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*Advocacy Now, Advocacy Later*

My name is Jordan Anderson and I wanted to share my story and my hopes for the future. I'm 18 years old and I live in Auburndale WI. I have Cerebral Palsy and use a power wheelchair. My twin brother is a little more mobile than I am and uses crutches. Soon I will be graduating from high school and I'm starting to really look at what I want to do with my future. School has always been something I've enjoyed because I love learning especially government and journalism classes. I've always had a passion for politics and current events and I think it's because I live in a small town so there is always someone to stop and talk to. Sports has always been a big part of my life and I used to be part of the school Athletic Club or A-Club. In 2018 my brother and I were selected for the Make-A-Wish program and we got to go to a Brewer's game and meet our favorite players. We also got to talk to Bob Uecker for a long time and he even talked about us during an inning. Sports broadcasters have really helped to feed my passion for journalism and broadcasting. I've also been interviewed on television for several different things which is good experience if I'm looking to go into journalism. I was interviewed once for my experience using an adaptive bicycle for a bike radiothon in my area. Another time I was

interviewed about a fundraiser I worked hard to organize with one of my friends and our special ed teacher for a classmate who was diagnosed with cancer.

As I get older, I'm realizing that I enjoy talking to other people with disabilities to hear different perspectives on life and to talk about similarities. I also feel that since I have the ability to talk, I should be using it to advocate for myself and others. This year I was able to attend the Self-Determination conference for the first time since it was virtual. I had so much fun getting to know people in the hang out sessions, but I also learned a lot. One of the days I went to a session on guardianship, and it blew me away how much I didn't know. As it turned out, my guardianship was shortly after the conference and because of what I learned I was able to retain my right to vote which is so important for me and all people. Advocacy is something that, as I learn more about it, I have been doing most of my life! I attend a summer camp every year called Bay Cliffe Health Camp. It's a 7-week camp for people with disabilities where we work with the counselors on physical, occupational, and speech therapies. There are also leadership trainings as part of the camp and I'm realizing it has been a huge help for my brother and I to pave the way for people with disabilities in our community.

For a while now, I've been interested in starting a disability Facebook page, and other social media accounts, so people can meet from all over the state and the country to connect about disability advocacy. My idea is that it would be a place where people could come to learn about disabilities and talk about current events that relate to the disability community. As of the release of this article I have decided to start a Facebook page called People with Disabilities and you can check it out here, <https://www.facebook.com/People-with-disabilities-113262860852471/>. My dream job would be to run social media accounts that are either focused on disability rights or sports. One of my teachers does a Facebook live event every week and I am in charge about coming up with topics. The latest one was about Tomatoes. At school I help with clerical work and I also work with the IT department to help with marketing and overall school messaging. I'm also managing the Auburndale Greenhouse social media. These are skills I'm working on for my future but for now I'm going to focus on a Project Search placement and to get a job while making connections around the state. I recently found out about the Self-Determination YouTube Channel and the WI Disability Vote Coalition and I'm excited to bring my social media skills, interest in journalism and life perspective to help advocate with these groups. In the future I want to be an advocate, live life to the fullest and contribute to society to make the world a better place.