are my two big things that play. Thank you. Audreka? Hey everybody. My name Audreka Peten. I graduated from UCA with a bachelors degree in Computer Information Systems in May of 2001. So it's been quite a while. And I did my Masters at Western University. I kind of knew, I come from a single parent home my parents got divorced when I was in the fifth grade. And so I saw my mom go through the struggle. And I always knew that her main thing for myself and my sisters was, you know, go to school and do good. That's all she asked of us, that's it. And so if that was all she wanted from me for me to make our life easier, I was determined to make that happen. So I graduated as Salutatorian in my class and I have a twin sister, she was right behind me. So we already knew our goal was to go to college. My dad and my mom both had high school degrees, but that's it. So we knew we were going to college. We knew my mom couldn't afford to pay, so keep the Those things were kind of in our head even though my mom didn't instill it, she didn't pressure us for it. But we knew that was her driving force for the hard work that she did. All she say was I just need y'all to do good in school you do your part and that's what's going to make me happy. So that's what we did. So when we were getting prepared to come to school, she couldn't really help us a lot. She was supportive but she didn't file our FAFSA, she didn't really know much. We came from a town of 2,000 people. You know, our counselor he was older, he did what he could, but he didn't really know a whole lot. Right. So like I said I have a twin so me and her work together, we tried to figure it out. You know, what do we have to do? What do we need to do? So when we got that we were accepted to UCA. We knew we wanted Conway because he had a cousin that lived here. So we had already been visiting on weekends and we loved the university. So we knew what it was like. Once we got our acceptance letter, we just knew at that point okay, they told us we had an academic scholarship. And that academic scholarship will help pay for our school. Though, my mama kept telling us, "Y'all got four years." The paperwork said you got four years, so y'all gotta get in there and get out." That was our driving force. So that's what we had. But I think my, the difference between myself and some of the other people was that I did have a twin So I did have somebody there going through it with me. I have someone there to, you know, we were we had each other's back. We took all the same classes. We have the same undergrad degree, we have the same Master's degree. We and we took the same classes. So my mom didn't have to pay for two separate books. We would share books. So our whole driving force was, we're very family-oriented people, we were just trying to make my my mom happy, make her happy, and make life easier for her. So that was the driving force. Once we got here and they moved us in, they didn't have a dorm for us. So we had to stay in the kitchen of Conway hall with three other girls. They turned the kitchen into a space. So they had five twin beds in there, they had just some rails for us to hang our clothes on. Just some regular rails on wheels. So what they did was, now that I look back, it was so so intentional because in school even though Shameka and I were cheerleaders and but we were still very introverted. When sometimes when you have a twin you tend to just, that's your friend, that's my friend! So we didn't have a whole makeup of friends but it caused us to be very introverted. And we just talked to each other. Well when we got in that room with three other roommate it's an open space, everybody gotta talk. So that kind of took us

out of our shell, just a little bit, and I was like, okay, this is intentional. I'm still really good friends with one of my roommates. I don't know where the other two are, but it was five of us in a small room, and I remember we would come out into the hallway just sometimes for a break you know to the hallway because we can't get any piece. So we will go to the hallway. And I remember in that hallway, I ran into a young lady who is still my best friend, her name is Angel, and she lived two doors down. She offered her room to us if we needed somewhere to study some quiet time. She offered so many things to us. She just happens to be a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority at the time. So through her, we were able to meet other people. And, and I will tell you, it's really important that you group yourself with like-minded people, people who have the same goal. Your goal is to come here and to graduate. That is so very vital with when you're in college and when you're a first Gen, you really want to be around people who got a goal in mind, the same as yours, if your goal is to come here to be successful, to get involved, to graduate, then you surround yourself with those type of people. So that's what we did. And so we ended up pledging Delta Sigma Theta in the spring of '99. The best decision I've ever made in my whole entire life. Come. If anybody asked me, what part of your life would you redo it's my college years. I had the best time while I was here. My best friend, I met her the very first night. It was a back to school party. In August. And she's my very very best friend that I made. And her goal was to