



CHANGING

LANES

Drum major to political science major



Lover of dogs, music, and sci-fi movies. Senior Melissa Pardock spent her high school career participating in band, drama, IHSSA, newspaper, swimming, and soccer. Pardock has always been passionate about music.

“Music has been a big part of my life ever since I can remember, and I love being constantly surrounded by music and other people who are passionate about it,” Pardock said.

She has played in concert and jazz band. On top of that, Pardock was a drum major for marching band.

Pardock’s love for music is made clear through her dedication, but after graduating in January she has shifted her focus to something that stood out to her since eighth grade.

“I took a government and civics class in eighth grade, and I immediately knew I wanted to learn more about it. I didn’t know if I wanted any direct involvement with the government, but I knew I needed to learn more and understand how it works,” Pardock said.

After hearing about the Iowa Legislative Page Program from her mom, she was interested in seeing it first-hand.

“I submitted my application in October and was interviewed later that month. I was then offered employment in November,” Pardock said.

Her job includes a variety of tasks. Some more simple than others.

“I help representatives and House staff with whatever they may need. Pages run a lot of notes back and forth between lobbyists, constituents, and representatives. I also get them snacks and drinks, grab them bills from the House and Senate bill rooms, and run online subcommittee and committee meetings,” Pardock said.

So far, she’s learned that even in the House of Representatives, you can still have fun at work.

“One of my biggest takeaways has been how representatives are truly just normal people. It’s so fun to see them goof around with each other, be it by cracking jokes on the floor (even during debate - which is hilarious to see) or playing full-scale pranks on each other. They have personal lives, families, and jobs outside of session - and it’s been so amazing getting to know them on both a political and personal level,” Pardock said.

She hopes this experience will benefit her with her future career.

“I plan to get another job (hopefully nothing as 'high-profile' and demanding as this job) this summer, then go to college to major in political science,” Pardock said.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, along with her drive to help others, has inspired Pardock to be a civil rights attorney for the ACLU.

“I hope to pursue a career in which I will be protecting and defending the rights of people who have been treated unfairly,” Pardock said.



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