



Kaitlyn Martinez

Animation & Game Design

I'm 23 years old, an artist, animator, and esports player for Keiser University, competing in *Valorant* and *Rainbow Six Siege*. Most people know me as Kat. Gaming has been a huge part of my life for as long as I can remember, and I'm just as passionate about creating worlds as I am about playing in them. Whether I'm designing characters, bringing animations to life, or strategizing in a competitive match, I'm always looking for ways to push myself both creatively and competitively.

As a student in Animation and Game Design, I'm deeply passionate about storytelling, digital art, and game mechanics. I love experimenting with different styles and techniques to create immersive experiences that captivate players. With a strong drive for both creativity and competition, I'm excited to carve out my space in the gaming and animation industries, proving that passion and perseverance can turn dreams into reality.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



Thoughts Relating to the Significance of Women's History Month

Women's History Month is an opportunity to reflect on the incredible achievements of women throughout history and recognize the barriers they have broken. In industries like gaming and animation—where women are still underrepresented—this month reminds us how important it is to continue pushing for diversity and inclusion. Seeing more women in leadership roles, creative positions, and competitive gaming helps inspire the next generation to chase their goals without hesitation.

Importance of Inspirational Role Models and Mentors

Having role models and mentors can be life-changing. Seeing someone who has walked a similar path proves that success is possible, even when challenges arise. In gaming and animation, where breaking in can feel intimidating, mentorship provides guidance, motivation, and reassurance. Whether it's an artist whose work inspires me or a fellow esports competitor who pushes me to improve, these role models help me stay focused on my goals.

My Greatest challenges and How I Overcame Them

One of my biggest challenges has been balancing school, competitive gaming, and my passion for creating art. There were times when I felt overwhelmed, wondering if I could truly excel in all areas. I overcame it by developing strong time management skills, prioritizing what mattered most, and making sure I allowed myself time to recharge. I also leaned on my support system—teammates, friends, and mentors—who reminded me why I started and encouraged me to keep going.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



The Values and Beliefs that Guided Me Through Processes

Perseverance, passion, and self-belief have been my guiding values. I've learned that success isn't about never failing—it's about getting back up, learning from mistakes, and continuously improving. Staying true to what I love, even when things get tough, has helped me push through obstacles and grow as both a creator and competitor.

Thoughts Relating to Women Who Have Been Mentors in My Life

One woman who has inspired me greatly is Stephanie Harvey. She is a former professional *Counter-Strike* player, a game designer, and a strong advocate for women in gaming. Her journey from being a competitive esports player to working in game development and pushing for diversity in the industry is something I deeply admire. Missharvey has shown that women can succeed in competitive gaming and make a lasting impact on the industry. She has been vocal about the challenges women face in esports and has worked tirelessly to create opportunities for future generations. Her dedication to empowering women in gaming motivates me to push forward, improve my skills, and contribute to making the gaming space more inclusive.

Advice that I would have Given Myself Several Years Ago Considering Important Educational & Career Decisions

I'd tell my younger self to trust the process and take more chances. It's easy to get caught up in fear—fear of failure, fear of not being good enough—but every experience, even the tough ones, helps you grow. I'd remind myself that setbacks don't define success—your perseverance does. Also, I'd say: Don't be afraid to put yourself out there, network, and take opportunities when they come. You never know where they might lead.

KU's Model for Education and how it Supports the Working Student Who is a Woman

Keiser University's education model is designed for students who need flexibility, especially those balancing work, school, and personal responsibilities. The hands-on learning approach and career-focused curriculum make it easier for students—especially women in male-dominated fields like gaming and animation—to get real-world experience and support while pursuing their dreams. KU fosters an environment where women can thrive, whether they're artists, gamers, or future industry leaders.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