get out here and graduate. So I surrounded myself with people so I will say being going to college first, I didn't know what it meant to me then, but now what I know. I have a niece that's now at UCA. She's trying to follow in our footsteps. And just my little sister This is her, she's a freshman here in college, and my other little sister graduated from UCA with a teaching degree. For now I realize that I didn't know the impact I was going to have on my family, but by me starting something, completing something, that's encouraged them to start something and to hopefully complete something. So I think that's very important is once you become a first gen like, I said my mom who really helps, she was supportive. But I know everybody's situation is not that, everybody's situation isn't nice, that you have somebody supporting you. You get somebody in your ear saying, "you're not going to graduate, you can't do it." That they are not the people that you want to listen to. You be your own person. My advice to you is to you set, you set your goal and you complete the goal that you have set for yourself. Do not allow other people to set a goal for you. Other people cannot determine and you know, some people say I came from a small town this and that, you never have to be a product of your environment. That's not. You control your own destiny. You like, you make life purposeful for what you want. And once we figured it out, when we first came my sister and I said we were going to come to school and get accounting degrees because we had we were going to name our accounting firm, "Twinacious Accounting Firm" That was going to be the name. Well, we got here, we made its to intermediate accounting and we decided yeah that ain't what we are going to be able to do. But we have made it so far in our business education. We have made it so far. We went talk to advisor because, you know, we we gotta get out of here in four years, we know that, and we have already taken all these business courses, we got our gen ed's out of the way, but we cannot continue on accounting. What is another route for us? We had to have that discussion and after sitting down looking at our credits, and our hours, it all, he was like, well, if you go ahead and start taking computer computer courses, you can get a degree in computer information systems. So that's what we did. So we made sure that we we did change out major, but we had to make it make sense. Make it make sense to where we're not going to have to You know, be wasting money and we're not going to lose the scholarship. Well, that's exactly what we did. So you have to just make sure Like Miss Pearlle said, ask the questions. I've been here at the university for 10 years now. I've worked in financial aid as Assistant Director working with technical problems, so I used my degree a little bit over there and

I did that for five years. I'm currently in the student accounts office and I've been here for five years. And I tell all the students I just sit back here in this office. I always have an open door and I don't know everything. But what I do know is people, I can tell you who I can contact you with and I don't mind making a phone call just to help your path be that much easier. To help your process. Make sure that you get to the final destination, which is the graduation day. That's what we want you to do. And finances, if you have any questions, for how are you gonna pay? Hey, what do you do? Be mindful of scholarships. You have to be mindful of how many hours you must be into receive to get this continue to get this scholarship. The challenge is one of those, is one of those scholarships where you have to be, so just make sure we don't know, like Miss Pearl said, we don't know the questions that you have, we don't know what you don't know, but feel free to ask there is never a dumb question. We are available. We are here working at this university, not because we make big bucks. We work here because we we create big smiles. So that's that's why we're here to be of any assistance. So my first gen situation is a little bit different from some people and that's fine. That was the course of my journey, but I wouldn't trade it, and looking back, I would do it all over again. I would probably do it the exact same way, cause it has truly been a great lesson for me. Thank you. Mr. Marvin My name is Marvin Williams. I graduated from UCA in 1995. Whoop. Don't start.... in 1995 and worked as a speech language pathologist and preschool teacher for eight years. And in 2003, I came back to UCA as an emergency hire for an academic advisor. And I've been here ever since and one of the best decisions I could've ever made. That would not have been possible had I not been I had not been educated and had a college degree. So getting my college degree means the world to me and meant the world to me. It was one of the proudest moments for my mother. Picture it: Osceola, Arkansas in 1971, a 14 year old and a 17-year old give birth to a beautiful baby boy (laughs). 