

Cole Gannon

Professor Cudahy

EWRT 1A

25 January 2021

The Big Transfer

~~By: Cole Gannon~~



"Learn by Doing, Learn by Caring". When I first stepped foot into The Nueva school, I couldn't contain my smile. The natural light let in by the giant glass panes in the foyer illuminated the artwork on the multicolored walls and various furnishings. The teachers gave us the rundown of what the education plan would look like and the various group projects that we might explore during our time here. We were shown various parts of the campus before we were sat in one of the empty classrooms, ready to listen. When I went home that day, I already knew that this was going to be the perfect environment for me to socialize and enrich myself in. At least, it would've been if I actually got in.

"Maybe you should've taken that test more seriously", said my friend who was accepted into Nueva. It was true, my writing was somewhat lacking and I didn't really give it my all. And so I began my high school education at a public high school. Nothing wrong with that, right? Just a normal high schooler. Nothing wrong with just staying on the path that was decided for me. After all, it was easier to just do what everyone else told me to do.

Those dusty Indian Red facades were my real welcome to school each morning. I was one of only two people from my middle school that was attending Sequoia High School. In this sea of about two thousand others, I knew nobody I could call a "friend". As I looked around me during break and lunch, it dawned on me that the social groups formed from previous schools had already cauterized. There was no real outlet of people for me to break into.

One very unremarkable and normal day, my mother asked me to take public transport back home since she was going to be out of town that evening. I got off the train and

absentmindedly hopped on the bus. Today had been a day like any other at school, learning next to nothing, talking to nearly nobody, and unhappily sitting alone at break and lunch. As the bus crossed the bridge to the lake blue Oracle towers, I noticed a girl in a Design Tech High School hoodie.

"Hey, you go to d.tech? One of my best friends goes there!", I asked her. "What is it like?" She described a schooling system that felt so relaxed and different than any style of education I had heard of before. This was my chance to go to a school where my friends were, to go to a school that was anything but ordinary or normal. I emailed the office of admissions and set up a day to go visit.

The scent of burnt chocolate wafted into the autobody shop of the wacky and uncharacteristic "Design Tech High School". It was a scrappy school, nowhere near as immaculate as the elite Nueva school, yet it had its charm. Chairs and tables made out of various materials and formed into odd shapes were scattered around the building seemingly with no relation to each other. There was no sunlight inside the building but it was clear to see that even the furniture would not conform to a specific theme. There were no teachers who gave me the rundown of what our year would look like and there was no tour guide.

After seeing what the school was like, I walked into the office for the interview. I wondered what kinds of questions I was going to be asked. Was I the right fit for the school? I remembered the final interview at The Nueva school. Would they say that they didn't want to accept me? The admissions officer asked me what I thought about the school and my interests. I was eager to answer and I told her exactly what I felt: "I want to go to school here".

This time was going to be different than Nueva. I wanted this for myself. It wasn't my mother or friends pressuring me into going to school here. Transferring to d.tech was a conscious effort to derail myself from the standard track of my high school life. "Great! We'll see you in January!" Just like that, the interview was over.

It was my first day of school. That is, my first day of school at d.tech. It was also my second time taking the train by myself. I was nervous about meeting new people. I worried I'd have difficulty adapting to my new environment. But I was getting on that train to go to school, worries or not. After all, this was what I wanted to do, and it was up to me to make it happen.