

Friends of the Library BHS Scholarship Essay 2020

by Kelly Kaon

As I haul my decorating kit to the car in the parking lot, I look back at the Barrington Public Library, a feeling of adoration washing over me. Only moments before, I was in a room with children laughing while piping multiple designs onto their cupcakes, using cones as Christmas tree toppers, conjuring up their wildest designs with pretzel sticks all while pertaining to the theme "campfire cupcakes." My hands were covered in frosting dyed all different colors, and requests for assistance coupled with demands for more piping bags and praises from parents filled the room with commotion. Yet, amidst the mayhem, I felt nothing but joy and humbleness. Only with the strong networking of the BPL and immense support the citizens of Barrington invested in this library, could I have put on such a successful event. For me, the BPL symbolizes a community that fosters creativity, allows imagination, and enables individuals to exude their passion.

I remember Mrs. Burkhart reading to me during the Mother Goose program when I was young. I loved her patience and experienced her love for reading to children firsthand. I only hope to live up to her expectations as I now find myself exercising that same patience for the children of Barrington as a mentor for English language learners.

Fast forward a few years and I'm helping myself to a cubby in the back of the circulation department, now one of the staff. I finally learned the trick to make stern Mr. Bob Oliveria smile (the answer is cupcakes), and how to schedule shifts with a time log. Precision and accuracy became my paramount concern as I shelved books back, knowing that I was responsible for patrons being able to find their books. Even after leaving my Page position, this sense of learned responsibility was etched into my work ethic. Working at the World Trade Center Starbucks in NYC, I acknowledged first time patrons from all over the world. That same sense

of pride and responsibility was ignited within me, and I went the extra mile everyday- helping customers to track down their drinks in the queue, patiently helping to translate flavors into a familiar language, and proudly showcasing my Barrington pride through my work ethic daily.

In essence, when I walk into the library to Mr.Bob's greetings and see high schoolers collaborating over homework, my teachers mentoring their students, residents browsing over their books, Tanya's beautiful smile as she excitedly presents to me a flyer she created for my cupcake event, my fellow NHS friends tutoring students, and the circulation department ladies as they bid me a good night, I recognize the irreplaceable role of the Barrington Public Library. It's an institution that contains the histories of thousands of residents, and intertwines our pasts to form an unbreakable bond within the community.

Thank you Friends of the Barrington Public Library for shaping my identity for the past eighteen years, and allowing my dreams to come to fruition.