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Gateway to University Honors

Final Presentation

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Try, Fail, Succeed, Repeat

My first week at the University of Cincinnati was a whirlwind. Not only did I have to meet and get to know my twenty-two musical theatre classmates, but my focus was also split between the diagnostic performance exams and the auditions I needed to prepare for. All of this was before the first actual week of school. After listening to the chair of department explain that our focus should be on the process of our development and not the final product, my nerves subsided. I stripped off my heavy armor of anxiety and defensiveness to reveal a mere ball of clay. Throughout this semester, my form of clay has constantly been morphed, affected by my teachers and the other musical theatre majors in CCM, especially my twenty-two classmates. The moment I met the diverse and wonderful people residing within CCM, my confidence, trust in others and excitement for musical theatre increased to a threshold I never experienced in my life.

My introduction to this brave new world of CCM came at a challenging time in my life. My father passed away during the summer, and the eager anticipation of college turned to a lukewarm passion as I reinvested myself into my family life. My fears of meeting an apathetic and inauspicious faculty grew in my mind while my strong bond with my family prevented me from chatting with all my new classmates over the summer. However, by the time my first week flew by, I realized I had nothing to worry about. By the first month, I bonded with not only my classmates, but some of my teachers as well. They provided a network of support, comfort, challenge and continued growth. In retrospect, my seventh experience cannot be singular. My seventh experience is a work in progress. I have learned so many things, but what I value most is my newfound appreciation for the process – the process of becoming a better actor, singer, and dancer, the process of friendship, the process of forgiveness, and, ultimately, the process of life. I am a ball of clay; CCM is the sculptor. While I have a strong core that will never change – my values and my personal beliefs, my malleable shell is reshaped every day and continues to accommodate what I learn.

I chose a slideshow of pictures to represent the experience I have had so far. The photos show the people I have met and the places I have been. They also show some of my history. I decided to include both the past and present because I want to remember where I began. I want to catalogue my growth, so I realize what I have accomplished and what more there is to be accomplished. Photos have a way of making me acknowledge where I once was and how far I can stride in the future. They provide nostalgia, but also hope and motivation. The photos represent my drive to live day by day, and to continue my growth as a performer and creative artist. My experiences here will inspire and inform this drive, and hopefully keep it alive for the rest of my life.