a collection of

Essays

first year experience & chancellor’s leadership corp
# Table of Contents

## Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Thea Zidonowitz Hoeft, Editor</th>
<th>p. 4, 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division Chief for Undergraduate Academic Advising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator for Personal Awareness Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Section 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Instructor Dobbins’ comments</th>
<th>p. 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Student Essays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Aron Adkins (section 3)</td>
<td>p. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Haniel Bismark Favela (section 3)</td>
<td>p. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Kevin Gardner (section 3)</td>
<td>p. 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Di’Mond Jackson (section 3)</td>
<td>p. 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Adriane Martin (section 3)</td>
<td>p. 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Chintan Patel (section 3)</td>
<td>p. 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Chintan Patel (section 3)</td>
<td>p. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Tyler Nicole Ayers (section 5)</td>
<td>p. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sandra Carmona-Garcia (section 5)</td>
<td>p. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Meghan Glogoza (section 5)</td>
<td>p. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Kayla Marie Grimm (section 5)</td>
<td>p. 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Zakery Mitchell (section 5)</td>
<td>p. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Darvin Vernell Mosley (section 5)</td>
<td>p. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Christian Turner (section 5)</td>
<td>p. 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Sydney Williams (section 5)</td>
<td>p. 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Cassidy Beaver (section 6)</td>
<td>p. 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Tye Garrett Boudra-Bland (section 6)</td>
<td>p. 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Courtney Sheree Edge (section 6)</td>
<td>p. 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Takilya Hampton (section 6)</td>
<td>p. 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Eric Johnson (section 6)</td>
<td>p. 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Breuna Jones (section 6)</td>
<td>p. 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Farah Nicole Malek (section 6)</td>
<td>p. 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Brendan Mitchell Talbert (section 6)</td>
<td>p. 29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
25. Mary Foster (section 7) p. 30
26. Abigail Leandra Green (section 7) p. 31
27. William Ryan Harris (section 7) p. 32
28. Derrick Moody (section 7) p. 33
29. Ashley Sutton (section 7) p. 34
30. Jalisha Willis (section 7) p. 35
31. Kalisha Willis (section 7) p. 36
32. Jacy Andrews (section 13) p. 37
33. Laura Elizabeth Cash (section 13) p. 38
34. Trevar Dye (section 13) p. 39
35. William Jordan Payne (section 13) p. 40
36. Brandon Sunthorn Rekow (section 13) p. 41
37. Katie Ruth Vanpool (section 13) p. 42

Section 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.</th>
<th>Instructor Shelby’s comments</th>
<th>p. 43</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Student Essays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Alexa Allen</td>
<td>p. 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ashley Alvarez</td>
<td>p. 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Alexis Angle</td>
<td>p. 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Marlaina Bean</td>
<td>p. 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Laura Britt</td>
<td>p. 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Madison Butterworth</td>
<td>p. 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Josh Eubank</td>
<td>p. 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Cassie Farr</td>
<td>p. 51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Christian Inman</td>
<td>p. 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Danielle Kelley</td>
<td>p. 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Daniel Keretz</td>
<td>p. 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Melissa Keretz</td>
<td>p. 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Kellie Landon</td>
<td>p. 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Samantha Lee</td>
<td>p. 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Kevin Lewis</td>
<td>p. 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Meghan McGrath</td>
<td>p. 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Ashley Perkins</td>
<td>p. 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Zachary Thigpen</td>
<td>p. 61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Section 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Co-Instructors Hampton’s and Steele’s comments</th>
<th>p. 63</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Student Essays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Orpa Ali</td>
<td>p. 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Diana Arias</td>
<td>p. 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Camillo Ballard</td>
<td>p. 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sarah Barfield</td>
<td>p. 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gregory Bolden</td>
<td>p. 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Carley Carrell</td>
<td>p. 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lauren Coggins</td>
<td>p. 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gabrielle Confer</td>
<td>p. 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Jessica Diaz Barriga</td>
<td>p. 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Britani Dwyer</td>
<td>p. 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Reggie Gavin</td>
<td>p. 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Victoria Golden</td>
<td>p. 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Gerardo Hernandez</td>
<td>p. 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Maija Jones</td>
<td>p. 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Jaimes Krutz</td>
<td>p. 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Erin Lampinen</td>
<td>p. 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Taurine Main</td>
<td>p. 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Victoria Mugambi</td>
<td>p. 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Maria Oates</td>
<td>p. 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Robyn Oglesby</td>
<td>p. 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Jesus Padilla</td>
<td>p. 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Mercades Parker</td>
<td>p. 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Micah Parker</td>
<td>p. 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Tavelyn Payne-Allen</td>
<td>p. 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Jayla Pounds</td>
<td>p. 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Matthew Shockey</td>
<td>p. 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Tyler Jonel Simpson</td>
<td>p. 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Hunter Spense</td>
<td>p. 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Megan Squires</td>
<td>p. 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Lauren Stiles</td>
<td>p. 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Spencer Sullivan</td>
<td>p. 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Maybelline Redix</td>
<td>p. 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Tatyana Thompson</td>
<td>p. 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Emily Watson</td>
<td>p. 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Cassidy Webb</td>
<td>p. 98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Kayla West</td>
<td>p. 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Robert Garrett Whisenhunt</td>
<td>p. 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Phillip White</td>
<td>p. 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Elizabeth Wilson</td>
<td>p. 102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Jennifer Yang</td>
<td>p. 103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Francisco Zamora</td>
<td>p. 104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First-Year Student Writing, service learning, & college success

Introduction

Written and verbal competency is central to University of Arkansas at Little Rock’s core curriculum. For all students to be engaged in learning the power of the written word, the concept of “writing across the curriculum” has been supported with a variety of attempts to achieve the concept through curriculum integration.

Geared toward the aims of supporting and nurturing writing in first-year students, these essays are of the student’s reflections on their service learning or learning about strategies that assist with the critical transition to college, through a personal awareness course.

This project supports institutional purpose in meeting the written competency core curriculum requirement through an academic discipline. It further demonstrates to first-year students the notion that writing is important and that UALR teaches and expects students to write throughout their academic careers.

Description

The ideation for this project began in the spring 2003 term when UALR eliminated the Written Proficiency of English Exam (WPE) graduation requirement, not to negate the importance of the core competency but to reassess writing within the disciplines. In the Personal Awareness courses, especially PEAW 1300 The First-Year Experience and PEAW 1124 Chancellor’s Leadership Corps, the opportunity exists to combine established elements of the curriculum in supporting the process of students learning to write. This would be enhanced and strengthened by producing a collection of the student’s written work. The collection would, from one perspective, demonstrate how much value is placed on a first-year student’s written work. The collection also has the potential to be used as an artifact in future student portfolios, demonstrating individuals learning about the writing process.

Objectives

To support the discovery of the writing process in freshmen students.

To connect freshmen students’ writing assignments to a service learning experience.

To connect freshmen students’ writing assignments in the fall 2013 to the established learning objectives in PEAW 1300, the First-Year Experience course or PEAW 1124 the Chancellor’s Leadership Corps.

To contribute to the assessment of the student’s service learning experience.
The three instructors involved, embraced this writing project with little hesitation and committed to providing numerous opportunities for their students to write in meaningful ways. Dedicated instructors willing to take on this additional project are an asset to UALR’s First-Year initiatives reflecting best practices worldwide, in selecting the most qualified, committed individuals to teach these courses.

Learning from our experiences in fall 2013, the instructors adjusted classroom writing assignments, deadlines and provided ample opportunity for students to practice submitting drafts for review using e-mail. Utilizing the technology of computers, instructors submitted their student’s final essays via e-mail to the UALR Office of Communications. This process was designed to assist in the graphic design and layout of the preliminary draft of the collection. It was not without its challenges due to the incompatibility of various software packages. Students with new laptops, already loaded with the latest software sent their essays to faculty and staff which had difficulty opening the documents.

Time management skills are one of the learning objectives of all courses. These skills are frequently mentioned by students as either having been learned to some degree in high school or improved as a result of the PEAW 1124/1300 courses. It was not possible to include essays submitted by students after the established submission date or those that do not submit the required final draft to their instructor. It would appear that some students can continue to improve their organizational and time management skills in relation to meeting the necessary deadline and improve their essay.

It is also evident that the student writing reflects upon their self expectations as they transition into the university culture from high school. Their comfort zone is the familiar in referencing of family, high school graduation and friends. The old versus the new is a frequently mentioned theme.

Social connections and concerns about “fitting in,” “making new friends,” feeling comfortable” in class and at the university are common self-expressions in the essays. Their future aspirations, hopes and adjustments to college life are celebrated.

It is interesting to note that the students mention the new friends and re-acquaintances that they made through the PEAW courses and service learning experiences. “Getting involved,” being engaged in coursework and the community seems to lessen the isolation of the unfamiliar as they more towards the second semester of college life.

It has been a pleasure to collaborate and share the excitement of the instructors and students! I hope you will enjoy these student essays keeping in mind that the process of writing was at the heart of this project as first-year students participated in curriculum designed to support their transition to college.

Thea Zidonowitz Hoeft, Ed.D.
Division Chief for Undergraduate Academic Advising/
Coordinator of Personal Awareness Courses
I am Trakenya Gordon Dobbins. I have always had a great desire to positively impact and assist students to succeed. This desire is personal because I am a first-generation college student. I am the first in my family to attend and graduate from college as well as the first to get a doctorate degree. It has been my passion since graduating college to assist other students like me. I therefore chose a career in higher education. After having worked on college campuses for approximately 10-13 years in administrative capacities, I chose to make a career change and teach!

Teaching the First Year Experience classes this semester has definitely been an eye-opening and personal awareness journey for both my students and me. While expecting to play the role of coach to my students along this journey, I have found my students coaching me. We have had a fantastic voyage of goal-setting, learning and studying, and career exploration.

Throughout this experience, we have discussed reasons for attending UALR. We have discussed the traits of a master student; a student possessing the skills necessary to success in college. We have also discussed the most important and impactful moments learned throughout the class. Each of these discussions were written as separate assignments, and later fused together, resulting in the following essays written by my students. These essays detail their journey throughout the First Year Experience class this semester.

It must be noted that the students in the following pages represent students from all five of my classes, who submitted high-quality essays during the first draft date! These students represent various ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds such as being African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Iranian, and athletes and may have any of the following characteristics and qualities: first generation being the first in their family to attend college; adult learners juggling work and home life; students from other states; or students who lived in Arkansas and wanted to stay close to home. Some of the students represented in the following essays were chosen for having shown the most improvement over the weeks we’ve spent together this semester. But overall, all of the students discuss impactful things learned from attending UALR and the First Year Experience class!
Hello there! My name is Aron Adkins and I am a student at UALR from Benton, Arkansas. UALR attracted me due to its standings with its Chemistry program.

First Year Experience has offered me some valuable skills that will aid me in enduring college. A piece of knowledge that I cherished learning throughout my time in class, was managing credit scores. This was very beneficial, considering that I had no prior knowledge of what a credit score was even used for. Something more prominently associated with college, stress management, was another very crucial lesson learned. Stress hits like a tidal wave with the prestigious demands of college. However, this lesson minimizes how stress affects you, and can make college life a lot easier. The in-class tasks and projects encourage professional development. There are plenty of group related projects that teach cooperation, which is necessary in mostly all work fields.

Throughout the time I’ve spent at UALR, I’ve learned a few things that have been very essential assets in this transitional phase in my life. I have learned to be self-dependent. I have to rely on myself as far as daily maintenance goes. I have learned how to prioritize. Not all things will conveniently line up with one another. I have to change and reschedule things according to importance. I am successfully getting the important things done. Along with these things, I have also learned to adjust well with a very broad range of people in a diverse community.

I participated at the Pulaski county Habitat for Humanity for the service learning project. In conjunction with other tasks in class, this was another pleasant opportunity to practice cooperation. It encouraged me to get involved in a community of people. Service learning teaches one to value true work, which is work without monetary incentive. I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience with University of Arkansas at Little Rock.
Haniel Bismark Favela is my full name and I was born and raised in El Naranjo, Durango, Mexico. My family and I migrated to this country in search of opportunity and a better future. I am first generation in this country and first in my family to pursue a Bachelor’s Degree. That makes me proud. I choose to attend UALR because it is accredited for my major of interest and it is near home.

So far after this first semester at UALR, I have learned tolerance towards diversity. Diversity is not only a person’s skin color. It is their culture, ethnicity, values, and even the way they think. They say college is the best stage of your life but, it can turn into a nightmare if you don’t manage your time wisely. I learned how to better adjust my classes for next semester, considering every minute. Academically, I have learned how to properly write research papers in APA format and I am expeditiously catching on to algebra.

First Year Experience has been very useful for me throughout this first semester. I learned note and test taking skills. Since notes move fast during presentations, I’ve learned to review material before or between classes to have a better understanding of the subject. First Year Experience also taught me to “fake it till I make it,” meaning to pretend to enjoy class, assignments, or projects in order to get it finished and receive credit. I appreciate all the guest speakers that visited our class as well. I learned how important it is to have good credit and also easy ways to build it. I now know where to sign up for jobs and internships in my career area as well, thanks to First Year Experience.

I’ve met a lot of good people and I’ve learned multiple skills to become a master student. Overall my experience this semester at UALR has been a rewarding challenge.
My name is Kevin Gardner. I am originally from Arlington, Tennessee. I have chosen the University of Arkansas at Little Rock as my school because it is close, it has a low student—teacher ratio compared to larger schools, and because I have read that the faculty are mostly professionals in their field of study and regularly provide unparalleled knowledge into the courses that they teach.

This semester I believe that I have learned to be a successful college student. I have been able to make friends with good people and have learned techniques that will aid in the success of my endeavors. Before I started school, I was under the impression that college was extremely difficult and that professors did not care about the success of their students. I have learned that this is far from true. Every instructor that I have met is extremely caring, wants you to succeed, and will aid in your success every chance they get. The First Year Experience class has taught me to be a better learner; it has helped me realize different ways of doing things that are more beneficial to the type of person that I am. More importantly, I believe that the class has taught me how to be a better person. I’ve taken more from the class than what is in the curriculum. I’ve been able to take the information provided to me and apply it to other areas outside of school; this has allowed me to grow as an individual.

I completed my Service Learning hours at Habitat For Humanity. This organization takes great pride in providing for others. I have been shown that selflessness is a way of life and provides joy not only to the people that you’re helping, but to you as well. I plan to remain a volunteer in the future so that I can continue to help touch the lives of others.

My college experience so far has been outstanding. UALR has surpassed all of my expectations. I believe that I will continue to grow and develop throughout college and my career, and I am honored that UALR is the school making it possible.
My name is Di’Mond Jackson. I was born and raised in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the Pelican State. I chose to attend University of Arkansas at Little Rock because of its women’s basketball program: I am a proud Trojan on the Women’s Basketball Team.

This semester I have learned three important things. First, I have learned not to judge a book by its cover. At this university I was exposed to a variety of people that were not as stereotypical as popular belief. Second, I have learned that interaction with other students make for a better learning experience. Speaking up more throughout class has made my learning experience easier in college. Third, I have learned that I had to stay on top of my work: procrastination is definitely not key!

I have learned three key items from First Year Experience that I believe will impact my life. I have learned about credit in general, a concept I was not familiar with. I have learned key skills that make for a more adept and masterful student; being attentive in class, paying attention to key concepts the professors point out, and communicating with other students. I have also become more aware of how important goals are for actually achieving what you want.

My service learning was completed at the Boys & Girls Club, here in Little Rock. Through my service learning, I have attained a better grasp with working with children. At the Boys & Girls Club, I assisted children with their homework and from this, I had to practice patience. I also learned how to play 4-year old children billiards—the kids version is much different and easier than the standard and official game of pool played by adults. Last, I learned that some people are fortunate and some are not. I was raised with after-school help and a positive place I could go to keep myself out of trouble. This first semester at UALR has honestly been a true growing experience—from my classes to becoming a better person—I can see the positives being generated each and every day.
My name is Adriane Martin. I was born and raised in Little Rock Arkansas with my mom and brother. Although, I am not the first generation to go to college, I will be the first to complete college with a Bachelor’s Degree. I chose UALR to educate me because I wanted to attend a school with a good Nursing program and also to stay close to home.

While attending UALR I’ve learned not only that the field I want to be in is tough business but also, I’ve learned how to set a goal and even through stress and tears to not give up. I’ve learned that there is a whole new perspective of the world that I have yet to grasp, mostly UALR’s Composition 1 class has taught me this. From First Year Experience I have learned more about several real life situations that I had already gone through like job interviews, resumes and dealing with credit cards. This class helped me realize the mistakes I’ve made in those areas and how I can correct them. The thing I learned from this class that will impact my college career is the tip that if you learn your professor it will help you pass the class. I completed my service learning at the Little Rock Children’s Hospital. Completing those 15 hours taught me discipline, responsibility, and how networking can be fun. My overall experience this semester at UALR was not only life changing but also a big news flash!
My name is Chintan Patel from Gujarat, India. My family and I moved to the US when I was sixteen. I am currently pursuing B.S in Biology and I choose to attend UALR, because it was close to my home, I got a scholarship, and my older brother studies here.

There are many things that I have learned this semester: time management, communication, technological and some writing skills. I had to learn time management skills because when I have assignments from all my classes due in the same week I have to manage my time wisely and get the most important assignment done first. I had to learn communication skills because English is my second language, so the more I practice I will get better and better in speaking and interacting with U.S. people. I had to learn technological skills because in some classes the assignments are due online which was completely different for me. I had to learn some writing skills because in many of my classes I have to write different types of essays and scripts.

