My Personal Statement

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I can still remember my first day as a work-study for the Stillman School of Business in the Leadership Studies office. One of the first assignments that a co-worker of mine was given was to use up as much paper as possible with the “Center for Leadership Studies” letterhead. Soon after this incident, I was informed by my mentor and employer, Professor Michael Reuter, that this was essential because the “Leadership Studies” title had been changed to “Leadership Development.” I never realized how much a simple name change would affect the way I approached my first year of college at Seton Hall, but what I learned from the experiences that followed changed my outlook on leadership and how it is an ongoing process of development.

Immediately after my first semester had begun, I joined the Benchmarking, Team Walker, Marketing and Recruiting, and the Self-Leadership Initiatives within the Leadership Development program. Furthermore, I joined the Division of Volunteer Efforts (DOVE), participated in the SHU 500, organized a canned food drive during the holidays, and volunteered my time to join the Servant Leader Initiative to tutor an eighth grade boy for two hours a week at St. Benedict’s Preparatory School. Since I was and currently am a Servant Leader Scholar, I took the opportunity at each meeting to get to know individuals who shared the same passion for continuous learning and spiritual growth.

In order to focus on my chosen majors of Marketing and Management, I joined the Student Marketing Association and volunteered to advertise a local toy collection during the holidays in order to provide underprivileged children gifts for Christmas. I felt like a true servant leader, or in other words, one who directs and guides others for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of all others, by participating in organizations both connected to my
passion for learning and spiritual enlightenment, and also by leading others in various initiatives and volunteer drives to provide for others who are less fortunate.

However, although many of my experiences have taught me various leadership and service skills, the most emotionally rewarding experience was tutoring for the Servant Leader Initiative. When I first met Lawrence, the eighth grade boy who I tutored, he seemed as if he did not have a passion to learn as much as possible in school and did not have any confidence in himself that he could succeed. After a full semester of tutoring every week, I noticed that once I gave Lawrence positive feedback, he began to give himself positive self-talk. Before I knew it, Lawrence was solving even the most complex math problems in the textbook without my help. An apparent paradigm shift made me realize that Lawrence knew the material all along and all he needed was a boost of confidence, an occasional pat on the back, or a “good job.”

This experience taught me a lot about servant leadership: not only did I volunteer my time and help Lawrence with nothing physical in return, but what I essentially got in return was an extremely valuable lesson. I realized that I was able to encourage and inspire Lawrence to strive to expand his knowledge and his horizons; whereas, he used to settle with mediocrity and average grades. Personally, I enhanced my skills of interpersonal and group communication and allowed myself to recognize once again my passion for learning and enthusiasm for academic tasks. I realized how I could make such an impact in my own life and in someone else’s.

At the end of this Servant Leader Initiative, I thought back to the first day as a work-study in the Leadership Development office. I understood how servant leaders are neither created nor studied; but instead, servant leaders are continuously developing and learning new things. I know that in my future career in Marketing, I will use these experiences to remember that I must strive to gain more and more experiences to better myself as a business leader.