

Aubri Roth
12th Grade
Laurel High School
Montana

What drives you?

Passion. That is the driving force within my life. It's something that has fueled me and it started when I was around four years old. Stepping onto the soccer field as a child I had no idea the abundance of opportunities and realizations it would eventually bring me. Playing around the country in Idaho, Washington, Texas, Wyoming, South Dakota, Colorado and my home state of Montana. I have had the privilege of growing up playing the beautiful game of soccer. From a young age, this love for soccer grew within me. Mostly, I have my coaches to thank for it. They instilled that love within me and helped to spark the passion I have for the game. Over the years, I've figured out that I too would love to help instill that passion within someone else. For over two years, working for the Billings United Soccer Program, I have had the opportunity to coach little kids and help them in developing skills for soccer. Not only do I love watching their faces light up when they get a new skill down but I also love the connections that I make with the kids. And it's not just teaching them soccer that I love, I also love being a mentor, a coach, and a friend. Through soccer, I have learned and solemnly believe that it is my turn to pay it forward and help kids find that love for the game just like I did.

It was clear to me that coaching would be in my future, but I never really knew what I wanted to study in college until last summer, when something dawned on me. During that summer I decided to get a job at my old daycare in Laurel, The Sunshine Academy. It was my

childhood and I thought that I could impact other kids the way my teachers impacted me.

Currently I am still working there. I work with kids ranging from the ages of 1 to 5 years old and when I say that I love it, I mean it. I love the unpredictability that everyday brings, I never know what group of kids I get or what's going to happen. And I always come home with some pretty funny stories at the end of the day. Not only do they learn new things everyday, so do I. I've learned practical childcare skills as well as some other soft skills. I know how to handle meltdowns, I know how to talk with kids about how they're feeling, I know how to deescalate a situation; I've learned so many skills that are not only applicable to kids but to adults too. And the connections I've made with these kids are so rewarding. For instance, this fall while I was at a homecoming football game selling 50/50 tickets to the crowd, I heard someone in the stands calling my name. When I looked up it was two of my daycare kids saying hi to me. It warmed my heart to know that these relationships didn't just cut off once they left daycare for the night, outside of my work kids recognized me and were eager to say hi. And seeing the growth over just a few months is so fun to watch, watching them grow up is something that speaks to me deeply.

You ask me what drives me, and I have found that passion for coaching and teaching is what my future holds/is all about. Next year I plan on attending Black Hills State University and playing collegiate soccer as well as working toward a degree in Education. After college I plan on continuing to coach soccer and entering into teaching. I hope to fuel the next generations' dreams and aspirations through teaching and coaching, lighting that spark that my teachers and coaches helped to instill in me.