

THE REFLECTION

The Maroon & White Leadership Program's Newsletter



Smell the Roses

By Aimee Bourey

Lacey Lehrmann says this of her time as a Fellow: “Maroon & White instilled a love for reflection in me. Now that I am in graduate school, I am constantly reflecting on what I am learning in my classes and learning at my job. Whether that is through journaling or verbally reflecting with peers, I am finding ways to slow down and reflect.”

Exams, class evaluations, quarterly reviews. So many functions in our life give us a time to pause and look back on our progress. Did we understand the material of the past semester? Is an instructor giving students what they need? Is a workplace running as smoothly as it should be? Casting our eyes back on what we have done allows for us to better build for the future. These causes for reflection shape the future of any given endeavor. It is only natural that we should take time in our personal and leadership relationships to decide whether or not the path we are on is the right one.

“Modeling yourself after your idea of an ideal leader means that you will not achieve your full potential because you are not capitalizing on what makes you unique.” This is a quote from a reflection of Society member, Megan Nicholson. Reflecting on our experiences shapes our visions of what a leader should be. Sitting down to define an experience and our feelings on it, require us to question whether or not our actions reflect our idea of a leader. For Megan, doing these reflections revealed to her what unique qualities she brings to the table, and how these qualities make her a better leader. The Maroon & White Leadership Program is built on the foundation that, in the busy rush of college life, we stop and smell the roses, and, with that, we define what those roses mean to us.

IN THIS ISSUE

SMELL THE ROSES

SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT: ELIZABETH DUGGAN

LEP SPOTLIGHT: EMILY EVANS

IMAGE IN THE MIRROR

LEADERSHIP LITERATURE

The 4 Essentials of Entrepreneurial Thinking

By: Cliff Michaels

Challenge your definition of success while following a journey through life, mentors, and business.

Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking

By: Susan Cain

Learn how introverts are undervalued and what they contribute to society.

Society Spotlight: Elizabeth Duggan

By Natalie Coleman

Since graduating from Texas A&M University last May, Elizabeth Duggan has been working at a State Farm Agent's Office and will be attending law school in the Fall. When asked about being a young leader in the workforce, Elizabeth commented that it was difficult finding her leadership role and "when it was appropriate to contribute." However, she was able to display "silent leadership" which she defined as "doing the right thing when it seemed no-one was watching and leading with your tasks." She believes that this allowed her boss to notice her abilities and give her more responsibilities within the office.

Looking back at her time in M&W, Elizabeth feels that the most important lesson she learned was that "being a leader is not about striving to be a leader, and it is not something to set out to do as if it were a title." Elizabeth continues the leadership journey she began in M&W by reflecting on her everyday activities and attending every possible training workshop. She advises new Fellows developing in their leadership to "take advantage of the opportunity" of the M&W program by taking the time to develop a relationship with their coach and other Fellows.



LEP Spotlight: Emily Evans

By Taylor Messinger

Emily Evans has completed her M&W Leadership Engagement Project and is going to be inducted into The Society in a couple of weeks. Looking back at her time in the program she now understands that she can lead better from within a group, rather than standing above it. Emily's says her leadership is "motivated by a desire for social change, and [her] leadership gifts and abilities are best applied when [she seeks] opportunity for betterment in everyday encounters."

Emily's growth was not possible without her being pushed by the program's requirements to participate in trainings, such as Step In Stand Up, that have helped her become "more aware and empathetic." As a result, she now attends more trainings and workshops outside of the program due to the value of hearing different perspectives. Emily's development was in part due to her mentor who challenged her to apply her lessons as well as held her accountable for her leadership goals. If there was one thing Emily could have told herself when she first joined M&W, it would be to "try new things, and approach each experience with an open mind, ready to learn!"



Upcoming Leadership Events

Houston

Bridge To Leadership
April 25, 8:00 - 11:00 AM
Bridge between experience & youth

Austin

Top 3 Secrets to Leading Humans
Mar 2, 9:30 - 11:00 AM: FREE
Discover leadership superpowers

Dallas

Entrepreneurship & Leadership
May 19, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM: FREE
Educational and fun

San Antonio

Sister Cities Leadership Conference
May 2 - 4
Promote peace through respect

Image in the Mirror

By Taylor Messinger

It takes too much time, there's no one around to talk to, there are more immediate deadlines to focus on, and it reveals ugly truths about ourselves that no one likes to think about. These are all reasons Dr. Summer Odom discussed for why people may not reflect. However, if you have spent any time in M&W you have heard about the benefits of reflecting: increased self-awareness, personal leadership development, a unique bond with a mentor, and a better understanding of your own skills and abilities. You have heard why reflection is important to leadership, but what really is a reflection?

Reflection is a process that Dr. Odom uses three D's to describe: discovery, development, and defining. The discovery step is finding an experience that gives you dreams or aspirations, and that challenges you yet gives you goals. This could be a topic of interest or a call to action! The next stage is development. This is when one must be intrinsically motivated to transform their knowledge into wisdom and enhance their emotional intelligence. This may be done by defining one's values and principles, reflecting on what actions they took and why, and thinking about the lessons that apply. Finally, the defining stage, or rather redefining stage, is when one must deepen their discoveries. They must apply their realizations to transform their knowledge of themselves, what leadership is, and what abilities they have that can be applied in a leadership setting. This step is important to the growth of an individual because it allows us to apply our lessons and develop based on what we learn.

This process is one that can be taught and learned by anyone. An incredibly important aspect of reflection is understanding that anyone can do it, everyone has room to grow, and any person can be a leader. You have the capability of expanding your leadership development and making a greater impact on the world. So ask yourself this when you wake up in the morning: today, what will I do that matters?