

ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

MOMENTUM

IMAGINE, INSPIRE, IMPACT

STUDENT REFLECTIVE ESSAYS AUGUST 2017



*Few will have the greatness to bend history itself;
but each of us can work to change a small portion of events,
in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.*

Robert Francis Kennedy (1925-1968)

Conflicted. Four years ago, if someone asked me what I wanted to do after high school, I would tell them I am conflicted. For the longest time I did not know what I wanted to do with my life. I knew I wanted to go to college, but my dilemma was how I did not know what I wanted to study. I continuously changed my mind between marine biology, psychology, and so many other majors. I got to a point where I convinced myself I was not smart enough to do anything. My hole of despair and uncertainty grew deeper and deeper and I was running out of time. Junior year came around and after a bit of searching and some self-evaluation, I came across the field of occupational therapy. I felt like I had finally found the right fit for me. I felt as if I crawled out of a dark hole and I would succeed. This past summer, my old nemesis decided to show his nasty face one again. This old nemesis was my self-doubt. All throughout this summer I questioned myself. I questioned whether or not I made the right decision, choosing OT. I began to convince myself I would be a terrible occupational therapist and I was going to fail. This feeling inside followed me to college. I was sitting in the Jay Walk when I had an epiphany. Professor Benowitz led us in an exercise entitled: "The Socratic Method to Discovering Your Strengths, Talents, and Gifts" where he allowed us to evaluate whether or not our choice of major was right for us, and I still had a feeling of uncertainty in my mind. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in this exercise because it allowed me to slay my demons and defog my mind. You see, I am my worst enemy. I clouded myself with negative thoughts when the answer was right in front of me. I was meant to be an OT. This essay was meant to incorporate the themes of inspire, imagine, and impact. All three topics really stand out to me. Inspire. Inspiration is something which really resonates with me. I am the type of person who finds inspiration in the simplest things, but if I can pick one person who inspires me it would be my mother. My mother has sacrificed so much for me and my siblings. At times I wonder how someone can be so selfless. I aspire to be like her every day. What took me by surprise as well, were the stories the Momentum Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors shared. I was really moved by what was shared by them and I can honestly say how they have inspired me. They have inspired me to continuously look at life in a positive way. Yes, negative things are going to rear their heads but what matters is how I handle them. This is what the Kinesis taught me, and this is something I will carry with me for the rest of my life. Imagine. The future seems so far away, but at the same time I am aware of how the future is rapidly approaching to get me from behind when I least expect it. When I do visualize myself years from now, I try to imagine myself as a successful but happy occupational therapist, taking the world by a storm. After all, the world is my canvas just waiting for me to paint my picture. There are so many opportunities out there just waiting for me to arrive. Maybe I will be working in South America with the less fortunate, or maybe I will embark on a European journey. Impact. My ultimate goal in life is to impact my peers in a positive way. I want to be remembered for being the person who maybe put a smile on someone's face or the person who made someone's terrible day just a little more cheery. Sometimes, it is the littlest things which can make the biggest impact. I plan on living with this attitude for the rest of my time at Elizabethtown College, in the Momentum program, and for the rest of my life. I plan on putting this into action by getting involved in clubs and meeting new people. Looking back at where I was three months ago compared to today, I can honestly say I have changed for the better. I am looking forward to the countless opportunities awaiting me at Elizabethtown College. The future is not clear, but I think it is time to start walking the path of life.

- Giovanni Zapata; Allentown, Pennsylvania

Life can be hard at times, but it is how you overcome these hardships which matters. This is what my mother continued to teach me through her words and actions. Although she has been through many tough situations throughout her life, particularly in the last few years, she has always found a way to persevere. Two years ago, my father, in the midst of a mid-life crisis, began his turn for the worst. During this mid-life crisis, he did not treat my mother fairly. He would constantly put her down with his words. The Momentum program has helped me realize the major impact she has had on me throughout these two years. She has showed me how there is always light at the end of the tunnel. No matter how hurt you are feeling, you need to find one person or thing which makes you happy and hold on to it. Throughout my four years at Elizabethtown College, I hope to follow in my mother's footsteps. I plan to help students not only get acquainted with college life, but also with their schoolwork. Much like my mother, I want to make it clear to students; no matter how much they are struggling, they will always be able to make it through in the end. After my time at Elizabethtown College, as I move through my adult life, having a positive influence on everyone I meet will continue to be one of my biggest goals. My mother has inspired me to live my life the way I want it to be lived. Therefore, since I have enjoyed mathematics ever since I was a young child, I imagine myself succeeding in actuarial science in college and beyond. Throughout my major, I will learn not only how to be a successful actuary, but also how to flourish in the real world. This, in turn, will not only allow me to support my family, but will also allow me to give back to my mother for everything she has done for me, which is my main goal in life.

- Josh Albin; Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Fall of 1990, a freshman at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University was cycling in the mountains with friends. He turned a corner too fast and slid on some gravel laying on the road. He hit his head on a guard rail post, cracking his helmet, breaking C5-7 vertebrae, leaving him a quadriplegic. He was taken to Christiansburg Hospital, another hospital in Roanoke, and airlifted to the University of Virginia Medical Center, where multiple surgeries were performed. He had lost all will to live and struggled with anger and depression. He was an avid tennis player, cyclist, and overall an outdoorsy man. But now, he is wheel-chair ridden for life. Twenty-seven years later, this man, my uncle, has accepted how he is now a quadriplegic. Ever since I was born, he seemed like a normal person. He joked around with his siblings. He talked politics with my father. My uncle was doing "normal" everyday things. From building and modify a Jeep Wrangler to mowing the lawn, practically nothing got in his way. As I got older, my mom told me the stories of the struggles and the challenges he faced right after his accident. I remember her telling me how the therapists who worked with him in the hospital and rehabilitation centers worked relentlessly to make him laugh or even smile. They did things like playing Jenga, but it was the things like this, the littlest things which improved his quality of life. Seeing how my uncle's disabilities did not limit him, inspires me to help others achieve this same goal. I can imagine myself ten, fifteen years from now, changing the lives of patients and their families. I can imagine myself playing games trying to make patients smile and laugh. A person may be in a wheelchair for the rest of their life, or may be missing half their brain, but their disability does not affect their potential. And I can imagine myself achieving this. By providing the glimmer of hope or a little ray of sunshine, it could become the greatest impact on someone or someone's family. My uncle would not be where he is now without those therapists; they changed his life, my family's life, even my life. Without the therapists, I would not have been exposed to the opportunity to see how a disability cannot hinder one's potential. The options are not limited because of a disability; they are limitless. By studying to become an occupational therapist, I want to inspire others by being the calm in the middle of the storm. Because of the hardships my uncle went through, I hope my story will impact others, inspiring them to imagine bigger goals. Going through the Momentum program has helped me overcome any doubts I had about pursuing occupational therapy as a life-long career. As an incoming freshman at Elizabethtown College, I was questioning whether this was the career I wanted to have. This week has showed me how this is what I am meant to do. This is what I love. This is what I am passionate about. This is me.

