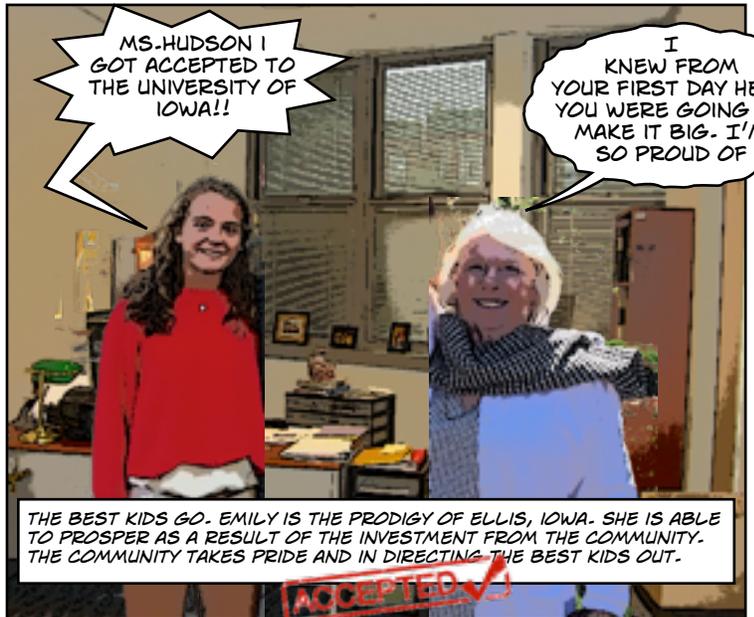


THE RURAL BRAIN DRAIN



THE HEARTLAND MATTERS BECAUSE WITHOUT THEM, THE COUNTRY WOULDN'T FUNCTION. IN THE SMALL TOWN OF ELLIS, IOWA, THERE ARE FOUR TYPES OF STUDENTS THAT HELP TO UNDERSTAND THE WIDESPREAD, DEBILITATING PROCESS OF HOLLOWING OUT.



MS. HUDSON I GOT ACCEPTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA!!

I KNEW FROM YOUR FIRST DAY HERE YOU WERE GOING TO MAKE IT BIG. I'M SO PROUD OF

THE BEST KIDS GO. EMILY IS THE PRODIGY OF ELLIS, IOWA. SHE IS ABLE TO PROSPER AS A RESULT OF THE INVESTMENT FROM THE COMMUNITY. THE COMMUNITY TAKES PRIDE AND IN DIRECTING THE BEST KIDS OUT.



THE IDEA OF GOING AWAY MAKES ME NERVOUS. EVERYONE HERE KNOWS ME, MY STORY, AND THEY HAVE GUIDED ME TO MAKE ME WHO I AM.

LOOK AT ALL THAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED HERE.



SINCE KINDERGARTEN, YOU HAVE EXCELLED IN ALL THAT YOU DO.

AND, YOU WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.



BUT, MAKING A NEW LIFE WILL BE HARD.

ELLIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING. IT IS YOUR TIME TO INFLUENCE THE REST OF THE WORLD. YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF.

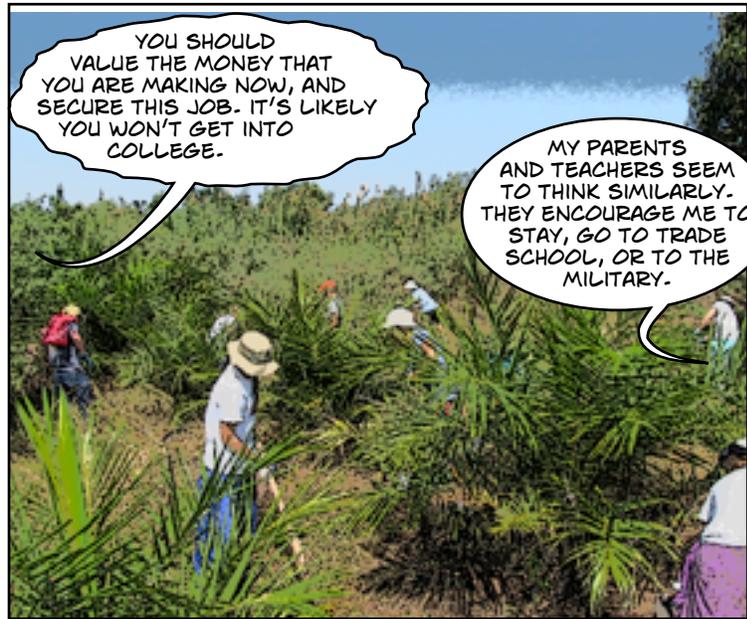


EMILY WILL GO ON TO EARN A DEGREE, AND LIKELY LIVE OUTSIDE OF IOWA. WHEN THE COMMUNITY PAYS MOST ATTENTION TO ITS ACHIEVERS, IT DRAINS ELLIS' RESOURCES, AS IT SERVES YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE LEAST LIKELY TO GIVE ANYTHING BACK TO THE TOWN. EMILY BEGINS TO SEE ELLIS THE WAY OUTSIDERS DO.



