

Second Year Celebration Essay

Make Waves, Not Ripples

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A visceral thrill ran through my body as the surgeon made his first incision along the jawbone of the patient. The surgeon assertively, yet ever so gingerly cut, clamped, cauterized, and drained the site where the malignant tumor insidiously invaded the patient's facial structures. Disfigured but not disheartened, the patient had an unparalleled sprit which inspired all those who came into contact with him. Five hours later, a gaping hole took the place of the malignancy, closing the door to one danger and opening the door to a hundred others. As the bandages were being applied, I said, "Ok, thanks very much everyone. I'm off to Physics class". After two years as a student at Case Western Reserve University, I have only come to realize a fraction of the academic and extracurricular activities waiting to be pursued by ambitious students willing to take them on.

As a college student, I feel as if the world has been brought to my fingertips. Whether I wish to do research in a lab focused on finding a cure to colon cancer, design an ultra efficient fuel cell, investigate Picasso's progressive forms through his career, debate the Middle East peace process, sing in an acappella group, or play any sport of interest, the opportunity to do so awaits. Throughout my first two years in college, I have slowly come to realize my strengths, weaknesses, interests, and other capabilities. The resources at college not only include the faculty or the world class facilities, but one's fellow students. Living in a religiously, economically, and ethnically diverse community opens one's eyes to a world other than his own; a truly global group brought together by intellectual curiosity. So, every once in a while, I pick my head up out of my textbook in order to look and listen to my surroundings, absorbing all that is around me.

My eye opening experiences at Case Western have led me to understand that one's remaining years in college and beyond can be truly fulfilling provided a healthy dose of inspiration, hope, and ambition. Over the course of my early life and my first two years at college, I have cultivated an image of what success means to me. What I take away from my college experience is the ability to effectively utilize my skills to make this vision of success a reality. Personally, my educational endeavors include finishing medical school to specialize as a craniofacial surgeon. This position enables me to use my surgical expertise, artistic skills, and problem solving ability, along with human touch which I will add to each patient interaction. Although my educational accomplishments address what I will become, they do not answer the question of who I will become.

Until the second year of my undergraduate studies at Case Western Reserve University, I thought about my education, my activities, my goals, and my future. For my remaining two years of college, I employ a new philosophy of not only focusing on all which is important to me, but also assessing my impact upon others around me. In light of my second year experiences, I more fully

understand how others are affected by my words and actions. I am more socially, culturally, and religiously aware. These coming of age changes might signify the maturity which develops with a greater understanding of human nature. For example, I will never forget the day when a car in front of me paid my toll after I had previously allowed its driver to switch into my lane. The simplicity of kind gesture was overshadowed by my markedly improved my mood for the remainder of the day. In essence, it is often the little things that make the greatest differences in people's lives. I now realize the importance of waking up every morning upholding this very principle.

Often times, as an ambitious college student with endless opportunities, the most important thing to realize is that one resource which eventually comes to an end is time. With the proper fundamentals in place, I now need to live every day to its fullest, keeping in mind that though I am only one person, I can greatly change my life and the lives of others for the better. It is trivial what I become in terms of occupation or social stature, but more importantly who I become in terms of personality, beneficence, and the will to make a better tomorrow.