

NextUp Video - Deon
October, 2017

Deon: Deon five years ago wouldn't have even thought about community college, he thought about what he was going to be able to do to survive after high school. I entered the foster care system when I was about the age of five. We were always moving from home to home to home to home and there was no stability at all. I was homeless for a good six months. And I just saw the trajectory of where I was going and I just knew it was not for me.

I was already taking part of a lot of opportunities and programs here at Sierra College already, and as soon as somebody told me like hey we have a program coming up that can, you know, help you with paying your rent and all these books, like there was no question if I was going to do it.

Susie: The NextUp program was implemented in 2016. It's a state-funded program to provide enhanced services to our former foster youth students who are attending college.

Some of the benefits statewide would be services that students desperately need in terms of assistance with book purchasing, transportation cost assistance, grants, financial aid, and counseling support services to help them be successful while they're attending college.

Deon: NextUp just gave me an opportunity just to focus in school where I really want to put all my focus in and just help me be a part of the community where it's all from a foster young, and just being able to meet other people who are from the same status as me, who don't look like me, helps me understand that I'm not the only one.

My goal is to be a lawyer, that's what I truly want to do. I want to focus on more constitutional lawyers or civil rights law, that's definitely where I'm heading towards.

A lot of people, no matter foster youth or not, say "school's not for me" which I think is bogus. Education is for everybody.