From FYE class I have learned a variety of things. I’ve learned how to communicate with others, how to work in group projects, how to take better notes, different levels of learning and style, SQR3 method, memory strategies, how to apply for a future job, how to prepare for a job interview, and how to create a cover letter and resume. The most important thing I’ve learned is the S.M.A.R.T goal system. All of these things will impact my college career or life.

I completed my service learning with UALR Children International. I learned great things including computer skills and interpersonal skills. I had to put data into the computer and communicate with children and adults. While attending UALR, I’ve learned so many great things and will continue to take advantage of opportunities that may come forth!
I am Jessica Yutuc and I grew up just a few miles for UALR in Little Rock, Arkansas. I chose to attend UALR because the university’s nursing program has a good reputation.

During Fall 2013, UALR has taught me many different things. Though it may seem miniscule in the whole scheme of working towards becoming a nurse, my history class has allowed me to know there is such thing as a blue book. Now if I need one for a more advanced course I can worry about studying for the test as instead of trying to find the thing to take the test on. Another experience that UALR allowed me to learn from is, if I have classes with only ten minutes between them, make sure the buildings are not a whole campus length apart. The last lesson that UALR has taught me is that not everybody can live in silence, but like watching movies and screaming.

The one class that I was most reluctant to take has actually taught me a lot more than I first thought. The first thing that I learned was how to calculate a college GPA, which will help insure I keep my financial aid. Another lesson that this class taught me was how to make a resume and cover letter. The last one was how to interview for a career position. I have had many interviews and this has allowed me to know why those failed, which I now can change.

The place that I received my Service Learning hours was at CARE for Animals. One thing I learned from volunteering there is that small dogs become anxious when they are held around larger dogs. Another is that even though the place tries hard to benefit animals, they are a non-profit organization with only two employees. The main people who work for them are only volunteers. The last thing that I learned was that it is not a good thing for an animal lover to help on adoption day, because bringing home every dog is the only thing you think about. Surprisingly, I have enjoyed UALR, from its environment to its professors.
My name is Tyler Nicole Ayers. I am from North Little Rock, AR and I graduated from North Little Rock High School-West Campus. I chose to attend UALR because it was a good local University. I wasn’t ready to leave home quite yet, so UALR was a good way for me to have the college experience and still be able to live at home where I am comfortable.

A few things I have learned this semester were useful study tips, learning how to set attainable goals, and note taking strategies. When I first entered PEAW class I didn’t really know how to study efficiently. I learned numerous techniques as well as strategies to help me increase the information I retain while studying. I also learned how to set SMART goals; which are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely Goals. This process helps to be more realistic while setting goals: it brings about questions like “Is this goal timely?” or “Is this goal really realistic?” I also learned new note taking strategies.

For this semester we were required to do 15 hours of community service hours. I chose to do my service learning at NLRHS-Freshman Campus. Seeing the impact Ms. Bell made on her students was eye opening. I never thought about how much a teacher can influence their students. She showed me how important our students are, because they’re our future. I was teacher’s aide for a freshman English class. I got a lot out of my time helping the kids with their work. I helped grade papers and tutored students when needed. Overall, this semester has been a fulfilling and an exciting time for me.
My hyphenated last name connected with my first name creates Sandra Carmona-Garcia, showing only a part of who I am and who I will become. I was born in Mexico but moved to Little Rock. At eight, confused and ignorant about the new culture and language, I was eager to learn. I quickly learned the language and caught up in school. Soon, I became an honor student who was enthusiastic about becoming a first generation college student.

As college approached I didn’t have all the documentation needed to get financial aid, so I enrolled into UALR because aside from being an outstanding college it is also close to home and it allows me to live at home and work while getting my education.

At UALR I have grown spiritually, mentally and physically. I learned that if I want to be the best person I can be then I have to believe in myself and continue to motive myself. I have learned that my brain can only take in so much information at a time and that is why it is important to use the studying techniques and tips I learned in PEAW. Before college, I was terrified because I didn’t know if my body was going to be able to keep up with a busy schedule. I learned that my body does have the strength to allow me to attend classes, to work, and to do homework. However, I wouldn’t have been able to learn and do those things if it wasn’t for PEAW. It taught me that I have to manage my time in order to get things done. Second, it afforded me to find out I am a visual learner, which improved my learning skills by about 30%. Also, I learned the importance of dinning etiquette.

Aside from PEAW I also learned a lot through my Service Learning with Girl Scouts. I learned that leadership skills are learned at an early age and that great leaders are created through teamwork. Also, that we have a great impact in the community and every minute of our service goes a long way. Aside from stress break downs, I have ventured through countless experiences this semester that will shape who I am and who I will become.
My name is Meghan Glogoza, and I am from St. Louis, Missouri. My purpose for attending UALR was to be on the Women’s Swimming and Diving Team, but UALR Nursing Program is also appealing to me as well.

From my first semester of college at UALR, I have learned what classes interest me the most and how I can use those classes to benefit my major, Nursing. From college, I have also learned that striving for perfection is not always a realistic goal and that I have to accept otherwise and learn from my mistakes. Finally, UALR has taught me how to avoid procrastination and work ahead when possible.

While UALR has surrounded me with many new life experiences, this class in particular has also taught me new things. First of all, the Career Exploration Project (CEP) helped me consider several new options for possible careers. As much as I love the idea of being a Nurse, thinking of other possibilities has helped me consider my future more in depth. The CEP allowed me to realize that what I truly want is to work with kids, and there are several other career options that would allow me to do so. FYE has also taught me new methods of studying, along with new ways of writing notes. Lastly, I have learned how to apply for a job, make a great impression, and start a successful career.

For my Service Learning, I worked at the Children’s Hospital, playing with kids with mental or physical disabilities in a pool. From my volunteering, I gained a greater understanding of the saying “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” I have also learned that I interact best with kids on a daily basis, considering I am basically a kid myself. Lastly, volunteering has reminded me how fortunate I am to have the abilities I have been blessed with that so many wonderful kids will never get the chance to experience. Ultimately, my first college semester can be best summarized by the word eye-opening.
My name is Kayla Marie Grimm. I am from St. Louis, Missouri. I chose to attend the University of Arkansas at Little Rock because of swimming and the many academic opportunities provided.

This semester while attending UALR I learned that I can’t procrastinate, like I did in high school. If I put assignments and studying off, the work load would become overwhelming. In order to prevent this, I made sure to do my assignments when I received them. I have also learned that attending all of my classes is important. Anytime I skipped a class, I would miss important information that would be on a test or quiz later on in the semester. Another thing that I have learned is getting to class on time is important. Not only do many teachers count people late, which can lower your grade, but also it is disruptive and important information, such as test dates and upcoming assignments, could be missed.

One thing that I have learned from First Year Experience is my learning style. My learning style is kinesthetic and knowing this has helped me learn in my other classes by teaching me the best way to take notes and tests. I have also learned about the different types of tests that professors will give and the strategies to conquer the tests. One of the most important things that I learned in First Year Experience is how to construct a resume and cover letter. This is a skill that will not only help me in college, but will help me the rest of my life.

I completed my service at Arkansas Children’s Hospital, helping children with special needs swim and exercise. From this amazing experience, I have learned how to communicate with a variety of different people, how to use my time wisely, and how rewarding and important it is to help other people. This semester at UALR has been very difficult, but rewarding.
My name is Zakery Mitchell and my hometown is Hampton, Virginia, but I have lived in Benton, Arkansas for ten years so it feels more like home to me than Hampton. I chose to attend UALR because the university treats students from my high school very well and because the city of Little Rock is close to home.

My first semester has taught me the importance of the lessons I learned at my high school, ASMSA (Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts). At ASMSA I learned that academics can break you down over the long weeks of a semester but in the end, staying on top of your assignments, despite how tired and worn out you might be, is the best decision. I also learned that each class is a different beast and it is necessary to come up with a different survival strategy for each. Another important lesson this semester has taught me is that college campuses are big and you need to quickly familiarize yourself with the campus in order to stay on top of things.

First Year Experience has taught me that in order to be successful in a class I might have to do things that I feel are far from my comfort zone, such as getting on a public bus for the first time in order to reach an important interview or volunteering site. I also learned it is important to make as many good references as possible so when I finally go out into my desired career field, I can look like someone who has, at the very least, been liked by my superiors. My third lesson that I was taught was I have to be up to date in what is occurring at my university so I don’t look like a fish out of water when the entire texture of the college changes.

I did my service learning at the Nature Conservancy where I learned the importance of public transportation and the amount of work required in teaching a burn crew. While there I also bettered my office skills. My experience at UALR this semester has been a great one, as I have learned many required skill sets that will help me in my post-student life.
My name is Darvin Vernell Mosley and this is my third and final attempt at attaining a degree from school. I was born and raised right here in Little Rock, AR. I choose to go to UALR because no other school close to where I lived offered my major.

Just by doing one semester here on campus I’ve learned so much sitting in one class than I ever did in my lifetime. Interacting with different people from different backgrounds was a major priority of mine—I needed to build up my social skills—and I know that is possible here. Another one is actually being able to come to a real university to get my education rather than just some building or online course where all you had to do was log in for points. Having that one-on-one time with my professors is the main reason that I am staying ahead of my studies.

Since being in my First Year Experience class, I know that I have a lot of information implanted in my brain that I can take with me in and out of school. Building up my resume to make it up-to-par with my competition, would have to be one of my biggest accomplishments. Another one was grasping the knowledge and understanding the different levels of credit cards. The last one, of course was the career exploration project. This one really helped me hone in on exactly what I want to do in my major.

My service learning was the best. I was able to go back to my old stomping grounds from my high school days and went to P.A.R.K. (Positive Atmosphere Reaches Kids) and help out in the mail room there. Also I was able to get my hands dirty unloading items off of the truck for Habitat for Humanity.

If there was one thing that I could say about only my first semester here at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, it would simply be, mind-blowing.
I am Christian Turner from Sherwood, Arkansas. I chose to attend UALR because of their EIT program in Construction Management and Civil Engineering while maintaining that close-to-home sense of security I wouldn’t be able to get somewhere far off.

While attending UALR, I have discovered many new things about myself. First, I was never sure what I wanted to major in for college. While taking classes and talking to other people, I soon learned that I wanted to take the path to becoming a civil engineer. Although at times I am still quite unsure if that’s what I want to do for the rest of my life, I am still pursuing that career. Moreover, I have learned from many long talks with my Resident Assistant that many people still have the sensation of uncertainty creep about although they may be far along in their studies. The most important thing I have learned is responsibility. Being responsible for my own time management, studies, and daily activities is something I have experienced quite a bit of in the duration that I have been in college.

There are several things from my FYE class that I think are valuable. I have been taught how to dress and act appropriately in a business situation. I have also learned the proper way to create a resume which will benefit in obtaining that career I have set my goals towards. However, the fundamental concept I have been taught in my FYE class is self-awareness and I have learned of the opportunities available to students here at UALR.

I successfully completed service learning with Habitat for Humanity. Through service, I learned that communication can affect a positive change in the community, there are many values to be learned by volunteering, and that a lot of small things can add up over time to make a big impact. What’s great about service learning is that you really are doing what the name says. So far I have seen a brighter future ahead of me since I have been at UALR.
My name is Sydney Williams, I am from Little Rock, Arkansas, and I am also a teen mom. I received my diploma from Mills High School and chose to attend UALR because I wasn’t quite ready to “leave the nest” yet.

Attending college for the first time is an eye-opening experience. I have learned: I must have a realistic schedule, I’m responsible for knowing my grades, and friends are very important to have. Having a realistic schedule is very important. My schedule gave me no time to socialize, relax, or most importantly, EAT! Second, none of the professors will go out of their way to find me and let me know I am failing their class. Most of them will drop a student, or worse... fail a student. Last, having a social life with classmates is important. I may need them in case I’ve missed something from a professor, or even if I want to just hang out and get my mind off of school.

Three things I have learned from PEAW are S.M.A.R.T goals, my professors don’t have to like me, and how to study more efficiently. S.M.A.R.T is an acronym—Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely—to keep me focused on the task at hand. Another thing I’ve learned that will definitely stick with me is that my professor doesn’t have to like me. It made me realize that I should perhaps attend class, make sure I understand the information, and leave. The last thing that I will take from this class is study habits. I’ve learned that studying leads to understanding. When studying something I’ll have a better chance of understanding it.

I completed my service learning through a privately owned business, Educational Research and Consulting. By volunteering here, I learned: I don’t want to work a clerical job, networking is imperative, and success has different meanings. Overall, my experience at UALR has been positive; the professors are very patient and understanding.
My name is Cassidy Beaver and I am from the small town of Hampton, Arkansas. It has one red light and mostly contains dirt roads. I chose to attend the UALR because I wanted more for myself than to be stuck in a small town, struggling pay-check to pay-check; I came here to pursue my dream career, Dermatology.

My first semester at UALR I have learned: to always keep a positive attitude, because you never know what doors will open by making a good first impression; to let my voice be heard, because it matters; and to never give up, no matter what life brings. These three things have helped me get through the day because they remind me that my smile, voice, and determination can get me anywhere. I have also learned so many things in Dr. Dobbins’ class that will benefit me in my career, college experience, and life. A few things: my image, character, and reputation can get me where I need to be. A good image can create a good impression. Good character reflects a person who watches what they say before their words become actions. Lastly, “we will be known forever by the tracks we leave,” our reputation.

While completing my 15 hours of Service Learning at the Morning Meadow Animal Rescue in Fordyce, Arkansas, I learned the joy received by giving back to my community, seeing how much it helps by just taking a few hours out of my day to help others, and how much it can make a difference. It was a wonderful experience to volunteer and help others at the rescue and it is definitely something that I look forward to doing again. My overall experience at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock has been incredible and there is nothing I would change about it.
I am Tye Garrett Boudra-Bland and I call Hot Springs, Arkansas home. I chose to attend the University of Arkansas at Little Rock because they offered me a great scholarship and I really enjoyed my campus tour.

While attending UALR I have learned both from my classes and my personal experiences here on campus, a main one being that it is solely up to me to have the drive to get my homework and assignments done. But the second lesson that I have taken full advantage of is that there are plenty of people on campus who are willing and able to help me in my journey through college. Another, more light-hearted, lesson that I have been forced to learn is how to do my own laundry!

In First Year Experience I have learned a few things about myself and how to keep my head afloat in the seemingly deep and scary waters of the real world. Since some of those terrors are credit cards, scores, and reports, when Dr. Dobbins brought in Mrs. Tina Ward to teach us about them I was very grateful. Another thing I learned from this class is that I am an auditory learner and how to become a well-rounded learner. One more important thing I learned in FYE is that teachers are willing to assist when I ask them for help.

While completing my 15 hours of service learning at the Habitat for Humanity in Benton, I learned that serving others is a very humbling experience. It taught me that not everyone can afford a good home or even have the money to tidy up an apartment. I also learned that Habitat for Humanity doesn’t just give the houses to people, the owners have to work for them. Another thing that I learned is that mandatory volunteering is not a bad thing. It really showed me how much of an impact I can make on the lives of others. Overall, my experience at UALR has been interesting and eye-opening.
My name is Courtney Sheree Edge. I was born and grew up in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas. I chose to further my education at UALR because it offers a diverse learning experience that is unlike any other university or private college in Arkansas.

Through the exposure of UALR's diverse population I have learned how to effectively overcome stereotypes and build relationships with people who are not similar to me. Through involvement on campus, I have maintained connections with other students that have proven to aid me in my studying and managing stress through UALR’s recreational activities. Through my experience I have gained a greater sense of independence.

While attending Dr. Dobbin's First Year Experience class I found her curriculum on time management, test and note taking strategies, and forming relationships with professors to be very beneficial. After discussing the topic and using the given tips for time management and note taking and test strategies, I have found that I am no longer stressed and pressured for time, I can effectively take notes over lectures, and I can study and adequately adapt to any test my professors give me. Learning is a lifelong experience, therefore note-taking and organization will impact the overall learning experience. Dr. Dobbins’s also introduced and stressed the importance of forming positive relationships with a few professors every semester. She helped me realize that college isn’t just about passing tests or scooting by in classes. The relationships you form can be very beneficial and aid students throughout their careers and college lives.

I volunteered at Sherwood Animal Shelter for my Service Learning. Through my volunteer work I gained responsibility, a feeling of purpose, and skills to support success in my career. While working at the shelter I learned punctuality, communication skills, and leadership skills. My experience at UALR was exceptionally beneficial.
My name is Takilya Hampton, I am from Holly Grove, Arkansas, and I went to school in Stuttgart, Arkansas. I am the youngest of five siblings and the last of five to go to college. I chose to attend the UALR because I would be close to my family—my sister goes here—and because it’s a great school.

I have learned from being at UALR that there are a lot of different resources to get help and people willing to help if I ask. I learned that there are different clubs to join to make my experience here great. I have also learned that my classes and professors are what I make them out to be. From this class I was able to learn how to study using different techniques, the 30 plus 3 or Ten-Minute methods. I learned the biggest mistakes students make and how to properly write a cover letter.

