

I chose Xavier because it felt like my high school. I know what you're thinking, and no it was not because I knew a bunch of people coming here or because it was close to home. Neither of these were true. At the time, I wasn't sure what it was about Xavier that made it feel like my high school that I loved so much.

Honestly, when I toured Xavier, I wasn't sure what to make of it. It felt small, and not quite what I imagined college to look like. Granted, during my tour, there was a flash flood warning and we didn't get to see much. My biggest takeaway of the tour, then, wasn't all the fancy buildings or study spaces, but the fact that somehow, my tour guide knew every single person we walked past. It wasn't until my brother moved in during his freshman year that I truly started considering Xavier to be the place I wanted to call home for the next 4 years. The orientation team in their bright yellow shirts, enthusiastic smiles, and eager faces to welcome my brother flipped a switch in me. Maybe this place isn't so bad after all.

As you may have guessed, I did choose Xavier. I got to have my own team of movers help me to my room in Husman (where, little did I know, I would first move in with the roommate who'd be by my side for the next four years), and then got to see what Manresa was really about. While I don't think I remembered even a quarter of all the things my leaders shared with me, my biggest takeaway was that during my first day of classes, I had a squad of 15 familiar faces I could smile, wave at, or sit with at the caf.

Halfway through my freshman year, I had the opportunity to apply to be a Manresa leader and a tour guide. I took a stab at both, and got the jobs. While I was primarily excited to be a helpful hand towards my group of first years and perspective students, I was pleasantly surprised when in addition to that, I had a group of dozens of new familiar and friendly faces I could turn towards on campus or at social gatherings (wink wink). [Shoutout Camille McDonald and Georgia Fosse for welcoming me with open arms into the BOA!]

I got to be closer and closer to these groups and continued working in admissions and on OT. Year after year, my network expanded exponentially, and I slowly started to realize that my best good days were ones that I got to see the largest portion of my people. [Even if it was a short wave or head-nod to a 5 minute conversation gone on to hours long and way past my bedtime; these were the moments I loved the most]

In my closing months here, I have begun to realize why Xavier felt like my high school. In a graduating class of 186, I knew just about every one of my classmates. Everything felt familiar. The people made it feel like home. In my four years at Xavier, I can confidently say I found my home again in each and every one of my friends' faces. Over time, I've come to realize that what matters most to me is the people I share my life with. No matter where I end up, I know I'm grounded by the relationships I've built—people I trust, care about deeply, and who are always in my corner.