

I always had a passion for learning. No matter the class I was taking, I would find a way to make it interesting and motivate myself to want to learn more. However, the one subject that never truly clicked for me was politics. I could never understand why it was so difficult to love to learn about politics - but for some reason, I couldn't. To me, politics was something that always divided people; something that often-created conflict and conflict was something I avoided.

However, through studying ethics in Rabbinics and my diverse reading in AP Literature, I learned that challenging yourself is unbelievably important. I realized that social justice and politics are two completely separate concepts and that it would be the subject of social justice that would finally allow me to become more politically educated.

One of the most important chapters of my life was becoming President at Schechter. The position allowed me to challenge myself, delegate responsibilities, advocate for others, think from all perspectives, listen carefully, and value my own feelings. I learned to love being a leader, which is something I have carried with me.

Racism has always been a prominent issue in our world. However, this cause finally gained the attention it deserved this past spring. Growing up with the values that Schechter instilled in me, I couldn't stand on the side listening to what was happening, and not do something. Schechter taught me to stand up for what I believed in and to be the "upstander" that I aspire to be. Thus, I started small. I realized that despite everything I was taught I didn't know enough and needed to learn more. So, I read newspapers, books, articles, and watched documentaries. Slowly I came to understand the amount of work I still needed to do to educate myself. However, more than that, I realized if I was feeling that I needed to learn more, many others were probably feeling the same way.

So, I returned to school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and decided this was the place I wanted to start helping others educate themselves. There's a huge lack of diversity at my school with only 2.26% of the population from a Black and African American community. Maybe I wouldn't be exposed to the diversity that I was yearning to learn from at school, but that wouldn't stop me from trying. I decided to start small within my sorority, Sigma Delta Tau. I took the leadership skills gained from Schechter and decided to run for President. Although my presidency has yet to begin, after speaking with the previous executive board, my first action will be to create a diversity and inclusion chair on the executive board and ensure monthly educational programs about social justice, philanthropic events dedicated to social injustice, as well as creating more awareness in our community.

Without my Schechter education, this might not have been my first initiative as President, I may not have run for the position itself, nor would I have learned the importance of challenging myself and standing up for my beliefs. Politics may have never been my favorite subject, but Schechter taught me that it is important to continue to learn and remain educated. In fifth grade, I learned the quote "Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof" ("Justice, justice you shall pursue") it is a quote that I try to carry with me and implement in my everyday life in any way that I can.

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