

1. Describe any honors or accomplishments you have achieved. Also, describe how the work performed to receive these honors or accomplishments helped make you the person you are today.

As small children turning in to young adults we still have so much to learn. Our adolescence, innocence and purity are stripped away as we begin to face the "real world" and aspire to become our future selves. We mature, become more self-confident and set goals to achieve success. We all want success, but it only comes to those who want it the most, those that are willing to work hard and can envision themselves as a future leader. I am one of those young men who wants so much out of life and will devote 150% effort to reach my goals. I am one of those young men who is determined to overcome any obstacle and overcome challenges that present themselves to me.

I am a southerner and was born and raised in Powder Springs, GA. I led a pretty normal life with my parents and one sister. I have always dreamed of expanding my horizons and wanting to see more of this world. My first journey began over my four years as a student at Hillgrove High school. In middle school I struggled with fitting in and all the perks of going through puberty. This caused me to really become apathetic and my grades dropped. As I entered high school, I made the decision to mainly focus on my academics and get my GPA where it needed to be. I looked forward to this restart in life and was aiming to make it right. My mother, \_\_\_\_\_, tried very hard to get me interested in several clubs. I joined a few, but never really got anything out of them. One that I did have some interest in though was Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps or NJROTC for short. I joined my \_\_\_\_\_ when I was a freshman and even though the initial investment was significant, I never really joined any of the teams. As we met and I learned more about the differences of each of the teams and the success they had I knew had to get more involved. I joined and never looked back. The next years would turn out to be the best three years of my life!

NJROTC is structured with two head instructors, a U.S. Navy Commander and a U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer that are both retired. Even though retired they wanted to give back to their communities and be a positive influence on the future generations. Even though they oversee the unit, it is really run by a cadet staff of young men and women in the unit that have been selected by the instructors. There are five teams within the unit. First, there is Orienteering which is a navigational foot race through the woods. Second, there is Drill which is split in to four different teams. Drill is a group of 14 cadets who band together to excel in military standardized marching. Third is Academics. Academics is a competition like

Jeopardy. Next is Drone which is a competition in which a four-man teamwork as a squad to navigate obstacles. Lastly, there is Rifle which is a shooting match to targets like you would see in the Olympics.

For the past four years, our unit has made it to the state championship level in all categories. I have been a member of three of those teams. Our Orienteering team are back-to-back National Champions and I placed third overall at the senior level in the nation this year.

Since my sophomore year I have obtained most of the goals I set for myself. I maintained a 3.5 to 3.6 GPA as well as successfully earned the title of Platoon Commander which is a top 5 staff position in the unit of 110 cadets. I was nominated and attended Leadership Academy and a special camp for advanced Orienteers last summer through NJROTC. I was selected as a leader for two drill teams, one came in first place and the other fourth place in our state championship. I have traveled all over the state of Georgia, Texas and California while participating in these events. I could not have done this without the support of my family, my team, and my unit. I feel like I have grown as a person and I have obtained life skills that will help me to become a leader with empathy for others while never backing down from hurdles that sometimes seem insurmountable.

2. Explain your participation in extracurricular/work/community activities have made an impact on your life

While being involved in NJROTC I have learned many qualities that make me a capable leader. I learned self-confidence, to see the value in people, value in country, to ALWAYS set the example, honor, courage, and commitment. I also believe through my experience that a leader is not about what the leader gains, but what his/her team accomplishes. I have learned that being a true leader constitutes empowering others, helping them to reach their goals and recognizing their value.

I was able to develop these qualities by being part of a team and participating in the events and experiences provided to me while being in NJROTC. Being a part of these teams has allowed me to develop leadership skills, to learn the value of not only winning but the lessons you take away when losing as well. The camaraderie of my team and my unit will always be one of the greatest experiences in my life. We started as just some kids entering high school, but now we are a family.

Over the past four years I have volunteered and achieved over 350 community hours. There is no greater honor than giving back and seeing the change that your small part can make in others' lives.

Finally, my senior year was the most impactful year in my life so far. When I stepped into the position of Platoon Commander, it gave me the chance to discover a lot about myself. I learned to put the groups needs ahead of my own. It taught me to resolve conflict because nothing is achievable with a constant butting of heads. There is always a solution, and the leader must help those that are not seeing eye-to-eye consider all sides and come to an agreement that works for all. I felt the most pride in seeing those in my platoon realize their achievements and not to give up. That was the true reward, knowing that I helped someone to grow and meet the goal for which they were striving. Sticking it out through hard work, stress and muscle aching times has shown me the path I want to walk. I feel like I would take a bullet for each and every one of my cadets because that's how much I care for them.