I completed some of my service learning hours at Boo at the Zoo. I had an awesome time with the people I worked with. I learned how to work as a team and get the job done with no hassle. People may not have always wanted to listen to me but I had to stick with what I was told and handle situations in the best way possible. I have also learned that I should act as if I enjoy something even if it’s not the case because there is always someone watching me. To always be positive and smile is another thing I learned, because if I’m not happy being there, it makes others not want to talk to me or ride the ride I was responsible for. My overall experience here at UALR has been overwhelming, yet great.
My name is Eric Johnson, I am from Pine Bluff Arkansas and I am a Civil/Construction Engineering major. I chose to attend UALR because it has one of the best engineering programs in the nation, and because it’s close to home.

This semester has really helped me realize how far I want to go in life and how close I am to achieving these goals. It made me put everything in perspective of what is and what isn’t really possible. Dr. Dobbins really gave me the information I needed along with real-life situations to plan for the future and how to be successful at reaching these goals.

Another thing I learned is that time is one of the most precious things to have during the semester. I had a bad habit of procrastinating assignments until there was almost no time left to accomplish them at all. When we discussed our time management techniques in class, Dr. Dobbins helped me come up with better ways to improve my methods and helped me realize my best times to do the tasks that needed to be done during the day.

Preparing for the job I wanted was a major helper this semester. Instead of planning after I receive my degree, it was better to start researching now so I could keep up with the requirements to hold the title I plan on having. The Career Exploration Project guided me in the right direction and provided me with resources to get the information I needed for my career.

I completed my service learning with the UALR Race for the Cure Team. Completing this helped me learn that everyone needs help sometimes whether they admit it or not. Giving to others is always better than receiving, and it matured me and helped me grow. This was my best semester of school I’ve ever had, and I can’t wait till the next one.
My name is Breuna Jones I am from Little Rock, Arkansas. I am attending UALR to get my Bachelors in Nursing. I chose UALR, or college period because I want to make a good future for myself and I want to be in charge of my life.

What I have learned overall while attending UALR is I’m not alone in this. If I need help with anything big or small there are people here to help. For example the Writing Center: the people who work there have helped me become a better writer and minimized my stress. Three main problem areas I had this semester were three main things I learned from First Year Experience: time management, money management, and many new test-taking skills. These three things will definitely help me in my future career.

I completed my service learning at St. Vincent’s hospital. This allowed me to be in the environment I plan to work in after finishing college. It also it allowed me to watch other nurses. I got to see firsthand what nurses do from a day to day basis. My overall experience at UALR has been wonderful.
My name is Farah Nicole Malek and I am from Little Rock, AR. I am half Iranian and half American. I chose to attend UALR because it is close to my family and friends, and it is a good learning community.

Three things I have learned while attending UALR is how to study, manage time, and live on my own. Before I started attending UALR, I was never confident when I was studying. I could never remember what I had studied. Since I came to UALR, I learned different study methods that help me. I also learned how to manage time better. Now I have time for all my homework and time with my friends. The last thing is I learned how to live on my own. This is the first time I have ever lived away from home: I learned how to cope on my own and be responsible about it.

Three things I have learned from this class are how to do an interview, how to make my resume, and how properly eat at the dinner table. Now that I know what the interviewer is expecting from me, I feel more confident about going to an interview. I learned how to make my resume, which I had no idea how to make until this class. Learning how to properly eat at the dinner table is also helpful for the future.

I did my service learning hours at Suicide Prevention Week and at Little Rock Animal Village. From this experience, I learned how to passionately care for others, including animals. It feels good to help others who are in need. My overall experience at UALR this semester has been pretty good. I haven’t made very many new friends, but I have learned a lot and been making A’s and B’s.
My name is Brendan Mitchell Talbert. I was born and raised here in Arkansas in the town of Hensley, but my family was from Sheridan and that is where I have some of my fondest memories. I chose to come here to UALR because it is a well respected college close to home.

Three valuable things I learned while attending UALR are how to be more open with others, how to keep up with my responsibilities, and that college is as easy as I make it. Being open with others was, at the beginning, hard for me. My experience at UALR has helped me get over the worst of that problem. Keeping up with my responsibilities was never really a problem because I never had responsibilities like I have since attending college. These newfound responsibilities have been hard to balance in with my life, but I have risen to the challenge and I will fight for the best outcome. While here at UALR I found that college truly is as easy as I make it. Only if I struggle and fight to do my best can I succeed in a life where everyone only wants the best, which is why I am going to do just that.

Three things I learned from the first year experience class that will impact my life are what my career will be (Wildlife Biologist), what that career entails (keeping nature safe), and how to go about getting that career.

I completed my service learning with the Friends of Jenkins Ferry Historical Preservation society. What I learned while was my extended genealogy, the land on which the battles of the civil war, during the battle of Jenkins Ferry, was fought on, and information on the battle itself. My overall experience this semester at UALR has been enlightening, informative, and fun.
I am Mary Foster from Little Rock and I am a single mother. I chose to attend UALR because of its fantastic teaching program, of its location in the largest school district in Arkansas, and how convenient the campus is to my hectic life.

This semester, my mind has been expanded and stretched through writing papers, hands on research, and working with different people from different backgrounds to accomplish like tasks. Each class has helped me think of life differently. My Comp II class has helped me think differently about argument and how I should open my mind to both sides of it before being close-minded and only considering one side, thus actually actively listening to the news and being more politically involved. My Intro to Theatre and Dance class has helped me understand the theatrics of life. Theatricality is in everything from church services to the way the President wants to deliver a message to a certain demographic.

In FYE I have obtained new skills to apply to studying, life habits, and prioritizing. The class has provided valuable information and lectures regarding attaining internships, how to dress, deliver, and execute interviews, and handling credit. As a non-traditional student, I have had real life experience interviewing for jobs and handling credit, however, through the speakers in FYE, I have learned the official and proper way to handle these situations in the future.

For service learning I had the opportunity to read to blind residents on our property and assist them in getting groceries. The one interaction I’ve had so far has opened my eyes to realize how someone lives everyday life without their sense of sight. Understanding how different their everyday life is compared to mine has been very humbling and makes me feel guilty for complaining about anything. If I had to describe my experience at UALR so far, I would say that it has been a very eye opening, mind expanding experience that I am excited to wake up to everyday.
I am Abigail Leandra Green from a little town in Oklahoma named Glenpool. I chose to come to UALR because I was offered a cross country and track scholarship. I have met the most amazing people and had so much fun at UALR.

I learned so much my first few months in Arkansas. UALR has brought me out of my comfort zone of a small town. People say never judge a book by its cover: UALR has taught me to always remember that and to also accept diversity. I have an incredibly busy schedule with classes, practice, homework, and social activities. With all that going on sleep is usually not one of my top priorities. But I have learned, some days the hard way, going to class without much sleep makes it hard to focus. Sometimes it is also hard to focus if a professor is boring or monotonous. So I have learned to take good notes in class.

From FYE I learned better time management skills/strategies. I did sports in high school but I never had any homework. Now I just have to balance it all more effectively. I also learned more things about my intended career, pediatrics, through our Career Exploration Project. I did research and asked questions that I normally wouldn’t think about. The one thing I will definitely never forget from Dr. Dobbins: she taught me to “fake it till I make it,” a good trick to getting through those difficult classes, finding out exactly what the professor wants, and just doing it.

I volunteered at SpectUALR, Race for the Cure, and the Arkansas Food Bank. I learned that many of the people at these places are not getting paid, they are volunteering out of the goodness of their heart. The managers there are just so happy to see you when you arrive and to have help. The best thing was being able to talk to different people in the community, even if it was just a small elevator conversation, many people just wanted to talk and tell their stories. I have learned a lot this semester, even though I am 4.5 hours away from my family, I wouldn’t want to be at any other college than UALR. I can’t wait for the months and years ahead of me.
My name is William Ryan Harris and I am a student in First Year Experience this year. I was born and raised in Fort Smith, Arkansas. I hope to attain my law degree after graduation. I chose to attend UALR for the opportunity to play baseball as well as attend a four year university.

While attending UALR this year, the main skill I have learned is time management. Time management is so crucial due to all of the activities I could be involved in at college. Homework, sports, and work, all play a dynamic role in the life of any typical college student. Also, I have found myself more conservative with money at college. You start to figure out the things in life that are really important when you have to spend your own money. Thirdly, in high school, it is very possible to procrastinate and get away with it. If you attempt to have this same mindset in college, it will swallow you whole.

This class has instilled three things in me. First, career opportunities are abundant. We have looked into many career possibilities and I have discovered many that I didn't even consider an option. Secondly, the concept of “fake it until you make it.” There is always going to be the class that you don't like, and you are going to have to just grind through it and make a good grade, regardless of the situation. Lastly, the cost of living: we budgeted our career salary. This experience opened my eyes as to how much providing for myself really took financially in the real world; it was scary but very helpful.

I completed my service with the organization girlsscout.org. I learned that volunteering was very helpful for everyone. It provided a sense of accomplishment for the volunteer, helped the company in an extreme way, and instilled responsibility in the volunteer. My overall experience at UALR has met all of my high expectations of a college university.
Konnichiwa! My name is Derrick Moody and I am an aspiring Sociology major at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. I chose to attend UALR because of its convenient distance from my home and its exceptional community interaction and invigoration. I am a Georgia-born, Lake Village, Arkansas-raised native and proud of it!

Taking First-Year Experience this semester has been more profitable than what I can see. I have learned valuable information that will follow me through the rest of my college life, possibly further. Increasing my social interaction, efficiently managing my money, and balancing my priorities are some things that I have acquired while living/attending (on) the UALR campus. Taking this class, I have found that managing stress is very valuable when trying to upkeep my health. Gaining professional connections and improving the way I learn are some of the other things I found in First-Year that I know will benefit me when I venture into my career field.

I was directed to habitatpulaski.org to start my venture for my Service Learning. I then contacted a representative and went to Habitat for Humanity’s, “REstore”, which I was started manual and retail based work. I have gained knowledge of how to work better with others, for instance, when I and four others had to work together and effectively communicate on moving heavy objects from one area to the next. The amount of humility for those less fortunate than myself was greatly increased after working at Restore. Finding out that I like to be involved in community-based organizations and how it helped improve my overall world view, I think is very beneficial for my career path.

My overall experience with UALR has lead me to grow as a person and gain knowledge that I know I will use for the rest of my life, and I am proud of it!
I moved here from Camden County Georgia, my little hometown that I miss more than words can express. My name is Ashley Sutton, and I moved here to be with my family, because we are all very close, and I need them. I didn’t really choose UALR, it was just convenient. It’s only about 40 minutes away from where my family stays. I am glad that I did choose UALR, because it has forced me to grow up and be more flexible.

I have learned that I can be a people person. I knew no one here. I had to be friendlier and more, quite a bit more, outgoing in order to make friends and get involved. It wasn’t easy, but I grew, and I am now on Hall Council as the Mascot and Communications Coordinator. I have learned that East Hall is haunted. Don’t laugh, because it is true! My friend lives on the fifth floor and she would hear footsteps and knocking. I have learned that I am not a computer whiz, nor will I ever be. I have had so many late-night phone calls with my dad: it has been to the point where he has driven from home to help me use my printer. Yes, I thanked him profusely.

I have learned from this class that I am both left and right brain dominant: I am logical and emotional. I have been known to hold my own in an argument, while screaming that I am right as I stick my tongue out at the other person. I have learned from this class that if you cannot write something down, or say it out loud, you do not know it. I have been using that new-found knowledge in my Anthropology class, and it has helped immensely. I have also learned SMART goals, and how they help you to map out your goals. I went to church a few weeks after that lecture and was given a handout on goals: it was on SMART goals.

I volunteered at UALR’s Suicide Prevention Week, the Red Ribbon Week NOPE Candlelight vigil, and have participated in HAC events. People will show up and participate, donate, and volunteer...as long as they get a t-shirt out of it! Overall, my experience here at UALR has been an unexpectedly positive one that I am grateful I had the opportunity to have.
My name is Jalisha Willis. I’m originally from Strong, Arkansas. I chose to come to UALR because my older sister came here, and she loved it. Plus, I figured that if I needed anything, she would always be there.

This semester, I learned that everyone is not my friend. If they’ll talk to me about people they used to be cool with, they’ll do me the exact same way. Also, I learned that college courses are completely different than high school. In high school, I could study the night before and still pass the exams. In college, I had to look over my notes a week ahead before the test. Lastly, I have grown completely since I’ve been here. I used to be the girl that stayed home all the time and never wanted to leave my mom. Now in college when I’m sick, I can’t run home and stay; I have to do everything. I rarely go home because I don’t want to get too attached.

Since being in Dr. Dobbins’ class, I learned that I had the worse study habits ever. When I started to study for 30 minutes and then took a 10 minute break, I started to actually learn the material and it wasn’t just crammed into my brain. I also learned that I had a bad memory. But, I learned that I had to look over my notes at least once a day just to remember it. My memory has gotten completely better since I used that method. Lastly, I learned that I am a kinesthetic learner. Someone can tell me how to do something over and over, but I have to sit down and actually do it to understand it.

I completed my Service during the Race for The Cure event. I learned that through volunteering, I could meet many diverse people that could teach me new things. Also, I learned that it’s alright to work without getting paid. It’s the thought that counts. Lastly, I learned that when volunteering, I always did what I was asked because you never know who’s watching or who you will need. One day I’ll need a letter of recommendation and the people I’ve helped shouldn’t have a problem with writing me one.
Hi, my name is Kalisha Willis. I am from Strong, Arkansas. I chose to attend UALR so I could be closer to my niece and it wasn’t that far from home.

While attending UALR, I have learned so many things. I learned not to procrastinate. When procrastinating, I’ve realized that I really will put down just about anything to be done with the work. Another thing I learned is it’s important to study in advance for tests rather than waiting until a day before to try to scramble everything in my brain—sometimes it works, but it’s not good! Also, I learned I shouldn’t miss a whole lot of days, even if the teacher says you can miss a certain amount, every day is important.

While being in Dr. Dobbins’ class, I’ve also learned a lot. I learned “Fake it ‘til you make it.” I may not like every professor, but I can always fake it until I pass the class. Also, I learned that I am a visual learner. I learn better by seeing things rather than hearing them. Finally, I learned a new great studying technique, the 30 plus 10 method. Studying for 30 minutes, take a 10-minute break: I can’t just keep studying and studying for hours!

I volunteered my service hours for the Breast Cancer Awareness. I learned that not all breast cancer victims are sickly after they are cured. I also learned that volunteering is not just about getting hours for a class, it’s about showing others you care and showing support, because you would want the same. Lastly, I learned that it’s okay to volunteer even if you’re not getting paid for it, it’s always good to give back.

Overall, my experience at UALR has been great. I’ve met some great people here. Whenever I need help—no matter student or professor, everyone is helpful.
My name is Jacy Andrews and I was born and raised in Little Rock, Arkansas. I chose UALR for the convenience of its location and for the fact that I feel comfortable with the environment at the campus. My sister is also a student at UALR, so I felt that if I ever had any questions then I would know exactly who to ask and I would lessen my chances of being confused and uncomfortable.

Seeing I have only been able to go to UALR part-time due to the expense of dorms, I haven’t yet begun learning as much as I know I have the potential to learn. However, I have learned to manage my time more, the unique culture of UALR’s campus, and the extent to which I can take my learning experience. From my First Year Experience class, I have learned study habits that keep me on track, how to manage my stress, and how to properly pay attention to my finances. With these things in mind, my college and career life have been impacted because I now know to keep an eye out for what I truly want to do in life and how to reach those goals in a responsible way.

For my service learning, I used my 15 hours to help the ladies at The Sparrows Nest. The Sparrows Nest is a shop that sells merchandise such as furniture, artwork, and jewelry to raise money in order to provide funds for an organization called Partners Against Trafficking Humans, or P.A.T.H. This organization redeems and rehabilitates girls trapped, against their will, in the sex trade in our city, state, and nation. While working at the store, we explain to customers our cause. What I learned is that Arkansas is one of the largest trafficking states, and many people are unaware of this.

So far, the overall experience at UALR has taught me to explore all of my interests and to even further open my mind to the world around me.
My name is Laura Elizabeth Cash. I am from Little Rock, Arkansas and I have lived here my entire life. I chose to attend UALR because it is close to home and UALR has an excellent nursing program, which is the major I intend to study.

While attending UALR, I have learned how college works. You have a lot more freedom than high school, which is a plus for me. I have learned that you really need to focus on your studies and that college life isn’t about partying. One of the things that I have learned from this class is how to use my time wisely. Time management shows you are organized. I have learned professionalism. You have got to be professional anywhere you go. This applies to the campus organizations I am in which affects college life, and the workplace. If I don’t look professional, then the person interviewing me for a job will be less enthusiastic or less likely to hire me. I’ve learned sometimes if I show professionalism well, the interviewer will even hire me on the spot. I learned note taking is how you are expected to study, which can help when trying to remember a lot of things.

I completed my service learning at Bale Elementary. One thing that I learned is that volunteering not only made me feel good, but it helped out others as well. Sometimes, when volunteering for the organization or helping a person, it helps give a little time to breathe, which is always helpful. I learned that it is hard out there in the “real world”, as people call it: this makes me want to work that much harder in college. Something else I learned while completing my service learning is that people do make mistakes. While I was volunteering, I learned how everyone is human and everyone makes mistakes, even if you are a professional. The service learning experience may influence my career path decision: each time I went, it touched my heart, it is something I have an interest in and it is also something I can see myself doing.
My name is Trevar Dye and I am from the northeast corner of Arkansas in the city of Trumann. I chose to attend UALR because of its location. Little Rock is my favorite city in the state, besides my hometown, and I felt like it was the perfect fit for me after visiting—for its opportunities on and off campus.