- Kimberly Huang; York, Pennsylvania

Most people as kids have a role model such as an actor, singer, or famous athlete, but I went against the norm. In my lifetime, there has not been one individual who has impacted my life, inspired me daily, and helped me imagine the limitless possibilities of my future more than my father. Not only has he been a wonderful father, but also a mentor, role model, and one of my greatest friends. He has inspired me every day with his words of wisdoms and the stories of his lifetime. He has taught me how it is possible to start from the bottom much like he did as a child and work your way to the top with determination and drive. He always taught me the most important keys to a successful life are arduous work, determination, and a strong family to support you in the best or worst of times. No other individual has or will inspire me like my father has throughout my lifetime. Although his inspiration is potent, the impact he has had on my life is so much greater. From an early age, he has taught me life skills and values which have helped me grow into the man I am today. He has taught me everything from changing oil in a car to scanning computers for viruses and how to be a gentleman. He has taught me how no matter how many times hard life knocks you down; if you believe in yourself you can conquer any obstacle. The most important lesson he has taught me in life which has had the largest impact is how when you go somewhere in life, go where you feel most at home. Besides my own personal interests in Elizabethtown College, he impacted me by always preaching lessons and reminding me how college should be as comfortable to me as my own home. In my opinion, the knowledge and lessons I have learned from my father are greater than almost any knowledge I could be learned from a textbook or a teacher. Ultimately, the guidance my father has given me, to help me imagine my future, is the most critical of everything he has done for me. He has taught me no dream and no goal is out of reach if I am willing to work hard and keep my faith in line. He has given me the support in everything I have taken on and has given me the courage to take on any challenge no matter what obstacles I must overcome to reach my goals. I have imagined my future to begin with my graduation from Elizabethtown College with a Bachelors in Mechanical Engineering. After college, I wish to either become an officer in the United States Air Force and become a pilot or work privately for a company using my degree to its highest capability. He has not been a parent who has tried to live his life and live his dreams through me but has pushed me to my highest potential to reach my goals and live my life how I want to. Without the irreplaceable love and support from my father, I would not have the impact or inspiration needed to have a plan imagined for my future like I do today.

- Peyton Hulyo; Muncy, Pennsylvania

When I first heard about the word “College” I heard it from my mom. When I first heard about the word “Marines” I heard it from my dad. My mom was born in Belgium and raised by her parents who both had careers in the Army. All of them would move from Europe and the U.S. whenever the military summoned. She was never able to connect and make friends with anyone from middle school all the way through high school. When she graduated from high school she had to do all of the college applications alone because nobody in her family went to college. She was stressed and ended up going to a university in Ohio hundreds of miles away from her family. She then had to find a new college in Pennsylvania in order to stay closer to her parents. She graduated from college and became a counselor for juvenile delinquents. She did everything by herself and did not want the same thing for me. She pushed me to join clubs and meet new people so this way I would not feel the same loneliness and isolation which she felt all the time during middle school and high school. She has put in so much time and patience to give me the best life I could possibly have and even though I may be grateful for the materialistic objects I have, I will be forever grateful for my mom. She had the biggest impact on me to do well and focus on school as well as socialize and make friends. My Dad has always wanted me to join the military and still does. He grew up in New Jersey and never had a father to teach him. He would tell me stories of how he would steal in order to eat and do very bad things which I will not mention. Once he turned 17 he went into the Air Force and when he finished, became a drill instructor in the same building as my mom. I came around and my mom would always be supportive and wanted me to succeed, but since my dad did not have a father-like role model, he would often be very strict and put a lot of mental stress and anxiety onto me. My dad was fighting his own battles at the time so I do not entirely blame him for the way he treated me but if it was not for the both of them I would not be the same person I would be right now. He pushes me now to be respectful and appreciative of the blessings I have been given. Both the negative aspects and the positive aspects of my early childhood helped me become who I am. I know even today, there will be awesome times as well as horrible times and the Momentum program is preparing me for both. While we enjoyed the scenery and history of Philadelphia, we watched films about discrimination and how other cultures are treated. Life will not be sunshine and rainbows nor darkness and thunder all the time. The most important thing is how you balance both and so this way you can truly be happy. In the end both of my parents impacted me differently. This was for the best and I am someone completely different than what I would have been if I would have only had my mom or just my dad. Now I am older and I am able to have discussions with my dad and I wish to help him and inspire other people to recognize mental illness. I want to get rid of the stigma about how nobody can help mental illness. I want to be able to support my parents and be able to care for them by the time they are older. My mom and dad deserve so much more than just a paper written about them but for now this is all I can give. Being able to inspire people is something few can accomplish, yet it was so easy for my parents regardless of what happened. They push me every day to try new things and I look up to them the most. I hope I can impact people the same way my mom pushed me to explore new things. She gave me a life only few can dream of and I want to return the favor by spreading her optimism. I hope I can have the fun but strict self-discipline like my dad. I want to inspire people to try activities and put themselves out there. I aspire to be an International Business major and travel the world just like how both of my parents traveled. My desire to meet new people and inspire them to be creative, supportive, and passionate about what they love is what drives me to pursue the International Business program. I want to change people’s lives just like how my parents did at the correctional facility. I want my coworkers to respect me and to feel accepted by my peers. These next four years at Elizabethtown College I know will fly by but I will make the most of it and connect. I am me and I believe.

