

I recently discovered I have an interest in Communications and Journalism as a career, and I figured it out by using Snapchat. Now, this probably sounds like every other teenager trying to validate being on social media all the time, but by reading and watching articles and videos from various sources like Vice, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and more, I realized I loved knowing about current events and hearing other people's stories. I would read and watch everything there was, from food to politics, to social justice to fashion.

I have always loved opening a new world or stepping into different shoes through reading and writing, but I'd never thought of doing that through non-fiction journalism and not fictional stories, which were all I'd ever read. Reading these articles opened my eyes to things going on in the world that I would have never noticed, or maybe not even cared about. They took me outside of my small, protected world, broadening my view and making me ask essential questions. They were also sometimes just a fun break in my day where I could read about fascinating people sharing their personal experiences and opinions. I enjoy hearing other people's stories and perspectives; it opens my eyes and helps me understand the world around me better.

I've always loved reading because it enabled me to experience new worlds and ideas, which led me to want to be an author, and I've always written some -- for classes, as a personal outlet, and for my school's literary magazine -- but it was never very consistent or passionate. Writing became more important to me after I took a Journalism class during my school's "Winterim" period. I wrote a short article about our new building dedicated to a deceased student. For that article, I remember being intimidated having to interview students, school administrators, architects, and even the student's parents. By the end, though, I realized I enjoyed the experience of learning things I never knew, and I loved the finished product. The best part, however, was when the student's parents approached me a few weeks later at the dedication ceremony for the building. We met in person, and they emotionally thanked me for what I had written about their son. It was a touching moment for me because I saw that my writing had meant something to them and could have an impact. I later found out from my school's headmaster that those parents had been wary about talking with me since they were still hurting and grieving. He told me, however, that after talking with me and seeing what I wrote, they were

glad they could share their story with everyone. This was a crucial moment because I realized writing could be more than telling a story; it could help share people's experiences by giving them a voice and could affect the readers. Although I did not realize it then, this moment sparked my interest in Journalism.

I came back to this interest last year when I decided to start a school news site. I gathered a group with the hope of making journalism enjoyable to fellow students. I wanted them to see the value and importance of it as I did, and I wanted people to be able to write about their varied interests and experiences. Although it took a year and another summer at writing camp to get organized and inspired, my goal of a school news source has become a reality this year. Although we are not writing deep, meaningful articles yet, I believe we are creating a platform that can evolve and allow people to have a voice about what matters in our school.

It has been a growthful experience for me to get closer to understanding what I want to do in life. I've always had a variety of interests, so it's been challenging to narrow those down to my skills and passions. I think Communications and Journalism help satisfy that range of interests because there are so many different focuses; I can write about simple topics like school events then delve into harder subjects like experiencing death and grief. Just like those Snapchat stories did for me, I can help broaden people's horizons to learn more about others' experiences, or I can give people a space to share their voice and talk about what matters to them, whether that be social justice or a good movie.