There are a few things I have learned this semester. I’ve learned that opportunities should never be wasted. College is a great place to experience things and they only come in the four or more years I am here. I’ve also learned that making connections with people is a key to success in life. Connections made in college can help shape a career or other major factors. I’ve learned that being on my own isn’t as hard as people have told me it would be. This has caused me to learn a few things about myself I didn’t know. Contrary to my previous belief, I’m a pretty responsible person. That’s something I probably wouldn’t have figured out if I didn’t come to UALR and lived on my own.

Dr. Dobbins’ First Year Experience class has allowed me to learn things I needed to know and will continue to use for a long time. The résumé writing process was very insightful. I didn’t know some of the things she told us, such as only presenting jobs and activities that are relevant to the job I’m applying for. I also think I will keep in mind the lessons on money management and our career exploration project.

I completed my service learning hours here on campus through helping with the haunted house in North Hall. This really emphasized working with a team and helping others to get a task done. I also got to meet people from school I probably wouldn’t have if I didn’t volunteer. I think it helped me with my interacting and social skills as well. My overall experience at UALR has molded me into a more balanced and responsible person.
My name is William Jordan Payne, I was born in Chihuahua Mexico and I lived there for a total of 10 years. In 2006 my family and I moved to Little Rock and have been living here since then. My parents were missionaries in Mexico. While we lived there I attended Colegio Binimea, a school for missionary kids. Then when we moved to Arkansas, I was homeschooled from the sixth grade on up.

I chose to attend UALR because it was a little more reasonably priced than some of the other universities in the area. But most importantly, it is where I felt God was calling me to go. Being that I am called to the foreign mission field—meaning I will be living in another country far away from my family—going to UALR affords me as much time as possible to spend with my family until it is time for me to move to my country.

This semester I have learned how to properly deliver an informative speech. I learned how to write a research paper. Also I learned that I have a lot to learn! A few things that I have learned from this class are how to work on a group project. I have experienced working in groups, just not on school assignments. So that was a good learning experience. I learned about how to properly conduct myself in a job interview. This will be helpful since all the jobs I’ve had were for family or friends, so I have not had a lot of experience with job interviews. I also learned a few new and interesting things about my career choice, such as the education required and the recommended amount of support necessary to live on the foreign mission field.

I completed my service hours at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center. I learned a lot of things during my service, so here are just a few. I learned how to run electrical wire through a new building as well as how to wire light switches. Also I learned more about how to communicate effectively in the construction setting. I would describe my experience here at UALR as an eye-opening character builder.
My name is Brandon Sunthorn Rekow of Little Rock, Arkansas. I retook this class in Fall 2013 to redeem myself from 2012’s failure. As of now, I offer no regrets from this semester, I am more confident than ever!

There are three things I learned from this semester. They are the three things I should’ve learned from the last time I took First Year Experience; individuality, responsibility, and determination. Looking at the fall of 2012, I realized that I took all of it for granted. What I should’ve learned in First Year Experience from last fall is what I learned this fall of 2013: reason, humility, and self-confidence. These 2013 words are more specific to what I have learned overall semester. All six of these words will never leave my side.

I volunteered at a church called “Word Covenant Fellowship.” What I learned while completing my time with the church is volunteers are heroes, carrying the words I stated above. It is these heroes that sacrifice their time to care for the ones who need the time the most. Overall, I felt like a true hero in my service learning. Now, I must finish college not just for my future, but to learn more about myself.
My name is Katie Ruth Vanpool, and I am from Rogers, Arkansas. I chose to go to UALR because of the urban atmosphere in Little Rock, and although I am an undecided major at the moment, I believe UALR will help me discover my future career path.

Through my attendance at University of Arkansas at Little Rock, I have learned several things. One being, that in order to succeed in a class, you must hit the books and make your class a priority. So basically, you put in what you get out. Another thing is I must take tests more seriously in college because they weigh so much in the final grading system. Last, something I have learned is that attendance is a lot more important in college, because there is so much important information per class that it is difficult to catch up.

From taking First Year Experience I have learned some useful things to help me through my college career. First I have learned that I am a Right brain dominant learner and a kinesthetic learner. This helps me know the best way that I personally would study and act during class. I have also learned how to make an appropriate resume and cover letter for my future career that I am pursuing. Lastly, I have learned to calculate my own college GPA, and this will keep me aware of my standing within my classes, and needing to know what may be improved upon.

I did my Service Learning hours with Race For The Cure and the SpectacULAR. Through this I learned that to be confident whenever volunteering or working for a program because I am representing them! Also, I learned that things don’t always go as planned either. For the building had a leak and damaged all the signs I had made for Race For The Cure, and I had to basically start over. Third, I learned more about Race For The Cure and the Athletic Department at UALR. So volunteering taught me more about the programs that I worked with. My overall experience at UALR was very educational in getting in to the college routine.
Julie Shelby has been teaching Composition I and II classes for UALR since 2009, and has thoroughly enjoyed teaching a section of the First Year Experience this semester. As a UALR alumnus, Ms. Shelby looks forward to new opportunities to help students succeed at the university.
My name is Alexa Allen, and I am from New Orleans, Louisiana. I graduated from Bryant High School, and I am now attending the University of Arkansas at Little Rock as a freshman. I chose to attend UALR, because I did not want to leave my family that stays close to Little Rock. I have three nieces and a little brother, and by attending UALR I am able to see them every day.

I have learned many things while experiencing my first year of college at UALR. One of the things that I have learned is that UALR has almost any resource that you could possibly need on the main campus such as student counseling, 24/7 police services, and a number of other things. Also, I learned that parking can be very complicated if you do not know the way parking works at UALR. There are several parking lots on campus, but not all of them are ones that you can park in. Two main parking places that would be great to park in would be the parking deck, which only cost $1 and the student parking lots. There is a map on the UALR website that highlights parking.

From taking First Year Experience I have learned ways to deal with bad habits that I picked up in high school. I have learned how to somewhat eliminate procrastination by using the 7-Day Antiprocrastination Plan. I also learned things that I did not know about myself by completing a Discovery Wheel in class. The Discovery Wheel helps to understand with kind of student someone may be.

For the Service Learning project I volunteered for Rock for the Cure/Race for the Cure! A friend and I from First Year Experience class set up a table and took donations. A few things that I learned from doing my service learning is how to communicate better with people, I met a lot of new people at the race, and I also learned that there is a lot of people who have been impacted by breast cancer, including myself. My semester experience at UALR has been great. I have had a few instructors that I know if I ever need anything I can contact them.
My name is Ashley Renee Alvarez and I live in Benton Arkansas. I have three younger siblings; one of them also attends UALR. I am an non-traditional student which simply means I did not attend college right after high school. This is my second year at UALR. I go to both the Little Rock campus and the Benton campus. I chose UALR because it is close to my family and friends and I did not have to quit my job to attend school.

During this semester at UALR I have learned that I have very poor time management skills. I go to school full time and work full time I have also just gotten a house which I have been trying to move into for a few months now but don’t have the time to work on the house. I have also learned that the faculty here at UALR is outstanding. I feel I can go to them with just about anything, even to vent. I have also learned that UALR wants there students to succeed because they offer so many opportunities for students to get help with classes or with themselves.

My first year experience class has taught me that community is very important to succeed in life. I have also learned what kinds of things are offered not only on the main campus but also on the Benton campus to help me succeed in my classes. I have also learned that UALR offers health services for students which can prescribe you medicine if you are sick. In First Year Experience we are required to do Service Learning. I am volunteering at the Saline County Humane Society. I have learned that a lot of nonprofit organizations are lacking volunteers and so my involvement helps them out tremendously. My overall experience at UALR has been positive and the classes I am taking are helping me realize that it is not impossible to stay in school while working full time. It just takes a lot of dedication to your successes in school.
My name is Alexis Marguerite Angle; I was born and raised in Benton Arkansas. I chose to attend the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to further my education. The main reason I chose to attend UALR, is so that I can lived at home. I also chose UALR because my brother is attending as well, and I have seen firsthand how successful he has been in school and his career.

While attending my first year hear at UALR I have learned many things that have helped me with my college experience. In high school I cannot count the times that I was told that professors are hard and don’t care if you pass the class. One thing I have learned from my professors is that they care about you learning the material and being successful. Going into college I thought the basics were just so you could find something that you are interested in and then peruse your interest further. I learned why the first classes are called basics, it is because you will use what you learned in the first class, in your upper level classes. I have also learned that college is hard at times but if you just stick with it you will make it.

My first year experience class has helped through my first year. I have learned how to manage my time between school and work with some of the tips in the workbook. I also learned about the many programs in campus safety. The most important thing I have learned is how to effectively communicate without sounding aggressive, which will help me throughout life. My service learning included being a Sunday school teacher at Center Point Church. I have learned that being a teacher is what I want my career to be. I also learned teaching two year olds is not what I want to do, but teach around fourth graders. The last thing I learned while doing my service learning project was how much I enjoyed doing it. To sum up my experience at UALR I would say that in the beginning it was scary and stressful, but now all the pieces are coming together and I am making steps toward my career.
My name is Marlaina Rae Bean. I am from Benton, Arkansas. I am a single mother of two wonderful children and, they are the reason I chose to go to college. They make me want to be the best person I can be, and getting an education to further myself is the best thing I can do for them.

Since I started school here at UALR, I have learned I’m not good at math at all, and I really don’t like it. I’ve also come to find out that I really like writing and enjoyed my COMP II class I really wish I hadn’t of tested out of COMP I cause I feel like it would have been as fun and educational as COMP II. But I had a great instructor who I could ask questions all day long if I didn’t understand something and, I could always email her if I couldn’t come up to the school. She was extremely helpful in my first semester. In my First Year Experience class I have really learned more things about me, such as my study habits aren’t that great. I need to work on them and there is a system for that in the FYE book. Also I’m not a very good people person but, since we had to come together and do group work I’ve found that when it comes down to it, I have the capability to work well with other people and get the task at hand done. I have also come to learn ways to manage my stress from this class which I can apply to every aspect of my life.

I did my Service learning project at Habitat for Humanity in Benton Arkansas; I learned how to talk to customers, what the organization is about, and how they get the funds and volunteers to make it a reality. I really is a great organization and, I would recommend volunteering there to anyone cause it’s not only fun it’s for a great cause.

My first year here at UALR has had its ups and downs, and its been especially hard trying to balance everything out. With the support of the staff, and the love I have for my kids I’m making it work.
My name is Laura DeAnn Britt. I was born in Little Rock, AR on March 31, 1995. A couple of months after I was born my family made the move to Benton, Ar. I come from a very close family.

I chose to come to UALR because of my family. I had originally planned on attending UCA with a lot of my friends from high school, but then realized that that wasn’t for me. My dad is a big part of my life, and I don’t know what I would do without him. When he was 21 years-old, he was thrown through the window of a vehicle. He broke both of his legs on impact. He went through a lot of medical procedures on both of his legs for many, many, years. Through all of the procedures, the doctors only saved one of his legs (his left one). His right leg is not able to bend at all and has been like this since that day. A couple of days after my high school graduation my dad fell and broke his leg in my garage. I had a really hard time with seeing my dad laying there helpless. Two days after he fell, my mom, brother and I, went to Hawaii for vacation. I didn’t want to go at all, but my mom made me. I wanted to stay home and take care of my dad, because he means that much to me. When I got back from Hawaii, I realized that I needed/wanted to stay home to make sure that my dad was okay, and if he needed me at any time, I could be there for him immediately.

I have learned a lot in my first semester at UALR. I have learned that college is a lot different than high school. People are different. I see new things every single day that I go to class. I have also learned that you have to do your work in college. In high school you could make a pretty good grade even if you didn’t do all of your assignments, but in college, it’s a different story. Every assignment is a big part of your grade, so you better do it. Also, professors at UALR seem to care. Throughout my whole high school career I was told that professors would not care about you or your grade, but that is not true for UALR. In my First Year Experience class I have learned a lot of things as well. I have learned about campus safety, how to manage my time, and different options that UALR gives me as a student. I completed 15 hours of community service at Harmony Grove High School in Haskell, Ar. Through my work there I have realized that teachers do NOT have it easy. They do so many things in 7 hours of their day. They not only teach, but they grade papers, make presentations, file papers, and most importantly they deal with students all day long. One thing that I realized is that I do NOT want to be a teacher. Teachers are verbally abused by students every single day, and I just can’t handle that. Overall, my experience at UALR has been great, and I couldn’t ask for a better first semester in college.
As a freshman, I was nervous — to say the least — about entering a new place. My time spent at UALR so far has been scholarly. I’ve absorbed many new things in these past few weeks. But, before I get into that I would like to introduce myself. I’m Madison Rose Butterworth, born in Hot Springs, Arkansas. I was raised in Texas and moved back to the Natural State in the first grade. I went to Angie Grant Elementary, Benton Middle School-High School. I was involved in many school plays and was always one for school spirit.

I like to spend my free time listening to music, finding new fashion trends, and writing. I find music to be very inspirational and it helps bring out my creative side. I spend a lot, if not all, of my spare time in the fashion world. In two years I actually plan on moving to Dallas, Texas and enroll in their Art Institute. I’ve always been enchanted by the world of fashion, that being why I chose Marketing as my major.

I chose UALR, not only because my mom works for the school, but because I liked what the school had to offer. The staff is dedicated to the students and the campus is very inviting. Not only that but, there are many classes and degrees to choose from. While I’ve been here, I’ve learned that there are an abundance of benefits, many on campus opportunities, and services the school has to offer. In First Year Experience we went in depth about these things, such as: The Green Dot program, the tutoring services, and the health and wellness services.

My first semester at UALR has been something I won’t forget, it has opened me up to new things and I’ve learned how to manage my time a lot better; along with how to keep from procrastinating and many alternative situations in time of distress.
My name is Josh Andrew Eubank, I am from Milwaukee Wisconsin and moved here in central Arkansas when I was in 5th grade.

The reason why I choose to go to UALR is because it was close to home and I had always wanted to take college level music classes. Come to find out though I disagreed with the way they teach kids music, Music isn’t something you are taught it is something that you find in you, If you find music through classes then you are going to sound like and play just like your instructor or your fellow students, I would absolutely love to explain my theory behind music and send this letter to music teachers around the world but that isn’t what this assignment is about. Some things I have learned from college is that it’s not for me at this point in my life I’m young and want to live my life the way I want to. I would love an education someday but I don’t even know if half the stuff they teach us is true or not. I already know math and I already know English and that’s what we really need from school, I personally don’t know what classes would suit me because I’m still trying to find out who I am and the only person that I have found in me is the stubborn rebellious musician who looks at life differently than others and you know what maybe that’s just who I am meant to be. I don’t even remember anything we learned from this class, I have hard time paying attention to things that don’t interest me, I don’t mean any disrespect and I’ve got a great teacher but the things I learned from this class didn’t come from the classroom or the book it came from me.
My name is Cassie Lashae Farr, I grew up in Tull, Arkansas. My name is Cassie Lashae Farr, I grew up in Tull, Arkansas. Most would not know where this is located so let’s say between the towns of Benton and Sheridan. The Saline River goes through this town which is a big part of my life. We would always have a big garden, woods to hunt, and a good country living environment. My parents divorced in the year of 1992, I no longer lived here for four years, but was able to finish the later part of my childhood there. I quit high school my senior year and when to a different school while living on my own the next year. Met my husband and he help support me through Cosmetology school. I worked as a hairdresser for eight years at the same salon. My youngest child had a serious accident and this is why I have chosen to change my career. I now am a wife of eight years with one stepdaughter and two daughters of our own. Children are my life and I take care of others that are not mine.

I chose to attend UALR because I live so close to the school, and if for some reason I did not have a dependable vehicle I could walk to school. I really like to always think of what could happen and to have plan, just in case. It is also very important to me to have a four year college for my degree in early childhood development. This career move will help me to be a better mother and help our community. I want to be the best that I can be in all aspects of my life, settling for less is not permitted. I have learned that there are many opportunities that I miss out on being I’m at the Benton campus. I would like to be able to be involved with my college more but having a family does not allow me to drive to the Little Rock campus. I hope soon that Benton will bring more resources and out of class opportunities.

I learned some useful information from the First Year experience class about the Little Rock campus that I would have never known, and I believe it should be required for all students in their first semester of college. If I had taken this class my first semester, I feel I would be further in college than I am now. I also would have known more about financial help that I dearly need. The service learning project I chose was the Saline County Boys and Girls Club and I have learned that once teaching young children for forty years that you can easily grow bitter. I will strive to enjoy my career and help make a difference in our children of the future.
My name is Christian Brooke Inman. I was born in Texarkana, Texas on May 17th 1995. I graduated from Bryant High School in May of 2013. So far as an 18 year old college student, I have successfully bought my own house and am working on my bachelor degree in Biology at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. I am working on my Bachelors because I want to either become a doctor or a veterinarian when I get older.

While attending UALR, I have learned a few very important things, time management being one. It’s a big change going from mandatory high school, to college life where you choose your own class times. If you want to do good in school you have to learn to be promptly on time for your classes. I have also learned that main campus has literally everything you could need: counseling, advising as to what classes you need to take to get where you want to go and even a 24/7 police force to help when you need it.

