Senior music major Richard Cuoco is passionate about playing instruments—his specialty is the French Horn. You can find him playing in the UMass Horn Choir or during the UMass Brass Bash. He is also enthusiastic about photography and filmmaking.

Cuoco has spent the majority of his undergraduate years as a student worker in the Digital Media Lab (DML). Located in the W.E.B. Du Bois Library, the Lab is home to dozens of computers, photography equipment for checkout, sound-proof recording booths, and green screen rooms. He has learned media production and editing through experience and practice, and has, in turn, taught dozens of curious minds as well.

Cuoco says one of his favorite aspects of the DML has been having the opportunity to learn more about the topics of interest to him during slower times of the year. While working last summer, he explored all the DML offered—photography, audio, filmmaking, and 3D printing services.

Photography has captured Cuoco’s imagination in a significant way. “Other people see just the photo, but I see much more than that.” Not only does he notice the work that was put into creating the image itself, he adds that he notices all of the technical aspects—the lighting, editing, sound, and image-capturing process. Cuoco says he prefers photography to film, since it is a one-person project and allows for a greater sense of control, whereas filmmaking requires multiple individuals to create one piece.

Cuoco’s photography has generated business from campus administration, student clubs, and faculty. Most recently, the Libraries purchased three of his photos for use online and in publications. From landscapes of the mesmerizing campus pond to photos of the towering W.E.B. Du Bois Library, Cuoco is continually inspired by what he sees around him. He recently launched an online store where customers can purchase copies of his work.

During his high school years in Townsend, Mass., Cuoco experimented with basic filmmaking tools like IMovie, which helped him reach his goal of working for a local public access TV station. He first learned about the DML in 2013 during New Student Orientation just before it opened, and Cuoco remembers how excited he was to find out more.

Now a senior, Richard Cuoco advocates for media resources at the Libraries, as he feels they have shaped his outlook on photography and film and made him successful. He attributes much of his happiness, friendships, and attainment as a photographer to his workplace. “I made some of my best friends working here.” he added.