

Isaac Thompson
Oberlin High

Cable CO-OP/WOBL/WDLW Oberlin Student Award

When I think about the things I like to do in Oberlin those are the same things I love about my community. As a young kid, I enjoyed walking and riding my bike or scooter all around Oberlin. You could find me and my friends or family going into Gibsons Bakery to get a scoop of ice cream and sit in the grass of Tappan square to eat it. If I wasn't down at the park playing basketball you might catch me and my friends playing outside of each other's houses. The Oberlin community has been a place that has allowed me to learn many different skills. I learned how to swim at Splash Zone. I had the opportunity to learn how to play the Guitar at the Shed and the Cello at school where they taught me about different genres of music. The programs at Oberlin College allowed me to explore cinematography at the Apollo Move Theater and taught me soccer while working with Fractions. Through opportunities with the youth programs, I developed friendships that I still have today through Redhawks Football, Hot Stove Baseball, and the City Recreation Bidy Basketball program. Then you have the community events where I learned how to ride a horse at Juneteenth. While also having fun at FAVA's summer program and drawing pictures on the sidewalk at the chalk walk. I appreciate all of the businesses that open their doors for fundraisers and the community trick-or-treat.

Once I became a freshman in high school I noticed that things had changed. Life for me became about school and sports. I became part of a traveling basketball team that took me away from Oberlin as much as possible. Then the pandemic caused a nationwide shutdown. Not only were we locked inside our homes most businesses were closed and/or had limited business hours. As time went on my family started to go outside. We started taking walks around the community, watching birds fly around the trees, and deer hang out in our front yard. Although our family unit became closer I became restless. My sophomore year I got my driver's license and wanted to drive around town without anyone recognizing my bright yellow car and calling my mom to tell her that I had just passed them by on the road. I wanted to go to a different school that had a top-ranked football and basketball team. During my junior year of high school, I was in a car accident as I left JVS. As I sat in my car I could see people coming from everywhere to help. My phone was flooded with

texts and phone calls. The support was there because of my community. I walked away realizing it was because of the small community that people knew that it was me in that car.

As a senior in high school, I recognize that I am who I am because of the strong and supportive community of Oberlin where I have been raised in. In the same youth programs with the City of Oberlin Recreation Program that I participated in I now have a chance to work with the youth as an employee. The past few years I have had the opportunity to watch many members of the Oberlin community support our high school varsity sports. Although I am excited to go to college and begin the next part of my life I know I will miss my Oberlin community.