

## Brief Biography

Growing up I had a strong pull toward journalism. I enjoyed creating stories. Writing to me was formulated and calculated. Every sentence, every contraction, and every period was planned to the vision I had for every story. This fixation with structure and planning seems to have drawn me to my studies in Computer Science over Journalism. Switching to STEM was not planned, but it was a welcome change after I had figured out that Computer Science was more than just programming. It's viewing problems and solutions from different perspectives. As I worked to develop myself for a career in Computer Science, I found myself attaching to three different components of the field; cyber security, robotics, and web development.

I have sought out different opportunities for all three industries, but I have always found myself attracted to robotics opportunities over other positions. Unlike cyber security and web development, robotics was a new opportunity that I had never really explored. In high school, I founded my high school's VEX Robotics club and went on to compete in SkillsUSA and participate in local demonstrations and scrimmages. After graduation, my interest in robotics didn't falter as I went back to coach the same team I competed for. During the pandemic, this took a pause, but I found myself in an excellent opportunity to work with the Desert Research Institute as a Robotics Outreach Coach. I am currently working as VEX Robotics Coach looking to upstart robotics programs hoping to get teams back into a stable state. Seeing students and teachers alike get excited about STEM and robotics specifically has been an extremely rewarding experience. Seeing the awe and curiosity in students' after a lesson or a demonstration opened my eyes to just how much change I was making with every student I met. The impact that I am making with STEM outreach has led me to work in research dealing with socially assistive robotics which combines my passion for robotics with solving problems for the general public. Continuing my journey in research for robotics and autonomous systems would provide me with ample experience and knowledge to continue my personal development not only for myself but for the students and communities that I aim to support.