

THE REFLECTION

The Maroon & White Leadership Program's Newsletter



Wellness and Leadership

By Aimee Bourey

With countless leaders, it seems all too easy to put wellness on the back-burner. Often, there is a tendency to replace well-being with some task - exercise with studies, social interactions with group projects, and sleep with caffeine. It becomes so easy to give yourself to work that stepping back to be selfish and even look at your own well-being becomes almost foreign. Guilt associates itself with taking that time to focus on well-being, so leaders exhaust themselves with pushing through and moving forward.

This is not healthy, nor is it sustainable. This behavior is what causes people to break down when asked how their day is going or get sick when they realize they haven't eaten anything of substance for who knows how long. All of these are examples of lapses in wellness that could affect growth in leadership.

When asked if involvement in local community is important, Maroon and White Fellows overwhelmingly responded that they strongly agree. When asked if they felt like they belonged to a community and were regularly involved with community related activities, the answers were not as concentrated. Similarly, many people did not agree that they found meaning in the things they do each day, or that the career they were working towards aligned with their values and strengths. The majority of respondents felt unprepared to handle personal finances or long-term decisions for their fiscal future. More than half supplemented their sleep with caffeine, and slept an appropriate amount less than half of the week.

Well-being, though overlooked, should address these concerns. Building career, community, social, physical, and financial wellness not only alleviates stresses, but opens the doors for stronger leadership and healthy role modelling.

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LEADERSHIP LITERATURE

Start With Why

By: Simon Sinek

Find the purpose, cause, or belief that inspires you to do what you do.

Developing the Leader Within You

By: John C. Maxwell

He shows you how to develop the vision, value, influence, and motivation required of successful leaders.

Society Spotlight: Taylor Messinger

By Princess Tates

Taylor was a fellow in the Maroon and White Program and also served as the Society Chair on the 2017-2018 Advisory Board. One of the greatest lessons she learned was to seek challenges finding out that “she will always come out stronger on the other side.” Currently, Taylor works as a Project Manager at a general contracting company. The industry that she is in now was not one she studied in college, presenting itself as a daunting task. However, Taylor remained confident in her abilities based on coming in fresh from her Maroon and White Capstone Project where she had the best understanding of herself and her capabilities.

Taylor expressed that if you want to be a leader, you must “work hard and make sacrifices.” Though she was confident in her capabilities coming into her new job, she has been able to grow in areas that she has not “previously explored within herself” and develop her leadership abilities in ways that college cannot. Taylor encourages the current fellows to “seek experiences specific to their interest”, and to keep in mind that ultimately everything you do “should be to better yourself.”



LEP Spotlight: Karen Leal

By Princess Tates

One of Karen’s qualities is that she has always had a sense of “self-awareness.” However, she attributes much of her growth to being vulnerable with her coach who encouraged critical thinking, provided constructive criticism, and mentorship. At first Karen was hesitant about sharing certain things with her coach, but through her journey has been able to see her progression through her reflections and attributes the mentor aspect of the program as the “best part of her Maroon & White experience.”

Using what she learned in the program, Karen was able to embark upon her most challenging, yet rewarding leadership experience thus far. In her junior year, she started her own organization whose focus is centered on her passion for helping people in the community that live in poverty by making them “feel known and valued.” The name of her organization is Project MARC: Making a Real Change. In this experience, Karen has learned lessons in working with her team and about herself as a leader. Her biggest takeaways from her organization have been to trust her team to fulfill their duties and also the importance of taking personal time away from the project to engage in some extracurricular activities that she enjoys. She is thankful for Maroon & White and all of her leadership experiences for giving her a “strong leadership foundation.”



Upcoming Leadership Events for Society Members

Houston

Me & We Seminar
Nov 10, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Learn how you can have it all

Austin

Live to Lead
Nov 30, 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM:
Takeaway new perspectives

Dallas

Lead Humbly
Oct 17, 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Learn about “servant leadership”

San Antonio

Leadership Unlocked
Oct 15, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Develop mindset, skills, and habits

What's In Your Bucket?

By Natalie Coleman

“Everyone has a bucket,” Lauren Dorsett, Assistant Director of Health Promotion, explained to a confused group of M&W members. She described what could go into these buckets – exhaustion from a long school-day, frustration over a failed relationship, worry for an upcoming interview, or even insecurity about working out. Clarity returned to the students’ eyes as they reflected on the countless responsibilities being poured into their buckets on a daily basis. After grasping this awareness, the students wondered, “What should they do when their buckets were full and overflowing?”

Dorsett was one of eight speakers leading discussions on the five essential elements of well-being. This included career, financial, social, community, and physical wellness. From making friends and participating in the community to building good credit and securing the perfect job, students shared their perspectives and concerns. In my small group, M&W members confessed that they felt expected to master every part of their lives and to be the well-rounded individuals society heavily praises.

Even at their stage in life, the speakers understood the struggle of managing well-being. They advised students to view wellness not as a simultaneous challenge but as a shifting cast of characters. In their leadership development, students have to learn which of their ever-changing needs should come into the spotlight or which should dim into the background.