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Year 12

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Utah

What Drives Me

From 3rd-6th grade I had the opportunity to participate in multiple service projects, involving helping the community. Some of those included making blankets for a homeless shelter, serving at the local food pantry, and putting together hygiene and school supply kits for families in need. This sparked an early interest in me for serving others.

Then, during my Sophomore year of high school, I took an Interior Design class where we studied several types of residential designs and how they functioned. I highly enjoyed this class, because I was able to use creativity and structure to design projects for the class. My final project was to design and construct a foam board, three-room, 3D model of a floor plan I researched and drew by hand.

I had an idea! I could combine my drive for serving people with my enjoyment of Interior Design, as a career path. So I began to focus my thinking on how I could tie those two aspects together.

As part of this journey, I took a Psychology class where we studied the way people's brains work, with regards to thinking and feeling. We had an opportunity to research a topic of our choice, related to psychology. I decided to study the way color affects people's emotions. I gathered information and conclusions of experiments that had been conducted. It was fascinating to discover there was a common factor: the big similarities in the way that different demographic groups of people thought about color and how different their thinking was from other groups. I realized it is important to take into account these differences during Interior Design projects.

On my own, I researched more about the possibilities of becoming an Interior Designer for people with special needs. I read a blog post which described an assisted-living facility for

people with mental disabilities as feeling anything but institutional. That got me even more interested in actually pursuing this career further. At about this time, I also volunteered to be a part of a group of girls who went to an assisted-living home to massage the hands and paint the nails of ladies who lived in the dementia section of the facility. I realized there is a better way to accommodate people's personal needs which involves appropriately designing the interior of their living spaces. Part of my current drive is to have an opportunity to help people with mental and physical special needs more fully experience privileges and joy that others outside their position have.

These desires to serve people by designing spaces where people can have a more enjoyable and functional life really drive me. Currently, I am on schedule to enter Utah State University in the fall, where I plan to study Interior Design further. My end goal is to become an Interior Designer for people who have specific needs and make their home not only functional, but also a comfortable place to live.