

THE DRAGON

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LATE MAY ISSUE

Farewell Mr. Groat

By Mei Peters

As some of you may know, this school year was math teacher David Groat's (a.k.a Mr. Orange) final year at d.tech. He will be leaving in order to focus on his mental health and his happiness, which is something that we should focus on before anything else. Although Mr.Groat leaving is sad for the d.tech community, Mr.Groat leaving is the best choice for him.

Groat has taught at d.tech for over four years, and has been teaching for almost a decade before. In an interview, he said that "I learned more here at d.tech than I did in my previous decade of teaching." Even before becoming a math teacher, he focused on mathematics and knew that he wanted to teach it in some sort of way. From a young age, he has been interested in this subject and has always dreamed of teaching others about it.

Being a teacher at d.tech has been more than just teaching for Groat. He has learned just as much from his students and has even been able to connect with students in his classes and advisory. Groat even said that his advisory felt "like another family unit... there were 20 of us, but that's really what it felt like. The relationship was that strong." He said it is mind blowing seeing a group of students and a teacher build such a strong relationship over the course of four years. Although Mr. Groat has only known his current advisory for the past year, he said that he still feels like he has gotten to know them very well.

During my interview with Groat, he seemed to enjoy refreshing on past excitements and experiences in his classes. Although I won't blabber on and share all of them, I will say that one way or another, they all revolve around a bright community. In general, d.tech seems to have a great sense of teamwork, and to support this, Groat shared a great example from one of his classes. He said that as he was "going around the room and checking on people's problems, the entire team would just totally get into solving the thing, and they were all discussing it." He also shared a few other memorable experiences which include his whole class dressing up in all orange and playing with giant parachutes in the hallway.

Even though Groat won't be here next year, he has shared treasurable moments with many students and faculty at d.tech, so rather than remembering him for his leave, we should remember him for what he has done to create a better community. As Mandy Hale said, "You will be remembered more for your kindness than any level of success you could possibly attain."



Mr. Groat (a.k.a. Mr. Orange)



d.tech Stock Traders – the Ins and Outs of the Market

By Madeline Hsu

From the GameStop short squeeze to the rise of Dogecoin, it is no longer unusual for teenagers to jump on stock market trends for the memes and quick bank. However, it is risky to follow the crowd when you know nothing about the market, trading, and investments. It is imperative that you do your research to gauge the risks and make sound financial decisions. Many brokerage companies, such as RobinHood (who is known for not charging trading commissions), have made the stock market more accessible, affordable, and straightforward for amateurs. Junior Zooey Kirchner notes that “you don’t need thousands of dollars to start investing” and that “trading apps with zero commission are a great way for you to invest small amounts into companies.” Additionally, there are many online resources for beginners to use, from investment analysis sites to paper trading platforms that use fake money and have zero risk.

Entering the stock market may be a confusing and nerve-racking venture for many. However, d.tech stock traders are open to sharing their experiences with beginners to get you started. The average age that students began to invest and trade was around fifteen years old, which is roughly a freshman or sophomore, but don’t feel pressured because everyone moves at their own pace. 71% of these students who trade stocks at d.tech identify as male while 29% identify as female. 14% of respondents prefer index funds over individual stocks, 29% prefer individual stocks over index funds, and 57% like both. Index funds are usually made up of various stocks and bonds. This allows ownership of a diverse portfolio that has lower risk, typically at a low price. For individual stocks, amongst d.tech students, Tesla was one of the most popular stocks with 50% of interviewees owning shares, and following it were Apple, Amazon, Disney, Microsoft, and Alphabet. 14% of students own cryptocurrencies, including Dogecoin, Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Non-Fungible Tokens. An NFT is a unit of data stored on a digital ledger. It certifies the digital asset to be unique and not interchangeable. When more data is added, the units become harder to modify, allowing the asset to become more secure over time. Lastly, 14% of participants recommended using paper trading/stock market simulators before getting involved with real stocks and investment accounts. Recommended platforms include Think or Swim, Yahoo Finance, and Marketwatch Virtual Stock Exchange.

