

The School of Physical Sciences presents

SPOTLIGHT STUDENT

Joseph Najera

Meet Joseph Najera, a 2nd year transfer student in Mathematics with a Concentration in Mathematics for Education/Secondary Teaching Certification. Joseph's exceptional academic record is why he has been selected as our Anteater Spotlight student.

Joseph is from beautiful Santa Ana, California. He transferred to UCI from UC Santa Barbara, where he started his education. While at UCSB, he suffered from seizures which led to him being diagnosed with Brain Arteriovenous Malformation or Brain AVM. Basically, Brain AVM is a tangling of blood vessels in the brain that doesn't allow the brain to transport blood to vital organs properly. After a combination of procedures, medication, and therapy, Joseph thought it best to return to Orange County and take time off to focus on his health. He took a year off, applied to UCI, got admitted, and has loved it ever since! Joseph credits the Disability Services Center (DSC) for his success and when transferring, he really wanted to attend a school that was helpful, caring, accommodating, and useful. He is grateful to the DSC for helping him to overcome the obstacles he has encountered at UCI.

Joseph was originally admitted to UCI as a Pure Mathematics major, but found that the CalTeach Program suited his career goals. His goal had been to finish his bachelor's degree and move on to a credential program, but discovered he could complete both of these at the same time at UCI. He took Phy Sci 5 (Introductory CalTeach course) and was amazed at how the administration and teachers cared so much about their students; he knew this was the program for him.



Joseph Najera
Class of 2020
B.S. Mathematics

Joseph has this sound advice to new students:

“Love yourself. A lot of students have a lot on their plates, and are frequently stressed, tired, and maybe even frustrated with how school may be going. It's okay to take a break every now and then, get into a good mental space, and do whatever needs to be done. Sometimes getting sleep before a test is better than not sleeping at all and attempting the test half-awake. Self-care and balance play larger parts in success. At the end of the day, our mental health is extremely important and often times we neglect it. In order to have the best chance at anything, I think making sure you're okay is what's best.”

Joseph loves sports and working with the youth, and plans to be a teacher and youth baseball coach in the future.

Congratulations Joseph! We know that you will accomplish everything you set out to do!

