



Write to Educate

Scholarship Contest Winner

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Homeschool

Essay Topic: Why is diversity important? How can you embrace and promote diversity in college?

Mahatman Gandhi once poetically stated “Be the change you wish to see in the world”. This phrase has been typed onto posters, printed on t-shirts, and copied onto hundreds of Facebook posts. However, no matter how often people are reminded of the important role they can play in the world around them they continue on their daily routines without any recognition of the power their actions have. A boost of importance on diversity has been generated in recent years by schools, celebrities, and political figures, most people neglect to embrace their personal role in creating a more welcoming and diverse atmosphere for others. It is impeccable that we take on our roles of embracing diversity if we desire to uphold our title as the “Melting Pot” of the world. Between the years 1820 and 1930 over six million immigrants entered the United States looking for a safe haven for all races, ages, and religions. It was an era of open arms and open minds towards all walks of life. This tradition has been carried on in our nation and I aim to be one of the many who continually live day by day in hopes of preserving our welcoming and diverse nation.

It has always been easy for me to say I am not prejudice against races, religions, or gender orientations, but it wasn't until a few years ago that my statements were tested. Being homeschool I never had the opportunity to be in a classroom with 20 other students, all with different backgrounds. I completed all my classes online and communicated with others through a computer screen. Two years ago I got my first job at a fast food restaurant, and like most fast food places the employee individuality ranged through categories such as race, age, personal backgrounds, and sexuality. Not one co-worker was similar to the next and it blended into a colorful and culturally fluent group. Several of my coworkers were African American and I watched as customers would refuse to be served by them. Other workers were convicted felons that I was quick to judge their character based on their previous history. And some were active members in LGBT groups that openly discussed their lifestyles. As I continued working with these people I realized that I wasn't as open as I had once thought myself to be. During my two years of working there not only did I learn how to serve coffee, treat customers, and make sandwiches, but I learned that regardless of how you may identify yourself or your religious beliefs or even the color of your skin it has no effect on the value of each individual.

As I leave this job and begin the four years of college I have ahead of me I will strive to embrace diversity and individuality by stepping up against discrimination when I see it in action. No longer will I stand on the sidelines and watch as my fellow coworker is treated with less worth based upon their race or religion. No longer will I judge a classmate based on the pigment of their skin or the LGBT flag they hang in their dorm. We are all equal in heart and soul and having people who strive to create a welcoming and diverse environment creates the image of open arms and open minds that the founding people of our nation painted for us so many decades ago. Diversity is all around us, walking the hallways of our schools and working alongside us, but it is up to us to “be the change we wish to see”. A change in our society's thinking and in our daily actions that work together to create a more welcoming and diverse nation which sets an example of love to everyone who sees.

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