I’ll be honest: before I went to community college, I had a lot of preconceived ideas about the students there. I thought of all the stereotypical things that much of the world thinks. Community college is easier than real college. The students there aren’t really in college. No one that goes to community college can be successful. But, everything changed when I stepped into the shoes of a community college student and saw everything from the perspective of one myself.

I was originally supposed to go straight from high school into a four-year university. I was a great student in high school; I got honor roll all throughout and worked very hard for my future. But, ten days before I had to leave, I had an immense feeling that taking this path was not something that was meant for me. That week was one of the hardest of my life. I had to withdraw from the university I was supposed to go to and find somewhere else to go, and fast. I looked through my options. I knew that taking a gap year was not for me because I was anxious about starting my future, and I also knew that I wanted an authentic college experience. I looked into a lot of options, but most places were full or were no longer accepting students. Then, I stumbled upon the idea of community college. I didn’t like the idea at first, but when I went in to register for my classes just two days before they began, I realized that this was where I needed to be. Everyone was welcoming and understanding of my situation. It was nothing like I thought community college was supposed to be like.

Because most classes were full, I ended up taking a lot of online classes; but I did get the opportunity to attend an in person English class. It was my first official college class. On the first day, I met a new friend, and as the days of class went by she made me realize something important. People are wrong about community college. All kinds of people take all kinds of paths in life, and just because you are in community college doesn’t mean that you can’t be as successful as someone who is going to a four-year university right off the bat is.

I’ve learned that being determined, open, and positive makes a successful community college student. From taking more classes and receiving more work than I ever have in my life, I can tell you that community college is no easier than any other college. You have to commit and be determined to work your hardest to do well, or you will fall behind. You also have to be open to new people and experiences. Even though most people who go to community college are from the same general area, you would still be very surprised at all the different people you can meet. In high school, most students interacted with only the people in their small radius of an area and didn’t meet any new people outside of it. In community college, you can meet people from all over Charlotte, or even different countries. You can make many friends with people here, and those friends can help you in any way that you need; whether it be with school work or if you just need a friend. Lastly, staying positive makes a successful student. Being positive can help with all aspects of life, but it especially helps in college. When you are swamped with work and don’t want to write another sentence, being positive can help you stay motivated and not get stressed.

In conclusion, any community college student can be successful if they stay determined, open, and positive. Community college students are capable of so much more than they are given credit for, and I think that the world should recognize that.