

Because of VHS...

By: Clara M.

Anxiety, confusion, and a generally frantic atmosphere classically characterize a high school student's senior year. As such a senior, I am making major decisions every day that will greatly influence my future. Which school to go to and to which scholarships I'll apply is all part of it, but when making the most difficult decision of choosing an intended major, I was aided by my VHS course. I chose Anthropology and it is all thanks to VHS and a course called Evolution and the Nature of Science.

I was at a standstill, forced to a halt in my plethora of applications because my major was still undecided. Many of the scholarships I looked at required the applicant to know their major before applying and so I was made to stop my frenzied scholarship writing. All the colleges and universities I looked into had very different majors available and, with a limited amount of money to spend on applications, I had to choose my schools wisely. I was the epitome of Worry and Chaos all rolled into one, but as my VHS class slowly progressed I gradually began to realize what it was that interested and stimulated me best of all.

I was taking Evolution and the Nature of Science for my first semester class because I had begun to think that perhaps I could spend my life in a lab analyzing data. The thrill of finding past links in genetic history held great appeal to me and I dove right into my coursework. However, I soon discovered that meticulously retesting data year after year, as the Grants did in the Galapagos, didn't quite appeal to me as it first had. I wanted to make discoveries that would positively influence a person's life, to work at a job that could link modern people with their past. But how could I combine my love of history with my scientific mind?

My teacher, Doc B, gave the answer to my question in the last couple weeks of my class. He introduced my classmates and I to archeological-anthropology. We were listening to lectures from fantastic scientists and watching movies about evolutionary finds that were no longer centered around the source of a sticklebacks spines or the length of a birds beak. I had enjoyed both those topics but now we were exploring the mysteries of our own past and I knew that finding the answers would aid humans in understanding their own bodies' needs. Problems related with nutrition, psychology, and child development could all help to be solved by searching for the skeletons of the genus *Homo* and theorizing about their lives.

After weeks of learning about human evolution from Doc B, I was positive that I would never run out of questions to ask on the subject. The only problem was that some of my questions didn't yet have answers. I am now determined to work my hardest to find that answers to those questions. My second semester VHS class is The Glory of Ancient Rome where I am learning about the development of one of the great civilizations and how it shaped the western world. Next year I plan on attending Northern Arizona University where there are multiple anthropology majors available and I can learn about all aspects of ancient people. I am so pleased that now when people ask about what I plan to study and where I plan to go to college, I can answer without doubt in my voice, all because I took a VHS class called Evolution and the Nature of Science.