

Personal Narrative

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Ever since highschool I knew that I wanted to pursue a higher education. I had always loved Biology and that was what I had decided to pursue at the beginning of my college career with the idea of pursuing medical school after graduation. I started my freshman year off at Tidewater Community College (TCC). I decided to go to community college because it was the cheapest and easiest transition into college. Here I could live at home and get my general education out of the way for a low price.

When I first started college, it did not feel that much different than highschool. I was learning a lot of the same stuff in my first year with the exception of some electives. For the most part, a lot of the material was more or less the same. It was not until my second and third year of college that I really started to feel the strain of college courses.

After my first year in college was complete, I needed to figure out a way to gain medical experience for my resume to get into medical school. This is when I decided to get my EMT-B certification so I could run rescue in order to gain hands on experience with emergency medicine. EMS training was one of the most challenging things I had to learn. There was a lot of material to learn as well as a lot of skills. I completed my EMS training and even got my national registration certification, but after all that effort I would not end up using this certification.

After I finished my EMS schooling, I made a career path change. EMS training put the medical field into perspective for me and I made the decision that I did not want to pursue a career in medical. It takes a lot of time, money, and effort in order to become a doctor. At this point I thought how I had always had an aptitude for computers and technology in general. This brought me to a degree in Computer Science. At this point I

had already been at TCC for 2 years and acquired my associates degree in sciences. Changing my degree path required me to add an extra year at TCC. This would now be my 3rd year at TCC, and since I changed to computer science, I used this year to get all of my basic computer science classes out of the way before I transferred to a university. All of my classes consisted of some sort of programming and learning the different skills of the world in ones and zeros.

After I completed my third year at TCC I graduated with two Associate Degrees; one of them was in science and the other in computer science. Now that I had completed my associates degree I had decided to seek further education and I transferred to Old Dominion University (ODU). This would take me into my 4th year of college where I would come into ODU as a transfer student with junior status. I chose ODU because it was close to home, and I could commute there. This would save me a ton of money in the long run.

I completed my first year at ODU with no complications; although, the courses were getting a lot harder since I was heading into the latter years of my education. At the start of my 5th year I found myself getting burned out of all the programming that came with a degree in computer science. I quickly learned that I would not want to do programming as a career. At this point I was already half way through my 5th year of school, and I decided to change my major again. In order to not put myself behind too much I had to pick another degree that would also fit with all of the tech classes that I had taken. This led me to cybersecurity, and I even had enough credits to have computer science as a minor. Even though a lot of my classes would fit into my

cybersecurity degree, I still had to add another year to my schooling before I could graduate. This would lead me into my 6th year of school.

While changing my degree 3 times did add 2 extra years of schooling, I do not regret my change in school. I can say tht cybersecurity is a good fit for me and I am excited to see where it takes me in the future. At the present time I am now set to graduate with my degree in cybersecurity with a minor in computer science. I graduate May 4th, 2024 which is less than a month from now. My time at school has been valuable to me, but I can really say that after 6 years of schooling I am prepared to start my career.