



How has community service been a part of your life? Why is a college education important to you?

I haven't won the lottery. Nor have I seen the Seven Wonders of the World. I haven't witnessed a shooting star, and yet, I still consider myself to be extremely fortunate. I have, through my community and parent's support, received a wonderful and holistic education. I attended Chinquapin Preparatory School, a private school for low-income Houston youth, from 6th to 12th grade. There, I received a quality education in a nurturing environment. However, because all students attending Chinquapin receive a scholarship covering a majority of tuition, there is a huge emphasis on the school's motto of "Quid pro quo" or something for something. To instill a sense of ownership in its students, Chinquapin requires that all students give back to the school, everyday, by completing chores on campus. The students are, in effect, the custodians, landscapers, and even chef assistants. My sophomore year, I was fortunate enough to be entrusted with the role of chore captain. I was assigned an area of campus and a group of students that I was to supervise.

In addition, community service in the Greater Houston area has always been very important to me. Two years ago, my grandfather was diagnosed with Leukemia. Although his condition was once critical, through the magnificent care he received at MD Anderson Cancer Center, he is now more stable. I couldn't be more thankful to the people of MD Anderson for helping my grandfather in his fight against cancer and feel I owe the same care to the current patients. It is because of this, that I have committed to serve as a Pediatric Patient Advocate advocating for pediatric patient's rights and serving as a liaison between staff, family, and the patients. In addition, I am an unpaid, Public Relations and Development intern at "The Community Cloth" a microenterprise based in Houston that helps empower refugee women through the selling of artisan products. During my year studying abroad in Brazil, I volunteered as a English teacher for local students and built my own English as a Second Language curriculum.

As a first-generation college student, I feel a huge responsibility to my parents and grandparents to receive a college degree for their decades of sacrifice and hard work. In addition, I feel that higher education is the only way to position myself to have a successful career in founding my own non-profit in the Houston area. My education extends beyond me, it is for my family, it is for everyone who has believed in me-it is for Houston.