As a part of the First Year Experience class I have learned many valuable things. One of the most influential things I’ve learned in FYE is how to tell when a peer is in need of help. Sometimes a person to talk to can make a total difference in what happens to them. Also I have learned that I am a very hands on learner. FYE has showed me procrastination is not your friend, just get the job done when it needs to be done.

I chose to do my Service Learning Project at the Humane Society of Saline County in Bauxite. From there I have realized that taking care of animals isn’t the easiest, but they need the care and someone has to do it. It’s the happiness of others, whether they’re human or animal that influences me to be a better person.

My overall experience at UALR has been great. I’m currently attending Benton campus It’s a lot smaller and seems to be more student friendly than main campus and I love it.
My name is Danielle Kelley, or more preferably, Nikki. I’m from Bryant Arkansas, I lived in Saline County for 13 yrs. of my life, then I moved to Conway, to spend more time with my dad, and I plan on moving back there as soon as the semester is over.

I chose to attend UALR originally to better myself with an education, and to further my chances of a career in which I’ll make more money, also, my mom is a UALR graduate, which made it seem more familiar to me. I chose to attend the UALR Benton campus so that I wouldn’t have to stay in a dorm, and the smaller class sizes felt more comfortable for my freshman year. The convenient location of the Benton campus helps enable more people to go to college at their own pace.

I have learned many things while attending UALR for my first semester, but a few of which stuck out directly. I learned to make time, if I couldn’t find the time to study, I made time, I’ve studied at work, during commercials, and late at night. I learned to leave extra early to find a good parking spot. The most important thing I’ve learned to have a thick skin, and don’t let people get to you. From this class, I’ve learned to organize priorities, make a time commitment, and keep to a specific schedule for the most part to avoid confusion and being tired. I’ve been working on my service learning at the Habitat for humanity restore, and from there I have learned to schedule in time for even the things you dread, be accepting of others, and time management in general. My overall experience at UALR has been pleasant, and generally easy, besides coordinating my work schedule.
My name is Daniel Brower Keretz and I am from Little Rock, Arkansas.

I currently work as a manager at the Arkansas Skatium in Little Rock, where I work about 40 hours a week. I am also a firefighter with Crystal Fire Department, where I usually end up working about 450 hours a month at the firehouse. The reason I spend so much time at a firehouse is because after I am finished with school, I want to get on with a paid fire department and start a paid career in the fire service. Another reason for this is, I can get a lot of different training and on the job experience.

While attending UALR, this semester, I have learned that they can help you with just about anything you need on or off campus. UALR also realizes that college students are broke and can’t afford things like medical insurance. So, if you need some kind of medical help and you don’t have any medical insurance and can’t afford to go to a larger medical facility, you can go to Health Services, on campus, to get that help. This is a lot cheaper than going to a hospital and paying an extremely large bill for something that UALR can do for a fraction of the price. I have also learned that if you are looking for a job while in school or after just graduating, UALR will help you. They will help you find a job that will help you in the field of work you are majoring in. Something else that I have found helpful about UALR is, if you need assistance in any of your classes, you just have to contact the Academic Success Center and they will get in contact with the people that can help you.

I completed my service learning at Crystal Fire Department. In my involvement with the fire department I learned that not everyone is very smart, people will call you for some of the weirdest things, and that one person can make a big impact on the community. My overall experience at UALR has been a pretty long and positive first semester.
My name is Melissa Joann Keretz. I am from Little Rock, Arkansas and I was born and raised there. I have three brothers, one I am a twin to named Daniel Keretz and I am a minute older than him. I also have a job in Little Rock at Love's truck stop working at Subway. I chose to go to UALR because I heard it was a really good school, which it is and I don't live very far away from the school.

I've learned many different things in my first semester of college like all 204 bones in the body. Learning all the bones in the body was probably my favorite thing this semester in my Anatomy and Physiology class because I got to sit down with my mom and she taught me. My mom is an RN at UAMS and works in the psych unit. Another thing I learned was a lot of math in my pre core math class. Some of the math I never was even taught and other topics I just needed refreshed on. Negative exponents were the main thing I wasn't taught in high school or at least was absent when my teacher taught it. I had to have my twin brother, Daniel teach me how to do them and I have probably spent six plus hours on just that topic but I had finally got it. In my art class I learned how to really analyze art work done by people like Picasso and Van Gogh. I look more at detail like the techniques used when looking at art and I don't just see a picture with maybe paint or a bunch of lines. In my First Year Experience class I learned what UALR offers to students by a group project like Health Services or the Academic Success Center.

My service learning was very interesting. I volunteered at Habitat for Humanity at the store where they sell the used items. I noticed they were more expensive than I thought they would be but they have a lot of business. Things I learned from working there was to never help pick up a couch again to let the guys to it because it hurts to drop it on someone's toe. Also I need to stay away from glass because it seems to slip out of my hands. I learned that I did well with checking people out and helping people bring things to their car that aren't breakable. My overall experience this semester at UALR was a lot better than I was expecting it to be.
My name is Kellie Lee Landon. I am from Benton, Arkansas and have lived here my entire life.

I decided to attend UALR about a month before the first day of classes began. I had originally had my mind set on Arkansas Tech University because all of my friends were attending there. One day my dad sat me down and asked me, “Why do you want to go to Tech?” and with no thought about the question I responded with, “I don’t.” Even I was shocked by my answer. I immediately called ATU and withdrew my admission and applied to UALR. This school was closer to home; I could enjoy my family and even live at my house and attend classes at the Benton campus, which is ten minutes away from my house and job.

This semester at UALR, I have discovered many things about the school and the people attending and working here. I have learned that the staff here at UALR actually wants to see you succeed in college and in life in general. Everything that they do is for a good reason and will benefit you. I have seen the roles that each individual in the office play and how they are able to assist me throughout my college experience. In my First Year Experience class alone I learned about the many services that this school has to offer to students such as the health and wellness services, the free tutoring services and how to act and respond to different scenarios in life.

In this class I have completed fifteen hours of community service at Lake Hamilton Middle School in my sister’s classroom. I have spent this time seeing what exactly a teacher has to deal with every day while I was grading papers, making copies and other work such as that. This experience has opened my eyes up to a new perspective of schooling. I now see just what kids put teachers through and how to handle the different situations that are thrown at you, whether that is an angry parent or an unruly child. Also, I got to see the effects and impact that a teacher has on a student’s life. Overall, UALR has been a wonderful experience for me, teaching me new things about life and my future.
My name is Samantha Nicole Lee. I am originally from Conway Arkansas and moved here to Benton in 2000. I chose to attend the University of Arkansas at Little Rock for many reasons: I already live here and love my home town, I work here in Benton, and I volunteer at multiple places in Little Rock.

While attending UALR I’ve learned many things when choosing your major/minor or even simply what classes you will take next semester, your advisor helps so very much, they know how to classes work and can push you in the right direction. When you pick your classes, realize that there are only so many classes you should take, you will need time in between all of these classes to do homework and study and you won’t be able to do that if you’re constantly going to another class. Once you get into your classes start talking to the other students and making friends, they are invaluable. If you miss a day and need notes, don’t understand something the teacher said, or need someone to help you study, they’re a lifesaver. In my First Year Experience class so much useful information has been given out that I have really benefitted from. Things like knowing where different building are on campus and knowing where different organizations meet, we also learned how to manage our schedule and time a lot better so we aren’t as stressed all the time, and one of the most helpful in my case: learning how to communicate effectively without sounding accusing. During my service learning experience at Hurricane Creek Elementary I learned how great it feels to give back to your community. I also learned that you have to change your attitude and outlook when dealing with children on their level. And my favorite part of doing my service hours here was learning from the kids; they don’t care what you’re wearing, what you look like, or how you talk, if they like you they like you.

Overall being here at UALR has been not only beneficial academically, but has allowed me to grow as a person.
Hello. My name is Kevin Lewis. I’m from a small town in central Arkansas called Sheridan. I ultimately chose UALR as my University of choice, because it had exactly what I was looking for. It was close to home and it offered the field in which I wanted to study.

Attending UALR thus far has been quite an experience. Through my time here, I have found that you should always take advantage of free time. When time is available to you, completing homework or studying for exams, should be the priority. This is especially important, seeing as how the work load is unbalanced throughout a semester. There is a need to stay ahead of the game. Another important concept that I have observed, is that you should never take your fellow classmates for granted. If you’re experiencing distress in any particular subject, you’ll find that a friend can be a plethora of knowledge. Plus, camaraderie in the classroom is key to having a safe learning environment. One thing that I didn’t think I would find is that there is quite a bit more work that goes into a theatre production than I once thought.

I have found my First Year Experience class to be very helpful. It has taught me effective study habits, and helped me realize my own potential as a student and as a member of society. One of the more important things that we accomplished in the class was our service learning project. I completed my service learning with the Future Farmers of America. They taught me that if something is worth doing, it’s worth doing right, and that communication is important in any group or relationship. Also, that they make excellent BBQ. If I had to describe my time here at UALR in one sentence, I would say that it has been fulfilling, not just as a student, but as an individual.
I’m Meghan McGrath and my story is a little different. I was born in Washington D.C. and grew up in North Carolina and I was around my big, loud family all the time. I have three sisters and one brother while my dad has six sisters and three brothers. They each had around four kids and we would always visit my grandmother in her small, two-story house in Bethesda, Maryland.

My dad was in the Marines so unfortunately, he was always away on trips or he’d go overseas while my mom worked as a lab tech at the local hospital and raised five kids. But when he did come back he’d always take us to the beach and spend as much time as he could with us. In 2004, we moved to Arkansas to be closer to my mom’s side of the family. As you can tell family is a huge priority so I chose to attend UALR to stay close to them.

This is my second year at UALR, and I’ve learned more this semester than my first two. Taking this First Year Experience class has helped me see what UALR has to offer and the things that are available for me to use to become a master student. I’ve learned that there is a Writing Lab on campus and online that will help you with papers or questions about writing. There are also tutors on the Little Rock and Benton campus that can help you with any subject. UALR also provides public safety for students 24/7 and they give safety escorts. I’ve also learned that UALR has a lot of crime on and off campus so having the Department of Public Safety accessible is decreasing the problems.

I’ve completed my Service Learning at the Humane Society of Saline County and I enjoyed volunteering and helping this organization and the animals that are taken care of here. The Human Society is a clinic and a shelter. They have a vet come by and check each animal. I’ve learned to use my communication skills to communicate with other volunteers and the volunteer leader if I come across a problem or if I have finished my work. And that every animal deserves to be adopted.
Ashley Dawn Perkins is my name, but who am I is the real question. I am a 32 year old mother of a precious nine year old little girl, named Tessa.

I recently married my best friend, Johnny, and I am completely happy in life. I live in Benton, AR and I enjoy it very much. I am currently serving my 7th year in the military as a member of the 189th Airlift Wing in the Arkansas Air National Guard and I am also the assistant coach for my daughter’s softball team. I am attending UALR to finish my upper level classes that are needed to complete my bachelor’s degree after hygiene school.

Learning everything I can is the goal in life. This semester I have learned some very helpful things to make it easier to achieve my goals. While at UALR, I have learned different programs for tutoring and also there is a counselor’s office if you are in need of talking to someone. There is a health clinic at the school if you are ever sick and in need of their services. First Year Experience has helped me tremendously, even though this is not my first year of school. I have learned some very interesting study habits to help make studying and finding time to study easier. My Service Learning was with Habitat for Humanity, while volunteering, I really enjoyed helping the community. My experience with UALR has been amazing and has given me the building blocks I need to succeed.
Hello my name is Zachary Daniel Thigpen; I was born and raised in Little Rock, Arkansas. I have one older brother who is a mortgage broker for Arvest banking. I have chosen to attend UALR for its pre Medical program and how closely it works with UAMS. I plan on becoming a Traumatic Surgeon and specializing in stage 1 and 2 cases (gunshot and car wrecks).

I have learned a lot about myself, the world around me and what it means to be a part of the Greek system. I have learned a lot about myself in my study habits and the best way to learn a difficult subject. Breaking down something into smaller categories and how they all connect together and then figuring out the similarities between them to help reinforce the subject. I also have learned better how to adjust myself to the world around me. Being more open and a better listener to other people has allowed me to move forward in my career choice and in my professional relationships. Also joining the Greek Life and becoming a Kappa Sigma (Theta Eta) has changed my life. The brothers that I have met and the relationships I have made that will follow me for the rest of my life.

Freshman experience has given me a lot of life skills and communication skills. Learn the “I statements” can help in getting your point across without placing blame or making the person feel worse about the subject. It has even helped me more in my professional life already. Also I have better learned how to sensor myself and watch my social media due to the true impact it can have on my professional life. I completed my service Learning at the C.A.R.E Animal hospital and Rescue in Little Rock. The service learning has allowed me to help give second chances to young kids and help them with their own lives through the training program “Paws in Prison” which rehabilitates abused animals so that they can be adopted and they are trained by at risk kids on probation. This semester at UALR has changed my life, I am the first person in my family to ever attend college and I am hitting it head strong and will not give up until I am a surgeon and I can take care of my parents that gave up everything to get me here.
My name is Keeley Belle Wilson. I am nineteen-years old and have lived in Bryant, Arkansas my whole life. I chose to attend UALR because it is only a twenty minute drive and I don’t like being very far from my family.

This semester I have learned that there is no room for procrastination. Due dates are much closer than you think. I have had to buckle down and spend thirteen to fifteen hours a week studying and working on homework. There are also no late assignments or make up tests. Instructors are very precise as to when they want assignments to be turned in. If you arrive at the end of class then most instructors will not accept it. No matter how hard you have worked to finish it. I have learned that in order to get through your first year, or even your first semester you have to put one hundred and ten percent into every assignment or test that is given to you. One slip and your grade can plummet. You have to keep your focus on what is most important, graduation.

I have learned from my first year experience class ways to deal with procrastination. Also what ways of learning are best for me. Lastly how to break bad habits.

Dealing with procrastination you should start out with things that will only take five minutes or so to do, then start working your way up to bigger things.

The best learning style that helps me is “Doing” (Active Experimentation). I learn more by using trial and error, practicing what I learn and applying ideas.

For breaking bad habits you need to choose a small change and commit to that behavior. “The joy of this process is watching one small change of habit ripple through your whole life.”

I chose to participate in promoting Rock for the Cure for my service learning project. I sat up a table and took donations in the hallway of the UALR Benton campus. I never realized how many people got involved with Race for the Cure. Also I never realized that there were so many survivors and people with breast cancer. It felt really good to help bring in donations for a good cause like that. It was a blast walking with friends and family to support Susan G. Coleman in breast cancer awareness.

My experience this semester at UALR I would say has been very challenging.
What a pleasure it has been to work with the fall 2013 Chancellor’s Leadership Corps (CLC)! This fall, we welcomed 174 new scholars to the CLC program. The CLC structure has organized scholars into families of approximately 50 new scholars led by a junior mentor with sophomore ambassadors working with 8 – 10 new scholars.

Reading the essays, you will learn more about CLC, in particular, and life and activities on campus, in general. The students wrote about their community service experiences, “move in” day, their classes, Greek life, and diversity.

To all our CLC scholars, junior mentors, sophomore ambassadors and freshmen scholars, you have challenged and encouraged us to better serve and educate you. We thank you and count it a privilege to learn, lead, and serve with you.
I graduated from Little Rock Central High school, and I hope to pursue a career in the political field one day.

The first time I met my roommate, was on move in day in August. She seemed like a relatively normal, easy to get along with kind of girl. Little did I know that she would make such a difference on my perspective of life, friendship, and family. My roommate has a life threatening disease, which is stable most of the time, but often leaves her in a lot of pain and suffering. Early on in the year she had a crisis in the middle of the night, and I drove her to the hospital and stayed with her through most of the night. She had no one except for me. I saw how tough it was going through all of this by herself. Once I found out more about what was actually going on with her I was shocked at how she was so strong and independent. I can’t go through with having flu without the help of my parents, and here she was at the hospital all by herself. Learning more about her and her disease has made me realize how fragile life is and how thankful I am for my family and my health. The strength that she has inspires me to be a stronger person. And that’s not something every freshman gets to experience.
Diana Arias

I graduated from Russellville High School in Russellville, AR. With my degree, I would like to become an agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. My family is my main motivation.

From finding where your classes are to finding the people you want to call friends, college is the most frightening, exciting, intimidating, and exhilarating milestone in my life. In my first year alone, I have gone through things I never thought I would go through. It took me a while to realize how big the move was in my life. It wasn’t until the first major assignment in my comp class that I realized... I am responsible for my own future. I no longer had mom walking into my bedroom rushing me to get to school or the school office calling my parents to notify them I was not at school. (Totally only happened once, because I had knee surgery. Promise, Nick!)

The Chancellor’s Leadership Corps played a major role in my freshman experience. If it weren’t for all those mandatory orientation activities, I wouldn’t have met the people I now call my best friends. Although it was a nuisance, all the orientation activities allowed me to feel comforting in the new environment I was thrown into.

Having gone through this major change, the last few months have seemed to be a lifetime. I catch myself referring to something that happened a week or two ago as if it were four months ago. To be frank, I caught myself telling my mom I was going to head “home” one weekend I went to my hometown. The second I said it I realized I truly felt like UALR is my home.

Now, I am truly grateful to be a part of CLC. I am also thankful for Gabby, my sophomore ambassador, and Caprice, my junior family mom. They have been my go-to resources. There are also plenty of other CLCers that have made me feel welcomed. That feeling of belonging is priceless. Which is why I would love to have the opportunity to actively interact with freshman next year.

