Alumni reflects on growth, success from P4K

Navigating the journey to college is daunting for any young student, but as Partnership 4 Kids alumni Sheree Haynie knows, having mentor support along the way makes for a much smoother experience.

“The guidance and level of support I got from P4K was something I’d never felt before in school,” Sheree said. “Even though I was an excellent student, there were skills I had to learn that I wouldn’t have gotten if it weren’t for P4K.”

Sheree first joined P4K in 8th grade where she had fun on field trips and began learning how to prepare for life after high school. Sheree quickly discovered that P4K would help her build the skills needed to succeed and that it was the right place for her to be.

“P4K is so supportive in many ways,” Sheree said. “P4K is very ‘come as you are’. I’ve always felt that I can be my true self with everyone at P4K and express myself authentically.”

They guide students throughout the years of their education by providing post-secondary and career experiences that foster a future-thinking mindset, which equips students to graduate on-time and forge a path toward their career.

After graduating from North High School, Sheree’s path led her to earn a bachelor’s degree from University of Nebraska-Lincoln in studio art. At times when Sheree struggled academically or was grappling with the loss of loved ones in her family, she said her P4K mentor, Molly, consistently supported and helped her navigate those difficult times.

After college, Sheree committed to serving her community as an AmeriCorps Member at the organization that always supported her. Growing up with P4K, Sheree said she’s grown passionate about providing others the tools to discover their strengths and support their growth.

“I have gained so much from being involved with P4K,” Sheree said. “Not only have I had mentors who truly care about my growth and success as a student and person, but now serving with AmeriCorps at P4K, I am able to give that same guidance to students who are in the same position I was in. I’m able to be who I needed when I was younger and feel as though I’m fulfilling a special purpose by serving P4K students.”
P4K not only makes a difference in the lives of students, but also in the lives of its mentors. There is nothing that equates to the feeling of seeing and hearing the excitement in the students’ faces as you discuss THEM! There are several “a-ha” moments throughout the year as they make the connection between goals and success.

I absolutely love being a goal buddy and am grateful to be given this opportunity to make a difference. Giving back is one of the most uplifting things and you cannot put a price tag on seeing children become more confident in themselves, supporting & encouraging each other and seeing the value in making goals. I would highly recommend anyone who wants to positively impact a student to volunteer as a mentor for P4K!

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