BRENDAN, WHY HAVE YOU BEEN IN DETENTION OFTEN?

I'M BEHIND IN SCHOOL. BUT, I WORK LONG HOURS. I CAN PAY FOR COOL CLOTHES AND I CAN AFFORD A CAR WITH MY PAY.



YOU SHOULD VALUE THE MONEY THAT YOU ARE MAKING NOW, AND SECURE THIS JOB. IT'S LIKELY YOU WON'T GET INTO COLLEGE.

MY PARENTS AND TEACHERS SEEM TO THINK SIMILARLY. THEY ENCOURAGE ME TO STAY, GO TO TRADE SCHOOL, OR TO THE MILITARY.



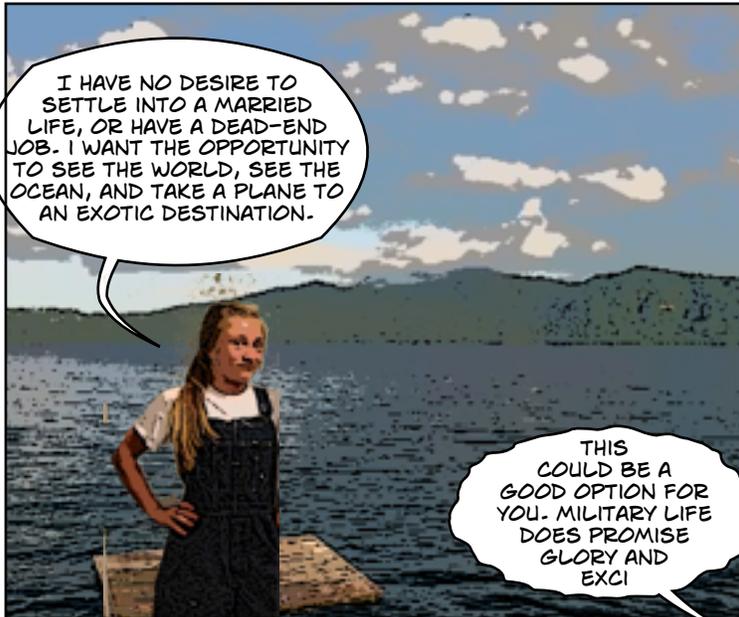
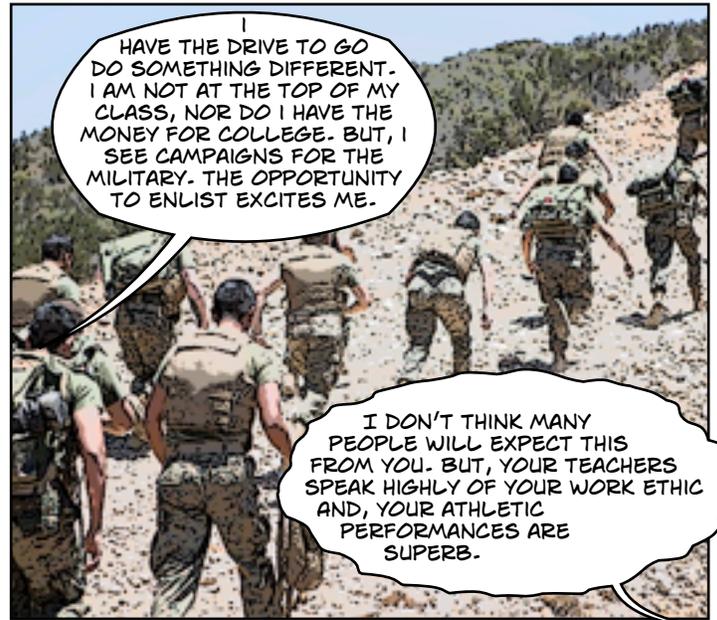
GREAT. THAT SEEMS LIKE A GOOD PLAN.

I THINK BECAUSE IT IS MUCH CHEAPER AND THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN ME.

ANYWAY, I HAVE A PURPOSE, I'VE MATURED AND I HAVE DIRECTION IN MY LIFE.



BRENDAN, A **STAYER**, WILL CONTINUE LIVING IN IOWA TO STAY AROUND LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE. HE CAN'T IMAGINE LIFE ELSEWHERE. HE ENTERS INTO THE WORKFORCE EARLY. HE FAILS TO REALIZE THAT SHORT-TERM FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE WILL NOT BE ENOUGH WHEN HE IS AN ADULT, HAS A CHILD, AND A MORTGAGE.





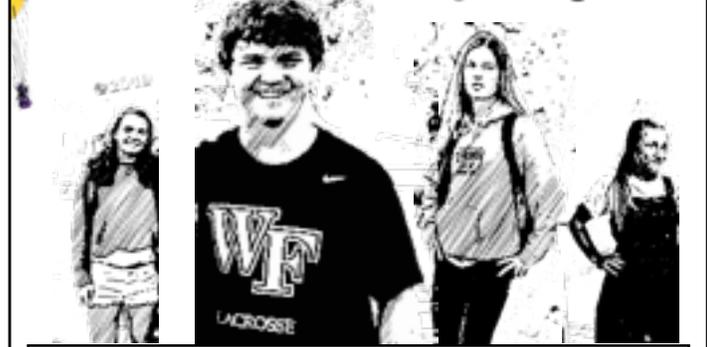
I'M NERVOUS TO GO TOO FAR. MY FAMILY IS HERE. I AM COMFORTABLE HERE.