- Ty Maldonado; Palmyra, Pennsylvania

Imagine being asked what you want to do for the rest of your life. For most people my age, they do the typical shoulder shrug or respond by saying “I don't know.” Fortunately for me, I have always known I wanted a career where I could help people reach their lifelong goals. After many shadowing opportunities at a local children's hospital, I knew Occupational Therapy would be the best career for me. Occupational Therapy would allow me to use one of my greatest strengths, creativity, while still allowing me to help others be the best they can be. I love to imagine the future me- helping others to discover their strengths and overcome their weaknesses. Let us face it, applying to college is hard and it is hard to decide at such a young age if you are choosing the right career path for you. Although it was a big choice to choose the perfect career and the right college, I am truly thankful my parents and my younger brother have supported me through all of it. They push me to be the best I can be and they motivate me to work hard. They consistently tell me how proud they are of me and inspire me to make a difference in the world. I vividly remember sitting in Kindergarten class about thirteen years ago, when suddenly my teacher asked, “How do you want to change the world?” I wrote how I wanted to be a superhero and save the people from danger. Now, here I am, thirteen years older, and I still have the same dream. Although I will not necessarily be “saving people from danger,” I know I will be helping people to reach their full potential, even if they do not believe they can do it. I cannot wait to start my future career and look forward to impacting other lives in the future.

- Meghan Glaspey; Greenwich, New Jersey

Standing alone stranded by myself with wide gazing eyes, my heart is beating faster than the pistons in a race car. Putting my past behind me, I enter the front gate. I have realized I am about to embark on a new journey which will change my life for good. I want to live a life where I do not have to struggle from paycheck to paycheck, and where I can raise my kids in a blue-ribbon school district. I want to be able to go into work and show my passion for money and numbers by becoming an accountant. I hope to learn how to manipulate numbers and make businesses run more effectively. What I learn at Elizabethtown College will help me decide how I want to live my life. This is best exemplified through a quote by Professor Benowitz, "A rich man does not show his wealth." This phrase stood out to me because, in my experience, it is a true statement. If you look at any rich person, they tend to be wearing plain clothes in an average house with a base model car. One example is when Benjamin Franklin traveled to Paris, and saw how the houses were set up with all of the front doors facing inward towards the court yard and noticed there was a gate at the entrance of the court yard with a man standing guard, the concierge who allowed people to enter. He did this in order to protect his family and wealth. This way, if anyone came after him to attack, they would not be able to access his property. Eventually, when Ben Franklin passed away, his family decided to raze his house so no one would try and steal all of his wealth. I am inspired by the life Ben Franklin led because of the many times he had great ideas and proposed them to the authorities, only to be sent home disappointed. Eventually, he persevered and fixed his ideas so they worked out in his favor and they turned out to be great inventions, such as a fire brigades, libraries, and hospitals. All of these were public places for everyone to use and affected the community greatly. I would like to have similar creative ideas like Ben Franklin in the hope it could help my clients run their businesses as efficiently as possible. I want to be able to impact my family's life because if I can prove to my family how if you dedicate your time and focus on your school work when you are young, it will pay forward. I once read a quote by Confucius and it directly correlated to how I feel about choosing a career. "If you choose a job you love, you will never have to work a day in your life." This means a lot to me because I have been taught it does not matter about the money or the benefits, they will figure themselves out. Rather, it is about being willing to give your best effort every day to something you are willing to do for the rest of your life. I want to impact my clients in a sense where I can help them run their business, which allows them to focus on other parts of their company. I want all of my professors at Elizabethtown College to remember me as a hard worker, determined for success, and someone who they would be willing to send their future students for internships to so they can share the same passion as I do. As I took my first steps on Elizabethtown College's campus I knew how the faculty were about to offer me the best opportunity to be successful and set me up for a great life.

- Steven McAlpine; Ambler, Pennsylvania

"You are so strong, and I am beyond proud of you." Those eleven words have the power to change a person's life forever. Those eleven words can give someone the strength to persevere. Those eleven simple words saved my life. Growing up, I struggled to find self-love. I looked in the mirror every day and cried simply because I hated what I saw in the mirror. This fight to accept myself lasted seven years. I struggled with self-harm. I wore sweaters and baggy jeans in the winter. The worst part, however, was the feeling of being alone and how nobody cared about me. I shut everybody out of my life because I felt as though no one would give a second thought about my "problems." I imagined either living a life where I could love myself, or not living at all. The combination of constant negative thinking and bottling up my thoughts ultimately led me to a suicide attempt my sophomore year of high school, and a hospitalization my senior year. I was discharged from the hospital after a week, and I was nervous about returning to school. When I got to orchestra, something happened which changed my life. My orchestra teacher, whom we most lovingly call McG, ran up to me and hugged me. When she pulled away, still holding onto my shoulders, she said something I will never forget. "Ally, you are so strong, and I am beyond proud of you." I started crying, and my friends from the class came and hugged me too. One simple moment. A mere five minutes. That one morning in the orchestra room made me feel like I was worthy of love. McG, my friends, and even the people who barely knew me pushed me to seek compassion and acceptance for myself. I could finally see a future where I was not hiding my body or being disgusted by my reflection. I found love through the love of others. As soon as I started my adventure in the Momentum program, I felt at home. Every single student I met on the first day immediately struck me as a person I could trust. I have no doubt I will have somebody who will help me through my struggles just as I will be there for them. These students inspire me to love everybody, regardless of who they are. I am on a journey to live my best life. I am here to show everybody how no matter what they are going through, they are never alone. Even the hardest moments in life are softened with someone by your side. The most important thing anybody can do in a tough situation is find a friend. Because of my past, I strive to be a friend to everyone I meet. I want to spread the love and positivity shared with me that day in late April. In addition to this, I encourage every person who reads this to be aware of what other people are going through. Everyone needs someone to confide in. You could be someone's McG. You could save a life with just eleven words.

