

**Law Enforcement Family Member Scholarship 2017 Essay**

The life of a military, law enforcement officer, or emergency personnel is not a life without pain and sacrifices. Whether they are in a branch of the military, or a peace officer in a small town, or in a metropolitan area, the events these public servants see or act upon can be both inspiring and tragic. They inspire through their selfless acts and compassion, yet the tragic events they witness take its toll. These sacrifices are shared by their family. They make the decision, every day, to risk their lives for strangers. Every day, when they step out the front door in their uniform, they are willingly accepting the call to put themselves in harm's way, never knowing if that day will be the last day they step through that door. Their families never knowing if that will be the last time they see them. My family is one of those families. My father served our country in several capacities, beginning as a Corporal in the United States Marine Corp Reserves from 1983-1988, and currently as a law enforcement officer in the United States Border Patrol as a Special Operations Supervisor from 1988 to the present. I would not be the person I am today, nor would I have accomplished any of my goals, had it not been for the values he has taught me.

My father is the son of an Army soldier, my grandfather, who served our country for 23 years in the United States Army. My grandfather was a Sergeant First Class who served two tours in the Vietnam War by flying a Caribou Transport Plane and a Huey helicopter. He received a Purple Heart and was awarded a Bronze Star in recognition of his service. His service had psychological and physical effects that persist to this day. In addition to my father, I have two uncles who served in the military. My grandfather taught my father honor, integrity, loyalty and the importance of service to the community. And my father passed these crucial characteristics to me.

My father has worked for the United States Border Patrol for over 28 years. During his time in the field he experienced many things that effected his leadership as a Supervisor. I recall, when I was younger, him telling me how he used to take extra food to work so he could give it to the undocumented persons they apprehended on patrol. My father treated them with a certain level of dignity and humanity. As a Supervisor, he has had to learn how to adapt to the new generation of agents who have a different mind-set and outlook on their job. My father has had to learn how to communicate values, ethics, and integrity in a way that resonates with them.

My father has taught me the value of learning to consider both perspectives of each situation when attempting to find a solution to a problem. He also taught me the value of uncompromising honor, and how to use it as my guide when I am faced with a difficult decision. The foundation of my integrity is based on the experiences he has shared with me that demonstrated his goal to put the needs of others above his own. Being a leader does not mean being in charge or having power. To be a leader means ensuring everyone feels valued, leading by example, showing compassion, and being willing to make the personal sacrifices necessary for the prosperity of the group. Loyalty, trust, and respect are earned and they cannot be earned without putting in hard work to prove you deserve it. Your word is your law. If you do not negotiation your integrity and give in to situations that compromise the trust others have in you, you will earn their loyalty. Nothing is accomplished without hard work. Determination and resilience cannot be taught, but are developed. My father helped me develop my sense of commitment and determination by encouraging me to never give up when something became difficult. If I want something in this life, I will have to work for it and earn it.

I have utilized everything my father taught me in various aspects of my life. I served my church as an altar server for 14 years, and in that time, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to train younger servers as well as teach them the importance of service. I was a dancer for about 12 years, and there were many times I struggled to accomplish a goal I set for myself because I could not physically perform the skill I was trying to learn. But my father encouraged me to be persistent and work hard until I accomplished my goal, because if it were simple, everyone would do it. If I wanted to achieve the goal, I needed to put in the work to achieve it. I went on to audition for a dance company at New Mexico State University and received the highest score out of 30 people who auditioned, because I was able to overcome challenges that hindered my abilities and sharpened my technique and skills. The importance of service and determination my father taught me assisted me when I became Vice President of Service in the honorary accounting fraternity, Beta Alpha Psi, I joined while in college. This position allowed me to inspire others to give back to various members in our community, from collecting pet food donations for pets in need to preparing meals for the less fortunate. The work ethic my father instilled in me and helped me develop, allowed me to graduate from New Mexico State University with a Bachelors in Accountancy with Honors, was nominated the Accounting Department's Outstanding Senior, and completed 15 out of 30 graduate credits (through the Accelerated Master Program). There were many times I felt frustrated and was tempted to quit, but my desire to achieve my goals and work ethic wouldn't allow me to give up. This past summer I had an audit internship with Deloitte, the top accounting firm in the nation, in Las Vegas, NV and accepted a full time offer to work with the firm after I graduate with my Masters. It was my willingness to learn and determination that helped me overcome the struggles and leave a good impression. I am currently the Beta Alpha Psi President, and am utilizing the leadership skills he instilled in me; compassion, valuing others, considering both perspectives, how to make a decision in a difficult situation, loyalty, trust, keeping to my word, leading by example, servicing others, and making the necessary sacrifices for the good of the chapter. I plan to graduate with my Masters of Accountancy by May 2018 and complete all portions of the CPA exam by next summer. I know it is going to be a challenge being the leader of an organization, taking classes, working as a Graduate Assistant, and studying for the CPA, but it is a challenge my father has helped me prepare for. I will utilize everything he has taught me to overcome every challenge and achieve my goals.