

Lowell Saign

12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Wayne High School

Utah

### What Drives You?

#### Utah Jiffy Lube Teen Driver Scholarship Program

I'm driven to erase the stigma of choosing trade school over traditional four-year college. The direction I'm going lies somewhere between the two and I'd like to pave the path for others who feel forced to choose between one or the other.

There is a significant demand for Career and Technical Education (CTE) trained students as one of the largest generations of technical workers reaches retirement age. These include vocational careers like automotive, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (hvac) and welding technicians as well as chefs, hospitality workers and cosmetologists, just to name a few. Salaries for these careers have traditionally been among the lower range but with demand so high, workers are seeing a drastic increase like never before. An example is a conversation I recently had with my guidance counselor while discussing my interests in the automotive industry. She was telling me about an experience she had while trying to schedule her vehicle for repair. The wait to obtain an appointment was much longer than expected because the automotive dealership was so short staffed. I learned that the dealership was offering starting automotive technicians \$40,000 and a bonus if they could commit to working 40 hours a week!

As a high school student in rural Utah, I have been fortunate enough to be part of the Concurrent Enrollment (CE) Program with my local community college. Thanks

to this program I will be graduating with my General Education Certificate from Snow College, along with my High School Diploma, at graduation this May. I have a passion for the trades and technical fields but I also want to run my own business. My goal is to obtain my Bachelor of Science in Business Management and then to pursue my Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification.

Ideally what I'd like to do is attend Utah Tech University for Business Management and put my elective focus on automotive mechanics, however this isn't an option. *I have to either choose trade school or college.*

I'm optimistic, that like the (CE) Program in Utah high schools, I can help develop a similar cross over program designed between state colleges and trade schools to enable students like myself to pursue a post-secondary, 4-year degree synchronizing hands on trade skills as well as classroom curriculum.

If (CE) can help students cut their time in college in half by getting their general education classes out of the way while in high school, it only makes sense to continue this accelerated path through college and beyond.

I'm driven when it comes to making opportunities available to as many students as possible and sharing what I know with others. My passion is rooted in mechanics and I'm so excited to spend the next few years learning and gaining experience from teaching professionals. Ultimately, my goal is to return to my home town and open my own business where I can help those in need of repairs while mentoring youth like myself, who share similar interests in the field.