- Alexandra Laskey; Royersford, Pennsylvania

He stands there with his fiancée, gazing upon the city skyline as the street lights begin to flick off block by block. The rising sun crests and orange glow while the man fixes his black tie in his faint reflection. In this mirage of himself, he sees himself standing there in his old Snapback, surrounded by his friends from college. He was to sit in front of the Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners. They were to judge if he was fit to practice law in the state of Pennsylvania. This was the final step in his journey to become a lawyer. Rudolph first made his way to some of the local food kitchens and homeless shelters to talk with some of the homeless he knew. He rather enjoyed their company and wanted them to know how they were able to have such a success as he had, as long as they fought for it. Some of the older gentleman he knew for some time wished him the best of luck with his future as they were not sure the next time their paths may cross. Everyone knew him, knew he saw himself as an equal to everyone he spoke to and thought no less of the homeless than he did his peers. Fast forward about 15 years and Rudolph's name is being hung on a wall next to two others. Jacobs, Rudolph, & Schmitt was now the name of the law firm in which he owned a significant portion. He has helped countless homeless or poor families send their aspiring children to local or even far colleges to help those people out of the ditch they may have been stuck in. Flash back to his childhood and you can see him admiring the generosity of God's Meal Barrel. At this moment he knew he wanted to help inspire people the way the kind souls of this establishment inspired him and the others around him. By the start of his college journey, he heard stories about the leaders in the Momentum program, the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors, and the projects they had been a part of within the Elizabethtown College campus and the local Elizabethtown community. A few of the Kinesis were part of a project to create something referred to as the Mosaic House. This house was to promote the school's extreme diversity while providing a safe environment to any student having an issue. If you need a tutor to help check a paper with you, or need a shoulder to lean on there is somebody staffed there to help you. This moved the student and reassured every person has a voice which can change things they truly believed in. Through the faculty led academic sessions of the Momentum he met a professor who shared a poem titled, "Like a Simile" by Mark Cox. While reading the poem aloud, he realized he too felt like the figure in the poem. He felt trapped in a monotonous routine where he had no say. He did not like what he was doing and despised life. He ate the same food, wore the same clothes, and "...Went down the stairs like a slinky..." Repetition is inevitable in a life which is run by time but he knew he needed to love what he was doing in order to love life thanks to a professor he met. This professor gave a speech; the student had heard once before. Even though this speech was nothing new to him, the passion the professor displayed truly sent him into a state of awe. The professor's eyes were lit as if they were Christmas lights hung from a tree. There was energy radiating from his body as if he were the sun. He looked so truly joyful as he sprung from the ground with each step. He described how in order to be truly happy, one must live the things they do for a living. One cannot and should not choose a job just for the money which is associated with it. One should wake up and think, 'I cannot wait to do what I love today!' not 'I have to go to work today.' As the professor continued to speak Rudolph rethought and rethought about his true passions in order to make sure he was not a drone but rather a self-aware consciousness. While he was at college he wanted to be there for students and help those who were struggling with their work. He knew what it was like to be ridiculed by people who were better at something, so he wanted to offer his helping hand rather than have them come to him. He then became a member of the Kinesis team for the Momentum program to hopefully impact the lives of the income of first generation students.

- Donovan Rudolph; Hanover, Pennsylvania.

Take a moment and imagine your role model. Now, imagine your role model becoming a shell of a person she once was because of a brain surgery gone awry. About a year ago, this is what happened to me. She was my choir director for five years, and I had known her for about seven years at the time. She did not spark my love for music, but she made it grow. She made me so passionate about music I wanted to major in it in college. She currently still cannot talk or walk, but she can communicate through writing and some body language. Professionals working with her have used her love of music to help with her rehabilitation. They used my dream career, my college major to help heal her. I wanted to be a music major before her tragedy, but now it only motivates me more. I want to help people, to make the world a better place. I imagine making the world a better place, not just for my future clients, but for my future spouse, children, family, and friends. No matter how discouraged I may feel some days, I will keep going. Those moments of gratitude and change are what are truly worthwhile. My goal in this world is to leave it a better place than I entered it. As I have learned from the Momentum program this week, "you should leave a place better than when you came there," and that is exactly what I intend to do.

- Brittany Freed; Hamburg, Pennsylvania

“I exist as I am, that is enough” ~Walt Whitman Hearing how a family member has terminal cancer is never easy especially when it happens for the second time. My mom and her sister had always been close. From having a rough childhood to creating a name for themselves in the world, they never lost touch. Now, my mom was losing her best friend and through this process, she still had to raise a family. To make things easier, my mom made the decision to have my aunt move in with us. As a freshman in high school, I did not know what to expect. I still had to go to school every day and act like my living situation was not crumbling below me. Naturally, my grades dropped. My social life declined and I was not having fun doing the things that I had loved doing before. I questioned myself and everything I did. My aunt outlived her expected time by a year and a half but once her two-year anniversary came since her diagnosis, she passed away. When I think of the word “imagine,” the only thing which comes to my mind is living the perfect fairytale life. I would graduate from college, have a job, be married, and planning a future of having kids. However, this is not how I want my future to be. As of now, I have accomplished the first step by getting accepted into college and making the choice of what school I wanted to go to. The next steps include maintaining my GPA in all of my classes. I want to learn. I do not want to prepare only for the test because this would defeat the purpose of attending college. By learning the information in my classes, I will be able to graduate with a high GPA and my ultimate goal of passing the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy exam. My mother has always been my biggest supporter and inspired me to be the best person I could be. She showed me how a woman has the capability to do whatever she wants if she puts her mind to it. She took a chance and decided to become a State Trooper. As expected, there were not many women who attended the academy and there were even less women which were black. She succeeded and was able to do better than the men in some of the tests. Her perseverance and dedication inspires me do things which make me happy and do those things well. This includes coming to Elizabethtown College and being a part of the Momentum Program. My mother was very supportive of me leaving for college a week early even it meant she would have less time to spend with me before I left. She told me how it would be an awesome opportunity to make friends and learn how college worked before all of the other freshman moved in. I am so grateful she encouraged me to commit to the program. This week I have learned where the buildings are, that poetry can be fun, and not to judge a book by its cover. I am here and learning because of my mom. Once I graduate college and pass the OT exam, I want to focus my time on helping the special needs community and people recover from accidents. I have been told how I always take the extra step to make people feel comfortable and included. This will be how I make an impact on the community. Being humble and affectionate, I can teach the people around me about patience and how to accept people with special needs without babying them. I hope I am able to have a positive impact on my community but striving to be the best in all I do.

