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ELI Final Paper

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### What ELI Has Done For Me

When coming into ELI I didn't know exactly what I was getting myself into. I thought that most people would be smarter and better than me. When coming to the class I found out we were pretty much the same and had the same things in mind. We all wanted to know the same thing, how do we become better leaders? I think that the five hour orientation was very helpful because it gave us an overview of what we were getting ourselves into and what to expect for the rest of the semester. It was good having a friend, Tom, in the class just because I know we could rely on each other.

### What did I do while in ELI that stood out to me?

I think that through my experience in ELI I have made great strides in my leadership skills. One thing that I demonstrated was the initiative. For my individual project I thought of something that was very important to me and something that I think is an interesting topic. The topic that I chose was to have an STD fair. I don't think people realize how prevalent the transfer of STD's is with college students and having multiple partners through random hookups. So instead of just thinking about the problem and then just forgetting about it I decided to do something about it. I decided to hold an STD fair. One thing that I learned through this was that people are always thinking what you are thinking you just have to find the right people to talk to. This is when I started to act and

contacted people at health services and AVOL. Without ELI, I don't think that I would have ever acted on what I was thinking or even knew how to go about doing something good.

Some more things that I did that stood out to me was my increased communication skills. Before ELI, I wasn't the best communicator but I figured out that through researching one topic and learning all about that topic and having a passion for it I was able to deliver a fairly good speech on my part. It is a lot easier to talk on a subject that you know about then trying to pretend to know about a subject and then talk about it. I think just being around people that are striving for the same thing as me made it easier for me to talk in front of groups because I knew they would be interested somewhat in what I had to say.

I think through this class another thing that stood out when it came to me was that I learned to listen to peoples ideas better. Before I always thought my ideas were the best, which actually could be true, but I learned that most of the time the collaboration of two different ideas usually makes for a better out come. This was noticed a lot in our group project. Someone said lets do this and then another person said lets do this and then someone else said we just should do both. It was like a light bulb turned on in everyone's head and was like, "wow what a great idea."

One thing I kind of did in the class was calmed people down when maybe they were stressed about something. I think I did a great job of being a little comic relief during certain parts of the class and I know when I didn't talk a lot one day a couple people came up to me and said what's wrong I missed hearing

you talk today. So that made me happy to know that I really had a affect on people to the point that they would come up and tell me about it. This class overall had a positive affect on my actions and I will carry those affects with me for awhile.

What impact did it have on me? What did it mean to me? What did I learn?

Overall, ELI had a amazing impact on me learning about different types of leadership. I think that part of learning is hearing something from all different perspectives. I think by having different speakers all the time it kind of gave all different pros to leadership and then I could pick the ones that I would want to use and apply them. We were blessed to see plenty of intelligent and prestigious people from the university talk to us about their view of leadership and different styles that they find to be effective.

It also taught me that people like to say that things aren't political and people don't get positions through connections but that is not true at all. I know that through ELI I have been presented with lots of opportunities that I would not have known about if it wasn't for ELI. I know in my fraternity I hear about kids saying I wish I would have applied for that and the reason that they didn't is because they didn't know about it. Even when I applied for SAB there were some people on the board that I new and whether people like to admit it or not if you know people you have a greater chance of getting a position or in the long run getting a job.

The most important thing that I learned and I think all of us learned is that there is no one correct way of leadership. One leadership style might work in

one situation and then it might be a complete failure in another situation. I think leadership is completely situational. I think that after looking at the situation you have to sit back and look at what the best way to go about. Through the class, I learned all the different ways of approaching a situation and what are the most successful and which ones aren't as successful.

How will I apply this to life?

This is going to be the best part of this class, how I will apply what I learned. Through this class I have began to get involved in numerous things around campus. I went out on a limb and applied for the vice president of SAB. While I didn't get the position that I hoped for, I felt I did a good job in the interview process and was actually offered the Director of Web Marketing. While this is not the job I wanted, I will make the best of that opportunity and then go for the vice president again next year.

Along with SAB, I have been appointed house manager of my fraternity house for this semester. This just shows how people respect me and think that I am responsible when it comes to making decisions with our house money and issues like that. During my time in this position, I have to be the devils advocate which people do not like that much but somebody has to do it. While this was hard, I was able to rise up and do my job very well.

I have also taken the initiative to enforce the bi-laws that we have for the fraternity by leading up the philanthropy of our fraternity. The bi-law says that each member must have 8 hours of community service a semester which people are not doing. Me and Tom are going to set up events each weekend and begin

enforcing these bi-laws and at the same time explaining to people while community service is so important and then hopefully after partaking in a event people will see how important it is for themselves. As a fraternity, to break the stereotype of being huge partiers, if we do more stuff with community service it will look extremely good on our part and also give each member of the fraternity some self gratification.

To further my learning of leadership, I have applied for that monster.com leadership conference in Dallas. I know that views on leadership are always changing so I find it necessary for me to keep furthering my exploration of leadership and practicing it at the same time.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Jared, Angel, Dr. Lee Edgerton, and Amberlee for all that you did for us throughout the semester. I think that the best way to learn about situations is to learn through people who have done it. For instance Amberlee gave us great advice on raising money and getting the community involved because she knew that that is what the basis of the project was. We took that advice and were able to get some businesses to help us out with money so we fully didn't have to rely on ourselves. Dr. Lee was full of good advice throughout the semester whether it be for our group project and for our individual project. He was very supportive and put 110% effort into what he did. Dr. Lee made sure that we were prepared for our presentations and then when we all had successful presentations and a successful semester he rewarded us with Pazzo's. I think that Dr. Lee is a great example of a good leader and I wish

some of the other mentor groups would have been able to have him as their mentor. He demonstrated the rewarding techniques whether he realized it or not. Finally, Angel and Jared were always there throughout the semester to keep things going smoothly and just make sure our projects were going well and we were staying on track. Angel was very helpful when it came to SAB and getting me involved with that. Jared was able to bless us with his knowledge about leadership and at the same time bless us with his sarcasm which I thought was absolutely hilarious. So I would like to thank everyone for their hard work and effort and I hope you all keep in touch.