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"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." is an infamous quote spoken into existence by Albert Einstein. Resilience is practiced in the most subtle or tremendous ways. For example, many young children begin riding a bike with training wheels. The training wheels create a sense of safety and security for the young child. Then the child is stripped of the feeling of security, and off come the training wheels. The child must learn to maintain the proper balance to keep riding the bicycle, and if not, disappointment will be faced, and the ride will come to an end. A child who embodies resilience will manage their emotions, regardless of the outcome, and keep going forward with the life lesson. This nostalgic generalization plays into my personal journey as a community college student at Central Piedmont. In August of 2020, I started my first day of junior year. The excitement of finally living through my junior year and being so close to senior year was my reality and no longer a fantasy. I grew up and experienced it with my childhood best friends; I was on the varsity cheerleading team, setting an example for younger girls and simultaneously embodying school spirit. Still undecided as to where I would go to college, I never took those final moments for granted. Who would've thought it would all come to a crashing halt, and a global pandemic would arise. March 13, 2020, would be the last day I would ever attend an in-person class. I took it upon myself to graduate high school early. With my school's guidance counselors being consumed by students reaching out for help amid the global crisis, I took it upon myself to figure what I truly envisioned for myself. The process of getting to CPCC was far from delightful; I was stripped of my training wheels and lost balance. I felt as though I had no place to ask my endless questions about which school was best for me. Did I want to go out of state? Did I want to stay in-state? Would I be left out if I went to community college? Many teenagers would turn to their parents for advice, but my parents migrated to the U.S. at a very young age from El Salvador. They are lucky enough to succeed in life, with little to no schooling.

My father had mentioned that back in the day, he took a few classes at CPCC to learn the basics of the English language. While being alone in quarantine, I educated myself and found myself drawn to CPCC. In a way, it was a coping mechanism; I was already forced to grow up so suddenly from the COVID-19 pandemic. To restore some form of control, I had to go to CPCC to make myself feel better, and in control. I then had to face the harsh reality that it would take a while for normality to be restored, and online classes with the weekly Webex calls would be apart of my weekly agenda. Even though the weeks of my first semester of being a college student at CPCC seem to blend in, I practice resilience and gratitude each day. In the end, I'm able to further my education at a fantastic school and I'm taught by intelligent instructors such as Ms. Bee. I could choose to sulk and feel alone, but nowadays, I feel as though I have truly understood and practiced resilience after facing this much adversity. I have fully come to terms that everyone is going through this together, I have metaphorically chosen to ride my bicycle with no training wheels.