

The room was dark, cold and silent as my cousin peacefully slept all cuddled in his bed. Holding the camera in my hand, I slowly videotape him sleeping and carefully make my way to his hand, where we see “The Pranksters” (aka my other cousins) carefully whip up the perfectly cone-shaped blob of whipped cream on his hand. We can’t stop giggling in anticipation of what is about to happen. All of a sudden, we bang pots and pans together and flick the lights. My cousin jumps out of bed in pure horror and slaps himself in the face with the whipped cream! We caught the whole thing on camera. This was the day I fell in love with the art of filmmaking. We would spend all our family reunions putting together funny movies and home videos. Each of my cousins had their own show, which I would direct, film, and edit on iMovie using my iPhone 5SE. In my middle school as president of TSA, I did all the “tech stuff” for our morning announcements. I would control the switcher that would live stream the show to all the classrooms and add virtual backgrounds for our anchors. To this day, I still direct, edit and produce many videos for my middle school. For example, during the pandemic, I recorded the eighth grade annual musical and turned it into a movie. This passion for film flourished when I entered my high school's STEAM program for film. I became Adobe Photoshop certified as a freshman and skipped a year in the program. I was the youngest student in my film class, but I certainly did not fall behind. My teacher gave us a topic each week and we had to make a new short film in that category. Even during the pandemic, I continued to make videos to help keep our spirits alive. Friends from my school’s glee club recorded themselves singing and I edited everything together to make it seem as if we were on a zoom call, singing together at the same time. As things started to open up, I went to two programs over the summer: the University of Miami’s Summer Scholars Program, where I received college credits in 3D Animation and Cinematography, and the American University’s National Student Leadership Conference in Washington D.C.. Students from all around the world came together and fell in love with storytelling and I fell right along with them.

Although I may not be the best script writer in the room, I love portraying stories. The way the colors mix so perfectly and the shot has a completely new perspective with just inches of a difference, astonishes me. This is my favorite way to express myself. When I am making a film with a specific tone in mind, just changing the scenery or the color of a few props dramatically shifts the story and it is so satisfying to watch it unfold.

I take pride in every shot I create. Over the summer, I realized I could use this to explore specific issues that are very prominent in lives of those close to me, such as sexual harassment, mental health, body positivity, environmental issues, etc. I believe many of our societal issues can be slowly healed through education and advocacy. I started to create films about these topics in hopes of learning more and sharing what I have learned. Putting all this information into an inviting and entertaining story will help everyone, including the actors, clearly see what I am trying to portray, sometimes without even realizing it.

From a young age, I would create mini-classrooms in each of my family members' houses. I would teach my family everything I had learned that day in school. As time progressed, the pretending turned to reality and I combined my love for the arts to find my first job: a music teacher. I have been singing for years and taught myself how to play the guitar and piano. Now, I get to work with adorable children doing what I love. I’ve always enjoyed sharing my knowledge and spreading awareness to others.

I've always strived to be very involved and dedicated in everything I do, and do anything I can to learn more. I hope to one day become an Executive Producer or Cinematographer of a movie or show, or

become a free-lance videographer. I'm still learning and exploring what I want to do in my film career, but I am excited to get more experience and narrow down my goals.