



Through FAFSA and a strong family support system I was able to take the next step in my education, after being home schooled for all 12 grades leading up to receiving my high school diploma, by applying to BCC. This made me the first person in my family to attend college and graduate (soon). I am very close to completing my associates though it has taken me four years I have been very determined to set myself up for success. I grew up in a small Hilltown outside Pittsfield in a household that lived off of my father's social security disability. He was injured while working in HVAC. My mother never completed college because her life-long illnesses prevented her from doing so, instead she became a homemaker taking care of her two children, my older sister and I and our father. My older sister has a host of autoimmune diseases and joint issues, mostly due to hereditary illnesses, preventing her from a healthy lifestyle since she was three years old. This prevented her from being reliable enough to take courses on a structured schedule. I was home schooled since kindergarten and the idea of being the first in my family to attend college did not seem realistic since I struggle with ADHD, depression, and anxiety. However, through the support of my family and friends I was urged to believe in my ability to succeed in my academic life. I took classes as a part-time student because my learning disabilities restricted my ability to complete multiple classes at the same time. I am happy I took my time with classes and really focused on my education because it led me to join Phi Theta Kappa and the Honors program. I never saw myself succeeding this well when I first applied to BCC back in 2017. My major is Spanish Foreign Languages Liberal Arts and it has been a rocky road attending BCC because my major was discontinued at BCC due to Louis Cooper retiring. I was the only one out of the few taking that degree to continue to pursue it despite the obstacle of needing to fulfill my 6 remaining language credits. I worked with financial aid and took classes through a consortium at UMass Amherst. My career path is language interpreting and I look forward to perfecting my Spanish language and moving on to my BA. It is because of BCC and their amazing network of support that I will be able to attain my associates and have the possibility to pursue my BA. I look forward to seeing where this education takes me in the near future and I am very proud to say I will be the first person in my family to graduate with an associate degree and be continuing my education in a BA program.