

ROADTRIP NATION PRESENTS

# One Step Closer





## About Roadtrip Nation

For over 15 years, we here at Roadtrip Nation have made it our mission to help individuals pursue fulfilling careers aligned with their interests and strengths. We show people how to turn the things they like into careers they love—and we do it with the most powerful of tools: personal stories. From snowboard designers to filmmakers, we've sat down with professionals of all kinds and asked them honest questions about their struggles, successes, and how they figured out the age-old question, "What should I do with my life?" These conversations form the foundation of our career resources, which introduce young people to new paths and illustrate how to pursue them.

## One Step Closer

Fueled by the ECMC Foundation, Roadtrip Nation's *One Step Closer* offers a glimpse into how community college is helping people across America identify their passions and realize their full potential.

For Melanie, Armand, and Becca, community college has given them a way to keep moving forward, even when obstacles like indecision and illness crossed their paths. But lately, they're unsure about the best way forward. In order to choose a new direction, they need to see all the places their next steps can take them.

Come along as they cross the country to talk to people whose stories have been shaped by community college, ultimately finding the confidence to press onward and upward—all with the support of a newfound community.

The activities that follow are designed to be completed by participants along with their mentors, instructors, and/or family members in order to spark meaningful conversations about their future aspirations and how to achieve them.

See you on the road!



**ROADTRIP  
NATION**

**ECMC**  
Foundation



# One Step Closer



## How to Use This Viewing Guide

This viewing guide is designed to be used during and/or after watching the One Step Closer documentary. Here are a few ideas on how to use the guide with your participants.



### Watch

This viewing guide should be filled in after watching the full documentary; however, the documentary may be split into two viewings if needed.

Total running time: 60 minutes



### Talk

Provide a viewing guide to each participant before screening the documentary. Have participants complete the TALK section for several or all discussion topics after viewing the full documentary. You may want to choose discussion topics that are relevant to your participants, allow them to choose one or more discussion topics, or assign all discussions and questions for a thorough self-exploration and reflective activity.

If you'd like to use this guide for group discussions, participants should write down their thoughts first, then share through conversation. Discussions can take place in small groups with peers or with an instructor, mentor or with family members. Encourage participants to discuss any insights, ideas, or questions that they have during the viewing of the documentary or during your conversation.

Participant written response time: 30 - 60 minutes

Optional discussion time: 30 - 60 minutes

# Meet the Roadtrippers



## **Becca**

**Age 21**

**From Pittsburgh, PA**

After an illness forced her to drop out of her four-year university, Becca was thankful to find an option that continued to expose her to new things and fuel her love of learning: taking classes at her local community college. Now that she's transferred to the University of Pittsburgh, she's having difficulty picking a major—not because she doesn't know what she likes, but because she likes too many different things! She hopes this road trip will show her that she doesn't have to abandon one interest for another.



## **Armand**

**Age 25**

**From Daly City, CA**

Currently attending the City College of San Francisco and working an IT job, Armand has carved out a comfortable life for himself. But he's starting to get wary of that comfort. He's been living at home and attending community college classes for the past eight years, and he feels ready for a change. He knows this road trip could be the jolt he needs to restart his system and help him answer the tough question he's been facing: Should he stick to his well-worn, comfortable paths, or should he forge ahead into new territory?



## **Melanie**

**Age 24**

**From Brooklyn, NY**

Growing up in Brooklyn, Melanie was exposed to a lot in high school. After graduating from high school, Melanie followed the neighborhood trend of going straight into the workforce rather than continuing her schooling. After developing strong interests in political engagement and activism, Melanie realized she had to go back to school. Now enrolled in Queensborough Community College, she's ready for this road trip to connect her with the kinds of role models she hopes to someday become for her own community.



# Discussion 1: Commitment



**“Decisiveness is the key to success. Focus on one thing and start a fire. Get the fire started and make sure you keep yourself right. You have to have your own route. You have to have your own mind. You have to have your own heart.”**

**Dominick Cruz,**  
MMA Fighter

2. Roadtripper Becca states, “I have a lot of interests. But at the same time, I am the most indecisive person.” How can Dominick Cruz’s advice assist Becca in deciding what to do with her life? How will you start to explore your own interests? Do your interests relate to your educational and career goals?

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3. Think about the role commitment and focus have on your ability to achieve your goals. List 2-3 strategies to improve your focus that will help you reach the goals listed in question 1.

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# Discussion 2: Overcoming Fear of Failure



**“I wanted to give up a lot, but the way that I saw it was this was an opportunity for me to prove myself, and I just could not fail. I would not let myself fail. We can talk the talk, but if we’re not walking the walk, then nothing will change. Talk - Action = 0.”**

**Angela H. Brown,**  
Executive Editor & Publisher of SLUG Magazine



## Talk

Like the roadtrippers, all individuals are eventually faced with the concept of discovering their passion in life and then having the courage to pursue what they are truly passionate about. Think about your own sense of purpose as you respond to the following questions.

1. After interviewing Angela H. Brown, Becca opens up about her own fear of pursuing what she is truly passionate about, “Even just fear of failure is such a huge thing for me. Like, failing at something that I want to be good at. That makes me not even try.” Describe a time when you allowed your fear of failure to stop you from pursuing one of your passions. If you could go back to this situation, what would you have done differently? What can you do to overcome the fear of failure in your life today or in the future?

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## Discussion 3: Transition



**“Don’t focus on the top of the mountain because it’s intimidating. Look at the middle of the mountain and focus on how you get to that point first. Write down what it is that you want to do. Stick to the plan because, if not, you’ll be in a ‘plan’ forever. The worst thing to do is to not even try. Your every move has to be a calculated step toward what it is you are trying to do.”**

**Jarrett Adams,**  
Innocence Project Attorney

2. Both Deesha and Jarrett used the community college system to completely transform their lives, yet their paths were very different. What is the common lesson that both leaders learned as a result of committing to their educational pursuits? How can you apply this lesson to your own experience?

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3. After speaking with Deesha and Jarrett about their experiences with the community college system, Armand reflects, “There’s help right there. You just need to go to it, grab it. Take the opportunity to figure out what you want.” What opportunities or resources might you be able to explore more or take advantage of in your community and/or at your local community college campus?

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# Discussion 4: Finding Your Purpose



**“Some of the smartest people I know went to the smallest, tiniest colleges. You never know everything. I still have so much to learn. If you do things that matter, you will feel that you matter.”**

**Jim Lehrer,**  
Journalist & Moderator for  
12 Presidential Debates



## Talk

Throughout the experience, the roadtrippers express a sense of loss or a lack of direction in relation to their life pursuits, yet these leaders have a sense of calm and contentment with their direction in life. Think about the values that are important to you as you respond to the following prompts.

1. What matters to you? Describe your idea of a fulfilled life.

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2. Armand explains, “I want to find that happiness when I find out what I want to do.” How does Jim’s quote relate to Armand’s search for purpose in his life? Thinking about your interests or favorite hobbies, what careers or industries might bring you happiness or give you purpose?

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3. Spend some time exploring your local community college’s website. What types of degrees or certificate programs are available that interest you? What would it take to complete one of these programs and pursue a career that aligns with your interests?

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