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A Lifetime Within A Library

For as long as I can recall, I have always been an avid reader. I had a grand passion for literature and inspiration. Luckily enough for me, books combined both of those with a combination of words that expressed an exquisite story. What more was there to love? In fact, my mother used to always tell me I would bring books with me wherever I went so I could always have a story with me. Not only that, but my room was filled with shelves of books ranging from themes of horror to comedy, love to murder, and so much more in between.

Due to my love of reading, it was a given to most that I spent my time in a library. I began to spend more and more time in libraries and soon enough I was spending more time there than any other place I went. I would sit for hours looking through books and reading through them as hours passed, taking small notes and mental pictures while admiring the authors work. I realized at a young age how uncommon this was amongst kids my age and always thought it was sad that not very many people admired literature. Literature holds a history important to the world; even Alexander the Great knew the importance of it when he had his famous library. I made it my own personal mission to one day share my passion and pass it on to others.

The summer before my seventh grade year was when I finally got the chance to start on my mission. I spent the whole summer in and out of the Library constantly. I spent all day and all night reading until my eyes began to get fuzzy; I couldn't for the life of me stop. One of the staff members noticed this and urged me to join the summer reading program they had going on and I happily agreed to it. I signed up immediately, but ended up waiting to the very last day to enter

all of my books after getting a call from the Young Adults Advisor, Mrs. Vanessa Campbell, who reminded me. After entering all my books, I got yet another call to congratulate me on being the top winner and winning the annual trophy for my school for reading a total of 84 books. I was over the moon with joy. Not only that, but she invited me to join her Teen Advisory Board and I gladly did. I came to the first meeting of the year with my filled application and ended up running for Vice President, which I gladly got.

As fun as the board was, I thought it would be even better if a few of my friends joined it as well. Soon enough, quite a few of my friends joined and the board held a max of 25 members. Not only that, but it became female dominant and remained that way for two years. Throughout the two years, the board held multiple events for teens to interact with their community and library. The events the Teen Advisory Board held were becoming a huge success and the board was gaining popularity. The accomplishments of this board was due not to anyone in particular, but the board itself and its officers.

One of our most popular events was during my second year on the board when I got a famous author to come to my school after reading one of her novels in class. Mrs. Sharon Draper, famous for writing *Out Of My Mind* and *Tears Of A Tiger*, came to Mooresville Middle and spoke to students about the importance of literature and sparked the young teens to get more involved in their community. The whole school body was abuzz about it. In light of this, the student body became even more increasingly interested in the board and the library was a popular place for teens to go after school or to meet up with friends. The board was more than thrilled about this occurrence and so were schools.

Currently, I am on my fourth year of being an active member of the Teen Advisory Board. For the past three years, I held the position as Vice President and put on an abundance of programs and events for teens. As of late, I hold the position of President (which I will continue to do for the next year). My board now consists of teens with great diversity in race, personality,

gender and schools with an active average of 25 or more members. We have held many events this year. Our most popular event so far was the Martin Luther King March to celebrate everything he has done for civil rights. We had over 100 people attend it and actress Karen Abercrombie speak. MHS's honors choir performed and awards were given to children from both the intermediate, middle, and high school for their artwork in celebration of King. Our next anticipated big event before the year ends will be our summer reading kick off event in which we will have a Library scavenger hunt.

Looking back on the past four years, I can proudly say my life has changed for the best due to my involvement in the Library. I have read over 800 books and can retell each story, I have begun to volunteer with the board for many events and at the library itself, I have learned leadership and followership, and I have been able to interact with kids of all ages from different schools and backgrounds. Being apart of the board and the Library, I have realized my dream career: a librarian.

Libraries are one of the most important things for North Carolina and its growing generation. Although they do not receive much credit for it, libraries are important for providing a place for the public to come read stories with the most fantastic literature and profound research, and it is librarians that help make this possible. Libraries are essential for being a portal to all of the world's knowledge so that it can be passed on for lifetimes. They are economy-efficient and some of the most famous men have invested in them such as Andrew Carnegie and Bill Gates. North Carolina is a place of history and that is exactly what the library provides for it.

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