

## APPRENTICE STORY

# NATE

## HOPTOCOPTER FILMS

BUSINESS  
OPERATIONS



ASSISTANT  
PRODUCER & EDITOR

“NOW I REALIZE HOW MUCH MORE I ENJOY FILM. I WANT IT TO BE MORE THAN A HOBBY.”



Ever since Nate was a young child, he's had a passion for making movies. But using the family camcorder to shoot backyard films with his friends was merely a hobby, not a career option—until now. As an apprentice through CareerWise's modern youth-apprenticeship program, Nate has a solid vision of his future, and is taking active steps to make sure filmmaking takes the center spotlight.

## RECONSIDERING THE FUTURE

Nate recently graduated from Fruita Monument High School in Fruita, Colorado. While Nate was a good student who hovers around a 3.5 grade point average, he believes there are things to learn in life beyond school. He places value on learning through hands-on experiences—“not just theory.”

When Nate's media teacher told him about the apprenticeship opportunity, he was interested. But, he said, “when I heard a film company was involved, I knew I definitely had to try out for it. It's what I love to do.”

Hoptocopter Films hired Nate to support the editorial team as an apprentice in post-production. He spends his time at Hoptocopter organizing files and editing footage and b-roll, transforming them into impactful video narratives. His work leads to the production of promotional, commercial and recruitment videos for clients.

From the start, Nate was operating in familiar territory, but he admits the learning curve has been pretty big—big enough that he's hungry for more. The apprenticeship experience over the past year has made him reconsider what he wants in a career.

“I originally wanted to study music, playing saxophone. But now I realize how much more I enjoy film. I want it to be more than a hobby.”

# BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

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In addition to acquiring filmmaking tricks-of-the-trade, from keyboard editing shortcuts and lighting techniques to good storytelling strategies, Nate is picking up skills he could not have learned by reading a textbook or listening to a lecture.

For example, he is now more sensitive to human emotions. “When we’re using people’s emotions for a story, I learn how certain things make people feel. I can read people better now,” Nate said.

He’s advancing his workplace etiquette in tasks such as writing professional emails and interacting with coworkers. He had formed many of these skills working in a music store, but feels there is always room for additional growth. “It’s good to know etiquette in any business, no matter what it is,” he said.

Nate is also discovering the balance between being productive while also having fun. In both cases, he is treated equally and is considered an adult. It’s a contrast to school. “I like not having to ask if I can go to the bathroom,” he joked.

Now hoping to work full time during the summer, Nate hopes to become even more familiar with the filmmaking process at Hoptocopter. It helps to have a job he looks forward to every day. “I’m getting paid to do stuff I love doing. There is nothing better than that.”

Nate’s apprenticeship is leading him to more than just a career; it’s also preparing him for college. In the fall, Nate will attend Colorado Mesa University to pursue an associate degree in digital filmmaking, and is considering a bachelor’s degree after that. Simultaneously, he will complete his apprenticeship and hopes Hoptocopter will hire him some day.

# VARIETY IS KEY TO LEARNING

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Nate’s apprenticeship has reinforced his belief that life presents many options to help a person grow, and his extra-curricular activities are a testament. He’s produced numerous videos for Fruita Monument’s news outlets, teachers’ promotional programs and various district-level endeavors. He also kept busy during the school year playing in a wind ensemble and a jazz band, and performing at festivals around town.

“I don’t believe school should be everything in life. There are other important aspects people can learn from. It’s nice to have options.”

From his apprenticeship, Nate expects to gain technical knowledge and an understanding of how people work. Yet, he sees this as only the beginning.

“That is the tip of the iceberg. There is so much more I can learn.”

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