

## **Roots**

My relationship with Northville is something special and mysterious to me. I moved to this town with my family when I was in the fourth grade. My parents never considered Northville Public Schools as an option solely because my brother had gone to private school for his middle school years and was continuing his education in private high school at the time. I continued in this fashion through the eighth grade, but ultimately knew I wanted a bigger environment. I pushed my parents to allow me to attend public school to start the ninth grade, and to my surprise, they allowed it.

On my very first day at Northville High School, I was overwhelmed. I didn't know the most basic things about public school. I didn't know which bus to take home, how to buy lunch, where to sit in my classes, or how to travel through the massive school during passing time. My graduating eighth grade class was roughly twenty students; my incoming freshman class was about six hundred. I was both physically and socially lost for the first few months of school.

## **Growth**

Thanks to the graciousness of my classmates and teachers who reached out to me, I slowly started to find my place in NHS. I built a small friend group, learned to navigate my schedule, and discovered what I liked and disliked to do with my time. As an enthusiastic and social student, class didn't always keep my attention. I found it difficult to pay attention and take notes because I was always so eager to talk to my friends or enjoy the freedoms that came with public education. So while I was no superstar student, there was one exception: English class.

I fell in love with the discussions and arguments we got to have in class. I was happy to do the reading if it meant sharing my thoughts and opinions when I got to school. Even as I struggled with math and science, I was eager to come to school just for my one block of English. By the time I hit sophomore year, I was packing my schedule full of English electives at every opportunity. Just one hour a day wasn't enough--by the time I graduated, I had taken English 9, English 10, Modern Thought and Literature, College Prep Composition, AP English, Debate, Creative Writing (twice!), Now Poetry, Mass Media, and Individual Reading. My transcript speaks for itself: I found myself in these classes.

My senior year, I applied to Michigan State University and wrote my admissions essay about the influential teachers I had at Northville. I had come to love English class so much that I wanted to find a career that allowed me to take these classes forever. It was only so long before I realized that being an English teacher made more sense than being a professional student of literature. On my first day of college classes (which happened to fall on my eighteenth birthday), I told myself that I would return to Northville High School after graduation to teach.

## **Bloom**

While my ambition was admirable, it was also pretty short-sighted. Four years of hard work went by, and each experience broadened my horizons. By the time I completed my internship at Novi High School in 2014, I was wondering if Northville would really be my career destination. In fact, I

quickly realized that Northville wouldn't be my end point whether I accepted it or not. When I applied in 2014, I did not even make the initial round of interviews. I took another job at Fordson High School in Dearborn. The next summer, Northville posted another job. I applied again, convincing myself that the last year was a true opportunity for growth that had served its purpose to lead me back home. Wrong again. After making the initial round of interviews, I was told they were moving ahead in the process without me. I changed districts and worked at Clawson High School for a year. I had so much fun that I laughed when Northville posted another English position that spring. With absolutely no hopes, I applied a third time, knowing finally that I would be happy even if I didn't get the job.

Of course, this time everything fell into place as I had dreamed it would. It just didn't happen on my timeline and it didn't happen until I had a better understanding of myself. So when I returned to Northville, I knew it wasn't because I needed to be here to succeed--it was because I was ready. For a long time, I thought that conquering Northville as a scared fourteen year old freshman and again as a twenty-three year old teacher would be the perfect, circular sense of completion I would need to prove to myself that I had succeeded in life. I was wrong. I have something to contribute to this place now, and I am excited to prove that every day. I am not here because I've been passively pushed through life by some force that I can't control. I'm here because I've been brave enough to follow unfamiliar paths while trusting that with hard work, I would end up in the right place. Well, I'm finally in the right place.