This isn’t just a scholarship group for me; it is my family away from home. It is not only giving me the chance to make an impact on and off campus, but also create relationships that will last a lifetime.
I am very easy going and love to meet new people and try new experiences.

Can any of us really say that college turned out to what we expected it to be? You can read all the articles you want, watch all the movies, and talk to whoever has the best story about college, but it will never fully prepare you. I really didn’t know what to think about coming to college. Even on the first day of classes I don’t think it really hit me where I was at and how far I had come. On move in day it felt like we were just going to camp, like Girl Scout camp when I was 9.

I moved into college with my best friend. A lot of people told us we shouldn’t do it, but we did because we knew we wouldn’t have any problems. Yes, we get on each others’ nerves, but we’re like sisters now and that’s what sisters do. She has picked me up off the floor (literally) when times got tough and I felt like things would never get better. There is no way I could ever have gotten a better roommate.

And CLC, my saving Grace, gave me the opportunity to meet an amazing person, my ambassador. My ambassador, Ashley, has helped me so much already in the short time I have been here at UALR. She’s supported me right from the get-go. She’s always checking up on me and making sure I’m doing okay in my classes and even my day to day life. I know I can go to her for anything. Not only did CLC give me an amazing person to look up to, I gained a once-in-a-lifetime friend.

So, how is my first year experience in college? I’ll tell you not all the articles, none of the movies, and nobody prepared me for all of this. This was certainly a year I will always look back on and admire. There is one thing I was told that did come true: These are the best years of my life. Every minute spent laughing or crying, I will always look back on and cherish.
I graduated from Mayflower High School. I prefer the term “indecisive” rather than “undecided” for I have too many interests and having a quintuple-major is just out of the question for me. I’m a middle child, I love my family, and I’m an outgoing, happy-about-life, God loving kind of girl.

I will be completely honest. UALR was the LAST place I wanted to be. It was my senior year and I had already had my heart set on a particular university. I didn’t bother touring any other colleges at the time because I knew what I wanted and at the time had felt I was too good to be anywhere else - Boy, did I need a reality slap-to-the-face! Towards the end of my senior year all of my perfect plans began to fall apart as factors I didn’t think would be a problem began to set in. I started to panic until my sister, who had previously attended UALR, practically forced me to consider the university. She told me about this great guy named Nick Steele that she knew and about this amazing scholarship program called the Chancellors Leadership Corps that he was in charge of. Hesitantly, I gave it a chance and applied. When I arrived on campus for my first visit, I was amazed. The campus was SO beautiful! I had never seen so much “forest” and squirrels and bird nests in one place! I remember my first visit with Nick Steele, it consisting of me talking up my previous volunteer work only to learn he was listening to what he called my strange “ghetto-hispanic-northerner-twang” accent rather than what I was saying! The next visit I had at UALR was my CLC interview. Our interview group had the honor of sitting in on one of the last CLC classes of the previous freshman class. The class was so full of life that day and everyone seemed so happy, like they were part of one family.

Looking back then and looking at where I am now, I’m amazed at the difference. It’s hard to believe that I was once so close minded about this place and I often wonder what life would be like if I had chosen elsewhere. It didn’t take me long to figure out I had fallen in love with this place! I can’t imagine life without some of the people I have met at UALR and through CLC, and I thank God everyday for bringing me here. Here is my home away from home and here I am part of another family thanks to CLC.
I’m from the small town of Augusta, Arkansas where I graduated from Augusta High School in 2013. I am a Biology major with hopes of becoming a pharmacist.

Before I got here at UALR I was very nervous about the whole transition. Since I came from a very small town I didn’t know what to expect. With a graduating class of only 23, I was used to seeing the same faces every day. Here at UALR there is a lot of diversity which is something I wasn’t accustomed to. Being here I have met many new people and made new friends. My first semester is one that I will never forget. During this time I really learned about becoming an adult. One of the most important lessons I have learned about in college is knowing how to balance your time. Knowing when to have fun or hit the books is a vital part of your success in college. Being a part of CLC has truly help make my college experience the best ever. When I got here in August I thought this was going to be the longest painful experience yet. In contrast I have had a great time which made the time fly by. Finals are almost here and this semester is nearing the end. I can’t wait for the next semester to get here. Even though college is about your education having fun every now and then isn’t harmful. College is a once in a lifetime experience so make it the best it can be.
My name is Carley Carrell and I graduated from Sheridan High School. My major is Biology. I hope to become a dentist one day. I’m blessed with awesome parents, two sisters and a brother. I have many goals in life and hope to accomplish them all.

As the first semester of my freshman year at UALR comes to an end, I am first thanking God that he showed me the way to this college. It is a great place to further your education after high school. Although we go to classes like we did in high school, it is very different. It took me awhile to adjust to the changes such as only having one class on Monday’s and Fridays, studying more, having some people that are twice my age in a class, having over your average of 30 people in a class and many others. But with the help of CLC and others around campus, I was able to take on the challenge and get used to it. I don’t know if other people at other colleges can say this much about their own college, but I see UALR as a huge family all coming together for a purpose. I love that about the campus. I feel at home and like I can lean on others to guide me through this chapter in my life.

I have learned so much not only about educational things, but I have learned a lot about myself. My dad always told me that time management is key to doing a great job. I used to blow that off when he told me that in high school but now I am beginning to see that he was right. I have started using a planner and write down things and check it religiously. I’ve learned to balance out my day so that I have enough time to study for each class. Not only have I learned time management but I’ve learned to be more responsible. As a high school student, I was pretty responsible but now that I’m in college, I’ve started to take a slight step into the world and realize that I have a lot more responsibilities and I don’t have my mom to hold my hand and do it all for me. Again, I am so thankful for the opportunity to have started my freshman year here at UALR and can’t wait to see what my future holds here!
I’m majoring in Psychology and yes, I know what I want to do with that degree. I want to be a Child Life Specialist at Arkansas Children’s Hospital, but my career is only secondary to my major mission in life which is to serve Christ and serve people wherever I am. I love laughing, extreme ping pong, making lists, running, and watching Ted Talks.

UALR. Not in my top ten, but I listened for God’s direction again. I thought it’d be fun to move far away, but over and over He told me to stay. In only a month, I knew I belonged here. In only a semester, I got excited for next year. A few things I’ve learned thus far-- Give rides to your friends and take care of your car. It’s nice having time to meet your mom for lunch, but I never knew I’d have to study so much. The Power Nap deserves some recognition, as it kept me awake and more able to listen. Listen to my professors, to hear what they say. Who knows? It might actually be useful someday. DPS is on the alert, even after students go to bed. Yes I know their number; it was beat into my head. When I’m stressed, optimism says “it could be worse.” And when I’m not so great, I’m learning to put other’s first. I’ve found a place where I can serve, a place to lead, to reach, and go deep in God’s Word. God has given me a family at the BCM, people who encourage me to grow and be more like Him. This is my time to do something great. It’s not about perfection or avoiding mistakes. It’s about trying and working and laughing and singing. Sometimes tears come, but that won’t keep me from dreaming. Being a leader isn’t about a position or a title-- It’s about making a difference, not making myself an idol. My great things are little and that’s ok because my goal is to look for the blessings of each day. To make people smile and show them Christ’s love, To make people laugh or give them a hug-- The power of that is no small thing, So this year I’ve learned to offer what I can bring.
I went to Valley View High School in Jonesboro, Arkansas. I want to be a professional dancer and then one day open my own dance studio.

My name is Gabrielle, not a T-number, which is one of the reasons why I love UALR so much. Not once since I have moved in have I doubted my decision to come here. Faculty members actually remember my name; I’m not just a number. In fact, one of the cafeteria staff members always says, “There’s the dancer! Hey Gabi, how are you today?” every time I see him. One of my professors pulled me aside the other day and asked how my first semester is going. At UALR, I feel like I matter.

No one from my high school, or even my area, came to college here, so initially I was really terrified. At orientation, it seemed like everyone already had friends or were making them really easily. I felt alone and dreaded when it came to be time to choose roommates. I had been hoping I would find someone to room with. But the time came, and I stood in the random roommate line. All of a sudden, Dustin Brown came out of nowhere and pointed to me and the girl beside me saying, “You two should be roommates!” This girl and I looked at each other and somehow, we both agreed to it. That girl is Morgan Priddy and has become one of my best friends at UALR. From then on, I’ve made a lot of new friends that I don’t know how well I would be doing without them.

CLC has been the best thing to happen to me. Cheesy, I know. But seriously, transitioning from high school to college was pretty tough. It was even tougher since I came here alone, not knowing a single person. However, CLC helped ease all of that. CLC has always been a resource I can rely on, with a bunch of people to help when I need it and be there for me. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed all of the activities CLC has put on because it’s another chance to either form closer relationships or even meet new people. I am super appreciative of all that CLC has done for me.
I graduated from McClellan Magnet High School. I enjoy helping people and working with kids, that is why my major is Social Work. I hope to one day reach my dreams of helping children all over the world to have a better academic and personal life and to also make my family proud. “You’ll fail a thousand times before you succeed, but you will succeed and those failures will only be a reminder of all your hard work and perseverance. Don’t think about how you didn’t pass it. Think about how you are going to pass it”

Someone told me this before coming to UALR. I was always afraid of failing in life. Everyone always talked about how college was harder than high school. This made me even more anxious about coming to college, but I knew if I wanted to be successful in life I was going to have to work hard for it. Coming to UALR is only the beginning of my journey. My classes aren’t as easy, it’s my own responsibility to wake up for class, my mom won’t be there knocking on my door endlessly until I wake up, and I have to learn to manage my time with friends and studying/homework. An easy path can be taken by anyone, the hard ones are least taken but with the best rewards.
All these words sum up my freshman year. I had no idea what I was getting myself into until the morning of Move in Day. Hundreds of smiling faces and hundreds of carts bustling in and out of the doors. I unloaded all of my things, set up my new room, and said my goodbyes. I wasn’t sure about what to expect from my college experience but, I was ready to embrace it. My roommate wasn’t a new face but having a roommate was going to be different. She has become one of my best friends and I don’t think I could have made it through my first semester without her. I joined Kappa Delta in hopes that I could meet some more new faces, as if I haven’t already met enough, they welcomed me with open arms and I gained over 30 new sisters. I do often find myself wishing I was home so my mom could cook for me or do my laundry. When you go away to college you really start to appreciate the “little things” like your own shower. Before, I started college I thought I knew everything I needed to know about responsibility but, I was WRONG. I have grown up so much in the last semester and I feel like that is the only way I will be able to survive college. I’m excited for College and I’m trying to embrace all of these crazy experiences with open arms. Here goes Nothing!
I graduated from Conway High School having no idea what I really wanted to do with my life. “What people think of you is none of your dang business.” I never really understood what that truly meant until I started college. In high school, what people perceive you to be kind of rules your world for the next four years. Coming to college was very different for me. No one knew who I was, what my story was, or the kind of person I was in high school. I had the chance to totally recreate myself. As the year continued to pass, I realized I didn’t have to change who I am. Making friends and growing as a person showed me that it was just fine to be me. I mean let’s be honest here. If I am not myself, then who else is going to do it?

Coming to college was not my first plan of action for my life, but I’m glad I came. The friends and experiences I’ve already had are ones that will be treasured. It’s exciting and a little scary to see what will happen next, but nothing has been accomplished by not doing anything. Now when I feel like not doing anything I remind myself of these words: Bippity Boppity Boo to these shenanigans. You better come on.
Man I Love College

That first exam man, was awfully crazy I hoped I aced it.

I studied my butt off and wrote so much my fingers are aching.

Do my work and watch tv, 2 hours of sleep is all I need.

Class out at 1, hang out till 10, do my homework till dawn, and do it again

Man I love college.

I don’t want to be in college for the rest of my life, so I study hard and do things right.

Study groups on Thursdays and Tuesday night, and I can get pizza a dollar a slice.

So I fill my cup and don’t act up

We split the work evenly

Who want what?

Who will be the one, to make the coffee run? 3 cappuccinos and hot tea for one.

No bathroom breaks, its already late

Gotta be at class round a quarter to 8.

Time isn’t wasted if you don’t waste it

Woke up today and all I can say is...

That first exam man, was awfully crazy I hoped I aced it.

I studied my butt off and wrote so much my fingers are aching.

Do my work and watch tv, 2 hours of sleep is all I need.

Class out at 1, hang out till 10, do my homework till dawn, and do it again

Man I love college,

Volunteering,

No more parents,

Man I love college.
My name is Gerardo. I went to high school at DeQueen, AR and I am majoring in Computer Science. I like to sing and play guitar.

When I first came to Little Rock for the CLC Orientation, I wasn’t too impressed with the campus. I thought it was really small but there were a lot of things I did like about it. I made a couple of friends and overall I had a great time. Then came move in day. Honestly, all summer long I thought my roommate was going to be weird. He posted so much on the CLC Facebook page, he annoyed me and the thought of rooming with him annoyed me. But move in day came along and I got over it. He actually turned out to be only a little weird but overall a really cool person and a GREAT friend. Later came the first day of classes. I was actually excited to go to class the first day but after a week I got tired of class and hated it.

I am going to be honest. For a while, I actually hated it here. I didn’t like the fact that I lived 2 and a half hours away from my family and friends. I liked being on my own but I was so pessimistic about being here that I didn’t really make many friends the first few days of being here. If anyone who is new to college is reading my essay, I just want to point out that college is more fun if you make it fun. You are going to hate it anywhere if you don’t give it a chance. This first semester, I have learned so much about myself, the world, and pretty much just life in general. I went back home and did things I never had the courage to do before. I think I’ve matured and learned so much since I’ve been here and I can’t wait to see what these next few years have to offer!
I am from Little Rock Central High School and I want to make a difference.

The transition from high school to college was very difficult for me; not academically but emotionally. My grades were excellent and I had no trouble in classes but I didn’t really have anyone supporting me. I was so accustomed to having my high school AVID class and teachers there 24/7 as my support system but I soon learned that I had to become my own motivator. I determined where I went from there.

After the first two months of college, I honestly wanted to drop out. I declared chemistry as my major so that I could get another scholarship (not a good reason) but I soon found out that it was VERY unfulfilling. I became discouraged sitting in a class full of geniuses and being totally bored and uninterested. Science became too real- the research, the multi-million dollar equipment, the super-technical terms- I just couldn’t do it. It wasn’t for me. Yeah, it was cool back in high school but science in college is REAL. I then knew that I needed to find a career path that was fit for me.

I went to career counseling. My top majors included Early Childhood Development and Services, Mental Health and Therapy Services, Teaching and Training, and Journalism. I decided to declare Early Childhood Education as my major and Psychology as my minor because I was interested in children and their development. I was finally happy because I knew what I wanted to do with my life and I could finally move forward knowing that this was something that I was passionate about.

Now, my freshman year is progressing amazingly! I’m focused. I’m happy. I’m motivated. And I’m ready to take on ANY challenge that is placed in front of me. I am so thankful for the motivation that I receive from God, my daughter, and the CLC program. “Success will be within your reach only when you start reaching out for it.”

‒ Stephen Richard, Think Your way to Success: Let Your Dreams Run Free
I went to Bauxite High School and I want to develop software with my degree, which is a career plan supported by my mother, Jaime, my father, Marty, my brother, Joseph, and my sister Arden, who all say, as well as me, that I’m a cool person.

The social aspect of my freshmen experience started halfway through the summer. When I went to the overnight CLC orientation. I met people, we did weird ice breaking games, and we all slept (or didn’t sleep) in the dorm rooms for the first time. It was all good stuff. I felt more comfortable on move in day because of CLC and the orientation, so that was helpful. On move in day, I decided to call the year the “Year of the Freshmen”. It sounded cooler in my head, but I’m still going with it. I felt more comfortable than most on move in day because I went to school with my assigned roommate on the second floor of West Hall. The roommate situation was going well. We discussed pointless room regulations and other things like who gets what bed, which later did not make a difference since I moved into another room with another roommate a few months later. I was really good friends with my now new roommate, so we decided to breakup with our old roommates and have our own room. We both also knew everyone on that floor (floor 3) and that was where our group of friends was anyway, so it was a win-win to move up there. Since then, it was full of people every day. The folks on that floor dubbed our room as the “entertainment room”. My “group of friends” all had a bunch of hobbies, so they made me like that stuff too. I basically spent the entire semester doing nerdy stuff like play video games and such. This worked well with everyone else since we were all into the same stuff. The most prominent thing I learned during the “Year of the Freshmen” was to keep an open mind. I didn’t automatically dislike something or deem something to be impossible. I instead gave things a chance and it generally worked out for the best. One example is the Rubik’s Cube. I learned how to solve it. Not only solve it, but solve it in under a minute, which I think is pretty cool. So there you go, the Year of the Freshmen was awesome.
I graduated from Van Buren High School and hope to be a traveling nurse one day.

College is full of unknowns. You come in not really knowing anyone and with a clean slate. Nobody cares what sport you played in high school or how popular you were. Everyone is equal here. Coming to UALR, I didn’t know anyone. I was worried I wouldn’t make friends and I would completely hate it. Instead, it was the complete opposite. I found an awesome roommate, and made close friends who will be lifelong friends. At college, a lot changes. You grow up, you make adult decisions, leave home, and create friendships. Some of which you probably never saw coming. Your parents are no longer there to hold your hand through every decision. College is full of stress, studying, and very little sleep. In the end, it’s an experience you love and will never get back. You discover who you really are at college. It’s important to keep your priorities straight: go to class, do your homework, and study. But at the end of the day, just enjoy life, because as stressful as it can be, it so fun, and you never know what’s coming next.
My name is Taurine Main and I am from Mayflower High School. Home of the Eagles! My bachelor's degree is in Biology and I am double minoring in Nonprofit Leadership Studies and Business. One key fact that you need to know about me is I am a huge animal lover who has a deep passion in rescuing homeless animals from any abused and/or neglected environment.

