

## How My Community College Experience Has Changed My Life.

Lone Star College-CyFair has saved my life, and changed it for the better. The absolute compassion of this community college and its entire staff has encouraged an insecure teenager who didn't know her place in this world to believe in herself again. Lone Star College-CyFair has intelligent and caring professors, challenging and relevant course selections, and a staff who truly cares about their students success. I know all of these factors contributed to my substantial growth and continued academic success at my community college.

To be honest, I never pictured myself attending a community college growing up. My grades throughout high school put me in the top fifteen percent of my class, which would allow me to attend almost any university of my choice. My teachers loved me, and I loved going to school. I was headed directly towards greatness, and then my dreams were slightly derailed.

During my senior year of high school, I suffered a concussion during one of my athletic events, starting a cycle of debilitating conditions that would force me to postpone my academic career for a number of years. I was diagnosed with post-concussive syndrome, which includes symptoms such as constant headaches, severe loss of short term memory, and personality changes. It is also an illness that many people, even doctors, do not understand or are familiar with. As a result of the concussion, I started to lose interest in school and sports, causing my grades, and my reputation, to suffer. Depression was settling in and I was losing who I really was. I was always very vibrant, patient, and outgoing, and now I was pessimistic and defensive, especially to anyone who had an authoritative complex against me.

Immediately after graduating from high school, I enrolled in a four year university. To put it mildly, it was a nightmare. It was the first time I had been away from home in my entire

life, and I honestly was not ready to lead a life on my own. I didn't feel like anyone on campus really knew me or wanted to know me, so in turn, I isolated myself. I was alone, in constant pain, and my professors were not supportive of my condition, so I packed my belongings and headed home. I spent an entire year of my life recuperating, and I know now how much that year helped me get my life back. I needed some time for me to realize what was important for my life and my future, and it finally became aware to me that school was the answer.

I wanted to start over, and the first place I thought of was CyFair Community College. I had noticed it had become very well-known and well-perceived since its establishment in 2004, and I was willing to give it a try. Everyone there was helpful, and I felt they went out of their way to make me feel at home. The staff looked happy to be there, and so did I. I started slowly, first only taking two classes, and then worked my way up to four classes a semester. At first it was a struggle, but both the professors and the students offered their help as soon as they found out about my condition.

During my first semester here at Lone Star College-CyFair, I knew that my preconceived notions about community colleges were wrong. I felt so relatable to my professors, and always felt comfortable coming to them if I had a problem. For example, during this past semester, I informed my biology teacher that I was having trouble taking the tests due to my memory lapses. She noticed I was participating in discussions and was reading the material, and she offered to help me as much as she could. Both of us noticed the same thing was still happening, so we came up with a plan to take the same course next semester so she could help me ahead of time.

Lone Star College-CyFair is my second home. I love being involved on campus and feel like I can make an impact on campus. This school has saved my life. I know I still have

limitations, but I see a future again. A future where I can do what was almost lost to me three years ago.