



My Most Vivid Memory Concerning Water

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Waters of Inspiration: A journey to Advocacy

Water has always had a huge impact on my life. From a young age, it seemed that there was always something happening with a drain or dam in our area that my father would have to resolve since he was a board member. As a young child, I would always tag along if it was safe.

One memory that stands out when I first think about water is when I was in fourth grade. It was early spring, and the local water board had been dealing with drainage issues. They were working on a new project that required funding far beyond the level our county could sustain, so they contacted the North Dakota State Water Board for assistance. Since my father was the chair, he was asked to represent our board in Bismarck. When he was telling me about this, I immediately wanted to tag along. After some convincing, I was able to join him. I was beyond excited and thought I was the coolest kid because I was going to be in a room full of important people where extremely important business was being conducted.

The day had finally arrived, and we arrived in Bismarck. We met up with some of the engineers working on the project and other individuals on the capitol grounds before heading to the meeting room. I was eagerly looking around, hoping to catch a glimpse of the governor, Mr. Jack Dalrymple.

As I walked into the room, I was extremely intimidated by all the people present. My excitement was replaced with utter shock and intimidation. I sat between my father and the rest of the team as the meeting was starting. I stared in awe as the whole thing progressed. Watching and listening, trying to make sense of what was happening. The room was full of people all wanting the same results, funding for their local water issues. This was also one of my father's first experiences working with the state board, and he could have to speak on behalf of Sargent County. In the end, he did not. As the hours went on, I stayed attentive the whole time and, in that moment, I had decided that I wanted to help evolve and fight for the water in my state when I grew up. I wanted to serve on committees and boards that would make progressive changes and create a better use of how the waters flowed and where they did.

At the end of the meeting, I was able to meet all the State Water Commissioners as well as Mr. Dalrymple. I was so proud of that moment, and it is something I will never forget. Ironically, on our way home, I was working on my North Dakota Studies project and was so proud that I was able to see everything we were learning about in person. I was also able to say that I was in the capitol building and even interacted with the governor of North Dakota.

Without water, I would not have had this opportunity. Over the years, I have developed and gained valuable skills that will be useful throughout my life, and I am proud I have been able to have these opportunities.