14 years old. She dropped out of high school in the seventh vary to give birth to me. And my dad was 17. He did go on to complete high school. So I was the first of three children, the oldest of three. And we grew up in the housing projects, food stamps, welfare, hand me downs. And I had a mothering, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother who were like our circle who kind of helped to raise us. And I just knew from my experience that there were people living across town who lived differently than we did. And the common denominator in those individuals. How they were able to drive certain cars, have a career, live in certain places was that they were educated, they had a college education. And so I knew that that was going to be the ticket or the key to unlocking my future is to get what these folks have. I didn't know what all that meant. Of course, like I said, my mother ended up dropping out in the seventh grade. She eventually went back and got her GED and became a nursing assistant, but no college degree. And so pretty much I was dropped off here on campus here at UCA and was left to fend for myself. My mom came to campus one time, and that was in May of 1995 when I graduated from UCA. And she passed away in September of 95. It was a hard journey. She was sick and there was a lot of things going on at home. And so that's the reason why I'm very transparent with my students and I can relate to them and their struggles. Because I had those struggles too and had it not been for people here on this campus. And I'm not talking about faculty members and I'm not even talking about advisors, but just connecting with people in the library. There were two ladies, miss Hendricks and Miss Jones. They worked at the circulation desk. They became surrogate moms. The ladies who used to clean Arkansas Hall, Angel and Charlotte. I still remember their names. I can remember sitting in the break room with them in the in the residence hall. They became like Aunts or moms to me. So making connections on campus would be one of the pieces of advice that I would give to students is to make connections. But that's my story. And, and let me clear up something. The reason why Pearl Williams did not graduate the first time is because she came to UCA. But

anyhow, I'm proud of her because when I started working here, I found out about the classes that she needed to graduate. And so we kinda helped each other in that in that regard as she went on to finish and she's now doing which he loves to do, and that's to help students. So that's my story. So basically you distracted her, she was on the path. Well like I said in 1971, this beautiful baby was born. So, most of you all mentioned you know, about the people on campus that you connected with and asking for help. And I think, you know, even for Lance and Pansie, you know, who are feeling young and very recently tied to UCA, I think nowadays students comfort level with asking for help, they're not as comfortable as we were when we first came to school. I was not afraid to say I'm confused. I don't know where I'm going. I don't know what I'm supposed to be doing, I'm hungry, whatever the situation was, I wasn't afraid to say that, but I think this generation, is a little bit different. And in their culture, they're just not as used to asking for help, and we have Dr. Desrochers here saying yes, asking for help is a big deal. So what advice would you give to students if they're a little bit nervous about approaching, you know, for a lot of them we're still strangers, even though we feel like we know these students, and we know we're here to help, but we still feel like strangers, that even upper-classmen students they feel like strangers. So what advice would you give to them? It's actually Pansie and Lance, about asking for help and how to break that, I can go on and do so. I got something I always say to students like this, I'm sorry, thanks y'all I wanna jump in. Because this is a big deal. I just got done today with my bottom line, freshmen, very bottom chemistry class, right? And I always tell students that, that you got to ask for help. And I said it like this. Let let's say you ask somebody for help and you're successful. Then you ask somebody for help and you succeed. Then you ask somebody for help and you succeed. And then you ask somebody for help and you succeed. You think people are going to say, Are you couldn't get there without somebody. They're gonna, they're gonna remember you as a success. You're going to have succeeded. And they, none of us, I mean, look at you all nodding, you know, somewhere in life we all got what we are, where we are, right? Because of somebody's help. And so that encouraging that risk taking because it's a risk, right? People are afraid to admit something they don't know or they're afraid to admit that they're weak or no weak's not the right word, but you know that they need help it's a sign of weakness. That's hard and it's not an easy thing. I wish I had the magic bullet cause I don't. I don't know. I wish I did. I agree. Well, students come up to the circulation desk and they'll say, I do I have a stupid question. And we say there's no stupid questions. And like others have said, if you ask us a question, we don't know. We're a library. We're supposed to if we don't know, we're supposed found it out. We don't know everything even though people think we do because we work in a library. But we at least know how to find out where it is. And I tell people, you know, they'll say, well, I don't want to bother you. Well, UCA pays me to be bothered. That is my job here. And I tell them If you don't bother me, I may lose my job, and I like my paycheck. I