



SOURCE

University of Miami

Camner Academic Resource Center

The birth of a vision: A student's story

Imagine waking up only to realize your vision is completely gone. Thinking of all the mundane tasks most people take for granted, would you be able to study for an upcoming math exam, write a paper or collaborate with your peers on an upcoming assignment?

Most people would view the loss of sight as a tragedy. One student's loss at the University of Miami has equated to the rebirth of a new vision and motivated her to succeed against all odds.

Kimberly Garces, a sophomore at the University of Miami, has overcome many obstacles at such a young age. While Garces has succeeded academically at UM for the past three semesters, the road to success hasn't always been glittered with positive experiences.

Garces, who has Hydrocephalus, a medical condition resulting in an accumulation of fluid on the brain, has always defied the odds against her to succeed when she became legally blind in 2013 during her freshman year at Penn State.

"I remember waking up for class and I could no longer make anything out—everything was blurry," said Garces. In a panic, Garces' mother, physicians and agency evaluators all insisted she give up on her academic dreams and adapt to the new changes she would surely face.

"It was like no one believed in me and the student I could be despite my disability," said Garces. "I began to doubt myself."

While Garces took her mother's concerns seriously, she was faced with her most challenging semester thus far, struggling to keep up in classes and receive basic accommodations.

"That time was very frustrating for me. I had to coordinate everything. It was as if the professors forgot about my disability because they couldn't physically see it," said Garces, fighting back tears recounting her experience.

Soon after proving she could still compete academically at the same level before her disability developed, she would transfer to her dream school—the University of Miami.

Immediately after learning of her acceptance to the university, Garces contacted the Office of Disability Services, located in the University of Miami's Academic Resource Center, to learn about the accommodations she would receive during her undergraduate career.

"Kimberly seemed timid yet determined to compete on the same playing field as her peers and saw proper accommodations as a way to level the field," said Nereida Higuera, ODS testing coordinator.

The Office of Disabilities team work to collaborate with her professors

—Continued on page 3



Developing your learning style

Do you ever have trouble retaining information that you have reviewed over and over again? Have you ever felt like you studied hard for an exam and still didn't perform as well as you had hoped?



If so, you may need help identifying your learning style. It is important to understand that everyone processes information in different ways. There are three main cognitive learning styles that can help you understand your preferred way of learning.

Visual learners prefer to use objects, such as charts, graphs, and pictures to process information, auditory learners retain information through hearing and speaking, and kinesthetic learners prefer using hands-on approaches

to learn new information. Some people have more than one learning preference so identifying your learning style can help you study and retain new information more effectively.

It is important to understand that balance is the key to being a life-long, motivated learner. For more information or to discover your learning style, visit www.umarc.miami.edu to schedule an appointment with a Learning Specialist.

APPs for academic success

iStudiez Pro: iStudiez Pro can assist even the most unorganized people in keeping track of all assignments and grades. A calendar real-time mode view tracks your schedule during the day, giving you a full overview of the classes or events you need to attend and assignments you need to complete.

RescueTime: RescueTime tracks time spent on email, social media and websites, and identifies top distractions. Students can set goals to make sure they are using their time productively and create alerts to notify them when they've spent too much time playing games. RescueTime also offers a desktop version that tracks time spent on websites and syncs with the mobile app to give users a better picture of how they spend their time online.

RefMe: Students can avoid figuring out the nuances of MLA versus Chicago style with RefMe, a free app available on

Android and Apple devices. The app allows students to scan the bar code on books and journals or copy and paste a URL to get citations in various styles. These citations are stored in the cloud, so students can access them from anywhere using the web platform.

Google Drive: Students can use this app to create, share and collectively edit presentations, spreadsheets and documents. Drive has a suite of tools, similar to Microsoft Office, that allow students to edit any document, regardless of when it was created. Students with a Gmail account already have a Google Drive account. Students can store up to 15GB of documents, images, music or other files for free, and then access them from any device.

Evernote: Students can use the app to record voice reminders, create to-do lists and snap photos of notes or a professor's

PowerPoint slides, among other things. Evernote is available for free on Android, Apple and Windows devices. The app has a Web version, so students can jot down reminders or search for notes on multiple platforms.



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—Continued from page 1

to provide audio books, testing environments with state of the art technology and even counsel professors on how to provide fair and ethical accommodations throughout the semester.

It was her spirit and determination which led the Assistant Dean of Academic Support Services, Dr. Mykel Mangrum Billups, to nominate her for a coveted scholarship.

