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What Drives Me?

Some people seem to think the march of progress is inevitable, but this isn't necessarily true. Sometimes, it needs a push. It needs to be driven. I want to be a part of that push. I want to drive our world towards a better place, but I know that will take work. I hope going to college will teach me more about that work and provide opportunities to make positive local changes.

I am a relatively privileged person. This makes it really easy to overlook the problems of the less fortunate. For a long time, that's exactly what I did. I've never been overtly hostile to social progress. In fact, I always considered myself pretty tolerant. Unfortunately, tolerance is passive, and passivity doesn't always cut it. When the COVID-19 pandemic reared its terrifying head, I started to notice just how disenfranchised some people are. The US has thus far handled the pandemic about as well as I handle trigonometry, which is to say, abysmally. We failed to contain the virus, causing hundreds of thousands of deaths. There are people losing their jobs, unable to pay rent, and drowning in healthcare debt. On top of that, the Black Lives Matter protests over the death of George Floyd and many others brought widespread attention to the systemic racism that permeates the US. What's worse is that, as I looked further into the causes for these problems, I found out more and more about how broken our country is. The problems currently on display aren't new; they're deeply ingrained into the fabric of our socio-economic system. For a long time, we have been a country bursting at the seams. Our current state of affairs just ripped them a little further apart.

I am driven to help mend those seams, because I see the tremendous potential for what can be. I know we can do better. There are so many things we can and should do to better the lives of everyone, especially the marginalized. Programs like universal healthcare, better public housing, and police reform could all be implemented in pursuit of a brighter tomorrow. However, we can't wait for them to fall into our lap; we have to reach out and grab them. This is precisely what many people have been doing, both now and before the pandemic. This is part of why I'm so excited for college. I can't wait to learn more about these issues. I want to study sociology, among other things. Sociology is, broadly speaking, the study of human society. I hope this will help me gain a more in-depth understanding of the problems the pandemic has made evident. Field of study aside, I also hope I'll be able to find communities of activists through which I can try to help people in a more concrete way. I want to push us towards a future of justice and equality. I want to drive social progress forward, and that's what drives me.