

A military veteran looks to become future leader in supply chain and logistics



“If you didn’t hesitate to dream about something, why hesitate to do it.”

By Chase Moore

Monique Lopez '16 lets nothing stop her. That attitude has been ingrained in her since she was a child and has motivated how she has pursued her education and career.

It's also the reason why Lopez has found her place at Clayton State University and become a great example of scholarly excellence on campus.

Lopez's personal journey in the U.S. has spanned both coasts, beginning with her adolescent years growing up in New Jersey.

Just two weeks shy of her ninth birthday, Lopez and her family moved to the U.S. from Puerto Rico, leaving behind sandy beaches and tropical weather.

The 22-year-old supply chain management major remembers the difficulties she faced moving to America.

“For one, my siblings and I all had to be held back a grade because we didn't know English,” she recalls.

Once she picked up the language, however, she was able to skip a grade and then another as she aced her studies. She also gained confidence and joined her school's poetry and literary clubs.

By the time she turned 17, Lopez graduated high school early and quickly enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. The three-month boot camp went by quickly. Lopez, now a military veteran, eventually rose to the rank of sergeant and says the experience put into perspective the great responsibility and honor of being a member of the U.S. Armed Forces.

“I realize I have these responsibilities put on me and people expect things out of me,” she says.

After stints in South Carolina, California and North Carolina, Lopez decided to move to Georgia after hearing good things about the state from friends.

Once Lopez stepped foot onto Clayton State, the beauty of the campus and sense of community drew her in.

Lopez entered as a junior in the spring of 2016 having already obtained an associate's degree in the military. She initially had an interest in pursuing business, but found that supply chain management best fit her organizational skills and was an in-demand career field.

"I researched industries that were projected to grow, and hopefully, I can own my own company one day," Lopez says. "The world needs this profession to go round."

By July, she learned that she had been named a recipient of the Marcia Taylor Family Foundation Annual Scholarship.

The scholarship was established by Marcia Taylor, CEO of Bennett International, a female-owned transportation and distribution company in Atlanta.

The scholarship is open to any junior or senior majoring in supply chain management through the College of Business and supports learning opportunities for high achievers.

Lopez was awarded the scholarship for not only her previous academic accomplishments, but also for embracing similar values as Taylor's such as a commitment to community service.

Through discipline and hard work, Lopez has thrived as a supply chain management student at Clayton State.

She has begun to fulfill her dream of traveling and learning internationally through study abroad opportunities in France and Germany. In May, she will head to India with a group of students to gain deeper insight into global supply chains.

Lopez has had a chance to meet Taylor in person. At an awards banquet for women in the industry, she got to hear Taylor share her personal journey and encourage other women to become leaders in supply chain and logistics. Lopez was thrilled to personally speak with the person she credits directly with creating a scholarship to make her dreams possible.

"It was just important to see the reality of what I researched about a female growing in the logistics industry," she says about the moment. "It was pretty inspiring and amazing."

Lopez says that anyone can set out to accomplish his or her goals. It's just a matter of doing it with no fear.

"If you didn't hesitate to dream about something, why hesitate to do it," she says.



Marcia G. Taylor: A pioneer for women in supply chain

Supply Chain and Logistics underpin almost every facet of society through the movement of goods and materials for various industries, government and people.

Serving as a conduit between businesses and their customers, supply chain and logistics professionals are a vital part of the global economy.

For Marcia G. Taylor, CEO of Bennett International Group, supply chain and logistics has allowed her to become a successful businesswoman and formidable change agent within the industry.

A leader in the industry and an inspiration for the growing number of women entering the supply chain and logistics sector, Taylor has turned Bennett International from a small Georgia trucking company to a large-scale global logistics corporation in the Southeast. As CEO, Taylor has led unprecedented growth and profitability for the company over the last 40 years.

Guided by fundamental core values of community service, integrity and responsibility, Taylor and her family established the Taylor Family Foundation in 2012 to give back through philanthropic work.

The Foundation set up the Marcia Taylor Family Foundation Annual Scholarship at Clayton State to meet the financial needs of undergraduate students majoring in supply chain management. Through the scholarship, Taylor has maintained a solid relationship with Clayton State to inspire the next-generation of supply chain managers and women entrepreneurs.