Kimberley is the 2015 recipient of a scholarship named after a University of Miami student Nathan Gaines, who passed away after complications from brain cancer.

Nathan majored in sociology and attended every class until he could no longer physically manage to do so.

Established nine years ago, the Nathan R. Gaines Scholarship created an opportunity for Nathan Gaines to be remembered after

his death, Gaines last wish before passing away on May 22, 2006.

“Nathan taught me about the meaning of courage and how to face death with dignity and grace” said his father and UM professor, Dr. Michael Gaines.



Nathan Gaines

Nathan Gaines' determination to persevere and attend all of his classes is a true testament of the qualities the scholarship committee seeks in its recipients—diligent and highly motivated students that face tough physical challenges while also excelling academically at UM.

Garces is the first female and third recipient of the award. She will continue to honor the life of Nathan Gaines, allowing Dr. Gaines and his wife Peggy to continue to turn their grief into a positive remembrance of his legacy. Garces looks forward to graduating with a degree in biology and working in the medical profession.



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Editor in Chief:

Mykel Mangrum-Billups,
Assistant Dean
Academic Support Services

Contributors:

Kiara McCoy,
Learning Specialist
Rebecca Bauer,
Administrative Assistant
Roopa Dominguez, Assistant
Director- Learning Support
Programs

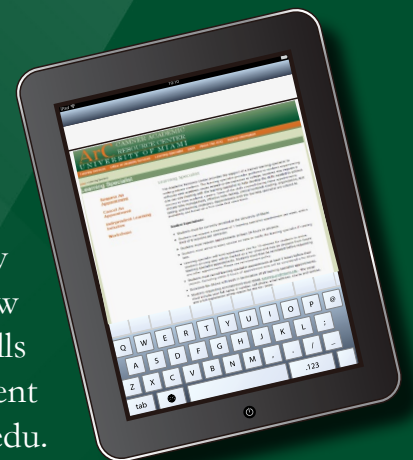
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Kiara McCoy

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ARC Department Spotlight

The Peer Tutoring Program at the Camner Academic Resource Center provides free tutoring up to two hours a week per enrolled course for University of Miami students. The Peer Tutoring Program currently has over 100 trained peer tutors knowledgeable in various subjects, both undergraduate and graduate, working to help fellow students toward reaching their academic goals. Students can review specific course material, master basic concepts or improve on skills under the guidance of a peer tutor. To schedule a tutoring appointment or to apply to become a peer tutor, please visit www.umarc.miami.edu.



News & Events

UMX 100 Fall 2015



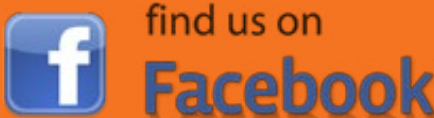
Course term is Aug. 1st - Dec. 16th

Tutoring Begins September 8th



Now Accepting Tutoring Requests via
umiami.gradesfirst.com.

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Get the UMX-tra

Every semester new students gain access to information about the University of Miami's most coveted resources, services and programs through the first year experience course, UMX 100.

Providing students with exposure to university traditions, leadership opportunities, academic and career planning and more, the University of Miami Experience course offers access only a click away for the students enrolled in the course.

UMX 100 seeks to provide new students with the most current and up-to-date information about the many opportunities available during their academic career at UM, while successfully assisting students transitioning to UM. UMX 100 is a graded, online and self-paced course that is essential to student success.

Still don't understand the hype surrounding UMX 100? Let's break it down.

MYTH: "UMX 100 is not graded."
DEBUNKED: UMX 100 is a 0 credit course, however, ALL students enrolled in UMX 100 will receive

a grade that will appear on their University of Miami transcript. Students who do not complete the course will receive a failing grade and may not be able to graduate.

MYTH: "You can wait until graduation to complete the course."
DEBUNKED: Students enrolled in UMX 100 must complete all modules by the last day of the semester of which they are enrolled. Students that fail to complete the course will receive an Incomplete (I) grade. If students do not complete the course work allocated to change the Incomplete (I), those students will receive a Failing grade (IF), which will reflect on their University of Miami transcript.

MYTH: "You can just wait until the end of finals week to complete the course."
DEBUNKED: In Fall 2014, 51% of enrolled students completed the course by the 8th week of the semester. It is encouraged that all students finish the course by the 8th week of the semester because students will most likely find the course information helpful during their first year at the university as opposed to after.

PENCIL IN TIME TO SEE US!



Whitten University Center, 2400
1306 Stanford Drive
P.O. Box 249003
Coral Gables, FL 33124-6995

