

Name: Yonit Addissie
Address:

Name of Scholarship: The Chaikin, Sherman, Cammarata, & Siegel, P.C.
Ethiopian Heritage College Scholarship (2010-2011)

List of community service provided, by date:

- Holy Cross Hospital Volunteer (summer 2008, summer 2009 – current)
- Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Volunteer (year 2008)
- Volunteer for Easter Seals Disability Services (year 2009-current)
- Executive Officer of Blake High School Renaissance Committee (2006-current)
- Active member of Blake High School chapter of the LEO Club (Leadership, Experience, Opportunity) (2006-current) and a recording secretary (year 2007)
- Active member of National Honors Society and Tutoring Chairperson for Blake High School (2009-current)

Essay

c) Discuss the life experience that has most dramatically affected your attributes

Ethiopia's traditional coffee ceremony was a daily routine in my family before we moved to America. During these frequent socials, the neighborhood came together, people shared their news, listened and gave their opinions. Problems got discussed, plans got made, and real laughs were had. When elders told their tales and reminisced about the past, we children eagerly sat and listened. Stories, lessons, and wisdom were transferred through generations. I learned more about what my grandmother called "the good days." I also understood the essence of living in a tight knit community, the mutual care and cooperation among community members. Whether it was to raise money for a person in need, or to visit and cook for a sick neighbor, everything got shared. One's problem or joy then became a people's responsibility. So despite the troubles that awaited them at home, people drank their coffee as if everything was going to be okay. I always admired the way they lived for the moment and faithfully worked for tomorrow. From them I

learned to appreciate everyday life, to value community and family, to make do with what is available and of course, to know my coffee.

The customs, traditions and people of my country fundamentally shaped who I am. So when we left for America, I felt the loss of everything that contributed to my identity. Only after some time did I realize that I received something important in return: diversity. We moved to the North Eastern part of D.C. which was brightened by different faces, languages, accents, styles, beliefs, and origins. I became immersed in this collection of identities and I learned from it: the words to “La Cucaracha,” the taste of Chinese food, the life of a Vietnam veteran, what yum kipper meant, or how rap became poetry. I took in the existence of lives and perspectives different from mine; and they took me in, making it easier for me to be different.

Thus, I have realized that knowledge can be diverse, and may come not only from the four walls of the classes I attend, but also from the conversations I watched in Ethiopia and from conversations I was a part of in DC. I am eager to meet more people, acquire more knowledge, and gain a better understanding of this puzzled world. And my understanding of differences comes from a wish to create more diversity in knowledge, to bring my strong sense of community to college and have a constant exchange of ideas with my peers. My ultimate goal is to broaden what we know by having more people shape how and what we discuss; it is indeed the best way to expand fields of knowledge.