



Travis Patterson

Undergraduate, Psychology

Travis Patterson graduated Summa Cum Laude in May 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. During his undergraduate work, Travis conducted extensive research with Dr. Richard Lippa in the Psychology Department, which resulted in a publication. He has served continuously on both the University Curriculum Committee and Graduate Education Committee, and is also a member of the honor societies of Psi Chi and Phi Kappa Phi. Travis made the Dean's List every semester while enrolled at the university, and also received the Outstanding Undergraduate Award. He will be returning to Cal State Fullerton for the Fall 2010 semester to earn a Master of Arts in Psychology. After that, he plans to pursue a Ph.D in Quantitative Psychology and to conduct research on a possible cure for Alzheimer's disease.

Commencement Speech

As I stand here before you today, I look back and am reminded of my senior year in high school where I had a 1.8 GPA and was on the verge of not graduating. A few weeks before my supposed graduation, I was failing two classes, and my high school actually withheld my cap and gown until they received verification of my final grades. In the end, I was able to score high enough on my finals to walk with the rest of the class. Thankfully, the scare of not receiving my diploma, and the thoughts of where I may have ended up had I not graduated, enabled me to turn things around. At that point, I was determined to start fresh at Fullerton College with a newfound motivation to succeed. From that motivation, I was able to transfer to Cal State Fullerton with honors, and two busy years later, I find myself here speaking before all of you.

So why then, you might ask, do I mention all this? Well, when I compare the person I was during my first semester at Fullerton College with who I am today, I realize just how much the last few years have helped me to grow. Knowing this, I encourage each of you to reflect on your own college beginnings to see for yourselves just how much your education has shaped who you are. Though there may be few jobs out there to actually apply our new degrees to, the important thing is this. It doesn't matter if it took you four years to get here, or ten. What does matter is that you are here. You have risen to the challenges that a college education presents, and despite the current job market, the knowledge we have gained is something that no one can ever take away from us. I hope you all remember this as we leave here today. Do not be discouraged if you can't get that dream job you hoped to have right after graduating. Instead, keep in mind all that you have accomplished up to this point, and let that motivate you to go forward in whatever it is you choose to do next.

In closing, I would like to take a moment and thank those who helped me get to where I am today. Mom and Dad, without your encouragement and compassion over the years, I would have lost the motivation to see this day through long before actually doing so. Grandma, grandpa – the unconditional love you have shown me gave me the energy to never give up, and for that I am eternally grateful. Lastly, my thanks go out to Dr. Richard Lippa for his guidance, wisdom, and understanding. I would not be up here today had it not been for you. Thank you all and congratulations class of 2010.