

Moving from Texas to Montana with a custom harvest crew in the summer months has to be one of the most “trying” occupations anyone could choose! Yet, it’s all I’ve know my whole life. I’ve never had a summer at home with my friends, who attend all kinds of camps, go swimming everyday and take a “real” family vacation.

However, I wouldn’t trade our harvesting for anything! For me, it’s the adventure, it’s the old friends and the new ones, it’s the times we actually get a day to run to the Sturgis Bike Rally, or attend the Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo and Night Show, or the fast, one day trips through the Black Hills and also, it’s the car my Dad bought me for working hard helping him.

Throughout the years on the harvest crew, I have performed several jobs. I’ve prepared and delivered meals, washed laundry, drove a pick-up pulling either the 36 foot header trailer or our 40 foot travel trailer, drove a combine if needed, fueled equipment, and my #1 job of driving tractor and grain cart.

Although I am undecided on a major at this time, I know the love of the great outdoors I have acquired each summer, will have a direct influence on my future. The unique experiences of harvest life, learning to be patient, to work with people, to please others and to do chores you really don’t want to do, like washing out the grain cart, will all help to make me better and more determined to succeed than I would have been without my harvest participation.

Harvesting has definitely influenced my life in a very positive way. I have developed into a more mature and responsible person. Our hired help, coming from all over the world, provides an insight into different cultures and tradition. Traveling, also, is a great way to develop communication skills. Many young people my age have never had the opportunities I have had as a “harvest kid”. The friendships I have made, the unforgettable lessons I have learned and the lifelong memories I cherish, will remain a part of my life forever.