

Making the Connection: Testimony

The In Demand Scholarship that I received my senior year in high school acted as an incentive for me to continue my education. Although I would have most likely continued my education either way, the scholarship provided more than enough reason to continue on.

As a kid I always enjoyed building things and creating but it wasn't until my junior year in high school that I actually got involved in the wonderful world of manufacturing. I started interning in the field at a young age, I believe 17, because of the program I was involved in while in high school. Each internship acted as a stepping stone to the next. I went from a machinist at Aerospace Manufacturing Technologies to a CAD technician for Accra Manufacturing and then QPM Aerospace and now I work at PCSI Design as a Mechanical Designer. I have been working for PCSI Design for a little over a year now. It has been the best job of my life so far!

I graduated in 2006 from Snohomish High School and I'm currently sophomore status at Everett Community College. I'm getting my prerequisites out of the way in the most efficient manner. I plan on transferring to Western Washington University sometime next year. They offer a very good engineering technology program where I can both learn theory and apply it to real world situations. I will be gaining an engineering degree in Plastics with an emphasis in Vehicle Design. WWU just started offering this specific degree this year which is great because before I couldn't decide which one to choose, plastics or vehicle design. The reason I chose this specific field of engineering is based on my work experience. Plastics and light weight materials such as resin infused composites are the wave of the future because they are lighter and stronger. I predict that the demand in this field will only grow through my years of education ensuring a job upon graduation. Dedicating my life to solving future problems addressing issues like global warming is very self satisfying to me and I hope to make a positive difference every day of my life for the rest of my life.

Some of the most enjoyable classes I have taken and learn most successfully in were the classes with very little structure and addressed real world situations frequently. They spoke deeper to me than textbooks or worksheets which allowed me to lose focus on the grade and gain focus on the material. Let me give a couple examples of great classes I have taken and why. I will talk about them in chronological order.

The first class was Science Fiction or commonly known as Scifi. Everyday I came to this class I left with something positive that I would take to my lunch table and share with my friends. A lot of it was based on the future and the cutting edge of technology. Everyday we engaged in class discussions and most of the time we would get way off track but we would all be awake, engaged and learning.

The second class I want to talk about is my CAD and Precision Machining class. The technology in this class was very advanced and blows any engineering class that I've taken at Everett Community College out of the water. The teacher had interest in every single student's success. Personally, he acted as my counselor and advisor and if it were not for him I would not be here today. He pushed me beyond what was required for the

class and showed me how the things I was doing applied to the real world. I remain in very close contact with this teacher today.

Onto college, I took three English classes from the same teacher. In these classes we learned all about semiotics, the specific reason to why things are the way they are and advertising/marketing techniques. I have hated my English classes for as long as I could remember but these three quarters were some of the best classes I have ever taken. I never knew that I would actually use the knowledge from my English classes as a fundamental basis for my engineering studies. My research paper was on a new building that just opened at Everett Community College. My perspective on architecture before and then after is something I hold priceless in my thoughts everyday. It was this point I learned the importance of education.

The last class I would like to address is my speech class. The instructor in this class takes a different approach to public speaking. There are basically four types of speeches and she teaches this by letting the students pick their own topics, giving advice to make your speech great and limiting the rules and specifications, allowing you to be as creative and as you'd like.

In conclusion, I would like to close with my vision of what I feel programs should be like for future students in my position. The four examples I have presented have a few things in common which I feel should be the foundation of all structure in all education situations. The elements are bringing relevance to every class meeting, limiting rules to allow more creativity, and having teachers that take interest in the student's success. I hope you can find my perspective as both relevant and helpful to solving this issue with the lack of pathways to career success for my generation and the next!

Thank you,

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