- Kendall Beverly; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

When I imagine the life I want to live I can easily picture my future. I instantly can see myself standing in the front of my very own Kindergarten classroom. I was blessed my entire life with a tremendous and impactful education. Growing up this way is what made me want to be a teacher today. I want to learn how to have the patience to help even the most troubled students. I want to learn how to make my classroom a safe space for those who need it. Attending school and learning will better secure my ability to teach others. I want to be sure I am fully prepared to give away knowledge before I have the opportunity to alter someone’s life. When I think of what has inspired me to do this I think of my teachers. They have been so great to me and have made education something I really enjoy. In this way, I want to make education enjoyable for others. Another recent inspiration in my life has been the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors in the Momentum program. Just seeing how patient and kind they were with the Momentum students so far this week has made me appreciate once again the role models in my life. Their openness to share their stories and take time to listen to mine during the daily reading group discussions the Kinesis led based on our summer reading assignment Paulo Coelho, Inspirations: Selections from Classic Literature, was something which made me a bit more comfortable with my college experience so far. Impact is one of my favorite words. Ever since I was young, all I have wanted to do was help other people and make an impact on the world. On the college itself, and from the wise words of Professor Benowitz, it is our responsibility to make our campus a community of equals, so this is the impact I will strive to have on Elizabethtown College. The impact I plan to have on my students lives one day is to help them as they begin their long journey through education. I want to make sure they feel safe and enjoy what they are doing, so they can hopefully keep this mindset with them as they continue their education. I truly hope I can impact many people in a positive way as I live my life.

- Rebecca Edenfield; Telford, Pennsylvania

My life was a mistake. My mom was hardly 18 years old when I was born. I was as some people labeled me a "teen baby." Nearly everyone expects young moms to fail. They do not have the education level, the confidence, the maturity, or the life skills to take care of their kids. People talk about this all the time. What they do not say is how they think the baby will turn out; but logic says if a mother fails, so does her child. In many ways, my mom's shortcomings did negatively affect me. I had poor social skills, low confidence, and was an outsider. As I grew, I learned my situation was not "normal" and envisioned a life for myself bigger than what my mom had. My most basic goal was to graduate from high school, graduate from college, make something of myself, and have a happy family. I wanted to prove how a mistake could become something good, too. I read many books growing up in an attempt to connect with someone-even if they were fictional-and used my teachers as role models to learn how to grow in a healthy and happy manner. I could never have made it this far without support from my friends, teachers, and counselors who made an effort to make sure I knew they cared for me and believed in me. They have inspired me to help others in the same way they helped me. Now I am the same age my mom was when I was born, I have graduated high school and I am about to start college. I have had many struggles trying to get this far: domestically and socially. I have had triumphs and failures, good days and bad days, curses and blessings. Through all of that, I decided what I aspire to do with my life. I will be successful when I help to pick up the people the world has shoved down, and to help them see their true potential. I know I have already begun doing this. I have had people tell me how, seeing me persevere through my tribulations has shown them how they can also grow past whatever tries to stop them. The best feeling in the world is to know how I am giving back in this way. I will continue to do this throughout college and have, thorough talks with the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors in the Momentum Program, learned of many ways in which I can both give and receive help. I can join the Kinesis, help out at the Mosaic House, reflect on and refer to the materials I have been given, and so much more. For this, I am grateful. I will take these experiences and use them to become a teacher and mentor myself and continue a positive cycle of growth within others and myself. I can confidently say, finally, I am no mistake.

- Kaedy Lauren Masters; Jessup, Pennsylvania

When you were little and was asked to imagine what your life would be like when you were older, most kids would say they want to have some super cool job like a firefighter, an astronaut, or even a ballerina. As we grow older those imaginations of what we want to be change. The people around us inspire us in many ways. Then you find yourself in the real world with a college degree and want to make an impact on someone just like the people who inspired you. There are so many choices to make and so many options it may be confusing. Right now, I want to become an occupational therapist because I love helping people achieve their goal and regain something they thought they would never do again or have never done. I want to have a family, three kids, and a dog. I imagine living in a nice house and to being happy, like truly happy. My dream is to work in Africa at a health clinic or an orphanage to help people who really need the help and might not get otherwise. All these things might change over the next couple of years but this is okay because this is what college is about finding yourself. In college I want to learn the best way to help people get back to a normal life, I want to be able to encourage people and support them. When I was younger I was one of those people who wanted to be a ballerina but there are so many things and people who shaped me and inspired me to peruse occupational therapy. My mom plays a huge impact on my life, she is my rock. I look up to her and know how she will always be there for me. I know how proud she is of me and inspires me to do the very best I can. On our Momentum road trip to Philadelphia I was inspired by a painter we learned about, named Benjamin West. He had such a passion to paint he used the tail of his pet cat to paint. I want to be this passionate about something someday. My best friend is like my sister we do everything together and she has a sister who is also like my big sister as well. We talk about everything and she really pushes us to be our best and she told us this quote to live by "Shoot for the moon, even if you miss you will land among the stars." In January of 2017 she took her own life and it was really hard because she was like my big sister, a person I could always count on to talk to at 2AM and I do not really understand why, this something I still struggle to understand. So now I take the quote to heart and I know she is up with the stars looking down on us and watching our lives play out. She inspired me to be strong and to keep going. So many people have made an impact on my life and I would not be the person I am today without them. I want to have the same effect on people. I want to be the person telling them they can do this and they are strong. Sometimes this is all you need. I want people to have a better life because of my help. Before I entered this program I did not think about these things really. I have made new friends and learned a great deal about myself and all the amazing opportunities available to me in my college career.