MORE EDUCATION WILL BRING MORE OPPORTUNITY TO YOUR LIFE.



JESSICA STARTED OUT AS A SEEKER, BUT LANDED BACK IN ELLIS AS HER NEW LIFE FAILED TO TAKE HOLD. AS A **RETURNER**, LIFE OUTSIDE SEEMED TOO OVERWHELMING. THE SKILLS THAT SHE ACQUIRED MAY BE OVERLOOKED, BECAUSE THERE IS AN UNDERINVESTMENT IN PEOPLE WHO ARE ALREADY SITUATED TO HELP THE SMALL TOWN THRIVE.

5 YEARS LATER



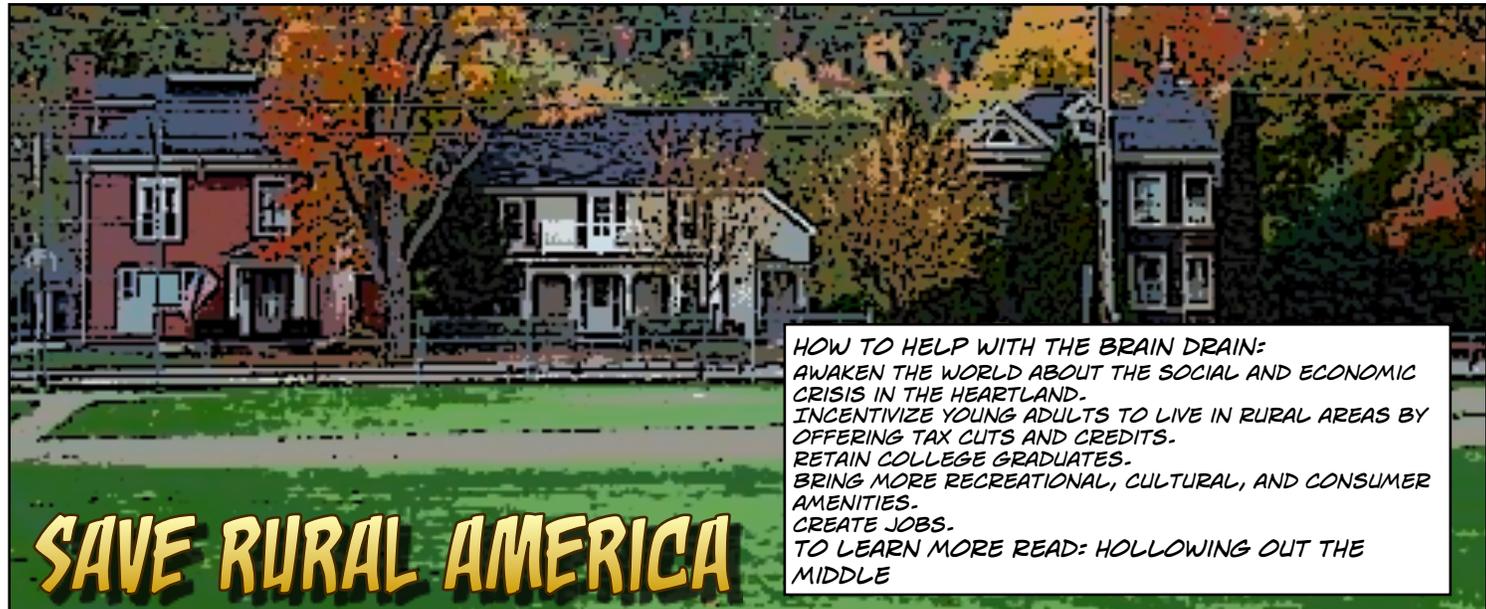
THE STAYERS, LEAVERS, AND RETURNERS ULTIMATELY TEACH US THAT THE SMALL TOWNS PLAY A ROLE IN THEIR OWN DECLINE. YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE TALENT GET AIRLIFTED OUT TO FULFILL THEIR POTENTIAL, AND THE INVESTMENT IN THEM MAKES A BOON FOR SOMEPLACE ELSE. ELLIS TAKES PRIDE IN CHILDREN WHO



URBAN AREAS ARE ROBBING RURAL AREAS OF INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL.



RURAL JOB MARKET IS NOW 4.26 SMALLER THAN IT WAS IN 2008.



SAVE RURAL AMERICA

HOW TO HELP WITH THE BRAIN DRAIN:
AWAKEN THE WORLD ABOUT THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE HEARTLAND.
INCENTIVIZE YOUNG ADULTS TO LIVE IN RURAL AREAS BY OFFERING TAX CUTS AND CREDITS.
RETAIN COLLEGE GRADUATES.
BRING MORE RECREATIONAL, CULTURAL, AND CONSUMER AMENITIES.
CREATE JOBS.
TO LEARN MORE READ: HOLLOWING OUT THE MIDDLE