

## Transforming Through Education

I was a nervous wreck when I first walked through the doors of Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Fighting daily anxiety, hating the feeling of change, taking in the pressure of my parents as well as being utterly clueless as to what exact career I wanted to pursue, I dreaded the very thought of post-secondary education. Reflecting back on it now however, I am happy to say my six years at KPU were some of the best in my life. I always had a passion for language and hip hop music, but I had no idea that my journey through post-secondary education would become such a platform for me to not only exercise my interests, but challenge it, tweak it, and use it in ways that I never could before. It was because of my willingness to take on a challenge, my fight to embed my passion for rap music into my studies, as well as the tons of support I got from my professors where I truly saw and felt how much education has transformed me.

If one were to ask any professor who has ever had me in the classroom, I can almost guarantee you that they would mention the fact that I rapped most of my answers and class discussions whenever it came time for me to participate. It wasn't until my third year English course on Children's literature, however, where I got to take it a few steps further and write and record an entire rap album on the class content with an accompanying essay on its creation for my final project. After my best friend and fellow rapper presented our album to the class on the final day, our professor encouraged us to keep editing our project. With her guidance and belief in my love for hip hop, I managed to eventually get the project published at TheJUMP (The Journal for Underground Multimedia Projects based out in Texas University. While the publication of my multimodal project was already an amazing feat in itself, it snowballed into other opportunities like the creation of a KPU advertisement for Sonic Radio, a KPU and Coca-

Cola sponsored Outreach Program, a professional music video, countless newspaper articles, and the honor of being awarded the Surrey 2015's Top 25 Under 25 by the Surrey Board of Trade.

While I can undoubtedly go on and write about each of these accomplishments in vivid detail, the most important thing I took away from all of my successes was that none of it would be possible without my journey as a student in post-secondary education. My song, "Transform" and its accompanying visual aims to showcase this journey. One of the goals I set for myself early on was to show students that if you work hard to bring your true self into the classroom, you will get the most out of your studies. Education can be a powerful and life changing journey, but it is up to you to make it one.