- Emily Sipe; Lancaster, Pennsylvania

A quote from an enthusiastic and enlightening professor from Elizabethtown once said, "Look at everything with opportunity." Some may look at this quote and say they have heard the same thing a million times and how it may have lost its meaning. However, for me, Professor Waters' words stuck with me throughout the week. Beginning the start to the rest of my life can be overwhelming and at times, frustrating. Sometimes in the toss-up of our daily lives, we lose sight of all that is around us. We miss the amazing opportunities surrounding us, when we could be expanding ourselves and bettering our future well-being. With taking opportunities by the grips, it makes your imagination greater and the possibilities endless. The opportunity to change others' lives; particularly in the autism spectrum disorder, has always been a great passion of mine. Through the help of occupational therapy, I will be able to touch the lives of many by not only my job, but my words and encouragement. Making others believe they are worthy and capable of doing anything no matter the "flaw" they may possess, has always been a dream of mine to accomplish. Through Elizabethtown, I will have the opportunity to learn not only the courses needed for my degree, but also valuable life lessons and experiences. Coming from a small town with very sparse diversity, the Momentum program has opened my eyes wide and expanded my mind. The various sessions featured in the program has shown me the endless possibilities you have here in Elizabethtown College. Again, coming from a town where everyone is very much the same, and little to no diversity, some of the sessions in the Momentum program would seem controversial to the people I have grown up with, and the faith I possess. However; knowledge is power, and looking at everything with opportunity instead of the barrier between the beliefs of myself and others has inspired me. Realizing others' beliefs and cultures has given me a new perspective on not only others, but myself as well. My mom has always told me there is so much more out there in the world than "Little ol' Bedford County." She has always shown me the countless possibilities I can do. She has always been the biggest person in my life who has truly inspired me to reach each and every dream I have, and supports my every decision. Through the Momentum program and my mom, I have been thoroughly inspired by the individuality of myself and others. These inspirations have impacted me, as well as broadened my mindset. With having these opportunities over the past week, I will now be even more capable of making an impact in those lives affected by the autism spectrum disorder. Not only in the way they live, but also helping them to know and to see their worth and their potential. I would love to inspire them, to embrace themselves how they are, just like the Momentum program has inspired us to do as well. So, as we wrap up this week, I look back and reflect on the greater opportunities out there to reach, and the people who have helped me get here. So, thank you Momentum, program and thank you mom.

- Sidney Gordon; Alum Bank, Pennsylvania

Education has never come easy for me. Looking at me now, one sees a bright and bubbly girl whose hand does not come down in class...it has not always been this way. I can picture myself in third grade, frozen with fear because the teacher asked me to read in front of the class. Tears poured down my face like a Tsunami had just hit and I lit up as red as the ripest tomato. I could barely read. I did not understand much of what was wrong with me at my age, but I felt stupid. I was the dyslexic girl. The one who could not tell a B from a D or an M from a W. No one wanted to be friends with the "slow" girl. Similar to the story told in the Momentum summer read *Inspirations: Selections from Classic Literature* by Paulo Coelho, I was the ugly duckling. No one accepted me, I did not even accept myself. I dreaded waking up every day because I knew it was near to impossible for me to have a good day at school. I sat in class and tried to stay quiet as a mouse to avoid any embarrassment. No one really talked to me, and if they did their words were filled with negativity and judgement. I learned to love being at home because this is where I could truly be myself. Due to financial issues, my family could not afford a tutor for me outside of the help I received at school, so I started having tutoring sessions with my Grandmother. She was the most recent generation to attend college and graduated with a degree in both English and Accounting. Three times a week she met with me for two hours, practicing my reading, writing, and spelling skills. Although it was tough for me, my Grandmother never stopped pushing me to be the best I could be. She continued to tutor me for five years, and once I reached the 7th grade I was at a higher reading level than most of my classmates. I was acing my exams, scoring honor roll, and answering question after question in class. My third-grade self could have never imagined, even for a second, how I could learn the way everyone else did. Fast forward to the age of 18 and I am about to start my first semester at Elizabethtown College. I received over 75% of my tuition in scholarships, and the only reason I could do it is because of my Grandmother. She is the reason I am here and this drive pushes me to be the best I can be. I am an aspiring Psychology major because it will allow me to understand and help people the way my grandmother helped me. I imagine myself graduating with a degree in Clinical Psychology, walking across the stage and seeing my grandmothers smiling face. I want to prove how anything is possible a disability cannot hold back anyone's abilities no matter what some may say. I have learned how even with my disability my education is limitless, and without the Momentum program I would have never known. Without the Momentum program I would not have wrote this essay to share my story. The Momentum program has made me confident enough to post this on the web and be proud of who I am and how I have grown.