It was the summer of my high school senior year when I visited numerous college campuses with the hope and dream of finding my ideal college. After each visit I ranked each campus as my top favorite to least favorite. At that time, UALR was not my number one choice.

At the beginning of my senior year I started applying to all the colleges I visited that summer. I waited with anticipation to find out if I was accepted. If I was accepted, then I started checking into that college's scholarship programs. It was at that time I learned how some colleges are superior in their efforts to help motivate students and how other colleges didn't seem to really care.

Surprisingly, I received a letter addressed to me from the UALR Chancellor's Leadership Corps. As my mother handed me the letter she encouraged me to reconsider UALR. At that time I had my eye on another college that was further away and offered me, what I thought, a better opportunity in my chosen field of interest. So to appease my mother I opened the letter. For me, even after reading the letter, I still did not see the opportunity. It was my mother that sat me down and pointed out how UALR had vision and was investing in those young adults who had shown their dedication, stamina and drive to accomplish great things in their lives. No other college recognized my commitment towards my education, along with my service and involvement within my community and school. UALR recognized those qualities in me, and they wanted me to interview for their CLC scholarship program.

So I went to the CLC scholarship interview and it was nothing like I expected. My eyes were opened wide and I can honestly say, I started to see what my mother was talking about. Not only did I feel welcomed by the CLC members but everyone. Mr. Nick Steele and Ms. Tammy Harrison spoke to me personally. They asked questions of me and listened to my answers. They genuinely cared about me and my future. Wow, I was overwhelmed with excitement and remember thanking my mother on the way home for asking me to reconsider UALR.

It seems so long ago as I look back but in retrospect it was just a few short months ago. I never imagined myself walking on the burgundy brick paths of the UALR campus this fall. But here I am, and I am as proud as ever to be part of such a progressive college. To be given such an amazing opportunity to define who I am and who I desire to become.

The friendships I have made throughout this first semester are numerous inside my CLC family and my Chi Omega sorority sisters. Whenever I seem to be down in the dumps and just not having a swell day, I know I can always count on my friends to give me a hug or a simple ‘Hello’.

As I search my mind for words to express my gratitude for the UALR CLC program, I find myself “wordless”. No words can truly state how grateful I am to UALR for all the amazing opportunities presented to me this semester. It is because of this realization I will encourage others to really look over what other colleges are offering them because the one college you may least admire could be the college that really supports your dream. UALR ranks number #1 in supporting dreams!
I attended Little Rock Central High School and am currently a Biology and Psychology major. I plan on becoming a pediatric neurologist or neurology researcher. My parents, older sister, and I are all from Kenya, and my younger brother was born in Texas. Something that describes me would be a science experiment; my life full of a few successes and several failures and sometimes I’ll accidentally do something that actually works, but most of the time it’s a guessing game what’ll happen next.

To be honest, freshman year did not go at all like I expected. According to the movies I was supposed to party every night and do whatever I wanted all while making perfect grades. But that’s not true. See, I was told that you’re given 3 options in college; Sleep, Good Grades, and a Social Life, but you can only pick 2. At first I chose Social Life and Good Grades so I could party and still make it to med school. However, I fell asleep everywhere and anywhere, including the couch, the floor, the car, in class, and even on the table in the cafeteria. So then I thought “Maybe I should do Social Life and Sleep. Just take a few days off and skip a few classes so I can catch up on my Zs”. But then my grades started slipping much faster than I anticipated. I slowly slipped back into my Social Life and Good Grades routine. I didn’t want to let the partying and time with friends go. But then one day, while trying to decide whether to study for a big biology test or hit up the Kappa Sigma party going on, I laughed at myself. How silly of me to come to college for a degree so I can succeed, and become what I’ve always dreamed of being, only to be consumed by how many people I knew, or how many parties I went to. So I straightened up my life, and learned to balance all 3 options at once; Social Life, Good Grades, and Sleep. Instantly things got better. I declared my major as a double in Biology and Psychology, I brought my GPA back up to a 4.0, and still had time to do all the fun stuff now and then. So I guess that’s the major lesson I learned from my first semester of college. As long as you balance your life, and maintain your focus, your college experience will be great.
My name is Maria Oates and I graduated from Conway High School. After receiving a Bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice and a Master’s in Public Administration, I plan to work as a police officer and eventually working my way up to a homicide detective. I also want to do social work and be a counselor in a juvenile detention center. Some will describe me as very naive, optimistic, sweet, and humble.

I’ve come to the conclusion that growing up is inevitable. There comes a time in our lives when we must allow ourselves to let go of the things that once kept us from what most people refer to as “being grown.” Getting a full night’s rest, waking up to a hefty breakfast, having our parents still do our laundry, and not having Ramen noodles for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Now, we face madness. We’ve been thrown into the hustle and bustle of college life. We’ve been stripped of all “joy” we ever got out of this world. That carefree spirit we once possessed is no more. It’s stressful. For me, the beginning of my college experience was just that. I was caught up in a mindset that wouldn’t allow for adult priorities. Though I stayed on top of my schoolwork, calling home to complain to my mom about how unfair life was became a norm. Luckily, there is a God. I didn’t notice it in the beginning, but everything that was going on in my life was meant to make me strong minded and become more independent. I am so thankful that my destiny landed me here, putting me in a position to meet people I couldn’t imagine my life without and opening my eyes to countless opportunities beyond what I ever thought was possible. I am now at a happy place and I couldn’t be more optimistic about my journey here at UALR.
Robyn Oglesby

Just your average student from North Little Rock High School loving God, loving others, and living life at UALR.

I would be lying if I said UALR was my first choice, or my second, or even my third. Before coming to UALR I thought I was going to have no fun, I would hate all of my classes, and all of the other students would be weird or think that I was. If I’m being honest I thought my first year experience was not going to be a good one.

Well, life has a funny way of putting you exactly where you are supposed to be. The opportunity of a free education that UALR provided for me was too good to pass up. As I continue through my first year, I have learned that my prediction of my first year experience could not have been farther from reality.

I have been having the time of my life at UALR. There are so many opportunities here that I could not have even imagined. All of the activities during my first week of school may have taken a lot of my time, but that was honestly one of the more fun weeks here, meeting new people, and sharing my first week of college with my amazing CLC family. And I thought I would have no fun at UALR.

My classes have been amazing, not only educating me academically, but teaching me a lot about life as well. I am glad I have challenged myself. Studying from 9:30pm-2:30am for one test may seem kind of crazy, but I have learned that this is college and you do what you have to do to make an A. Not all of my classes are difficult or apply to my major, but there is value to be seen in all of my classes. And I thought I was going to hate all of my classes.

The friendships that I have formed here are ones that will stick with me for a lifetime. Who knew that ironing some guy’s shirt before the Deans Reception, or winning enough chips at Casino Night to buy Apples to Apples, or playing volleyball at the frat house would lead to some of the best friends I have ever had. My friends that I have made in my freshman year are more than friends, they have become my family. And I thought I was not going to like anyone here.

My first year has been full of ups and downs, but I love living life at UALR and I would not trade my first year experience for anything else in the world. I would like to thank everyone who has been a part of my life this year especially all my friends and CLC family who have just been living life with me along this journey called college.
I was a leopard at DeQueen High School. I wish to one day work for Caterpillar or any other legitimate company that employs engineers.

My experience here at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock has been phenomenal. I remember in the summer I was so anxious to finally get out of my small town and finally move to a city. Many of us were. College has proven to be a little bit more strenuous than high school was. There have been a couple days that I’ve made it through with only a couple hours of sleep, but I think that’s the way it’s supposed to be. Thank goodness for coffee. In some other ways it has been easier though. It is really not as demanding, but its way more important. You don’t have to wake up really early like back in the day, although it can be harder to get up sometimes. It feels great not having to take all classes in the morning. Something I want to point out though, afternoon classes can be painful. Having a day where you have classes from three to eight thirty at night can be a killer. Anyways, the people in this school are fantastic and that makes me feel like I belong here. The instructors are very helpful to the students. Indeed, the liberty you get as a college student is awesome. But even though it is college, there are still rules to abide by in life. You always have to do your work before you have fun. I’ve learned that overdoing it can be just as bad as not endeavoring at all. It has truly been such an honor being a college student. I wouldn’t give anything up for being a Trojan.
My name is Mercades Parker, I attended Ashdown High School and graduated class of 2013. I am majoring in Nursing, with my degree I hope to help cure people and make their lives better.

Upon coming to UALR, I have to say, that I was very scared and sure of my life plan. I didn’t know if I would meet people and make friends, and even though I’m not very far from home, I felt so alone. That was until I got to know my CLC family. They were a big help, in helping me transition into the college life. They helped me come out of my shell. I joined the CLC flag football team where we won the championship and traveled all the way to Fayetteville to play in regionals. While playing with the ladies on CLC Brick Squad, we became very close, so close it seemed like we had knew each other our whole lives. You could say they were my long lost sisters! I soon found out that I could in fact get used to the college life, after all I wasn’t alone anymore. Classes were easier than I thought and in a lot of ways just like the high school setting. The class sizes where not big at all and if you need extra help, you can go to your Professor during their office hours. I feel like being a part of CLC got me started out on the right track. I am very thankful to have been accepted into the program. I love my CLC family and thank them for everything they have taught me and helped me accomplish in my first year of college.
My name is Micah Paul Parker, I’m from Sheridan High School, I would like to double major in Political Science/Criminal Justice, and I love hanging out with my friends and listening to music.

My First Year Experience
When coming to a college you don’t expect to be an individual, but just another enrolled student working night and day just to pass classes. Just another person away from home to focus on school. I had the option of choosing between Henderson State University, UCA, or UALR. I was leaning toward Henderson until I got offered the Chancellors Leadership Corps Scholarship. This scholarship opportunity sold me on The University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Being a part of this scholarship program though has also allowed me to become an individual among a crowd. I’ve met many great people through this program and even more friends. College in general isn’t how I expected it to be. I expected to be stressing 24/7 over grades and working myself to the bone just to maintain good grades. Really though in college courses if you’re willing to put the work in, then you will be rewarded. The teachers are extremely helpful and want to help students pass their classes as well. All of this together has made college so far an amazing experience. If I could go back and choose again, I’d make the same college decisions, because this college doesn’t feel like school. This college feels like home.
I attended Little Rock Central High school, I want to work as a pediatric nurse, and something to describe me is dedicated for my mom.

My New Life

The whole week before I had to move into the dorms I was dreading it. I had so many thoughts and questions about everything. What if I don’t like my roommate? What if I can’t find my classes? What if my alarm doesn’t go off any I’m late for class (because I hate not being on time)? I was afraid because this was going to be a whole new experience for me and I didn’t know if I was ready for it. The week past and the day I had to move into the dorms was actually a very good day. I met a lot of new people and they were mostly form CLC. They made me feel welcome and excited about college. I met my roommate and she was the nicest, sweetest, and funniest person that I had ever met. That same week that had to sit in all the lectures and participate in the activities got me more confident that I was really going to enjoy college. I began to realize that it was my own mind that would stop me from doing what I know I could do, and that is to succeed. College is still a brand new experience for me, but it’s just the start of my brand new life.
I went to high school at LISA Academy. I plan on pursuing a degree in Pre Pharmacy. My family means a lot to me. Something that describes me is the word persistent; I don’t like to give up on anything I start.

“My Freshman Experience”

My first year here at UALR has been exceptional. Since move in day I have felt welcomed, almost as if I was right at home. Everyone was so helpful and friendly. I assume that being a part of Chancellor’s Leadership Corps (CLC) played a huge role in that area. At the beginning of the year we all were required to play games to get to know each other better. Without really knowing, we were building friendships that could benefit us throughout college. For most of us, starting college as a freshman was somewhat nerve racking. However, being in CLC gave us an advantage because we had ambassadors there to help us if we had any questions about anything as well as a group of other CLC freshmen assigned to us which made us feel as if we were no longer beginning a new experience alone.

Currently, I have learned to adapt to the college experience. It is essential to know the key aspects necessary for college survival. Those three aspects are: 1) time management 2) organization skills and 3) punctuality. As a freshman we quickly learn that we are truly on our own as far as getting our work done on time and going to class. Therefore, it is important to strategize a way to stay ahead of the game so that you do not become overloaded with work or other activities. Also, as a member of CLC there is a certain G.P.A that needs to be maintained in order to keep our scholarship, therefore, it is crucial for us to learn these skills if we have not already. Being in college is very similar to being out in the real world, it is important to make smart decisions and get the most important things done first so that there won’t be any issues or mishaps later. My first year of college is teaching me how to be more responsible on my own as well as the value of time and a well thought through strategy in order to achieve success.

As I begin to start my second semester of college, I am more confident because I know what to expect. Sometimes it takes staying in to study when there’s a party going on the night before an exam or perhaps typing a paper a week in advance to avoid putting it off until the night before. Whatever the case, it is essential to remember the main reason you are in college. This reason should be to further your education, not to party or socialize with friends constantly. In order to make it in college you have to be strong enough to say “No” sometimes. Success starts with a student’s mindset. You cannot be lazy and make it through college. A student must be determined to achieve their goal. Your parents and/or family members are no longer there to tell you what to do and when to do it, you have no crutch. After a while you realize that college is only the first phase. So the question to ask is how much do you really want to succeed? It all starts now.
I went to Van Buren High School and was raised in that area. I have 3 brothers and sisters, and 2 foster siblings. I plan on obtaining my Bachelors degree in Information Science. After I graduate I would love to work for Google as a Software Developer.

I am from a very small town. I was slightly afraid of moving to the largest city in the state. I didn’t do a lot in high school, mainly marching band and East Lab. I didn’t like music all that much, so I dropped out of marching band. I love working with computers and volunteering my time to help others. In East Lab, I was able to do both of these. I planned on receiving the East Scholarship. A few weeks after I submitted my scholarship application I got a letter from CLC. I didn’t know what the Chancellors Leadership Corps was so I didn’t bother opening the letter. I threw the letter that contained thousands of dollars in our “junk mail” pile. When the East Scholars were announced, my name wasn’t on the list. I called the scholarship office and they told me I had not received the East Scholarship, because I was a potential CLC scholar.

“Crap. I don’t wanna be a CLC Scholar, I’m not social, I’m not super smart and I seriously doubt it will ‘help’ me get through college.” This was my thinking. But I didn’t have too much of a choice. It’s a great scholarship and it pays the majority of my schooling. I knew one other person from my high school that decided to go to UALR. So I tried my best to meet new people and make some friends. CLC required us to go to those organization fairs during orientation at the beginning of the year. I decided to go against the stereotypes and introduce myself to the Greeks. I received and accepted an invitation to join Pi Kappa Alpha.

I could not be any happier with my decision. I received an internship as a freshman. I have made plenty of new friends. I have had a great time and it’s all because of CLC. I’m actually glad that I didn’t receive the prestigious East Scholarship. Without CLC, I wouldn’t have met all the wonderful people that I socialize with everyday or my brothers that help me through hard times.

Thanks Nick.
I’m from Monticello, AR and I attended Drew Central High School. I would like to take my BSN-Nursing to the next level by becoming a Nurse Practitioner and then eventually becoming a Pediatrician.

I’m trapped between these four walls yet I’m free as can be,

Expectations are set high however I feel as though I won’t succeed,

Family and friends are willing to help but being a burden is just not me,

I’m simply trying to find my place in this world because being a failure won’t fly with me,

Yet it seems as though everywhere I turn a new obstacle is being thrown at me,

However I never let them tear me down because of the phrase that forever sticks with me,

I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME!
Philippians 4:13
I graduated from Lonoke High School and am majoring in Biology and minoring in Psychology. I plan to complete my BS and apply to Physician Assistant School at UAMS. My family is large, fragmented, and non-traditional. I would describe myself as a driven go-getter who wants to accomplish as much as possible.

College can either be the single most terrifying event in a teen’s life, or it can be the most exciting and liberating experience. For me it was a little of both; coming from a small town and all. UALR had always been my first choice of colleges, coincidentally. Everyone I talked to responded with, “Really?” “Yoo-ler?” The comments were endless. I simply nodded and replied, “You take your “fancy” school and student loans and I’ll see you later.” Little did they, or I for that matter, know that the decision to go to UALR would be one of the greatest I would ever make. As the summer drew near the start of school, I was having second thoughts of college in general: How can I choose a career path of which I don’t even know I will like later in life? Are my classes going to be THAT difficult? Do all those horror stories of college hold some truth? I’ve come to find out that all of those are not, in the slightest bit, true.

I have found, more than anything, that college is what you make it. If you are an outspoken, energized person—there’s a place for you—if you love to play Pokemon (even at this age), hey, there’s a spot for you too. CLC has challenged me not only to come out of the lull of studying and to do something for the community, but also to become the best I can be. Leadership is the most important thing for a student to learn after all. So if you follow the guidelines to learn, lead, and serve, you will inevitably succeed in college no matter what.
I attended Dollarway High School and graduated top of my class as Salutatorian in May 2012. My favorite hobby is singing. I want to start out as a law enforcement officer and then become a detective. Then eventually I want to work my way up to being a U.S. Marshal, SWAT, or a bounty hunter.

