

Caleb Chandler

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Grade 12

What Drives Me

I am driven by an innate desire to understand the world around me and how it works, and then to try and make it better. My ultimate goal is to be remembered as someone that was intelligent, humble, successful, and someone that left the world a better place because they were in it. That's why I'm studying Economics at Utah State University in the fall. Economics is what drives the world around. I want to learn everything there is to know about it and use that knowledge to identify unique and effective solutions to problems we face as a society.

I was always an inquisitive person. As a child I would constantly barrage my parents and relatives with questions about how things worked. I even watched documentaries instead of cartoons as early as 5 years old. I specifically remember one program I must have watched hundreds of times about the Civil War. Of course I still have much to learn, and I feel like I have scarcely begun my educational journey. College is an incredibly exciting concept to me because it gives me more freedom to learn the things I want to on my own terms. Being an inquisitive child, I naturally gravitated towards maps. Maps were captivating to me because they presented a wealth of information in a visual format that was easy to understand. I pored over Google Earth endlessly, and eventually learned enough to get to the state Geography Bee and place in the top ten, essentially by accident. The next year I studied even harder and got second place.

Choosing a major was a difficult process for me. I wanted to study something that I had interest in, but that I could also make into a successful career as an adult. Economics was already one of my final choices, but it was my senior economics class that really solidified it for me. I became very engaged with the topic and researched various economic theories and processes on my own time. I loved the idea of an abstract concept being synthesized and then applied to the real world. I opened a brokerage account and invested in the stock market with some of the money I made from a paper route and a call center. Active investing is one of my favorite hobbies.

A lot of people think my decision is weird and boring. When I tell someone I plan to be an Economics major they have a visibly let-down expression like they were expecting something more interesting. I don't think most people really understand economics. They think of it as a kind of abstract and boring thing that doesn't really matter that much. But economics is all around us, and it influences our lives perhaps more than anything else. And it's anything but boring. If more of us understood and paid attention to economics, we wouldn't have many of the problems we have today. I look forward to the time I will spend studying it, and I hope I can make the world a better place with the knowledge I gain.