Jesse C.

CCSF Class of 2011

Stanford University Class of 2014

Protocol Labs, Software Engineer

What brought you to CCSF?

I was living in Europe at the time. I took some time off after high school to do some things and I realized that I really wanted to get a college degree. Not so much for the sake of having a college degree, but having a college experience. I ended up in California and CCSF made a lot of sense, so I started taking classes.

Most memorable CCSF experience?

Wow! There are so many (chuckles). Spent two years there. There are 100 things in my head, right? I was a student senator there towards the end of my time and we managed to refurnish the student union and that was really fun and it was a big endeavor to make that happen. I got to do it with a bunch of my friend, so not only I get to hang out with my friends, but we were doing something really cool at the time -- and I got to do it with my friends.

Transfer intentions upon arriving at CCSF:

Well, when I began CCSF, my intention was to transfer into as good of a school as I could get into. I didn’t have anything specific in mind. Even a specific degree or major. Roughly, set myself up to transfer into Berkeley. I began with this idea that I would start taking all of the general classes because there are many to knock out regardless of what you’re doing to take. I dove in and started taking them. Where did I end up two years later? So, I was taking all of these classes (audio cutoff).

So, how did I decide where I was going to apply?

Well, I set myself up to be able to transfer to UC Berkeley and fulfill those requirements got involved in some of the transfer programs that they had between the two schools. In a sense that was kind of like my fallback because I had structured my time at CCSF to be a strong candidate for that. As far as the private universities go, It was important to me to be selective and I applied to a few on the East Coast but what resonated with me was Stanford in the South Bay. I thought that they did and approach things in a way that made a lot of sense if I could get into that. Deciding to apply was easy and finding a university which respected my values, desires and aspirations. The application process wasn’t easy but deciding to apply and to a place I was really excited about.

How did you build community at CCSF?

CCSF can be a tough place because it requires a lot of self-reliance. Fortunately for me, I was able to find people that I really loved being around. It happened kind of naturally and I guess you can say in some ways I got lucky. I remember that some of my closest friends that I had the entire two years I met the first week, most of them on the first day. And while I didn’t become close friends with them the first day or the first week, I met them that day and we started hanging out in class, doing assignments and that transferred to hanging out in our spare time, talking about doing other things together. That was the core of my community and it didn’t come from any particular community group, but it came from people who really resonated with me and those I enjoyed spending time with. Once I found these people, I joined all these other groups and I effectively just brought these people into those groups. That was fun, because not only was I doing a cool group which was fun and it looks good on your resume and I was able to pull all my friends in. The people doing these groups and my friends, so everybody won.

What can CCSF do better?

I graduated or transferred in 2011 I want to say -- and ever since, I haven’t heard from City College. And I can this say this now – especially after graduating from a four year university -- that fostering an alumni community – not necessarily just for donation which could be a thing. I don’t know if that is useful for City College or not – but I could tell you as a relatively successful alum, so far that I donate to my current university and would also consider doing the same for City College if I knew that money would be put to good use. End of day, City College gave me a ton. Some of my most positive and memorable experiences were at City College. I grew as an individual a tremendous amount at City College and because of that, it has a really special place in my heart. I haven’t heard anything from the college ever since I left. I think that that could be a lot better. Probably not the majority of people who go to City College, but for at least for a small group of people, it is a special place. A lot of my peers are doing really great things now in society – and it would be amazing to have some bigger community around that specifically. That’s one thing I would like to see City College doing. Fostering community.

How did City College shape you?

City College was great (laughs). My name is Jesse Clayburgh. It helped me discover myself and I think part of that was just where I was in life at the time and in this moment of exploration and figuring out myself and what I wanted in life. City College provided the opportunity to, it was a great environment to figure that out – it wasn’t the only environment it wasn’t the only thing that helped me do that, there were many things going on at the time. It served as a great platform a great place to go every day in which I could meet awesome people and do fun things – sure, it wasn’t always perfect there are things that were hard, that weren’t optimal or things I would have done slightly different but City College played a large role at that time in my life in helping me set myself up for future success.