

Finishing what she started: ASU grads' lifelong pursuit of education becomes a reality

From motherhood to achieving a lifelong academic goal, Makita Hogans reflects on confidence, capability and becoming the example she always hoped to be

By Donovan L. Johnson, ASU News
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Editor's note: This story is part of a series of profiles of notable [fall 2025 graduates](#).

Makita Hogans has tried her hand in higher education for years, but her commitment to her newly born son put her vision for a degree on the back burner.

"I made the choice to raise my son. His future came first. My own dreams could wait," Hogans said. "I believe a great mother raises a productive adult. After that, I could concentrate on my own ambitions."

After years of prioritizing her son's future, Hogans will receive her bachelor's degree from the [School for the Future of Innovation in Society](#) within Arizona State University's [Rob Walton College of Global Futures](#) this fall.

"Completing my degree has shown me my own capability. I can accomplish anything I set my mind to. ... This time is different. I am finally accomplishing this goal," Hogans said.

Environmental consciousness and helping others has always been a passion of Hogans', so when deciding on a degree path, the Bachelor of Arts in innovation in society felt like a perfect fit.

"I realized I wanted to study innovation in society when I read the courses and electives. ... I was excited about learning something new that can be used to help others and make a better future for

our environments,” she said.

Hogans’ work in her scenario study focused on artificial intelligence bias and how it can impact African American communities in her hometown of San Antonio, Texas.

“Makita's work on AI and algorithmic bias and its impacts on minority communities in Texas is a valuable place-based study of the local effects of national policies,” said [Lauren Keeler](#), associate professor in the School for the Future of Innovation in Society.

Hogans is a testament to how dedication and perseverance can lead to thriving and accomplishing the dreams we set out for.

“Seeing that I raised a good man still motivates me to be my best, and completing my degree has always been an example that I want my son and grandsons to look up to and be proud of. ... I realized that I could do anything I put my mind to, and I know much more than I initially thought I did. I am proud of myself,” Hogans said.

Question: What changed, from previous attempts to go back to school, that helped you commit to accomplishing that goal this time around?

Answer: This time, I had the motivation to continue. Having tuition reimbursements and education benefits, it became affordable. Additionally, learning that I have accommodations for the anxiety that I had just learned that I have and exactly what it is. The [SAILS program](#) reduced my anxiety tremendously, allowing me to continue my degree program knowing that I have help where I need it.

Q: What was greatest challenge about going back to school and how did you overcome it?

A: My greatest challenge about going back to school was financial. Due to my previous experience with school, I had exhausted my financial aid and student loans, so paying for school was not an option. After a few years at my current job, our education benefits were changed to allow us to go to school tuition free. I started and didn’t look back.

Q: What’s the best piece of advice you’d give to those still in school?

A: The best piece of advice I would give is to give yourself grace. Nobody is perfect. We can only do our best when we take care of ourselves. Knowing when to rest is the most important thing to me. I work and learn so much better when I’m well rested.

Q: What are your plans after graduation or how do you plan to use your degree?

A: I plan to continue working towards my master’s degree. I feel that would allow me to continue learning and possibly find my passion.

Q: If someone gave you \$40 million to solve one problem on our planet, what would you tackle?

A: I would invest in programs to end poverty and promote equality. I want to see everyone be able to live, really live. There is so much we put emphasis on in life that we miss out on because of inequities and lack of capital to invest in others.

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Text image(s)



Makita Hogans, courtesy photo