

Scholarship Is Just One More Thing These Sisters Have in Common

Sisters Silvia and Evelyn Torrico are a year apart, but people often assume they are twins. It's an easy mistake to make; the sisters have a lot in common. And now they can add a scholarship from Mt. SAC to that long list. Earlier this year, Silvia and Evelyn both received the long-standing California Retired Teachers Association Scholarship. While it may be unusual for two sisters enrolled at the same college to get scholarships at the same time, the Torrico sisters are used to this sameness. They even have the same major.

Unsprising to anyone familiar with Mt. SAC, both sisters found a career path and so much more. Since they both excelled at math classes in high school, Silvia and Evelyn were originally mechanical engineering majors. However, they were unhappy in their STEM courses and decided to focus back on what made them happy: the M part of STEM. As math majors, both women plan to pursue careers in math education. Evelyn wants to be a middle school math teacher because it combines her love of math with her love of helping others.

One of the most prominent examples of how being at Mt. SAC has helped prepare Evelyn and Silvia for their futures as math teachers is the STEM Teacher Prep Program. Through this program, the sisters got hands-on experience working with middle school students at a summer science camp. Signing up for the program was Silvia's idea, and Evelyn is more than happy to give her the credit. Support and gratitude form the foundation of how their relationship works.

Both women chose to attend Mt. SAC right after high school because they were unsure of their career path and didn't want to invest time and money on a major at a four-year college if they weren't certain it was the right major for them. Silvia especially was disappointed in herself for choosing a community college. "At first I did not like it because it was not a university," she says. "I felt like a failure for going to a community college and that all my hard work in high school was taken for granted such as my 4.0 GPA the fact that I was one of the top 10 percent of my graduating class." Of course, it was her sister who helped her see that Mt. SAC was the right choice, not a second choice. They attended workshops together on everything from time management to



Silvia, pictured left, and Evelyn have always been close. Growing up, they even used to wear matching outfits to Disneyland when they took family trips there. These days, they spend most of their time together. At Mt. SAC, they had all the same classes and would book a study room together. In addition to school, they also spend free time together, which Silvia describes as "going to the movies, Knott's Berry Farm, visiting family, and just going on little adventures." Of course, Silvia and Evelyn aren't exactly alike. Their differences make them "a good team," according to Evelyn. "I am good at introducing ourselves and Silvia is good at continuing conversations. Silvia is also good at planning trips and I am good at getting her the directions to the places," explains Evelyn.

The Torrico sisters have since finished at Mt. SAC and while Evelyn considered transferring to University of California, Irvine, she ultimately decided to follow Silvia to Cal Poly Pomona. Their sisterly support system has served them well. "Why mess with a good thing?" Silvia says, "At the end I did not want to leave Mt. SAC and now that I am at CPP I really want to go back, but I know that I have to go out and grow and show Mt. SAC that the opportunities that they gave me were worth it and will help me in my journey ahead."

The sisters' scholarships transferred with them—and so did the confidence, skills, knowledge, and experience they acquired as Mounties.