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Most can agree that the feeling of being an outsider is the worst type of alienation. No matter the environment or circumstance, we all want to fit in. It is just human nature. The context where this occurs is usually in school, the workplace or other social setting, but for me, it happened every time I turned on the television.

When it came to representation in television shows, movies or even commercials, I've simply always felt left out; like an outsider. Growing up as an African-American, the only time I would see little girls who looked like me portrayed on a sitcom or drama would be when they were playing the role of "the sassy best friend". That was it. And if you can imagine what those moments felt like to an insecure introvert, you might be able to surmise that I never related to these characters. Surely not all Black girls acted the same? Surely with all the variety of characters that exist in television and movies, some could be given to a wider variety of ethnicities and personality type? Well, as it was in my youth, apparently not yet.

It was also in my youth that I decided that if no producer or television director was going to make the changes I wanted to see, I would make them myself. I want, plan to, and will create content for all individuals who feel underrepresented whenever they turn on a television. I want to create and produce content that tells the stories of all individuals. I love storytelling and I love being able to explore different realities - which is exactly I want to improve them with more representation.

Television, movies, and media in general hold a huge power in society. It can influence, inform, and inspire. It can create understanding and solve conflict. It can bring joy, and even in my case, reveal the purpose one has in life. This is why it is so important to monitor what is being reflected on these screens. What is shown in fictional shows and scenarios can have a huge impact on our daily reality. If we can respectively demonstrate diversity on screens it could perhaps set an example for our future.

I have already begun to take initial steps to practicing my art with an intent of being in a position to make the changes I wish to see. I regularly write and post short stories that give voice to youth of color and girls who like me, don't find themselves featured in mainstream media. I like to use the visual imagery of photography and film to open doors to the lives and experiences of "outsiders" in order to expand the range of inclusiveness we see everyday.

I look forward to embarking on the next phase of my education as a film student studying screenwriting and production. In college I will further develop skills around how to create a compelling story and how to network efficiently in order to properly promote my projects. I will have opportunities to network through internships with a film production or television company where I will be able to further explore my passion. While interning I will be able to find new connections and learn real-world skills. After graduating my hope would be to take a position at a company which I had interned, making more connections, gaining new skills,

perhaps even producing my own projects. My ultimate goal is to leverage the skills and experience from the workforce to be able to branch out and establish my own production company where I will be able to create content that speaks to all types of people. I feel very confident and inspired that with these steps I will be able to pave the way towards my future of making a difference.