

Achievement: *Drive To Succeed*

SVC graduate and mechanical engineer Miguel Strouse lands his dream job at TESLA.

Miguel was raised in an unstable and financially precarious family setting. Working small jobs to help support the family from age 11, he was brought to the US as a child. When his mother's employment fell through and she returned to Mexico, Miguel was left in Sedro-Woolley. He was 16, didn't speak English, and had no family support.

"Those were lonely times," he recalls. But soon, he established goals and set about working toward reaching them. His first goals were to learn English and graduate from Sedro-Woolley High School. He immediately began to make an impression, and teachers nominated him for the Champions of Diversity scholarship at Skagit Valley College. After graduating in 2008, he entered SVC, where he received guidance and support from college staff and instructors.

He first joined the Automotive Technology program, but soon realized his real interest was in the engineering of the engines. Gaining confidence, he set his sights on earning a transfer degree. He graduated from SVC in 2014 with an Associate's Degree in Engineering/Physics and was admitted to Washington State University.



During three years at WSU, he focused on science and math. He served as vice-president of the Society of Latino Engineers and Scientists, an organization dedicated to industry and faculty networking, and mentoring support for incoming students.

In 2017, he earned a Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering and began a quest to join a premier firm in engineering and technology. After submitting many job applications and undergoing several interviews, he landed his dream job. Today, he is employed at Tesla, where he is leading small groups of engineers in quality analysis.

Miguel's journey is the story of remarkable personal drive and achievement. It is also a story of a community supporting the success of young people. Patient tutors, inspiring instructors and anonymous scholarship donors have all played a role in Miguel's amazing progress.

"I feel very grateful for all the support I received and I intend to pay it forward to others," Miguel says.