



The Pursuit of Her Dreams - and Those of Her Parents

By Dylanne Easter

Portland, OR — Eisel Otzoy-Satey, a junior at Portland State University (PSU), is not your typical college student. A first-generation student with immigrant parents from Guatemala, Eisel's story is one of resilience, determination, and unwavering support from her family.

As Eisel walks through the bustling campus of PSU, it's hard to believe the challenges she's overcome to get here. Pursuing a bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management and a minor in Criminology and Criminal Justice, Eisel embodies the spirit of pursuing dreams for oneself while honoring the dreams of her parents.

Eisel's journey was marked by a pivotal moment when her father was deported back to Guatemala when she was just nine years old. For nearly three years, Eisel and her mother faced the heart-wrenching challenge of being separated from a beloved family member. She vividly recalls the hardships her mother endured to provide for them during those difficult times.

"My parents tell me that they do not want to see me working like they are working from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m.," Eisel says. "They would much rather have me work at my dream job. At that point in my life, I did not know what I wanted."

Eisel's aspiration to make her parents' dreams come true led her to embark on a journey that was not without its hurdles. As a first-generation student, she faced numerous challenges in navigating the complex world of higher education, often feeling alone in her pursuit of success.



"I struggled a lot to keep myself motivated. I would ask for help, but there was no sign of support at all," Eisel admits. However, her determination was unwavering. During high school, she had the privilege of attending a private school that provided her with internships throughout all four years. There an opportunity gave her a glimpse into the professional world and instilled in her the drive to keep moving forward. Additionally, she worked part-time as a cashier at Best Buy, embracing the idea of staying busy and focused on her goals.

Once she graduated high school, Eisel achieved a significant milestone, earning not only her diploma but also the pride and admiration of her parents. It was a moment of triumph she had once thought impossible.

When the time came to choose a university, Eisel made the decision to attend PSU, a choice that would shape her path to success. During her first year, she became involved with the Atmos program and the HRMA student organization, both of which played pivotal roles in her journey.

Eisel's involvement in the Atmos program led to a job on campus, working for the Online Business Education (OBE) team within The School of Business. Remarkably, she secured a position as a freshman, all while juggling a part-time job at Best Buy and maintaining a full-time student workload. Her commitment to her goals and her impressive work ethic paid off.

Reflecting on her growth, Eisel acknowledges the support and mentorship she's received along the way. "I want to thank my mentors, Tim Finn and Terrence Scott, for helping me," she says. "They see my growth, and I see my growth as well. I would have never imagined this happening."

Eisel's story serves as a testament to the power of determination, resilience, and the unwavering support of loved ones. As she continues her journey at PSU, pursuing her dreams and those of her parents, Eisel Otzoy-Satey stands as an inspiration to all who face adversity and refuse to give up on their aspirations.