Ever wish that sometimes something was over and done with so you can move straight on to the next step or the next level? In high school we had our good times and our bad times and we were getting anxious when it started getting close to that graduation day. When that graduation day came and went then it was like we kind of missed high school but then again it meant we were taking that big step in starting a new journey in our lives. That journey begins with furthering our education in college. We often don’t know what to expect, what friends we may make, what your professors will be like etc. There are a whole bunch of emotions that come with getting ready to move-in and start college. When I got accepted to UALR, I was so happy. So happy to start my own life and make friends along the way. I didn’t really know what to expect when I first arrived on move-in day at UALR. Sure there were a lot of other students moving in as well but I didn’t really expect there to be people there waiting to help us move in. Move-in day as a pretty hectic one. Everyone and their mama were getting on the elevators to head up to their designated floors and yes I literally mean everyone and their mama. I was on the 6th floor and honestly it was a bit of a workout going up and down the stairs with all my stuff about four times because there is no way I was going to be able to use the elevator. Believe me I wasn’t the only one using the stairs. However I really want to say thank you to Brenden Guffey. Poor big-little guy had to carry my hunky tv up those some six flights of stairs. When he walked in my room with it I almost thought he was going to pass out right then and there. Thank you Brenden Guffey for punishing yourself for me by carrying my tv up some six flights of stairs. I greatly appreciate it as well as the other people who helped.

Here my first year I was surprised as to how many people I would meet here and there and everywhere. It is almost like every day you meet someone new. My first year here so far has been really good. I was nervous at first because of all the people on campus and based on the fact I am not used to so many people. You may not be able to tell right now but I used to be very shy when it came to large crowds of people. If I didn’t know you I didn’t talk to you unless you approached me first. However, I broke that shell and emerged when I realized it’s time to break the chain and be more outgoing. I learned that through the CLC Orientation. They made me feel better about being me and getting to know others. So now instead of being the person in the corner being quiet as a mouse and still as a rock, I am that person who goes to that person, in the corner quiet as a mouse and still as a rock, and help them overcome some of that shyness.

I have made many friends who I hold dear to me and hope that I have many more to come. CLC is one great big family and I am glad to have acquired such a family here to support me and stand by me when I need them.
I went to Bryant High School and am a biology major planning to go into medicine.

Freedom. When asked to write about my college experience of course many things came to mind, the early morning cramming after late nights, kicking myself after procrastinating on my math homework, forcing myself out of my warm bed to go to class, or spending every moment of my free time with my boyfriend and not having anyone tell me I can’t. But out of everything the best part of my college experience has been the freedom. Being free to do whatever I want, whenever I please. Although with this freedom does come responsibility. But it’s honestly not that hard to go to class for a few hours a day. There’s also a need for balancing your studies with your social life. Being able to conquer this has given me a fulfilling college experience full of freedom.
In school many kids referred to me as the funny guy, or the outgoing one. I have always enjoyed being in front of an audience and I love making others laugh.

College is nothing like I had expected. Even up until move in, I never considered the vast diversity of people I would meet, or the family I have now made. During this first semester I have so far made enough friends to crush a small elephant, know enough people to have a personal army, and have enough connections to benefit my future in ways I couldn’t ever imagine. Throughout this semester, I have loved and lost, laughed and cried, and spent this valuable time with my new family that is now closer to me than even the oldest of friends. Although my time has been short, it has been what seems like years. This tightly knit community I am proudly apart of couldn’t be broken by even the biggest bat in the world. (which by the way is 120 feet tall and 68,000 pounds! So that's a pretty big deal.).

CLC has not only given me the opportunity to attend UALR, my home, but opened the doors to build my new life. Chancellors Leadership Corps. has given me the chance to meet new people, to show my worth as a leader, and like so many before me, make my mark in society. If it wasn’t for CLC, I wouldn’t have even considered UALR. I would have never learned about the awesome degrees they offer and I would have never been given the chance to rush Pike. Even though at times I have wanted to just croak from the constant business and school work, college has hands down been the best experience in my life. I wouldn’t change any of it for the world.
Maybelline Redix

Salutatorian graduate from J.A. Fair High School majoring in CJS and a double minor in Psychology and Spanish. I am a very diverse, unique young lady who has huge plans for the future.

College has always been bitter sweet to me as many things in my life. I always knew that I wanted and needed to attend college to better myself. But there was always that thought of me not having the motivation to graduate and graduate on time. Growing up the motivation to make excellent grades and have great behavior came from me and me alone. Those around me could care less what I was doing with my life. So I have never had the support system that I have witnessed many having. Now being in college I still doubt myself of having that motivation to continue. Quite honestly I am almost out of ammo for pushing myself. This is where my CLC family plays a huge role in my life. CLC is my newfound motivation to continue with college and get my degree. There are people who support me and my decisions. Care about my actions and the effect they have on me. CLC has helped my transition in college a lot. Although I attend a college in my hometown, I was still doing it alone. On move in day I had no relatives to help me move in and get settled. There I was with a car full of junk I call my life staring at me while I am trying to figure out my first move. Feeling overwhelmed and alone, here comes a fellow CLC member offering up his time and energy to help me get accommodated. He didn’t realize that the small action caused a great huge flame of hope in my heart. Letting me know that as long as I was here and apart of CLC there will always be someone there for me. From the small simple acts as this one to those that are bigger and more important ones in the near future.

Although at times I do get a little annoyed with CLC. With all the events and canned goods hahaha. Each event has given so much more than what I could ever receive just sitting in my room studying. Like new friendships, memories, and good laughs. I believe that laughs are food for the heart, mending the wounds that were once filled with sorrow and pain and replacing them with love and joy. So thank you CLC for filling my injured heart with compassion, joy, and most importantly the support I never had but secretly desired.
I went to Lafayette County High. I am majoring in Biology and minoring in Dance. I plan to go to medical school to continue my studies and become an OB/GYN. I then plan to open a dance studio with my minor to continue my dream as a dancer. I want success just as bad as I want sleep!

Let’s start from the beginning, the first step I took on campus, I must admit, was very nerve-wrecking. The thought of leaving my mother and being on my own blew my mind. A few days before I graduated from high school, I got really sick and was rushed to the hospital. To make a long story short, I have bad anxiety and was very nervous and overwhelmed with everything that was about to happen. I really overestimated college because of what people said to me about it but the things that I have been experiencing remind me a lot of high school, the drama... Since I have been here, I’ve met people, made friendships, and most of those fell through but one in particular (my ride or die) has been here since day one, and when I say day one I mean when I said my goodbyes to my folks, I came down to her room and took our very first college picture TOGETHER. People have tried to come between us but we are still here. I have a VERY small circle and when I say small I mean small, and if it was not for my ride or die I don’t know where I’d be, probably kicked out or something because of my temper. But in all seriousness, she pushes me to do more and more and we hold each other up, it gets no better than that. Loyalty, in my book, is way more important than popularity and as long as I got her, I know “I ain’t gotta worry ‘bout nothin”!! I love you Kyndrierra Tatum. . . .
Emily Watson

I’m from Wynne, Arkansas. As of right now, my major is Biology, but I plan to change to Early Childhood Education and become a Kindergarten or first grade teacher. I have a wonderful family that I love very much, and I have a big heart for people—especially kids.

Making a New Home
University of Arkansas at Little Rock. That’s where I landed, and that’s now where I call home. Originally, UALR wasn’t my first choice, but that quickly changed during my senior year when I began weighing the pros and cons compared to other schools. My entire family was pushing me to go to UCA, but I felt like UALR would be the best fit for me. From the very first time I stepped foot on this campus to move my boyfriend into college for his second year, I knew it was where I was supposed to be. As I went through the application processes for admission and scholarships at different schools, everything just fell into place for me to attend UALR. Great campus, great place for my major, way more scholarships and opportunities than the other schools. That pretty much settled it for me!

Since I’ve been at college, I have made some of the best friends a girl could have just in the past few months. As soon as I arrived, they all immediately surrounded me and did whatever possible to make me feel welcome. These are some that I feel will last a lifetime. The professors and other staff have been absolutely wonderful and so very helpful. The campus is beautiful, and the housing is amazing—until the elevator breaks for a few hours and I have to walk up six flights of stairs that is. I greatly enjoy the Little Rock area and all it has to offer. I have made a home here just in the past few months, and all that I have already experienced as a freshman will carry with me throughout the rest of my life.
I was born and raised in Dallas, Texas, and spent the last two years living in Mountain Home, Arkansas. I am a Chemistry major and I hope to do forensic science or research in the future.

Most college students dread writing essays, especially ones about themselves. I, however, was ecstatic to write this essay because it will allow me to express how significant my transition from high school to college was in my life.

The two years that I lived in Mountain Home were the darkest years I have yet experienced. All I wanted the whole time was an escape, I wanted to get back into a big city and find a place where I belong. The first few days at UALR were rough-adjusting to new roommates, unpacking, not knowing anybody within hundreds of miles, and finding my way around with no directional skills whatsoever. After a couple of days, I began to meet people through CLC. I met a guy who inspired me to be stupid in public and not care about what other people think. I met a girl who lived across the hall and would later become my closest friend. I met a genius who made me feel pressure to make an A in General Chemistry as a freshman and aim for that 4.0. I met so many people who were so laid back-and I immediately began to love college. All of these people, opportunities, and experiences I have had in college have made me grow into an entirely different person over the course of a single semester. I am no longer afraid to have my opinions heard. I am no longer that smart girl who sits quietly in class, doing as she is told. Most importantly, I am not the person I was when I was in Mountain Home, I am so much more.
I went to Jacksonville High school and I want to create amazing games with more developed storylines to send more positive messages to everyone to make the world a better place and I am very tenacious.

**Life Struggles**

We struggle into the world
A life to be unfurled
Blind and helpless with no direction
We have so much to do with little to no affection

Time is always against us
Any minute you could be hit by a bus
Making it through grade school is a miracle
We’re lucky the world is still spherical

Here in college your life starts to change
You’re lucky if your roommate doesn’t have mange
Money can so terribly soon run dry
Someone in 309 doesn’t know how to fry

I have met some interesting peeps
I envy those who might own a Jeep
Depending on others is such a drag
Especially when my head could end up in a bag

Group projects are no joke
Some people need a poke
I work better alone with no altercations
I seriously need a well-earned vacation

I am not you and you are not me
Until you watch Rush Hour 2, you know, that one scene
Life can be harsh, that much I know is true
But there are lights that come from out of the blue.
Robert Garrett Whisenhunt: a human-being born in Bossier, Louisiana, raised partly in Bradley, Arkansas, and partly in Guy, Arkansas. Oh, that human-being just so happens to be me. Although my first name is Robert, I don’t use it. I go by Garrett. Robert was given to me in honor of one of my great grandfathers. Whisenhunt, of course given to me from my father’s side of the family, has been a named honored throughout history. Garrett… well, it was made up. However, it was made up to ensure that I had exactly 23 letters in my name. Fun fact? Every male in my family has exactly 23 letters in their name. I find it unique, although to some people it may come off a little more as creepy. Concerning the foundation for the rest of my life, I already knew that I wanted to major in civil engineering, so I had to find a college that offered that major. That is when I found UALR. UALR is actually one of the few colleges in Arkansas that offer my degree. I took a tour of the campus, and instantly fell in love with my surroundings. Everyone that I asked had good things to say about UALR, so that locked in my decision to attend this university.

While attending this magnificent university, I have learned quickly the importance of time management. Coming into college, my time management was just about as bad as my mother trying to sing “I Don’t Care” by Icona Pop. Too many times in high school did I do my calculus homework right before I walked into class. College, well UALR, has changed my time management skill for the better. Doing homework the moment before you walk into a college class doesn’t fly too well. I learned that quickly. Also, I learned that I needed to fall into a routine. Up until this point may days have been extremely disorganized, and I couldn’t keep that up while in college. It would stress me out to the core. What I needed was a smack in the face, and UALR just so happened to be the hand that did it.

I have learned many things from my First Year Experience class, however the thing that I have taken to the highest pedestal would be the skill of listening. Yes, I admit it, I have forgotten to do many important things in my life. Actually, my memory is a hop, skip, and step away from downright horrible. I’ve learned that in order to be successful in classes, build quality friendships, gain a valuable reputation, and gain the trust of others, I must be a good listener. If you think about it, listening comes before action. Listening well can only intensify the satisfactory outcome of that action. Learning that has helped me tremendously while in my career as a student.

I’ve done various things in order to complete my 15 community service hours, but my biggest contribution has gone towards Life Skills for Youth. Life Skills for Youth is an organization that helps struggling children. This help can come in the form of helping with homework, giving advice, giving examples of how things are done, and just being a friend. I know these service hours are “required”, but I’ve actually come to enjoy what I do with LSY. If my help influences a child to do great things in life, then that child can get all of my help that he or she desires. All of the justifications mentioned have made my experience at UALR an amazing one, and I look forward to what awaits me in the near future.
I graduated from Benton High School, I love to sing, work with kids and am blessed by God to have an amazing family and people in my life!

When thinking about college in high school, I knew I had everything planned out. I was going to attend Henderson State University and become a music major in education—a choir teacher. I should have seen it coming that when you think you have everything planned out, you really don’t. I decided I wanted simple things, a normal career, a happy life, and good people. But God had bigger plans for me. He opened up UALR to me, allowing me to stay plugged in to my church, Geyer Springs FBC, and keep working with kids while attending school. I have learned to push myself, make myself reach for goals that never entered my mind as an option. I am now going toward my true passion: computers. I am majoring in Electronics and Computer Engineering and want to work for a large corporation such as NVIDIA, Adobe, or Google. I don’t see my goals as dreams anymore, I see them as my future. I don’t say “I wish” anymore, I say “I will.” My biggest goals are to graduate college, make some great friends, and be a positive impact for people and show them that God did make everyone for a purpose. I want people to see that hard work really does pay off, and when you work towards your passion, it stops to feel so much like “work” and feels more like “pride.” Go after your passion, make a difference, and don’t ever let someone tell you that you don’t matter or can’t make a difference in this world. And don’t forget that along the way you will impact people. You will be a positive or negative example on someone whether you like it or not, so why not make it positive?
When I first began thinking about college and what CLC might be like I will not lie I was extremely nervous. I have never been to a big school and have never had to make new friends. I felt awfully underprepared for what lay ahead. Thankfully, I had a huge family behind me and in front of me for support. CLC was there for me when I knew no one. They helped me form new friendships, find good teachers, and ultimately helped me succeed in college. Without CLC who knows if I would have the great friends I have now or if I would be doing so well in all my classes. When I came to college I had no idea what to expect or if anyone would like me. CLC became an organization that accepted me and made me feel a part of something special. With all the work and volunteering that we do who could be a part of CLC and not feel like we are doing something so great with our time? Even though I don’t know what I want to do with my life, I know as long as I am a part of CLC that I am doing something that is virtuous and that there will always be people in my life who are there to help me along the way.
I chose to major in Psychology because I want to become a Psychologist. I really enjoy listening to others and helping them with their problems.

We all have seen movies about how being a freshman in high school are the scariest thing you can experience. Well for me I grew up with all my friends so when we were freshmen I never felt alone or scared. I never felt like I didn’t know anyone. Pretty much everyone knew everyone at my tiny school.

Coming to college I really felt the loneliness. Leaving my group of friends to come to UALR was the scariest thing for me. I’m so grateful for CLC. The reason being is that I got to start college with a group of people that is in the same boat as me. Though I don’t know everyone in CLC the ones I have met I’m so glad that I have, and I wish to meet and get to know everyone that I haven’t met yet.

It was very nerve racking to meet my new roommate too. I mean I’m going to live with a person I’ve never met before in my life for a whole school year. I was more worried that she would think I was weird. My roommate is probably one of the nicest people I have met. She’s always asking if I’m okay if I don’t look well and how my day is after classes and she always tells me to have a good day when I’m running off to class because I woke up late again. I’m sure she must be annoyed with how noisy I am in the morning. It’s really not that I’m a loud person, but when I’m trying my best to be quite the klutziness always seems to shine through about ten times more than normal.

Though it was a rough start for me in the beginning I was able to find a group of people who I really enjoy to spend time with. They motivate me to do well in class, but at the same time to enjoy my time as a freshman. They truly are a great group of people and if it weren’t for CLC I wouldn’t have met them or my roommate. UALR has begun to feel like home, and I’m really glad that I chose this university.
Going into college is always different. One of the greatest experiences you’ll ever live because it’s such a huge change. You begin a different chapter in your life, not only by changing your environment, but by meeting new people that could possibly change your life as well. Unlike most people, my first semester experience is one that breaks my heart. At the beginning of the year, the day before my friends and I began this new chapter in our lives, one of my best friends passed away. It wasn’t real to me at first; there were so many things going on and for that to happen was just heartbreaking and all I could do is cry. Fortunately enough, I came into a great program (CLC) and was surrounded with amazing friends and had the support of my wonderful family. The semester went on and I liked the way college was. I decided to rush the fraternity Pi Kappa Alpha and experiencing pledging along with new college experiences was something that definitely will be a story to tell later in my life. Throughout this semester I have definitely learned some valuable life skills such as: Managing time, money, and making sure I have my priorities straight. I ended up not liking my major that I chose so I’m planning on switching my major to Health Sciences. This semester isn’t over yet but so far I’m really enjoying everything at UALR and all the people that I’ve been able to
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