

Please tell us in 250 - 750 words how you could use your degree to contribute to the technology economy in Ashland, WI. Some examples include: starting a technology business, consulting local businesses, organizing remote work between national/international employers and local employees. Ideas will be judged based on practicality and impact, so please include as much detail as possible in describing how your idea would come to life and how it will help the community.



MAYELLA BRINKER: My intended degree is Neuroscience. This degree includes varieties and extended forms of technology, all of which can be useful in Ashland, WI. With my education, I will address one of the most important issues in our community and begin the process of solving it. There is tremendous evidence of children that have suffered and are suffering from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs are known to show greater risk of heart disease than genetics and there is proportionally increased heart disease to the more ACEs a person has. The first step would be to include awareness in the elementary school and give kids strategies to manage their stress and find healthy ways to cope with their lives. A very crucial detail is that their parents are also involved and cooperative. Even though most of the children in Ashland have already had numerous ACEs, building their foundation to function anyway will make a world of difference in their ability to focus on school and, more importantly, creating their own life however they dream it to be.

My part in this plan is to use research to convince our community the vitality of this development, and furthermore, begin the process of recovery. I plan to begin research as an undergraduate, my university of choice supports this, and build a program to introduce to my community by bringing these issues to light with meetings, brochures, and newsletters with the eye-opening facts of ACEs. Then continuing by bringing in a psychologist in order to begin using a research-based program called "Ms. Kendra", which is a tool used by other schools to help children open up about unsafe experiences in their lives with a figure that responds and provides input and comfort. The power of allowing kids to speak up about the awful experiences they've endured is incredible and developing it at such a young age will encourage them to continue to speak up for themselves as they age.

Once I am able to start this program and it becomes part of normal schooling and curriculum, the majority of these kids will be able to dream and then make their own dreams come true with the focus and ability to face adversity with the skills they have learned from this program. Ashland will become a hub of extremely intelligent and forward minded young adults ready to develop this city's technology economy beyond any expectations for Ashland's youth.