

Why College is Important to Me

by Bailey Ray

I spent the majority of my time in high school feeling like college just wasn't all that important. What was the point of it? I was going to school so I could go to college so I could get a degree so I could make money so I could send my kids to college one day. That's what everyone was telling me I was supposed to do with my life. What if I didn't want to live like that? What if I didn't want to feel like another cog in another machine, always pushing forward instead of living in the present?

I still didn't want to live like that.

I've come to realize though, in this past year, that just because so many people see college as only a means to an end, another achievement, another thing to brag about, doesn't mean that I can't go to college for my own reasons. I've also come to realize that I do have reasons to go to college, and all those reasons are very important to me.

I love learning: history, sciences, languages, I want to know about so many things. I'm not going to have the best opportunities to learn about the flaws in the Treaty of Versailles or the importance of nucleic acids or how to conjugate Spanish verbs in the present perfect tense if I don't go to college.

I want to push myself to do the best I can; I don't want to waste any of my potential. I've spent thirteen years in school working really hard to do well in all of my classes, and I like to think that, as a straight "A" student, I've pretty much succeeded. I may not be a star athlete or an amazing artist, but I've got a lot of potential as a student. I'm great at learning, and I've got a lot more to learn.

I want to use what I learn to help people. I'm still not sure what I want to major in when I go to college. There are so many things I want to know about, it's hard sometimes to narrow my focus down to just one thing. I do know, however, that whatever I wind up majoring in is going to be something I can use to make other peoples' lives better. When I learn about history, I'm learning how to help to

keep it from repeating itself; when I learn about how the human body works, I'm learning how to help people physically; when I learn Spanish, I'm learning how to communicate with people who might feel lost in a new, scary place full of others who don't speak their language. College is my best opportunity to learn things that will let me help as many people as I can, in as many ways as I can. "Helping people" might not be the most specific goal, but it's how I want to spend my life, and going to college will help me do that.