

The moment I realized I belonged: my definition of community. I was never really drawn to sports. Like many kids, I grew up playing baseball, football, and basketball. Over time, the practices bored me, and the endless running turned each game into a chore. Eventually, I quit. I stopped playing and even watching. I became an outsider. I didn't want to be reminded of the dread I felt every time I stepped onto the field.

Recently, however, something changed. The kid who once pushed sports away was now embracing it. I watched every game I could. From hockey to football, my eyes were fixed to the screen. I started following teams and becoming invested in their journey towards becoming champions. I even found myself enjoying backyard sports, playing catch with my dad or throwing around the football. I can't describe or explain the single event when it became clear, but one defining moment sticks out. It wasn't obvious at the time, but meeting one of my best friends truly changed who I wanted to be. It all started on a cool fall night, perfect for some high school football. I was in vocal jazz practice with my new best friend when he started to leave early. He told me he was going to commentate a football game.

This new friendship was the spark that ignited the flame, the catalyst for the chain reaction. The next practice, he asked if I would be interested in becoming a part of the school's broadcast network. I thought I would try something new. I was no longer a spectator, but a participant in my newly found community. With each game, my passion for broadcasting grew and that feeling of belonging was born. Later that same year, my best friend graduated, and I was honored to take over the network.

After leading the club through my junior and senior years, I realized that while our club was already strong, it had the potential to serve the community even better. So, with the help of my friend, we set out to make this club the best it could be and to secure its future. We started by recruiting, helping to expand our membership and grow our crew. We then set our sights on grants, finding any way to raise money to improve our equipment and therefore improve our broadcasts. We wanted to create the most professional and enjoyable experience for viewers at home. While these lofty goals may not all come to fruition during my time here, I know I am setting up this club for a promising tomorrow. I look forward to being a viewer one day and seeing the progress this club has made. Watching the next generation bring sports to our community.

That's what makes it all worth it. Not only do I love commentating sports, but I love the ability we have at our network to bring high school sports to people who can't be present at the game. Whether it's a player's grandma who lives in Florida or an athlete's best friend who moved to California, broadcasting bridges the gap for everyone. It brings them home. That's the beauty of sports broadcasting: it's sharing sports that bring people together. And it was after experiencing this that my definition of community became clear.

People take the definition of community for its face value. Its true meaning comes when you understand, when you belong. I knew now what it really meant. Everyone has their own definition, but it was that shared experience and connection through the love of sports that was my definition of community. We really don't know why we enjoy watching sports or why we enjoy playing them, but we know it is a key part of our society. It serves as the basis for so many communities. Today, the kid who once disliked sports is using them to build connections. I found my people, I found my community, I found where I belonged.

