

Pursuing Dreams for Mars

By Karina Soriano

It is a new day and as the sun seeps through the window, I adjust my glasses, glance at my phone for the time and turn off the alarm for the fifth time this morning. I knew it was time to get out of bed and wake up my son Mars who is only three years old. Today is the day that changes the rest of our life. It is time to continue on my journey to pursue a degree in law and journalism. I am an Afro-Latina mother who dreams of a better life for my family.

I have always had a passion for writing stories and media law. I just never thought it could be possible to do both. Now that I am a mother, this dream appears more elusive than ever, yet I am positive that focusing on my education will make a better life for both my son and I. With my morning cuddles with Mars and his favorite breakfast of car shaped pancakes, bacon, and heart shaped apples with peanut butter. I go ahead and pack my notebooks, textbooks, and a well-planned schedule in my new school bag.

I understand that with each project and each exam I am closer towards achieving my dreams. Walking around campus not knowing where any of my classes are and with a mixture of excitement and nervousness mixed in. I have this thought that this is it for me: for me to be a better person and for Mars to have his mother chasing her dreams and pushing him one day to chase his dreams.

As I got adjusted to college life I looked at a way to expand my knowledge beyond classes, I became a contributor to the college radio and Talon Marks newspaper where I have a music program and I am an arts/entertainment contributor. I enjoy using these channels to print observations about new music and musicians as well as explore creative insights.

Music journalism is a passion source, a link to myself, and a means of making people escape though finding new artists or listening to something that can change their lives. For me the actual challenge is balancing school life with being a mother. Those late-night studying, after reading Mars his ABC book and doing his bedtime routine, falling asleep and waking up in a panic 5 minutes later because I thought I slept in.

The early morning classes after nights with no-sleep, and my schedule that seems to change daily because things always come up. Juggling my life as a mom and coursework has required so much from me, it's been one of my hardest journeys. My journalism classes have really made me a good storyteller and each day makes me stronger. I am thankful for professor Christian Brown and Casey Piotrowski for believing in me and seeing my full potential.

Knowing that for Mars, his mama is not just a student. I am proof that pursuing your dreams requires hard work. When he pretends to do my radio broadcasts with his toy microphone or types on his toy laptop making typing sounds, a wave of purpose comes over me and warms my heart.

I need him to realize that no dream is impossible. With all the pressures of exams, deadlines, and self-doubt, I remind myself every day and night that this struggle makes a new life for our little family.

Every obstacle has been a learning experience and has been overcome with support from my friends who have become extended family. All of this has influenced both my professional journey and the legacy that I am creating for my son.