

I used to think learning was about mastering the right answers in a subject and that teaching was about having all the answers. This belief changed when I led a robotics lesson for sixth graders and saw them struggle. Guiding them to explore, ask questions, and solve problems together helped me realize that understanding comes from collaboration and new perspectives. The experience showed me that meaningful learning often happens between disciplines, not just within a single subject's boundaries.

Since then, I've come to value opportunities that push me to think beyond an individual field. Real-world problems aren't confined to a single domain, and strong solutions require connecting multiple perspectives. This became clear during my Eagle Scout project, where I led the design and construction of two ADA-compliant tabletop gardens for residents with disabilities. The project required more than following instructions; I had to apply geometry and physics to ensure accessibility, math to budget materials responsibly, and empathy to ensure the gardens were genuinely usable. Watching Mia, a disabled freshman, smile as she tended her rose bush, I realized that a group of scouts, united by a common purpose, had created a lasting impact. Success required integrating technical knowledge with social awareness—a lesson in systems thinking I carry forward.

Similarly, my experience at American Legion Boys State reinforced the importance of interdisciplinary thinking. Collaborating with 400+ student delegates taught me that effective decisions can only be made when one understands ethics, history, psychology, and civic systems, along with the policy itself. The most productive conversations weren't driven by those who knew the most facts, but by those who could listen critically and bridge differing perspectives. These moments showed me that learning is strongest when it is collaborative, inclusive, and informed by multiple views.

This philosophy underpins my approach to entrepreneurship and equity. Through Mission Impact, I've built a platform connecting students with underfunded nonprofits, creating leadership pipelines for youth while strengthening organizations that lack resources. Scaling this initiative nationally requires more than business acumen—it requires empathy, systems thinking, and the ability to bridge perspectives, just as I've learned in robotics, Scouting, and Boys State. I see entrepreneurship not as a tool for profit alone, but as a mechanism for expanding opportunity and fostering equity. I aim to develop models that provide mentorship, access, and meaningful work to youth from all backgrounds, ensuring that talent and passion aren't limited by circumstance.

The Mensa Foundation Scholarship would help me continue this work by supporting my education and enabling me to expand Mission Impact's reach. My goal is to merge business strategy with social impact, building ventures that empower communities and create equitable opportunities. By combining innovation, leadership, and empathy, I hope to leave systems, organizations, and lives better than I found them—a principle that has guided every project, lesson, and initiative I've undertaken.