



Change of Heart

Occasionally, people make mistakes and the process of recovering from those mistakes can forever change their life, for the better. This is true of Pioneer Academy senior, Troy Winkler. Troy joined Pioneer as a ninth grader after years of making negative choices, which did not help him stay focused on education. He found himself in the court system and he felt his path was set for failure. Troy's first few months were difficult, he treated Pioneer just like he treated any other school he attended, and he didn't want to change his ways. Over the course of the rest of that first year, Troy began to recognize that teachers and staff continually showed him that they were there for him and despite what he had done in his past. By the start of his second year Troy made a decision to change his approach to school and life. He began to focus on removing the negative influences in his life and changing his approach to his coursework. His attitude towards life began to transform and his grades moved from failing most classes in middle school to getting A's and B's his Junior year.

Today, with interests in science, particularly geology, history, art, travel, video gaming, working out and fishing, Troy has the ambition to start and own his own business. He stated he loves to take things apart and learn how they work and has enjoyed his Project Lead the Way engineering class with Mrs. Steinkraus. He is now considering going to college to study engineering.

When asked who do you credit for your success, Troy was quick to reply his Mom and Dad. He stated they continued to support him through his most difficult stages of his journey. He also acknowledged his teachers at Pioneer for taking the time to guide him through areas he was struggling in. Troy said, "the staff would spend extra time to help me, they encouraged me to do better and that motivated me to do my best." He appreciated Pioneer office manager, Monica Ward, for helping him get through school issues and he thanked Mr. Jordan, school counselor, for believing in him and always giving him support when he needed it. Troy also thanked Mr. Macias, who pushed him through a very difficult time and showed he truly cared and wanted to see Troy succeed.

Troy has definitely pushed through and is on his way to great success. We have enjoyed having Troy at school and we look forward to seeing where he will land. -Written by Cary Jordan, Pioneer Academy school counselor.