got two more years till I retire, so please bother me. I mean that's what I'm getting paid to help you. That's what I do. That's my reason for coming to work every morning is to help people. So, you know, even if I'm not in the library, if I'm in Walmart and you see me, I've had people walk up to me and Wal-Mart and ask a question because they recognize me from UCA. That's fine. I get a paycheck. I like it, so bother me. And like I say, we, nobody who works in a library works for the money. we're, we're weird that way. Anybody who works in a library, we do it because we like people. We like books, but we also like people. So that's our job to be bothered. So please please. And if like I said, most of my children graduated from here. So obviously, I like here, I didn't graduate from here, graduated new UAM in Marcello, but I have taken classes here. So I know what it's like to be a student. I know what it's like to be the parent of a student. And so please bother us. That's what we're here for. That's the reason we have these jobs. We want you to bother us. you know, and something

else. It goes back to what I say about helping me to be a better advisor. Because sometimes we, we throw out our big words. You know, we don't really clarify things for students. And so when somebody has a question, it lets me know, okay, I need to say this a different way because more than anything, I want them to get an understanding. I want them to know, you know, what I meant or what exactly they needed to do rather than just trying to impress them, you know, because the big thing, they need help, they need the answers. And so just making sure that when they do ask the question that I need to clarify it for them, you're helping me to be a better adviser. Because there is a level of vulnerability that you have to allow yourself to be vulnerable to ask for help. And none of us know everything. And I think sometimes as employees when we are transparent to share struggles with students, it allows them to see that, you know, we don't know it all and that we can understand, we can relate. I tried to share my experiences with my students and so that they feel comfortable when they come to me, to okay, Mr. Marvin I can go and ask him a question. And so allowing ourselves to be transparent to a certain point. And then and I agree with Dr. Desrochers it's just it's a level of vulnerability to be able to to walk in somewhere or to someone and to say, I don't know something. But to allow yourself to go there, because that's the only way you're going to have that success and to know what you don't know. Unless you ask and finding whoever it is on campus. I don't care if it's like I said, I would sit and talk to the ladies who the janitors in Arkansas hall because I felt comfortable talking to them and sometimes they didn't have all the answers, but they would find out, well, maybe go talk to so-and-so so-and-so or even at the library when I would go in and I would talk to Miss... Miss Hendricks, and Miss. Dot, they could point me to someone and sometimes it wasn't even just an academic question. I was having issues going on at home and so I just needed someone to talk to sometime for someone to just tell me to hang in there is going to be okay. And so just finding whoever it is on campus that you can connect with. Making connections on campus is very, it's vitally important to your success. Man, really, Professors have been a big one, even like, through the academic stuff. Even when you have academic questions for the professors. Sometimes that leads into other factors that can really influence, like how you're just going about things in your personal life. Like my biggest moment for me was just I remember very clearly I was in Marvin's UCAN program. This was a coup Fall, This was not last fall, but the fall before that. And I started this psychology class. And I remember I remember exactly how this went. I, I've, I did not do well on that first exam. I'll be honest, man, I was still kind of learning. I was still trying to balance work, school, mental health issues all in this one thing and I didn't know who to go to. So I just started going and my professors, and I walked up to my professor with my grade and I was like, Hey man, you know, just asked him shut up. What do you think I could do? And he didn't sugarcoat it. And that's the cool thing about professors. They don't, they don't like to sugarcoat a whole lot of stuff for you, especially if you get a ruthless won like Dr. Bolter, shout out to him if anyone knows him. Great guy. He basically ripped me apart, but he did in a way that wasn't it wasn't rude. It wasn't mean. It was just the constructive criticism that I needed to hear it. And sometimes you just need to hear those things from those people off that position to take that into account and then reevaluate yourself because man that's the moment the light bulb hit, and after that, I didn't fell another exam in all of my classes were skyrocketing and I, you know, I was able to reach reach out more and it made me more comfortable to reach out more, because I realized, oh, these older people, they're not so scary, you know, they're not so intimidating. They may they may be they may be wiser, but they're not going to tear me apart in a bad way. They're going to they're gonna rebuilds you when they, when they break you down they're trying to break it down, your old habits, they're trying to build a new person out of you. And that's all it is. I really appreciate you for saying that. And if there are any of the first-gen students on here, did you

