

Amanda Hornback

The first semester of my sophomore year has been my most influential yet, thanks to the Emerging Leader Institute. Through all of the guest lecturers' seminars, our group service project, and my individual project I have learned a lot about, not only myself, but also about how others act and react in certain situations and how to deal with those correctly. It is a very enlightening and interesting class that I would recommend to anyone.

During one of our first seminars, the class was asked to take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which is a tool used to understand one's personality. I personally feel that this was one of the most useful classes because of all that we were taught. Based on our results and class discussions everyone was led to realize which of the 16 types he/she was. I found it amazing how well a piece of paper can pinpoint everyone's personality, anywhere from relationship habits, to careers, to simply the way they deal with events. I had taken the MBTI before in high school, but the resources and in depth explanations were not available to me then. I am an ISFJ and I feel that it really helps to know and understand your personality type so that you recognize why you act and react in the way you do.

Another activity that really made an impact on me was our weekly meeting with our faculty and peer mentor. This was an opportunity to meet with a group of anywhere from three to five of your peers and the two mentors once a week. It was a great chance to reflect on the prior weeks classes and especially on our individual projects. We were challenged to think outside of the box and to step outside of our comfort zones. This smaller group setting really allowed for us to emphasize on how we personally were

growing and to reflect and be questioned about those aspects. Being able to share our personal projects with a small group of peers allowed for constructive criticism and for new, different ideas to be brought to the table. I found these weekly meetings to be one of the most enjoyable aspects of the Institute.

I feel that one of the keys to learning is the atmosphere you are surrounded by. In ELI, you are selected along with 24 of your peers to be given this wonderful opportunity. Since it is a small class we were able to become closer and work well together as a group. We strived on the strengths of each individual and the weaknesses helped us to learn also. We realized early on that appreciating these diversities would help us to be a successful team and to get more out of the class as a whole. We were also taught how to manage the conflicts that may come about throughout our lives. We learned so many new things, but what I liked most about it was the applications. We weren't taught these skills so that we could just get through this class, this year, or simply our college life, but we were educated on all of these aspects so that we could live a better, more complete life. What we learned this semester will apply to our careers, relationships, parenting, and how we carry our lives in general. I now understand more on how I can stand up for my beliefs and really be true to my personality tendencies and myself.

This Emerging Leader Institute experience has helped me in so many ways. I have learned more about being an ISFJ, and I know that your personality is not something you should try to hide or change for others. I've learned how to interact better in a group setting and the importance of hearing and really listening to everyone's thoughts. I have applied these new found concepts very much so in completing a successful personal project for the semester. My project was trying to inform more people about the College

of Agriculture here at UK and all of the opportunities that it offers. I felt more comfortable and confident with asserting myself and trying to get my ideas across to those I was speaking with. Also, the time management ideas taught to us during class helped me to actually get my goals accomplished. I have also applied what I have learned about myself in family and friend relationships and at my work. By simply knowing more about myself and why others act the way they do, it has and will continue to help me lead a better, fuller life. ELI has been a wonderful experience for me. I mean, how often do you really get the opportunity to analyze many aspects of leadership while learning more about yourself, to work with a wonderful, small group of people, and to actually get credit hours for it? It has truly been a worthwhile experience for me and I'm really going to miss ELI next semester!