

At 16, Aliso Viejo Student Earns Bachelor's Degree and Begins MBA Coursework

16-year-old Aliso Viejo student earns bachelor's degree and begins MBA coursework, joining a small group of early college graduates nationwide.

ALISO VIEJO, CA, UNITED STATES, October 28, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At just 16 years old, Phoenix Juneau Austin of [Aliso Viejo](#) has earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Management from [Western Governors University](#) (WGU), placing him among the small group of students nationwide who complete a college degree before adulthood. National post-secondary completion data show that fewer than 1% of bachelor's degree recipients finish by age 18, making Phoenix's accomplishment statistically uncommon. He has now begun coursework toward his Master of Business Administration (MBA), supported by advanced calculus study to strengthen his quantitative foundation.

“

There's a reason kids can play games for hours. They don't fear failure. They just try again and make progress. What's more fun than leveling up?”

David Austin (Father)

“Phoenix demonstrates a level of self-direction and reflection that is unusual for any student, regardless of age,” said an academic advisor familiar with his work.

Phoenix's early learning potential was identified at age ten, when he scored 141 on the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, Third Edition (NNAT3)—placing him in the 99th percentile nationally for nonverbal reasoning ability. The NNAT3 measures abstract pattern recognition, problem-solving, and spatial visualization independent of linguistic and cultural bias. A score of 141 corresponds to a standard deviation of +2.73 above the mean (mean = 100, SD = 15), indicating very superior general ability within the cognitive domains of inductive and spatial reasoning.

Phoenix attributes his progress to routine rather than pressure.

Phoenix said, “I'm focused on growing a little every day and building on what I learn. Over time, I'd like to study [Management Science and Engineering at Stanford](#). I want to be around people who challenge each other, work together, and push ideas forward.”

Phoenix and his sister grew up with their father in a home where progress was tracked through rotating, skill-based family trophies. Each trophy represented a discipline, including language

learning, typing fluency, investing, daily exercise, piano, or guitar, and was awarded to whichever sibling demonstrated the most consistency in that area during the week or month. The system emphasized steady improvement, accountability, and learning as part of daily life.

“The goal was always to make learning fun,” his father said. “There’s a reason kids can play games for hours. They don’t fear failure. They just try again and make progress. What’s more fun than leveling up?”

Phoenix will continue his MBA coursework over the next year and will announce his next academic direction following its completion.

About the Austin Family

The Austin family, based in Aliso Viejo, California, emphasizes independent scholarship, early academic engagement, and lifelong learning. Their approach combines structured self-study with performance-based goal setting to foster both intellectual discipline and personal growth. This home-centered educational model has supported exceptional academic outcomes and a commitment to lifelong curiosity and innovation.

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Phoenix Juneau Austin, 16, earning his Bachelor of Science in Business Management.

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