

2008 Winning Scholarship Essay
by Lindsay Harmon

Determining what makes one person more unique than another is a very difficult task. The qualities within myself that I feel make me stand out from the crowd are my determination, compassion, and intelligence. When I dedicate myself to a particular project, I try to complete it wholeheartedly every time. Striving to do my best in a world where some people see conformity and complacency as suitable options is what makes me different from others, and is the reason why I feel I deserve this scholarship. Over the past few years, I have come out of my shell and embraced helping the community. Everyone has the ability to make a difference, and I hope that I will eventually be able to make a truly notable contribution to the world.

My community involvement may not be as extensive as that of other candidates, but I feel as though I have made at least a small difference in the lives of others. Opportunities to help clean a street, volunteering at a children's museum, and helping host a community youth Easter program have all been small ways to aid local children. I saw the Adopt A Street cleaning day a way for our group to provide children with an alternative to remaining inside the house. As a volunteer at a children's museum I was able to interact with kids of all cultures as I attempted to put smiles on their faces. The best part of each of these experiences was knowing the outcome of my small contribution could brighten the lives of others.

The accomplishments that I have the most pride in today are the ones of an academic nature. In the real world, academics may not be highly important, but in my opinion, they give hope to people who may not be able to succeed in any other way. My inspiration for getting good grades and participating in extra-curricular activities over the years has been the thousands of people in the world who are not able to learn freely or do as they please. Too many young people will never get to read a book or travel the world for the rest of us to let the endless possibilities of the world slip away. Knowing that I was experiencing everything my educational opportunities had to offer fueled my other pursuits, allowing me to help others do better for themselves. My academic accomplishments eventually led me to being chosen to participate in a group of local students called Leadership High School. This group not only allowed me to learn about careers and leadership, but also people in general. As a group, we met and were able to speak candidly with people who are unable to care for themselves. We also toured jail and put in volunteer work at a secondhand shop that allowed us to see how good life really is for us. Life's experiences have granted us so much in the process that giving back should be a necessity.