



# Ethical Cadet Essay

Jhoanna Echeverria, Cesar Chavez High School

A question was asked during a senior workshop, “Are you prepared for life after high school?” I was disturbed by the number of responses saying they were not. A majority, it seemed, were unaware of what to do after high school. Some seemed stressed about finance, while others didn’t seem confident in their abilities. Fortunately, I feel quite prepared. It was here that I realized that the JROTC curriculum has taught me many life skills. Some of the skills I use daily are how to manage stress, the ability to adapt, and the importance of responsibility.

Last summer, I was nominated by my JROTC instructors and the American Legion Auxiliary and was selected to be an Arizona Girl State delegate. Public speaking and socializing were highly encouraged. We did various mock trials, created a mock government, and participated in self-advocation exercises. It was a lot of information, and it was all very new to me. I successfully managed the stress of debating, public speaking, and collaborating with some intimidating, young powerful women with diverse backgrounds that I had just met a few hours earlier. With such an informative camp, I realized the importance of knowing and carrying out your role. As a JROTC Battalion Commander, I was able to utilize stress management skills I learned from Arizona Girl’s State and maintain my composure while managing my team, organizing events, and ensuring discipline and standards are upheld.

A lesson I am reminded of is Mental Agility. This gave me the ability to anticipate or adapt to certain or changing situations. As a young adult, I made the decision to enlist in the military. Much of the reason was to be more disciplined, be confident, and have more insight into becoming a leader and a team player in such a big and diverse setting. The military is a huge change. In JROTC, we have learned to adapt to new leadership, new companies, and teams. I was challenged in this way a few months ago when I started a new job. I realized I was able to adjust to new environments, navigate through challenges, and communicate my ideas clearly. As a leader in the school, student-athlete, and now adding work into my routine, it was a rough transition, it was then proven to me that adaptability and stress management is a crucial skill to ensure success.

Life is filled with many challenges, finance being one of the major and stressful challenges that can affect your life the most. Being fiscally responsible is a skill that is often overlooked. JROTC has taught me the importance of financial literacy, how to budget, the effect of poor spending, and importance of smart financial decisions. As a young teen, there are many things we desire, especially when trying to keep up with trends. Friends have asked me, “How do you budget so well?” I believe that a financial literacy class is essential for high school students and wish it were a requirement for graduation. JROTC has given

Cadet's opportunities and shown them a pathway to financial freedom. As the Battalion Commander, I am responsible for the JROTC club finances. In this position, my staff and I are tasked to organize fundraisers, such as selling snacks or t-shirts, and participating in scholarship opportunities. I have also used these skills to help other clubs I am a member of, such as National Honor Society and Academic Readiness at Cesar Chavez High School. JROTC has helped me in applying for grants and scholarships in order to further my education. These skills are invaluable to me not only help guide school clubs, but to also help guide my friends and be successful in my path.

As Battalion Commander, responsibility is a major aspect of my role. I am held by others and hold myself responsible for the success or failure of the Battalion. Inspections play a crucial role in helping incoming cadets become a better version of themselves.

I thank JROTC for guiding me through four years of high school and motivating me to become a better person. JROTC has prepared me to enter adulthood and lay my foundation for success. Stress took over my life for a period, as I held many responsibilities. However, through the leadership and stress management classes, I've learned to become resilient and overcome the obstacles that are sure to appear as I reach adulthood. Because of JROTC I can now manage my stress, adapt to new settings, be responsible, and be a leader. As I prepare to enter adult life, I feel confident, with these skills, of my inevitable success.

## Jhoanna Echeverria

Cesar Chavez High School

*2025 BBB Ethical Cadet Scholarship Recipient*



Powered by:



Delivering water and power®

