



Leodis V. McDaniel High School

Lilly St. Martin

How Are You Focusing on Fun in 2023?

After taking a job as a summer camp counselor last summer, I started my career working with kids and it changed my life in a way that I never thought was possible. Part of my responsibility at this camp aside from making sure the kids washed their hands and reading them stories during snack, was to encourage creativity to them, while interacting with and feeding into their vibrant imaginations. While fueling and helping their imaginations also helped fuel mine so much to the point that I felt like a kid again. Pretending to work in a bakery or being a pirate on a ship inspired me to focus on fun in my personal life outside of work.

Over the summer, I began to do more outgoing things like dying my hair red and going on solo road trips to visit my dad in Washington. Getting more comfortable stepping outside of the box led me to be more confident at the start of the school year. I went out for things like an Associate Editor position for my school's newspaper and became a golf team captain.

I have found that centering kids and letting them model how to have fun will be one of my top priorities for this year. In 2023, I hope to try out new fun things like becoming a student leader at Outdoor School or go on hour long bike rides in search of finding sunbathing turtles.

I plan to channel my inner child by focusing on all of the simple things in life; swinging on a swing set with my friends, having dance parties in the kitchen with my sister, taking solo road trips all over the west coast and maybe just stopping to smell the roses every once in a while.

While all of these simple acts are fun, I will need to find balance for the other important aspects of my life; school and work. Right now, I am fortunate enough to have fun at work with the kids I am responsible for. And, as it is the last semester of my high school career, I am also able to have fun at school every day with my friends. After I graduate, I have the summer camp counseling job to look forward to.

The fun habits I form this year will carry me through the rest of my life. In the future, I don't see how working with kids would not be part of my life as they have given me so much, I want to carry out the rest of my life trying to return the favor. 2023 is only the beginning of simple fun acts.