

## “The Power of College”

Everyone attends college with a goal in mind, be it obtaining a higher education, advancing their career, or just strengthening their abilities. I value education for a different reason: the freedom it will bring me. When my grandfather died, he left my unemployed grandmother with two toddlers and life insurance checks. My grandmother immediately landed a babysitting job to put my mother and uncle through high-school, and then she went on to attend college herself. College gave her the freedom to a satisfying and fulfilling job. All through her youth, my grandmother impressed on my mother the importance of college. My mom would go on to earn a BS in Chemistry and then an MS in Chemistry Education. They both became teachers at Lincoln Public Schools, and after 24 years of educating, my grandmother retired last year. With my mother and grandmother both having been educators for many years, I developed an astute appreciation for the power of education, one I would never have had otherwise. Through college I hope to achieve knowledge that I will utilize for the rest of my life to ensure job security, more career opportunities and advancement.

Firstly, my value of education came from observing what it did for my parents. From an early age my father relished art, painting, drawing, and sketching, but when he finished high-school his rude awakening was swift and justified. Power of pen and paper could not suffice, then college again gave him freedom because he took general art classes with a major in graphic design and has had much more satisfaction than he would without college advancing and developing his skills. My father's experience of college has imbued me with an understanding of what college can help me achieve. For him, college led to freedom in the form of expression. Without college, my father would have never continued doing the art he loves. There is a saying, “Work is only work if you see it as such,” I won't be my best self without doing what I love, and college is essential in becoming my best self.

Second, whether my aim is an advanced degree in paleoherpetology (look it up), quantum mechanics, or a simple business degree, college will help me. Having a collection of the smartest people in the world on those subjects at my disposal is a beautiful opportunity that only attending college will provide. My mother excelled in high school chemistry and thoroughly loved the subject. Although she could have been a chemical engineer, or biochemical engineer, she chose to teach science because teaching was the most secure job she could find. This taught me how college will give me job security. Regarding career advancement, college will aid me via its plethora of career choices. If I wanted that paleoherpetology degree, I would attend East Tennessee State University, or Astrobiology, the University of Texas at Austin. The point is, there is a course for almost anything, so I will have no trouble finding the best possible career path for me at college. According to WGU.edu, students with bachelor's degrees are up to 84 percent more likely to land a more desirable job. With that said, it is highly likely that I will end up with a satisfactory and fulfilling job which will be incredibly useful for my career advancement.

Lastly, although I have not yet decided my major, I easily understand college's value. College is not easy, no one said it should be. My mother had to work night shifts at fast food restaurants just to afford peanut butter and bread! But she went through it anyways, and with our current inflation rates, by the time my generation's children attend college, it could be over a million dollars! But they will go anyway, my mother went for job security and higher education, my father went for job satisfaction and opportunities, my grandmother went for higher pay, job satisfaction and education. I will attend for all of those reasons, and what's more, because college is freedom. And I know freedom is worth it, and college will be too.