- Melanie Blevins; Bel Air, Maryland

In a hospital room, in the middle of the night, I realized what I wanted to do with my life. Inspiration is the motivation and passion of an individual and leads to imagination and moments of impact. Someone can be inspired by a story, a quote, a moment in history, or a personal experience. This is how it was for me. A personal experience changed my life and made my decision on what I want to do with my life. About a year and a half ago my cousin was in a car accident and ended up in a coma. There was no guarantee he would wake up, and no guarantee he would have full, if any, body functions and movement when he woke. In the weeks of his non-responsive state, an Occupational Therapist came in and worked with my limp cousin. It came to the point where the doctors said there was no guarantee any of this would work, but yet the Occupational Therapist kept going and working with him. As weeks went on, we started seeing some hope. After a long month, my cousin finally awoke. He was responsive, however we did not know if he could walk. To our surprise, just this last spring he walked across the stage receiving his diploma in Mechanical Engineering. This tragedy led to triumph because of an Occupational Therapist and this is where my inspiration comes from. The impact she had on my family and me is the reason I decided to go for my Masters in Occupational Therapy and become a therapist. After this experience, I started thinking about the future. I kept asking myself how I can make a difference in someone's life like this Occupational Therapist made in mine. This is when I started leaning towards occupational therapy as my major in college. I imagined how point seeing a families face light up when a loved one succeeds in a feat seemingly impossible, all because of me and my dedication. The first step I imagined was getting into a master's program. I found Elizabethtown and knew it was where I wanted to go when I heard the motto was "Educate for Service." I now imagine receiving my degree and being able to make a difference in someone's life. I imagine myself in a hospital, using my degree helping children and teens reach their full potential. I want to help someone reach an everyday goal they did not think they could do. I want them to understand anything is possible, it just takes time. I want to be the reason their life changes. When they think about a moment of impact, I want my name to pop in their head. The most important part of this whole experience is being able to show my gratitude for one occupational therapist and use this to inspire others. My life changed from one moment of inspirational impact. Even though it came from a tragedy, this tragedy led to triumph. Momentum opened my eyes and showed me how truly grateful I am for my inspiration.

- Makayla Hockenbrock; Winfield, Pennsylvania

I have always been told how I work too hard, and how I need to live a little. However, doing what I love is to learn. Doing what I love is to study. As I heard from Professor Benowitz, "Challenge everything; and the more you change, the more you grow, the better you will become." I enjoy math and fixing things; yet everyone, excluding my high school teacher, told me girls could not do these things. I am in love with Japan; but have been told I am in America, and it should be treason to love another country. This is my life to live, and I want to make the best of it doing what I love. I imagine myself as an engineer. Doing math and building technology every day of my life sounds amazing. Also, I know this work will allow me to better someone else's life. I also imagine myself living and working in Japan. I want to be fully immersed in a culture I truly admire. I do not want to just be an American living in Japan. I want to live and work just like everyone else. Many people wonder why I chose a STEM career path. My family was shocked at first because I had mentioned teaching; but I had only said this to make them happy. It was not until I talked to my high school science teacher about Mechanical Engineering along with Japanese when I truly allowed myself to do what I wanted. Even though I had decided on what I wanted to do, I was still afraid of what others may think. It was not until I had to draw my friend's face in a Momentum seminar when I decided I can and will be more outgoing when it came to my classes and embracing my passions. When I think of myself, I do not really believe I can be an impact; but I want to be. All I have heard from people were negative comments about how "girls don't do math" when I did well in my STEM classes. Thinking about this made me realize how I want to be a positive impact on young and upcoming women entering into STEM. Encourage them to be strong and brilliant in all we do. Another aspect I want to be an impact on is the love for another culture. As I had mentioned before, I got a lot of criticism for loving and appreciating another culture. I want to show others how it does not matter what people think or say. To embrace another culture allows one to learn about other perspectives of our world. Through all of these ideas and wants, I have learned so much more about myself I probably would never have if people who love me did not push me. I am very thankful I have been given the opportunity in my life to change, learn, and grow.

- Arielle Cox; Lisbon, Maine

Things always seem to have a funny way of turning out. All my life I have wanted to help people. My life has been one jumbled mess of career ideas. It all started in fourth grade. I wanted to be an archeologist. Odd career choice for a ten-year-old, I know. I stayed in the same area of study when I changed my mind in ninth grade. Freshman year I decided I wanted to be a historian. In eleventh grade my career choice took a totally different path. I wanted to become a pediatric oncologist. Very different, like I said earlier my career ideas have been one jumbled mess. Again, in twelfth grade I changed my mind once again. My latest decision is now I want to become a mechanical engineer. I am sure you are wondering how I decided on mechanical engineering. About a year and a half ago, my aunt fell down the stairs. She broke her ulna and radial head. She also tore all the tendons and ligaments in her elbow. She had four surgeries at Hershey Medical Center to try to repair her elbow without doing a total replacement. If she were to get the replacement, she still would not have full range of motion, and she also would never be able to lift more than five pounds in her life. She has a two-year-old daughter, so it is not really ideal. I began looking into solutions for her elbow, but there is not anything the doctors and therapists have not tried. I decided I would help. I decided on mechanical engineering to not only help my aunt, but to help anyone else who is going through the same struggle. I hope to design new hardware for not only elbows, but other joints and procedures. I would also like to design prosthetics. When I imagine my future life, I see myself helping others. I will be living on a small farm with my family. We will all be happy, healthy, and caring. My dream of living on a farm comes from my love of animals. I do not know what job I will have, but I know I will be making a difference in the world around me. My ultimate goal is to be an inspiration for my younger brother, cousins, and hopefully my children. I want them to see how important it is to not give up. Coming from a very poor community was a struggle. I saw my best friend go from being such a happy person to becoming addicted to heroin. I have to remind myself of where I came from and what I have seen to continue pushing forward. I have to remind myself of these things so I do not become just another girl from a small town who could not make it far in life. Professor Benowitz said something during this week which really stuck with me. "Live higher than written expectations." I do not want to be another statistic, I want to be me. I want my story to be able to impact someone's view on life. No matter what odds are against you, where you come from, what you have seen, you can do anything you set your mind to. Momentum has taught me how anything is possible, and change is okay. I am forever grateful for Momentum. I definitely encourage all those invited to the program to do it!

