



BBB Scholarship Essay Option 1

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During the 3 years in the AFJROTC program, I have learned countless lessons that have motivated me to become who I am today. The first lesson I learned is that in order to be a good leader, I had to be a good follower first. By being a good follower, I was able to learn how to work and communicate effectively in a team environment and understand the essential qualities of good leadership. One of the qualities is the ability to gain reliability. Great leaders always treat others with dignity and respect which allows them to garner credibility from their followers. Building trust is crucial since it provides foundations for strong relationships. Without solid bonds, leaders are not able to motivate a team to thrive as their followers doubt their capabilities. Thus, it is the leader's responsibility to make cohesive and productive connections with their followers and articulate a clear directionality for a common objective. As AFJROTC cadets, our objective is to become "citizens of character, dedicated to serving the nation and the community". This year, as the support flight commander, I have had the opportunity to construct a productive team environment where all cadets are connected with the passion for becoming leaders of character who are embodied with strong characters and willing to bring a positive impact on the community.

Although some people have a natural inclination towards leadership, it is a skill that can be developed through experience and hardships. Personally, I did not have any leadership skills at the time I joined the corps and I was just a typical timid student in class who cared too much about what other people thought

of me. However, when I joined the corps CyberPatriot team (a competitive team for national youth defense competitions) and started to share my deep passion for cybersecurity, I was able to improve my communication and leadership skills gradually.

Leadership development is a continuous process that everyone goes through to become a good leader. Even though it can take a long time for some people to develop essential leadership skills, if they take initiative and utilize their passion to overcome obstacles, everyone can eventually become great leaders who can make a significant impact not only on the community but also on the nation and the world.

Character is the way of representing oneself with moral and personal values. Developing a character is important because it defines who you are and what you are made of. As AFJROTC cadets, having a strong character is vital because we represent the people who are currently serving or have served in the military. By wearing the uniform, we are expected to maintain our integrity, courage, and military bearing at all times. In addition, good character is critical to a cadet's development as a leader. As the current support flight commander and assistant captain of the cyberpatriot team, I am expected to lead by example for cadets being led forward and embody the core values of the Air Force: "Integrity first, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do. A strong moral compass and integrity also provide foundations for the ability to make reasonable decisions in high-stress circumstances. The program has allowed me to thrive as a moral leader of character

not only in the corps but also in extra curricular activities. As the secretary of the Science Olympiad Club and advisory board member of the Biology Olympiad Club, I have had opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills, values, and passions for the STEM field which all contribute to the development of a strong character.

Finally, service is the altruistic connection between citizens and the community. Service, character, and leadership are all interrelated aspects of a good citizen. By supporting others and the community, cadets are able to develop a sense of compassion, accomplish-

ment, and confidence. Building stronger relationships with the community also allows cadets to realize the importance of selfless behavior and acts, which motivates them to become better citizens of character and leader. As the treasurer of the UNICEF club, I have had numerous opportunities to volunteer and lead at local non-profit organizations such as Feed My Starving Children, and Midwest Food Bank and learn how to become an active citizen.

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