

The room was dark, yet some stray light managed to barge in through the blinds. Everything was set - it was perfect. The entrance for the only two guests, respectively named Mom and Dad. My sister was set, and as the grand curtain opened, the adrenaline of creativity rushed through my veins and was ignited with the sound of a click. The spotlight hit my sister at the perfect angle - well, perfect for a seven-year-old's mind. The heat from my lamp surrounded me like a warm bubble. This was my happy place - it still is. As I sat and waited for the perfect moment to make a change, ideas started to flow through my head. *The main lamp should go up more and what if the LED's go to blue?* Three, two, one, and click. The LED lights came alive with a deep sea blue that glowed against my skin. These lights were my Dad's, but to me, they were tools that allowed me to sculpt the perfect scene. While this was the first of only two shows performed in my room, a spark inside me was ignited.

As I grew, so did my passion, from shows with my sister, to watching YouTube videos from the ETC Video Library, but I still had a desire to do more. My first middle school show became my introduction to stage crew. While I was just an usher, the show felt magical, seeing and helping the theater transform with the work of my own hands, and catching glimpses of the tech booth. Year after year it was the same, slowly building my way into the tech world through curiosity. The first year I was an usher, then I assisted with mics, then... COVID-19. While my time in middle school was cut short, it never extinguished that flame of passion.

Starting high school was a new opportunity, a way to get involved. A *Christmas Carol* was supposed to be my first play of high school, but it wasn't. I struggled with the entry interview, and it only motivated me to do better for the spring musical evaluation. When the day of the interview finally arrived, I was ready. With more confidence, I approached the technical director, and sure enough, I landed myself in the stage crew for my first high school production: *Les Misérables*. The passion and want for learning more were the fuel to my burning desire to become more involved.

In my sophomore year, the technical director taught me how to hang a stage light. The feeling of wonder and excitement engulfed me. I felt like I had finally made it, and this is where I belong. For the spring musical, the new lighting designer introduced me to the design process. The following year, as a junior, I was able to work alongside another designer, creating a lighting plot for the show. During tech day, I was involved in the design process, sitting in front of the laptop, making decisions on colors and cues. My varied experiences during my time in school, gave me the confidence to solely design the lighting for *Finding Nemo Jr* at one of the middle schools. As I look towards stepping out into the professional world, enthusiasm for theatrical technology, specifically lighting design, continues to foster

my growing creativity.