

## Why College is Important to Me

As high schoolers we often forget the importance of education, as it consumes our days. Education just *is*. The clear positives of education, such as making interpersonal connections with adults, opportunities to participate in extracurriculars, and making friends, can impact your life for years afterwards. However, there are benefits of education that may not be as 'on the surface' as others, and these are the reasons college matters to me.

College equips students with the skills needed to succeed in life such as finding a new way of doing things, learning a differing opinion and opening yourself to new people and experiences. Because of the wide range of experiences in college students are able to pick from an equally wide range of jobs. Without a college experience, many people would remain in the same mindset their whole lives, and the world would not move forward as it has.

For me personally, I was blessed to receive a full scholarship to attend a boarding school when I was 14. Given for academics, character and leadership, the Batten Award at Culver Academy immediately challenged me to learn more, live with honor and always strive to become better. I have learned personal accountability and independence in a lot of ways, like approaching teachers, dealing with roommate conflict and balancing my time commitments. Because Culver is an international boarding school, I have already learned from people and experienced cultures way outside of what I would have if I'd stayed at home. And now that I have had these experiences, I never want to stop.

By not just going to college, but by going to college outside of my comfort zone, I will continue to expose myself to people, cultures, experiences and opinions outside my own. I will be challenged to look at all sides of things and keep a growth mindset. I will be exposed to many ways that I can become a better person, and I know I will have many opportunities to pay forward my great fortune.

I would have been ok if I'd stayed home and attended a public high school, but I don't think college would hold the same importance that it now does. I view college as a necessity. If I am not challenging myself I fear I will stagnate, and I am not ready to stop growing! I know that a college far from home, even outside the midwest, will give me amazing opportunities to become a better person. I'm not yet sure what career path I will choose, but a good college will enable me to think about that from many different angles, and open up opportunities I would never have considered.

In short, college is important to me because I never want to stop learning, growing, reaching and achieving, and that's what college is designed to do!