



Scholarship Essay submitted by

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My most powerful educational experience was in my Advanced Placement United States History class my sophomore year of high school. This class taught me what I needed to know for the national exam, yes, but it also taught me much more than that. By learning history through lectures that felt like stories and close examination of history's causes and effects, my worldview widened. The thing about learning history is that, once you start, you begin to see it everywhere. History teaches us how to be human beings; it is the guidebook for the generations of people that have inhabited this earth. History is the ghost of the people, ignore it and it will haunt you. During the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, when every aspect of life was full of uncertainty and school went online, I began to think more and more about my APUSH class. To me, reflecting back on hundreds of years of conflict, resolution, and change that has come upon humankind gave me a new kind of hope. The proof of our resilience was in the books; we could prevail through this too.

As a class, APUSH taught me how to push myself and take on a rigorous course. Despite how much I loved the class, it was hours of hard work. At the end of the year exam, I discovered the true satisfaction of massive effort as my dedication to the subject paid off. This experience not only taught me how to handle a college level course, but it showed me the importance of education and history. It showed me that everything you learn in the classroom, no matter the subject, has relevance and

meaning to the bigger world. This class installed a love of education in me that I still carry to this day and will continue to carry into college.

However, learning history in my APUSH class was about much more than just a class and an AP exam. It was a way of discovering how human beings interact and communicate with each other. Through history, I could create a deeper understanding and appreciation for all the cultures around me, including my own. History reveals human beings' capabilities of art, love, and resilience. Some of my favorite moments of human connection are Bruce Springsteen singing at the Berlin Wall and Jimi Hendrix's cover of the American national anthem at Woodstock. In both cases, through song and vulnerability, Americans and humans around the world could feel connected. These moments of music are so touching and I resonate with them because of my love for music and playing the bass. Music, historically and today, provides a way to hear much more than what is just being said.

My gratitude for my APUSH class only deepened as the pandemic hit in 2020. Reminding myself that we, as Americans, had faced pandemics in the 1920s, 1950s, and 1960s gave me comfort that regardless of the outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic, we would be alright. There is something significant to be said about the adaptability of human life. History shows how we, as humans, were able to change to new ages and challenges—many times during the pandemic chaos I remembered this strangely comforting fact. I often found myself imagining this period as a chapter in a history book, just another passing of time, for better or for worse.

Learning about Americans achieving the seemingly impossible is another reason why my APUSH class had such a significant impact on me. If we can make it to the moon, what *can't* we do? If we can reach technological advancements that were never before believable, why can't science do the same with a vaccine? APUSH gave me something more important than any other subject could: *hope*. History gives us all hope for the future of humankind, the future of female, LGBTQ+, and Black rights, and hope for the other side of the COVID-19 pandemic, where we will come out smarter and therefore stronger than before.