

Katie Mayfield

The Emerging Leader Institute through the eyes of Katie Mayfield

I. Katie and the Class:

As I was preparing to write this little bit about my ELI experience, I went back and looked at the essays I wrote to gain acceptance in the course. My, how I was bright eyed and bushy tailed!

My ELI experience has been more than fantastic. I have not only learned so much about myself, but also so much about the people, places, and things around me.

I loved having many teachers. They weren't only the people that spoke to the class every week, they were also the people sitting around me during class. I learned that the things my peers said were so very valuable. The idea of a different topic every week was a great one. Every week was refreshing and new, and we always got to see the perspective of someone new. Particularly interesting was Dr. Frazier's session on ethics. (I have never had a brain and spine so casually displayed before me like they were nothing more than play dough.) Sessions like these made me think in new ways that I did not know were in my capability.

II. Katie and the Mentor Group:

We were told in the very beginning that we were going to meet with this group, talk a lot about ourselves, process the information laid before us during the sessions and grow. A scary thought indeed. What if I didn't want to grow with these weird people I didn't know. Oh well, get over it.

I loved my mentor group. I loved the overall attitude of the group. We all had something to contribute and something to share. I learned something from each member of the group:

Tayo: Be fair, always try to contribute with your whole heart

Valerie: Personalize and internalize

Alyssum: Think "outside of the box", unconventional methods work just as well (i.e. Monkeys)

Christy: Never, ever give up, if you have to start over, do it.

Mildred: Perseverance is the key to getting what you want

The best thing about my group was the feedback and positive feel of the whole experience. There was a very strong and exciting vibe in our group that never went away. I loved my group!

III. What has Katie learned?

I have mostly learned about myself. I have learned my strengths and weaknesses. I have learned that I am a much more social person than I ever knew. I knew that I enjoyed people, but I did not know that it was one of the major characteristics of my personality. In learning about myself, I learned about other people. Not everyone is like me. That is okay. I now know why people react to me the way that they do. (That is very valuable information that can be used preventatively.)

I learned about leaders. Leader is a funny word. In the beginning I thought that leader had a very rigid definition and this class would go into detail explaining it to its members. Boy was I wrong. Leaders can be loud, quiet, weak, strong, big, small, black,

white, anything. The one characteristic that all leaders have is their ability, whether inherent or acquired, to take a situation and make the most of it.

My Project: Bringing Cultural Diversity to Girl Scouts

Objective:

To reach out to Girl Scouts, becoming an integral part of their group for a small time. I want to talk to them about different parts of the world, most of which they have not heard of before or know very little about. I want to teach them that there is a great big world out there. I want to peak their interest and get them eager to travel the world. By doing this I want to make this group of girls more aware of the world.

Expectations:

I hope to do many things through this project. First of all I hope to educate. I want to make these girls more aware that there are other places in the world other than the United States. I hope that in the process of doing this, I can help them earn a Girl Scout badge. I also hope to learn, myself, about these far off places and become more educated. In addition to this, I hope it to be a wonderful experience to get out into the community and be in touch with younger girls. I love traveling and want to do it for a living, so I hope to share this passion with the girls.

Outcome:

I am going to be executing my project this summer at a Girl Scout camp. The details are yet to be ironed out, but it should go rather well. I hope to update after I have completed the project.