hear what he said? He was nervous. He was a little bit afraid, but, you know, just to take a deep breath, do it. And there have been a lot of things in my life here on campus and otherwise that I have done afraid. But they never would've gotten done at all had I not at least done it. So I would say do it afraid, take a deep breath and walk into that office and say, I'm lost. Walk into that office and say, I just had a meeting and someone said something about a syllabus. What does that word mean? I've never even heard of the word syllabus. It's a whole new lingo that the language here we have our own terminology. And so for some students, with being a first-generation college student, you didn't go home for the holidays. And mom and dad were sitting around talking about what we had when I was in school oh Dr. so and so used to, you don't have the luxury of having that experience. So do what Lance did, walk into their office, walk into that building, take a deep breath. And just do it. Ask that question, look for that information. One of the one of the things I try to, Lance good on you to have the courage to do that because it's not easy. I mean, yes, that getting past it. I always tell students, although now we're not face-to-face, but I always told them, don't go alone then. You know, get a buddy system, and this this is where many of you have talked about making that one connection. One familiar face, say come on, let's go together. And I tell ya two or three people come in and then you don't feel like you're under a microscope right? Then, then we can give answers and you can listen while the professor's answer one questions as I always tell, let go with a buddy system, then then you don't feel alone. I'd rather they come two and three than that they never come because alone they're too, you know, and I understand that too afraid to go. I tell my students I would be a better person, a better chemists today, If I had gone into those office hours, I didn't, and I regret it. I regret it everyday thinking, dang, I would've learned that stuff a lot better, I should've done it. You know? Good point. And I think a lot of times, students don't realize that's what office hours are for. They think the instructors would rather, you know, you know, read or do something that they want during office hours when they're hoping students come by to talk to them even with advisors, they have drop in times, and you know, they're like, I wish students would drop in and ask those questions, so good point. So I wanted to ask another question before we run out of time. There is a lot of challenges You know, I know all students face challenges whether you're first-gen or multi-generational coming to college. But maybe you can share some tips on when times get hard for you throughout college. Kind of what did you do or how did you get help or how did you motivate yourself to keep going? Maybe Pansie, do you want to start with this one? Yes, I will. I would definitely say, a lot of times I cried. But no, my mentors y'all talking about and I want to highlight my mentor, Miss Nadia was one of my mentors, Mr. Gardner. They really, I'll definitely say once you guys build those relationships, find mentors that you can talk to, reach out to them and talk to them. That really helped me a lot get through those times. Take a breather from college, sometimes like on the weekends. I know we want to kick it, and have fun, and you got to do that. But it's good to like rest because college can really just take a lot out of you. So make sure you take care of your own mental health. And yeah, just take a breather and you'll get through it. You'll be fine. That's good, you and Lance both mentioned just making sure you take care of your mental health because we put so much about the physical health, but then mental health needs is equally as important. Remembering that, stress, and you know, there is a lot of emotions about leaving home and being the first to leave home. And you have younger siblings or you have family. Many of you work, and you know you've contributed to home or things like that. Just being able to take your little brother and sisters to school There's a lot of different things that go with somebody living at home and going to college, or even now in our situation, if you decided to stay home. But now you have to juggle this whole extra load of doing academic at a collegiate level. So that mental health is just so important. And I don't think we need to

