

NextUp Video Two
October, 2017

Daniel: You know, being in foster care wasn't easy for me, I was separated from my family. And then the foster home was so far away from my family, you know, they weren't able to drive down and see me every weekend, you know, I was lucky to see them once every six months. And we got one five-minute phone call every week. I just felt so alone and like I said I was very introverted, I didn't really speak to the other kids in the group home. And the counselors would try to get me to talk but I would always tell them, you know, I have nothing to talk about.

Jordyan: We struggle with depression, we struggle with anxieties, we struggle a lot. And it's more than just like normal societal pressures, it's more than just like -- because anyone in foster care has a reason why they're there, and that reason is never pretty, it's never nice, it is never -- oh, god, I feel like I'm going to cry, I'm not going to cry, I'm not going to! I'm not gonna! Okay.

Daniel: Like, I was going to this college for about three years and like I didn't really like do any like programs or anything, this is like the only one that I did and it just felt so like welcoming. I've grown a lot, I feel like, within these past two semesters. But I also want to be able to inspire other people too.

Steve: I wasn't always a good student, and I let students know; hey, I've made every letter grade that's ever been made, from A through F, through incomplete through a W. And what we find is when we do that and we're human instead of counselor to student, it's human to human, that usually lowers the expectation and anxieties and they tend to open up.

Veronica: We really like that face to face in person approach. I feel that having the student see who I am and feel a little more comfortable with me may assist them in actually wanting to be a part of the program.

Steve: It's passion. And my colleague and I, I mean, we actually care about the students and their success. And they can feel that it's genuine, and they tell us all the time.

Jordyan: So, essentially what NextUp is, at least what it is for me, it is a community on campus that's there to aide you in like your educational goals but also the biggest context that, at least for myself and the people I know, is an emotional context of like a family environment for somewhere safe for us to be.

Daniel: They made me feel even more connected when I realized you know that they gave me their cellphone number, you know, like any questions at all, any time, day or night. It just made it seem like I had somebody to talk to and like didn't have to worry about any negative repercussions. And in one of my songs you know I say "no matter how hard your times may

seem, just know one day that everything is going to be alright. You're a warrior, and you'll get through this alive".