**Personal Profile & Scholarship Essay**

**Sample Responses**

**What is important to you? And why? (maximum 250 words)**

It is important to me to take challenges in my life that will eventually lead me towards self-growth. New opportunities constantly help me to understand the world and myself. Growing up, I was the person who never went to the deep end of the pool; I liked feeling safe in my own little bubble. Therefore, I was naive to the world around me. Not until I joined Mustang Justice, the Social Justice club at L.A. Matheson Secondary, did I discover the importance of taking risks.

When I joined the club, I was astounded to discover the issues people face in their daily lives. As I discussed global problems with other members, I came to the realization that I could take advantage of my power as a well-educated student to make a difference. Although it was a daunting task, I decided to dive head-first into change. I started by educating myself. Then I pursued volunteering opportunities which focused on global issues such as racism, sexism, and homophobia. The Women’s March and 100 Year Journey allowed me to discover new viewpoints and opinions about the troubling concepts. Overall, I met remarkable people and had amazing experiences within my community, and gained knowledge of the world around me. By taking risks and moving out of my comfort zone, I grew as a person, both academically and socially. (225)

**What is important to you? And why? (maximum 250 words)**

For me, self-care is of utmost importance and it begins with being able to love myself and accept who I am. I am working towards the goal of being happy and there are many elements that fall into that. I believe spreading joy or positivity to others can be a step towards being content with oneself. I am currently the Finances Director for the branch of Wish Youth Network Society (WYNS) at our school. WYNS is a non-profit, student-led organization that raises money for youth with medical conditions. Contributing to a movement that is helping those in need pushes me a step further to be able to improve myself by accepting my own flaws and being grateful for all that I have. I have also been taking part in a Bollywood dance class for three years. Dancing in a setting that connects me with my family’s Indian background serves as a means for me to destress and recharge my energy. In the upcoming years, I hope to continue my efforts to bettering and maintaining my mental health in order to further my journey of giving back to the community.

**What is important to you? And why? (maximum 250 words)**

**\*\*** a different approach – not ideal, but acceptable, if you have fewer experiences as a volunteer, employee, or student-athlete.

My personal growth is incredibly important to me. I would be very disappointed in myself if I never changed or grew. Starting secondary school, I found myself quite lonely and afraid to try new things. Moving to a new school midway through the year did not help to alleviate these feelings. I struggled to make new friends, and despite wanting to get involved, my apprehension stopped me. I saw many of the things I wanted, like friends, a community, and self-confidence as simply out my reach. I sank deeper into my own feelings of irritability, tiredness, and low self-esteem. It was not until I became more self-reflective that I realized one of the reasons I was so unhappy was because I had been stagnant for so long and unwilling to enact the changes I needed to become the person I’d like to be. It was then I gained the courage to envision myself as a more positive, sociable, and involved person. I joined clubs at school and dared to speak my mind more often, even if it scared me. I changed. I am still changing, every day seeking new ways to evolve and be better than I was the day before. Especially through exploring new opportunities to volunteer and learning through experiences, or even by meeting new people and making new friends who offer fresh perspectives. These are some of the ways I try to promote change in myself and my life every day.

**Tell us more about ONE or TWO activities listed above that are most important to you. Please explain the role you played and what you learned in the process. You will be asked for a reference who can speak to your response. (maximum 350 words)**

I hold the time I spent as a mentor in the I AM Girls Mentorship program very near to my heart. Mentorship was not a concept I was very familiar with before starting the program, and I was nervous to begin. To mentor a young girl seemed like a very daunting task. However, as I met the girls I would spend many months with, it became clear to me what I was there to do.

The majority of girls in the program came from disadvantaged backgrounds and had few positive role models to look up to. As a mentor, I came to realize it was my job to be that person. Other mentors and I put together lesson plans each week about topics we personally struggled with at that age. Friendship, body image, health and fitness were all issues I was left to figure out on my own in Elementary School. Through this program, I made it my goal to ensure none of the participating girls would feel alone in their transition to high school.

In the process, I learned how difficult it could be to persuade twenty five young girls to open up to me, and fully engage themselves in the lessons. I found many were apprehensive of having been assigned ‘mentors’ who they did not know, and did not initially relate to. I did not know how to approach this challenge at first, until I tried to better empathize with the girls, putting myself in their shoes. I learned their likes and dislikes, and found we had plenty in common; what we did not, I made an active effort to learning more about. I established a strong rapport with them, which eventually led to the girls being more receptive and friendly. By the end of the program, I was not only a mentor, but also their friend.

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I recently joined the Junior Achievement Company Program in order to get insight into the world of business. Through this program, a group of twenty-five students from the Lower Mainland are being mentored by professionals who work in industry to create a company. We are entirely responsible for choosing a product, production, selling shares, generating capital, marketing, selling the product, and everything in between. Even though I am still in the midst of the program, I have already been able to learn so much about what actually goes into running a business. It has also helped me evaluate whether or not entrepreneurship is something I want to pursue in the future.

My family consists of my mom, dad, sister, and I. We immigrated to Canada and have essentially been on our own because very few of our relatives or friends live here. When my sister turned five, my mom decided she wanted to go back to school to upgrade her degree, so she could help my dad in supporting our family. This was a big deal for us because my sister was still young and needed adult support. Therefore, I had to step into the role of caregiver for her. I became responsible for her daily needs, whether that be dropping her and picking her up from school, helping her with her homework, her extracurricular activities, being there whenever she needed someone to talk to, playing with her to keep her occupied, or making food for us when my mom could not. Often times the responsibility of my sister prevented me from doing things like joining clubs after school, volunteering on weekends, or hanging out with my friends; however, it also gave me a chance to develop a bond with my sister in a way I could not have done otherwise. Even though my sister and I often felt the lack of our mother’s presence as she was always busy studying, we managed to support each other and help one another avoid feelings of loneliness.

1. **Explain how you responded to a problem and/or an unfamiliar situation. What did you do, what was the outcome, and what did you learn from the experience? (maximum 200 words)**

When I first joined cadets in November 2016, I was a few months late from the start of the new training year in September and had to soon depart for my first field training exercise (FTX) the following month. An FTX is not an easy event, especially on your first time when you lack experience and skill. Throughout the course of the weekend, I was faced with many problems I had never before encountered and made countless mistakes solving them. For instance, on the night of our arrival, I was expected to know how to do things like set up a tent and secure the training area, as the other new cadets had a chance to learn these tasks, while I did not. I was forced to step out of my comfort zone and ask our seniors for assistance in order to proficiently complete the task at hand. I often found myself being reprimanded for my errors. However, in the end I was able to learn from my setbacks and hone my skills. Moreover, this gave me an opportunity to interact with others and learn that teamwork is an essential asset and skill not only in cadets, but in life.