

John Adams Academies Foundation Scholarship Essay  
by  
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“How my education at John Adams Academy changed me” is the question at hand and the topic of this essay. After giving the question a great deal of thought and reflection I was struck by the realization that, at least for me, it is the wrong question. In order to assess how my education has “changed” me, I need a frame of reference for what I was before. Fortunately, I have no such frame of reference because John Adams Academy is all I’ve ever known. I am blessed to have been formed and shaped by the curriculum and culture of John Adams Academy from the very beginning of my educational journey. Therefore, I think a better way to address the thrust of the question is to examine and celebrate what my education at John Adams Academy has helped me *become* - a scholar, servant leader, and citizen committed to a cause “greater than self” who has learned to love abundantly.

As a **scholar** I have learned to love classical education and the wisdom it imparts. Learning is a noble endeavor proper to human beings, and the ability to understand ideas and principles as “true” is among the most beautiful fruits of classical education. I have come to love learning and embrace it as a lifelong process. Nothing surpasses the knowledge and wisdom found in the Classics as they reveal the universal themes and great stories of human existence.

As a **servant leader** I have learned to love people and derive joy and purpose from working on their behalf. Through role models such as George Washington I have learned what true leadership is and how service is the essential component of it. Servant leadership is key to finding greater purpose in life. It is a signal virtue - one that prepares people for citizenship, equips them for self-government, and makes them worthy of the blessings of liberty.

For example, because I love my school and my fellow scholars I was pained to see the negative impact on connectedness and community spirit caused by the Covid pandemic and related public policy. I strongly believe the increase in social media use among my peer group has also contributed to this malaise. I felt compelled to address this problem so I created a sustainable peer mentoring program encouraging healthy, positive scholar connections. Having seen the enormous impact of mentors in my own life, I believed peer mentorship could reduce feelings of disconnectedness and restore authentic human engagement among my peers. With the support of staff and administration I was given the opportunity to incorporate this program into Secondary Lyceum and I am working on developing the model to include Elementary as well. This project catalyzed my passion for servant leadership and demonstrated how one person can have a positive impact on many. John Adams Academy nurtures servant leadership and creates an environment where it can flourish – within me, and within others.

As a **citizen** I have learned to love liberty, the Founding Principles, and the traditions of Western Civilization handed down by our forebears. John Adams Academy has prepared me for “citizenship” in the true sense of the word. Through my classical education and scholarship at John Adams Academy I have acquired powerful intellectual tools that will guide me as I engage a world increasingly hostile to the principles of freedom. As I contemplate the meaning of “Public and Private Virtue,” I consider courage to be the principal virtue upon which all others

are predicated and feel confident that my time at John Adams Academy has prepared me for the fight that lies ahead.

At John Adams Academy I have also learned to love life. Life is precious and must be defended, both at the individual and societal levels. Life is also finite, creating a sense of urgency to act meaningfully and purposefully for the betterment of myself and my fellow citizens. Time is far too precious to squander on idle pursuits, enslaved to base desires or beholden to the whims of those who seek to rule over us. I learned at John Adams Academy that “Self-governance, Personal Responsibility and Accountability” are hallmarks of citizenship and liberty. That is my path.

I can't know who I would be today had my path been different, but I know for certain I would not be the person I am without John Adams Academy. The culture, curriculum and extraordinary mentors at John Adams Academy have opened many doors for me and set me on this path of lifelong learning in pursuit of the good, the true, and the beautiful. Mentors have been my guiding light - because of them, I can envision a future full of purpose and abundance and possess the tools to pursue it fearlessly. Faced with a nation in crisis, my mentors have called me to duty – to be a beacon of hope for others and reject the temptation to despair. Drawing on the wisdom of the Classics and the encouragement of my peers and mentors, I will go forth with courage and boldly carry the best traditions of Western civilization and the American Founding into the future.

I am proud of the person I have become, and feel profound gratitude for the role John Adams Academy has played in making me that person. May I always act in a manner that brings honor to the name and legacy of our beloved school.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very sincerely and respectfully,

Lauren E. Bixler