

I have always been an outgoing person. When I was in the fourth grade I was enthusiastic towards the planet, more specifically how I could save it. It was through my temple that I made the connection to Project Green Schools, and immediately I was overwhelmed with joy. Never had I ever met other people, let alone kids, who were as eager to help the environment as I was.

I enrolled as an Ambassador to the organization at ten years old, and began to attend summits, conferences, and meetings. I remember sitting in a business office around a table on my very first conference call, feeling incredibly mature for being so “professional.” My most notable early memories with Project Green Schools are two distinct events: a fashion show and a concert.

At the fashion show I got the opportunity to model sustainable fashion at Mansfield High School at an event that emphasized the importance of wearing ethically sourced fashion. At this event, not only did I gain a sense of confidence by modeling the clothes, I also gained an understanding of the role my clothing plays on the environment. Since then, I have worked to only purchase ethically sourced clothing and donate all unused clothes. Not only did I have this unique opportunity, but I also created and performed a rap song at the Massachusetts State House about the importance of properly disposing of waste. My stomach was filled with butterflies as I was anxious that I would look juvenile, but at ten years old it was impressive I even had the courage to step on stage, represent an organization, and perform for an audience of intellectuals.

I have developed a more mature role within the organization since my days of modeling and rapping. I am now the standing President of the *Project Green Schools National Youth Council*. It has been an honor and a great responsibility holding this position. Last year I was the Communications Officer, and now I am leading the council alongside my co-president. With this leadership position I have the responsibility of leading meetings, planning initiatives, and keeping the council in check. This council has not only taught me more about the environment, but also about leadership and teamwork. The council follows the Project Green Schools mission statement as it has developed me into the environmental leader I am today.

The environment plays an important role in all lives, especially mine. I find solace in nature, and it is truly sickening to see how some individuals disregard the wellbeing of our environment. Through environmental conservation work such as beach clean ups, town clean ups, and restoring ecosystems, I work towards restoring the environment everyday. Not a day goes by where I do not think about how I can better the planet, and what I am actively doing to do my part.

I will be transferring my environmental passion in college as I attend the University of Vermont. At a school which preaches sustainable living and respecting the environment, I know that I will thrive. I plan to double major environmental studies and education with a minor in business. I am aware that this fills my plate with school work, but I am my best version of myself when I am being educated. There is always room to learn, and it is my hope that by studying with concentrations in each field, that I will be able to truly make a difference in society. Education is the root of all change and if there were environmental equity on a global scale, we would see positive change. By combining environmental studies with education it is my hope that I can help society achieve both educational and environmental equity. The minor in business is to help me succeed in a world which is so controlled by people’s wallets. Businesses

drive society, and hopefully with an in-depth understanding of them I can create my own business which will have an environmental focus and in turn, better society.

I am currently working on making the "Green Difference" within my community through my senior project. My senior project is the implementation of an outdoor classroom at my high school. With access to outdoor education, students will be able to learn the importance of respecting the environment and hopefully they will be able to find solace as well. I have fundraised for two months, and have been able to reach my goal. I not only will be constructing an outdoor classroom, I will also be leaving "seed money" for my high school's Environmental Society to use and better their program. Unfortunately, money hinders a lot of potential sustainable development, so hopefully my contribution will help to make the Green Difference within my community. It is my hope that I can turn my project into a program in college. With the title "Thinking in Sunlight," I hope to have a set outline to help other students and schools implement outdoor learning spaces within their own communities.

If I were to offer some wisdom to the next generation, it would be to start small and realize that despite the size of their project, their impact is immeasurable. By starting small one is able to understand the limits of a project which will shield them from any failures. However, failure is normal and expected in any aspect of life, but when it comes to making environmental change, lots of road blocks will present themselves. There will be people who do not understand an environmentally focused vision, and people who will undermine those who are young. Do not let those voices hinder your success because one individual can make everlasting change, it just takes determination.

Thank you for the consideration of my application, it has been an honor to work so closely with Project Green Schools for all these years.