

# GOING THE \_social\_ DISTANCE



## Alumni Gill & Stephanie's Next Chapter Their Story Continued... Love for STEM, Stereotypes, Selfless Senior PART #2

Their story will continue to inspire you.



"STEM, in itself, requires a certain level of understanding in all other types of studies. On one hand, you have to be able to be creative and artistic in order to design the next best thing. But on the other hand, you have to be willing to look into the historical aspect of what you are working on so that you know what works and what doesn't. You also need a deep understanding of mathematics, science, working in groups, being able to be both a

mentor and a mentee, and so on. Major made sure we were constantly pushing ourselves to grow and succeed in all of these areas," Stephanie writes.

Gill adds, "I started to understand why I was learning specific things in my math and science classes. I honestly think the biggest thing with these projects is that they are all hands-on hardware projects. As a student, it is difficult for me to try and stay engaged with a book. When you hand me stuff and say, "Okay apply what you learned" I excel, and stay engaged and I am more encouraged to learn. The biggest thing that helped me was the fact that we made mistakes. Major always told us when we made mistakes that it was a part of the learning process. This lesson has helped me even to this day."

In battling the stereotypes that women face in STEM, Stephanie Carrillo believes that a mentor can make all the difference, and she found that mentor in Major Mark Hendricks of West Mesa High School who empowered her to take leadership roles in the program and ensured that she could build her confidence in pressured situations. She continues, "One of my hopes for the future would be to get more females in STEM. The ultimate hope for this though would be to get to a point where if a female shows up to a meeting or class, they are not the only ones and it is not a shock to see them 'make it this far'."

Gill was selected as a Selfless Senior after being nominated by Major Mark Hendricks for his service to his peers. He and Stephanie never missed an opportunity to help their fellow students, especially those that were falling behind academically. The Navy JROTC not only provided collegiate level academic content and opportunities, but it also gave them a second family.

**Tune in tomorrow to see where Gill and Stephanie are now!**

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