

KFA Multimedia Art Contest

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I have come a long way to achieve the privilege of attending university. Going back in time to my childhood I had faced a puzzling divorce, which still continues to affect my family today. For seven years I was taken down with the harsh, cruel words that children use to hurt others, and an overlap of a six year battle with doctors who refused to help me get the diagnosis I have today. My graduation was a close call because I was very sick, but I was determined to walk across that stage with my friends cheering me on and shaking my principle's hand; and I did. I was accepted into KPU and started that Fall in 2015. To get more personal, that year I also came out as transgender. My struggle today is coming out and facing discrimination that challenges my safety in public and sometimes my relationships.

The first detail I noticed at Kwantlen was how mature everyone else is. There are no stereotypes, no "popular" groups, we can simply be ourselves with no pressure or expectations. I really love that environment, and it has made it easier for me to stop hiding myself. Everyone is real, they're themselves, so I can be myself too. I have always been a people person, I walk past someone and think "They have a story, what could it be?" Imagine if all the books written were true stories of someone's life somewhere in this vast world, what would reading look like then? I like that university gives me an opportunity to meet people and create stories I can look back on in ten years. University has helped me develop my writing, which is important to me because one day I would like to write a book about my experiences. University offers me a chance to find myself, and develop my findings and interests. I have met wonderful people, and have learned so

much from them and the professors. One small feature I have come to look forward to is the drive to campus. I take the shuttle mostly from Langley campus to Surrey campus, and the drive always gifts me with a sight worth seeing. Every morning I take a back road past some farmland. When the sky is clear enough I can see the sun highlighting the trees and mountains or the rays coming out between the clouds. When I drive home on that same route I get to witness the sunset that makes the sky a mixture of purple, pink, and yellow streaks as if it were painted. I often get home late, especially in the Winter, and on that road when the night is clear that farmland is lit up by the moonlight. Sometimes I dim my headlights, if there are no other cars, so I can feel the full effect of the starry sky around me.

Through my short life of nineteen years I have been through too many mental and physical struggles. University has helped me find ground and balance in my personal chaotic life. The photo I am attaching is one I took on Mayne Island in 2016 on a trip with my family. The world is an ocean filled with people and opportunity and we sit in the red chair staring at it all in bewilderment, looking for a path to guide us. One day, somehow, we will find it or it will find us.