Generally speaking, for stocks, you buy low and sell high to make profits. There are two basic approaches to interacting with the market: “time in market” and “timing the market.” For “time in market,” traders believe that, in the long run, buy-and-hold is better than relying on your prediction skills of when the market is at its lowest or highest point. 29% of respondents reported that they use the “time in the market” strategy, 7% choose to time the market, and 64% like both. Sophomore Tyler Stray advises that you shouldn’t “time the market until you’re 18,” as it is risky and takes experience and understanding of external factors. Freshman Kaelan Yim also agrees with this sentiment, stating that “just because you got lucky doesn’t mean you will again. Take your profits as soon as it’s safe to.” He strongly recommends setting solid numbers to buy and sell at, adding “Do not trust your ‘instinct.’”

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Stock Market (Cont.)

Many students note that you should make sure that you actually get to know the stock instead of just buying up shares because everyone else is. Junior Maxwell Kwan includes many factors into his stock research, including the "ins and outs of the company, annual reports, balance sheets, company's management, and history." Sophomore Matteo Farinacci shares the same belief of doing "months of research beforehand [as] you won't always win, [but] it's about being ahead of the market, not jumping on the train." He adds, "Do what you think is right and learn from that [experience]," and "never go all in one stock as you should trade individual stocks before you try option trading." Kirchner advises beginners to "start simple investments in blue chips...It's important to be passionate about what you invest in...don't be deterred or be influenced by meme stocks." Blue chip companies are reputable, well-established, and financially stable with years of operations. They have dependable earnings and often pay dividends to their investors. Freshman Jackson Flagg believes that you "[should] not focus on market fluctuation based on short term gains and losses, don't think of a stock as just a blip of red or green on a screen that goes up and down, it is a piece of a business that you own. When you start thinking like a business owner you will be able to assess companies with a more refined eye." Lastly, Kwan notes that you should "watch videos or talk to a financial adviser if you have access to one as it is very important to understand how these types of investments work, especially regarding laws and taxes... I would start small and assume that you will lose all of that money. Experimenting will allow you to get used to seeing the market fluctuate.." For tax-deferred growth, d.tech staff, Aruna Murthy, recommends that students save from their after school and summer jobs to invest in individual retirement accounts and 401ks. She also advises "not [to] accumulate credit card debt."

At the end of the day, even with considerable training, knowledge, and experience, financial losses are still inevitable. d.tech stock owners have also had their fair share of mistakes and regrets; here are the tips they wished they knew before investing and trading. Kwan wishes that he had started early, noting that, "time is of the essence and is really what will help you grow your wealth." Farinacci keeps it blunt, stating that "big companies and hedge funds do not care about you." This can be observed in past stock market incidents such as the 2008 Financial Crisis and the recent GameStop short squeeze where profits are prioritized over morals. As for the price of the stocks, he believes that they don't matter, but the percentages are a different story. To prevent significant losses on a security position, Stray advises to "use Loss Stops [as you] shouldn't wing it." Murthy asserts that although "money grows significantly in the market, checking accounts [and others] do not really grow in value."

For some final words and commentary, d.tech students had many thoughts. Kwan believes that "it is important to start investing as soon as you start making money" and "to diversify your portfolio." Lastly, "talk with others before making financial decisions so that you won't do anything irrational or something that you will regret in the future," he finishes. Senior, Zach Morley, pushes for people to understand the market as "trading stocks is a great way to get a feel for finance, how money works, and how the world works." He adds that "there is really no risk because you still live with your parents so it's a great way to learn important lessons [as long as you] don't take any leverage or do anything that can cause you massive risk." Farinacci shares the same sentiment stating that "if you get stressed easily, I do not recommend jumping into the stock market because I have learned that trading without any emotion is when you get the best gains." He notes that, "everyone is a pro in a bullish market." And lastly, perhaps the best advice for teenagers is from sophomore Raymond Miller, who says, "Don't listen to TikTok guys."

