CHICO STATE

Re-entry student comes back to school to help others thrive

By Dani Angiulo

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CHICO — Daniel Caravez was helping his girlfriend with her homework one evening when he started thinking that maybe he should go back to school.

"I remember her coming back home with homework and I thought, 'If I'm helping her, maybe I should be in school,'" Caravez said. Going to school had always been Caravez's plan; it just took him a little longer than he expected to get there. Caravez, now 31, was born in Mexico and moved to San Mateo at the age of seven. He did well in school and had a passion for education at an early age. He briefly attended college after graduating from high school, but after his first year he had to leave school and begin working full time in order to support himself. As he worked construction jobs throughout California and Washington, the thought of attending college was never far from his mind, he says. In 2011 he decided to attend Butte College alongside his girlfriend who would eventually become his wife. He found his classes in Spanish and math engaging and in 2013 transferred to Chico State University to continue his studies.

"I knew I wanted to go back to school," Caravez said about his decision to attend Butte College. "I liked it there. I really liked all my classes and..."

Daniel Caravez received a scholarship from the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at a recent banquet.

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Daniel Caravez

Caravez was recently awarded a nearly $2,000 scholarship for re-entry students from the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, which he says will help him continue to finance his studies until he graduates in fall 2017 or spring 2018. It's been a long journey for Caravez, he said, but he's proud of what he's accomplished and has even inspired his brothers and friends to go to school.

"I've always had a passion for education. I knew that was why I, and my parents, came to this country," Caravez said, adding his parents are proud of what he has accomplished. "My mom always tells me, 'you guys are doing it and it feels like I'm the one who is doing it too.' That passion is what inspired him to be a teacher and continue to inspire him to remind family and friends that it's never too late to go to school."

"Over Christmas I was talking to a friend about this, he was looking to me for answers," Caravez said, "I told him, 'there's no thinking about it, just do it.' If he needs any help, I'm going to help him because I've done this."

Reach reporter Dani Angiulo at 896-7707.

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