



“Destinations” Interview Questions



Name: Nate Overholtzer

Destination: University of Southern California

Career Goal: Neurosurgeon

What is your favorite subject/class & why? My favorite class has been my AP English Literature class with Mr. McHale. As a teacher, he teaches his students for their own edification, for their own betterment, not just to pass a test. In his class, we tackle literature from all perspectives – psychological, sociological, and historical. The class truly is not just simply English; it is a synthesis of knowledge from all aspects of learning.

Who is your favorite teacher & why? Mrs. Dávalos, my math teacher for three years, has been an incredible teacher and role model throughout my years at Downey. She goes above and beyond to teach the most difficult course, Calculus; she can transcend the most complex theorems and formulas to understandable mathematics. Not only has Mrs. Dávalos been an incredible teacher, she has been an incredible mentor, always treating her students with respect, kindness, and patience.

What is your favorite high school memory? My favorite high school memory would be having the opportunity to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards camp. The camp was truly an incredible experience where I was able to meet other incredible ambitious teenagers who were all so passionate about making a difference in the world. There is a true comfort in being surrounded by similarly minded individuals.

Who/what is your biggest influence & why? My grandparents, more affectionately nicknamed my Gaga and Papa, have been my greatest influences. They both completed fulfilling careers in the medical field, as well as cared for me throughout my childhood. They have inspired me to pursue my dreams and a career in medicine.

What is the most important lesson you learned? Leadership cannot be taught, only inspired. Leadership is a character trait one can learn only through their own experience.

What advice do you have for incoming freshman? My first tip of advice would be to go to Downey. Find your niche, your home at Downey. Downey has something for everyone from an incredible variety of clubs, a supportive staff, top-rate athletics, and a great school pride. Downey has a supportive family-like atmosphere where students are encouraged by not only the staff but each other to achieve greatness.

Why did you select your destination? I picked USC for a variety reasons; the primary reason being I was fortunate enough to be selected to receive their Trustee Scholarship, a full

tuition + \$2000 scholarship given to approximately 1% of applicants. Besides the scholarship, USC has an incredibly beautiful campus in the heart of Los Angeles, offers more majors and minors than any university, and has produced more Olympic medalists than any university. USC also provides an on-campus tour/information program for scholarship recipients that makes all students truly feel welcomed on campus. From handwritten letters from admissions officials to one-on-one conversations with professors, to personal welcomes from the dean, USC made me feel like they wanted me there as much as I wanted to go there.

How did Modesto City School prepare you for the future? From Lakewood to La Loma to Downey, I have had incredible teachers and administrators who have always encouraged me to new heights in my academics, in my ethics, and in my community involvement.

In what extracurricular activities did you participate? Water Polo, Swimming, Memorial Medical Center Junior Volunteer, Memorial Health Careers Academy Practicum Student, Senior Class President, Junior Class President, Sophomore Class VP, Renaissance Club Co-President, CSF, Interact Club Vice President, Link Crew Leader, School Site Council Student Representative, Every Monday Matters Co-President.

What is your favorite quote or saying? “The question isn't who is going to let me; it's who is going to stop me.” -- *Ayn Rand*