

For the last decade and a half I have mediated on my life and perception of satisfaction in purpose. I have allowed myself to sit with what it means to be human in this global village, or in urban cities. My undergraduate degree in journalism from DePaul always resides in me as a passion to dig deeper and to remain open to stories that connect the work and intellect of others striving for global community. I want to reflect my passion for life-long learning in hands-on projects along with my dream of working with national and global agencies to plan economic development, social development and environmental regeneration utilizing forward thinking urban planning approaches and cutting edge data.

After my BA I continued expanding my journalistic curiosity for the power of information in planning and public communication. I was curious how social environment, public education and messaging influences people's willingness to reduce and reuse resources. My path led me here from being the child of a property manager in one of the largest cities in the US to spending every other summer in Poland learning about alternative approaches to architecture and urban design. Five story tall row house condos were the norm I encountered during my times in Europe.

In 2017 I turned my growing passion for the intertwining of personal nutrition and the consumer choices we make in a global food system by deciding to dedicate 2 years to a USDA specialty crops program on Standing Rock. By leaving the city to help the Lakota tribe in a time of need, I was able to turn my solitude into an exploration of community building and pursuing opportunities to learn from residents at every turn. The nature of the place led to conversations with educators, students, policy makers, local tribal government officials, small town mayors, small business owners, oil industry regulators, youth leaders, tiny home builders, solar array planners, ranchers, rodeo mentors, herbalists, greenhouse growers, MIT community developers and even the Army Corps of Engineers. The possible isolation living in a town of 70 people instead turned into the perspective of a life of complex yet promising interconnectivity.

The two years in North Dakota expanded the boundaries of who I thought I was. I met other community members in service to empower residents through compiling seasonal drone data of infrastructure and growing spaces, as well as working to get correct google streets data updated in the area. I learned how some parts of the world and the US are underserved with inaccurate or incomplete data that delays the synergy of informed collaboration.

Actively pursuing opportunities to round out my awareness of renewable energy technologies and planning issues, I joined a weeklong solar installer training program at United Tribes Technical college early in 2019. In May 2019 with my 6 months break between the end of my grant position in ND and the start of an internship in Moab, I took the time and the drive to visit intentional communities in NC utilizing solar power, hydro powers and milling their own wood for structures. I continued my mission to stack opportunities in my life by Europe for 2 months in late 2019 seeing family, but also making time to interview people along the way about ideal community layouts and inquiring about perspectives on climate change policies. During my time overseas I completed a certified Ed Ex Urban Sustainable Development course. Upon my return I scheduled visits with several of the faculty in the Depaul program and observed a GIS course in the downtown campus. I loved being actively immersed in this dialogue on urban planning.

I strived to learn more about the possibilities in sustainable building before a potential transition into a world of policy making for urban centers after graduate school. In January 2020, I joined Community Rebuilds in Moab, Utah agreeing to a 5 month commitment living on campus with 15 other interns. I committed to working 40 hours a week on a Living Building Challenge home while following city building codes. Upon arrival we were immersed in the realities of the community learning about the political landscape, affordable housing crisis, and regional resource issues and laws surrounding the watershed. I learned of amazing local efforts through community medicine gardens, educators, local mentorship and a history of solar powered straw bale homes in the county. The program ended prematurely due to pandemic restrictions, and I stayed in a bare bones crew continuing to build homes and help the program acquire permaculture grant funding by learning Libre CAD to map their campus resources.

In this season of uncertainty it is my decision to keep building my skills while helping to establish community infrastructure. I am learning CAD modeling/Sketch Up in order to create models for the properties in Chicago, Moab and Heart Valley Spring in Bloomingdale Michigan. I recently acquired a Part 107 unmanned drone license to aid in my multimedia service project 3d mapping gardens. Aside from my degree and any potential public service jobs that follow, my expanded education through Depaul will be utilized in my accepting an invitation into the long term planning of 40 acres of land in Michigan that is striving to be a campground and permaculture education center with farm to table growing.

My life goal is to strive for a future after I am no longer here, to leave the earth more abundant. I strive to do this in my home, my community, my life-long education and in my studies in sustainable urban design. I envision a future weaving my love of visual story-telling, journalism degree, and passion for sustainable development to tell the tales of active earth warriors, of communities, and to help create content and training to inspire individual citizens of the world to make shifts toward sustainability and sovereignty. I aim to grow support for urban farming and composting.

I bring dedication, the ability for persistence in learning, a community mindset and passion. A graduate degree in urban sustainable development is my goal. I am choosing DePaul to continue my journey due to its ongoing interconnectivity to ecological leaders and urban planners in my hometown of Chicago.

I have been able to discern how many paths forward there are in such a changing world. My path led to a blending of passions and skills. I aim to continue applying my multi-disciplined, compassionate mind to helping the world in building a regenerative perspective versus being a drain on resources. I have developed my ability to effectively self-prioritize goals and tasks, and I maintain focus in fast-changing environments envisioning the benefits of a holistic design in a field I am passionate about. Inspiration is my road to growth, and the thought of this opportunity brings me great joy. I am ready for the phase of my life where I live in confidence, abundance, and growth deepening personal skills in GIS and community climate analysis, working hard and finding a team to encourage the development of a better global community that takes into consideration the long term needs and wishes of its residents.