Summer 2018 graduates receive triumph cords

The significance

When faculty are aware a graduating Arts and Sciences senior has persisted despite adversity and reached the completion of their degree, those students are gifted a triumph cord as an outward sign of their accomplishment. The triumph cords are a visible symbol of the College of Arts and Science’s pride in these students who possess extra tenacity.

Three of the Summer 2018 triumph cord graduates, Natalie Beck, Vince Milano, and Sharell Moore, want to share their stories. These determined graduates hope to inspire students who currently face their own adversities by showing that if they can graduate, anyone can.

Natalie Beck

Graduating with a degree in environmental studies and minors in psychology and biology, Natalie Beck was surprised to find she had been nominated for a triumph cord. “I just thought I was a regular person graduating, and when I found out about it, it made me feel special and recognized,” Beck said.

Beck has Crohn’s disease. She explained this as an autoimmune disease in which the body mistakenly attacks and erodes healthy tissue in the gastro-intestinal system. Beck explained that she has been hospitalized approximately eight times in her college career, sometimes for up to three weeks at a time.

Beck explained that college was not easy for her, but she is proud of herself for making it through. “Even if I was really down at times, I tried to power through, I wanted to be an example for other people in a way. It took me five and a half years, and a bunch of hospital trips and really sick times, but I still made it through. It doesn’t matter how long it took to get there.”

Beck has advice for students struggling against adversity. “Take it slow and take it one day at a time, try not to have a super big plan and stick to it,” Beck emphasized. “Things change, a lot of things happen and pop up that no one can predict, so try and go with the flow and take it one day at a time.”

Vince Milano

After already attaining his associate’s degree in history from Cincinnati State, Vince Milano has now graduated with his bachelor’s degree in history from UC. Milano found interest in history from a young age. Milano was an avid reader, and always did well in school and earned high grades.

Milano feels that receiving his triumph cord is a sign of significance. The most difficult thing for Milano, he reported, was “writing papers and having a disability, it would be difficult to concentrate or do work and not procrastinate.” Milano worked closely with Dr. Sauer and accessibility resources, as well as the writing center and academic coaching, all of which resulted in a positive college experience for him.

After graduation, Milano hopes to be a historian or a museum curator. He elaborated, “I like ancient Greece and Rome and the Civil War and World War II, like the people who lived back then and what they did and how, what was interesting about the houses or the artifacts, like what they used.” Milano has a special liking for Roman culture because he is Italian and Catholic.

Sharell Moore
Graduating with a degree in psychology, Sharell Moore wants to enter a career in Human Resources because, as she said, “I think I really want to look out for employees more than anything – I’ve been at the bottom of jobs.” Moore persisted despite the adversity of time because she wanted a college education to break the cycle of working jobs instead of careers.

Moore explained that she went to UC, moved to Kentucky and transferred universities, took time off, and ultimately decided to come back to UC, despite a three-hour round-trip commute. “I missed Cincinnati so much that I decided to finish my last year here, and I still live an hour and a half a way, but all semester, I made the drive an hour and a half twice a week and stayed on campus late because I wanted to make sure I graduated a bearcat,” remarked Moore.

Moore said it’s never too late to go back to school. “Even if you’re done with college, and you decide to take a break, don’t let people get in your ear telling you that it’s too late. It’s never too late. I don’t care if you’re in your 50’s and you decide to go back to school. It’s never too late to get that degree to accomplish whatever,” Moore emphasized. “It’s never too late.”