

The Digital Media Art Program at San Jose State University is one that has raised my interest and allowed me to challenge myself and create things I never imagined myself doing.

From using 3D softwares to coding, the ability to merge art and technology together is something that is fascinating and fun to me.

With all honesty, my career goals have changed within the past two years. Originally, I was living and pursuing a career not out of my own interest, but rather pressure and expectations placed on me. With the fragility and unpredictability of life, I decided to pursue a career in art, where I could feel like the most genuine version of myself.

Within the DMA program, I am still deciding what it is exactly that I would like to pursue. However, my main interests within the program are web development. I have taken a look at the CADRE website and the career paths that DMA alumni have taken, and web design/web development as well as UI/UX are career paths that I would like to pursue.

I honestly did not see myself as a person following these careers until I took a class the DMA program offers: ART 101. Being able to code, use colors, implement design, and much more to create interactive pages was challenging, but something I really enjoyed doing. Having been introduced to some of the basic, primary languages of coding, I felt like I had been placed in a new world that I had never envisioned myself in.

Sure, sometimes I wanted to yell at the code for not “working,” but the moment I was able to get my projects and codes to work the way I envisioned them, I felt unstoppable. To me, a career or job that doesn’t challenge you or require you to think out of the box isn’t very appealing. I love having room to be flexible and creative, and that is what the DMA program offers.

Being able to combine art and technology, while creating projects based on topics that were important to me has been wonderful. The DMA program provides classes that I know would enrich my knowledge and skills to allow me to pursue a career in web development/design or UI/UX.

Still, being in a program that would allow me to pursue my career goals isn't *just* about my career goals either. Being accepted into the program, and being able to graduate from the program is a way to set an example for my family and honor them. Only 11 percent of Latinos have a bachelor's degree, and in my immediate family, I am the first person to go to college. Just being here is an honor and privilege that people like my dad, whose highest level of education is middle school, or my grandmothers, who were not able to attend elementary school, did not have.

By pursuing a career that would have never been possible for my family members (who have worked tirelessly in physical and manual labor), I want to be an example and encourage my younger family members to pursue their interests, just as I have through the DMA program.

- Cristy Aguilar