forget that and just knowing that there's people you can talk to and it's totally normal and it's so OK to say I need help. And you know, when you have those moments where you just have to cry or this whole virtual learning thing. I've cried twice since school has started. So you know, sometimes that's telling within itself, but yeah, anybody else with advice for, you know, when times get hard, challenges that students may face. If you feel like things are slipping for you in terms of mental health, don't be scared of the Student Health Clinic, I had never gone say anyone to speak to anyone because I'm just from one of those small towns where mental health is a fairy tale. It's all unicorns and wonderland for everyone. It's nonexistent. Basically if people don't talk about it and when you're sad, it's like Marvin said, people say hang in there and suck it up, buttercup. And that's the thing. It's, it's really just not that simple. And when you hear that, it's, it's really kind of patronizing to hear those words. But I can say I've never experienced that from the Student Health Clinic. They never want spoke down to me. I never felt uncomfortable. And they worked with me and they understood me. And they put in the work to understand me and said help me get to where I needed to be mentally. And now I'm proud to say I don't have to sit in front of someone and have those sessions anymore. But because of those sessions, it led me to being on my own and now I'm able to cope on my own. So if you feel like you're struggling with coping mechanisms, don't hesitate. Really, just don't hesitate. That's, that's that's something that needs to be handled immediately before it spirals. Anybody else on here that wants to chime in. I know we have 23 participants and some of you have been silent and you don't have to say anything. And I know some of you just joined because she wanted to hear the conversation. But by all means, if you have a perspective that you'd like to bring to the conversation, we have four minutes left, so please jump in. With everything, we never have enough time for this. I know. Can I say that being here 24 years, I've talked to quite a few people. And you don't know how many non traditional students have come up to the circulation desk. And we've got to talking and they've told me that they wish they had taken advantage the first time, and how they're making straight A's their second time through but they're having to work so hard to make up for those D's and F's that they made the first time through. And now they are like, I wish I had just done it. I wish I had gone to class, took the test, put my effort out because now I'm an adult and I want it so badly, but I'm having to make up. And so I hear that every semester, so you're here, take advantage of it, do it, put the effort out now because you don't want to be coming back when you're 40 or 50 and having to make up for when you messed up the first time. Especially if you lose the scholarships and you're young, believe me, my age, the brain sales, they just don't work the same. While you're young, use that brain, take advantage of it, and don't, don't think, well, this is my freshman year, sophomore year, I'll party and I'll come back later. No, when you mess up now, it's it's hard to get it back. So put out the effort now and take advantage of it. Do it now. Don't wait till you're old. Marvin, I'd like to add something. Hi everyone. I'm Nancy Gallavan and I did retire in the spring. Retiring in the pandemic is another interesting thing. But yeah, who's gonna help you move. You know, what where were you Marvin. So, remember that every faculty member has been a student and actually still is a student. And as the saying goes, when we know better, we do better. So we're, we have to learn from you every day. Now. If we talk about who the students are, it's probably the same kinds of populations coming to school. But, as Sandra has pointed out, we're getting older and we're still we still have our orientation of, of where we are in life and we won't know what to do basically unless you tell us or show us. So talk to a well, not me, well you can't talk to me, but you can email me, but the professors really want to connect. And if they give you that, 'why are you bothering me?' look, just remember, you were a student and you stood right here doing the same thing. And I will have to say on behalf of probably the most senior member of this gathering. There was a time when they wouldn't, the

professors were all, all white men and would not talk to women at all, at least not to our faces. And then they, I mean, we were, so everyone has gone through this marginalization. And so every professor has experienced that. So just remember they were here too. And so nevertheless, persevere. I think that's the thing today. I enjoy I enjoyed hearing from all of you. Thank you. Yes. Perseverance, great, I agree a 100%. Just stick with it, and if one person doesn't help you, you go to someone else. And I guarantee you, you will have to knock on more than two doors to find that friendly face, That's going to be willing to help. Typically it's the first time. But, you know, definitely you have a group of people here now that you see, you can screen, take a screenshot right now. And you know, you can find someone on campus who would be willing to help. So we're about out of time. So I just want to thank our panelists again for coming and sharing their story, being transparent, and maybe, lending the information to you all so you realize that we're all just people too, and they have similar stories. Um, so thank you all so much for being here to share and I really want to say thank you to our students for showing up today. Those of you who are attending these workshops, you're really going to be so much further ahead because you're getting valuable knowledge. We hope that you really take these things are heart and don't be afraid to ask questions and reach out to people when you need help.