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Comics and storytelling has always been something very close to my heart. I grew up enjoying reading comics and watching cartoons on television; these activities inspired me to begin creating more art in the first place. Throughout elementary school and middle school, I would spend every minute of my spare time drawing comics and writing stories. Because of this, I feel that I must work in the sequential art industry to honor my inner child.

When I began to search for the institution I hope to attend, I established several priorities; I first looked to identify a program that offers rigorous instruction in traditional and digital art mediums, as well as opportunities for internships and real-world applications. I also wanted to find a school that is interested in my intellectual growth as much as they are interested in my technical skills. After many acceptance letters and months of contemplation, I made the final decision to attend the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, Maryland. I plan to study here and receive a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration with a minor in Sequential Art.

One issue in particular that is important to me is the lack of LGBTQ+ representation in media, especially positive representation. An overwhelming majority of LGBTQ+ stories I have read or watched in popular media are heartbreaking and dramatic stories rather than stories that inspire and represent the beautiful elements of being part of the LGBTQ+ community. While these types of narratives are realistic and hit close to home for many of us, I want to tell stories that are heartwarming and make the readers feel appreciated for who they are. Using my creativity and artistic skill combined with my lived experience as a gay and transgender individual, I hope to create comics that LGBTQ+ youth will read and identify with.

If I were to receive a scholarship from Jiffy Lube, I would be able to not only follow my dreams, but also share my creative vision with the world. Not only do I enjoy creating artwork of my own and showing it to others, but I also hope to use my work as a force for positive change. This inner drive empowers me to continue to push myself and create content. I want the next generation to feel that they are positively represented and accepted for their identities so that they can feel more comfortable in their own skin. Youth need uplifting stories; I plan to bring that to the LGBTQ+ community—my community—through my artwork.