



## Wings Over America Scholar

Joseph Neill

Carlsbad, California

Sponsor: CAPT Thomas M Neill

College: University of California, Los Angeles Extension

2024-2025: Sophomore

Major: Learning & Life Skills

### Academic & Extracurricular Highlights:

- Yearbook Club (Pathways UCLA) Sports Contributor
- Best Pals Club, President
- San Marcos Shooting Stars
- San Diego Miracle League
- Coast Academy - Instructional Assist. Volunteer
- Encinitas Boxing and Fitness Team Member
- Housekeeper Ayres Hotel - Trained Transition Associate



As a special needs student with autism, I never thought I would have the opportunity to go to college. However, there are college programs for individuals like me to learn and grow. In 2023, I was accepted to the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Extension Pathway program on the UCLA campus. The Pathway program allows neurodiverse individuals like me to receive a blend of educational, social, and vocational experiences at a major university. I have been in the Pathway program for one year and now as a recipient Wings Over America scholarship it will allow me to continue my participation in the Pathway program at the UCLA Extension. I hope to be an example to other military children with special needs and believe the Pathway experience will teach me job and independent living skills. Upon completion of the Pathway program, I hope to work as an instructional aide for other special needs children and live independently near my parents.