

The completely new environment was hard to adjust to at first. I must admit I was a little anxious, but when I walked into the AVID classroom, I felt like I was at home. The teacher was smiling, said hello, but not only did she welcome me she also remembered my name and it gave me a sense of hospitality. For the first few months I had to adjust to my environment and AVID helped me with that. The teachers comforted me, told me that I could do it, and for the first time I felt motivated to do well.

During tutorials, the tutors told me to persevere. To be the first one to present is hard for me because I am a bit timid. Under normal circumstances I would have backed out, I would have been the last to go, but this wasn't a normal environment. I was surrounded by people who actually care about me, and because of that I was the first to go up. I showed no sign of stage fright because we were all there to learn from each other. Another incident where I was nervous was on the first day of class. Everyone was worried including me. When the teacher asked the first question of the new school year no one raised their hand. I was debating if my response would be ridiculed or praised. I overlooked the fact that everyone was here to teach me, even the students, even if it was an offensive comment. I didn't know what was going on through my head because before I could realize my hand was in the air, and my name was called on. I took a deep breath and responded appropriately. I felt accomplished because I took a chance and the day after I received a reward because of it, so it paid off to take that chance.

I enjoy having all three different types of people in the classroom. There are the teachers, the tutors and the peers. It is interesting to compare class work and homework with other classmates, so that we can teach and learn from our mistakes and our strengths. Teachers and tutors help us with new and difficult strategies that can improve our skills, because without practice you won't make perfect. My AVID teachers are always saying "We're here to help you." That's all I heard from them and I feel comforted every time I hear that, because I know that I am not on my own and that they want to help in every way possible. AVID is definitely impacting my life for the better and with my friends, teachers and tutors by my side it will keep impacting my life through high school and beyond.

Marcus Garcia