

Reflection 5: The Curtain Call

As my CODES journey comes to a triumphant close, our fifth and final reflection is to determine what our biggest takeaways were for this semester and our experience in CODES so far. I've thought a lot about my time this semester, as well as my two years in the CODES program. I feel I have gained an invaluable amount of learning in both of these experiences. It feels very surreal that I have come this far. It hasn't quite set in yet that I will soon be a junior in college, and within 2 more years, I will be a college graduate. It is hard to put into words what I have learned from the CODES program and this semester, but I am going to try.

One of the major things I learned in this semester, and in the CODES Program, is that I belong. This has been something that I have always struggled with when it came to my self-confidence. It was a constant struggle to feel like I belonged in certain groups. I constantly felt like I was the odd one out, like I never really belonged. For the majority of my primary and secondary school careers, that was the case. But now in college and with the CODES program, I felt like I actually had a place to belong, and if I ever doubted myself, the people around me would come in droves to remind me that I will always belong and I will always have a place in their group.

Another thing I learned is that I am great. As someone who is on the Pre-Dental track, I am surrounded by people who seemingly were effortlessly good at everything they did. When they would get higher grades than me, I would feel very discouraged and feel like I was not good enough to be surrounded by these scholars. Something this semester taught me is that all I needed was the right environment to succeed, such as finally getting ACCESS Accommodations, or just giving myself grace when I don't understand a topic right away. It was something that was recapitulated within the CODES Program. I always show up, and I always show out, and this proves I am great.

The CODES Program has been instrumental in my collegiate journey, it helped me become more social, I found people to call my friends, it awakened my love for research, helped me get over my fears of presenting and gave me monumental amounts of experience dealing with multifaceted problems, or rather "Wicked Problems", and how sometimes a big "fix-all" solution might not be enough, and in fact you need several smaller solutions to effectively fix one problem at a time. I am writing all this to say...THANK YOU CODES!

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