- Amy Frasch; Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Picture this. My twelve year old self landing with my family in Jamaica, freshly off the plane. We board the old beat up bus taking us to our hotel, and it is cramped, hot and smells like something awful. On our way there we pass by little villages with families who live in huts. They had tin roofs, hard sidings, and looked like they were made from anything the locals could find. It was different to see something which was not like America. This image of the village always stuck in my mind, and has come with me into college. I chose International Business as a major because I keep this image of Jamaica in my head; it reminds me how I want to help people improve their lives. I joined Momentum because of the opportunity to learn about different cultures and beliefs. I enjoyed this program because it exposed me to courses and majors I would not normally have considered. I thought International Business was the only way I was going to go, but now I am looking into a course on Cultural Anthropology. By the end of college I hope to be successful enough to help start and fund non-profit organizations and being exposed to different cultures would separate me from my competition. Going to different places like Jamaica, where they have a lower poverty line than us inspires me to want to make a change. I want to make an impact on the lives from the help of my future organizations by supplying food, clothes, water, or medical supplies to those in need. I can gain knowledge on global situations to continue my studies, or to educate others on global topics. Being at Elizabethtown College and being in the Momentum program helps me to picture a better future for myself, and inspires me to become a person bigger than myself.

- Lauren Moyer; Boyertown, Pennsylvania

I went through the motions. I played tag, hide and seek, and passed notes in class. I did the art projects and book reports. I ate lunch in the same cafeteria as the rest of my class, eating the same food, on the same trays we were all given. I was the same as everyone else. I never thought I was any different than the rest of the kids sitting next to me answering the same questions on the midterm exam. But, as time went on, we were all asked to imagine our lives in the future. Wearing the red, plastic, firefighter hat in the fire hall I dreamed of being the best firefighter, saving lives, owning the prized Dalmatian, sliding down the pole. When I told my friends, they all had the same fantasy, fire gear, dog, pole, all the same. I wanted to be different. I never wanted my imagined life to be the same as anyone else. I wanted mine to be creative and mind boggling, something always changing, and something I could proudly tell about. Yet, anything I discovered was inevitable matching the career path of someone else; marine biology, dolphin trainer, teacher, physiologist. It was frustrating to find something unique to me, but I was so desperate for it, the thing which no one else could possibly also be doing. I wanted my individuality to shine through my work. I never wanted to put myself in a situation where my creativity grew rigid from underuse. Finally, in tenth grade English, my teacher called me up to read aloud my paper because I was the only one in the class to take a different stand point on the issue we were discussing. I loathed her for calling me out and making me read in front of everyone I had once matched. But in time, I realized this was the answer. My perspective and my ideas were the only thing I only could have. In our meditation sessions this week we were told how if you love your livelihood, you will never grow tired of living. If I can bring my unique opinions into my career, then I will never grow tired of my life. It will be new and creative, drastic and impactful, and truly me. I am someone who sees the ordinary, and wants the unique. Socrates was always asking questions and he said a community needs the character which asks and questions. Majoring in Communications can place me in the center of information so I can see where the questions need to be asked. How something is communicated to you can drastically change the outlook which results. Communications allows me to use my individual thought process to bring new perspective. I may not be an aspiring firefighter anymore, but I finally found my version of sirens and Dalmatians.

- Brianna Komiske; Sykesville, Maryland

As a child I wanted to save lives. Although the reason for this was I wanted to help my father because he was sick. This was my plan for years until one unfortunate day changed my life and my idea of what kind of future I wanted. However, this change did not happen overnight, it happened when I was placed into counseling. After I realized how I wanted to be able to help people deal with their problems. The reason I imagine myself being a psychologist is because I do not want people to go through what I did. My experience was being put between different counselors and none of them knew how to understand my situation, and often times they would not listen to what I had to say when I wanted to talk about it. This caused me to want to do better and help the people who feel as though they cannot be helped. Although the bigger idea which inspired me to continue with this dream was the idea of happiness. I believe everyone deserves to be happy and this is something which allows a person to truly live their lives. Someone who is happy can see the better places and parts of their lives and this is important in our world today. I say this because before I came to the Momentum program I did not know how to be truly happy, but as I went through the week I realized how much being happy can change your life. I was able to laugh and just talk to people which was something I never knew before. This program was my first step to finding happiness in my life and this experience will stick with me forever. That is why I want to help people get this feeling. I feel as though this will impact the world because happiness is something everyone wants, but some do not know how to and I will be the person to help them unlock this within themselves. I hope I can be a successful psychologist. I also hope I will be respected and the people I help will always remember me.

- Nakita Edwards; Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania

“My dad tried to kill my mom.” Imagine the confusion a four-year-old girl felt when her mother told her to stop telling people. For her four-year-old mind, this was normal, was it not? Everyone’s families lived apart, did they not? Though her family was not the epitome of the “all-American dream” she never felt as if she came from a broken family. In fact, her biological father actually became one of her biggest motivators to dream big, to shoot for the stars, to grab life by the horns and seize every opportunity coming her way. Now imagine, this same confused four-year-old girl went through four years at the country’s oldest boarding school, flew across the world, and is now facing four years of school at Elizabethtown College. She is going to keep dreaming big and using her circumstances to better her future. That girl is me. Momentum has given me the power, the encouragement, and the inspiration to make my college experience outstanding and life changing. After the two sessions during the daily reading group discussions the Kinesis led based on our summer reading assignment Paulo Coelho, Inspirations: Selections from Classic Literature, I realized how many students shared similar experiences with me. Growing up I never had anybody who could relate to my story. Momentum gave me the assurance I am not alone and I have a large support system in place if I ever need them. Just as the name suggests, Momentum has given me an underlying force pushing me through college and helping me achieve my dreams.

- Gabriella Clarizio; Ewing, New Jersey

“You will never again in your life have a time like this” so said Professor Waters, which could not be more prevalent as a new college student. Now is the time to extend your education, enrich your mind, and leave an impact on those with whom you come into contact. This transformative experience through the Momentum program has instilled college etiquette in the participating student’s minds. Through the values imagine, inspire, and impact I have learned to find myself and prepare for the best four years of my life. To imagine is to create a concept, and I have created a concept and image of what I want to do for the rest of my life. Previous successful women before me such as Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, and Katherine Johnson crossed every race, gender, and social restriction to become elite women in STEM careers. I want to be as inspiring as these African American Mathematicians who served a vital role in the role of USA in the international space race. As an inspiring woman in a STEM career the statistic of 15% of the world’s engineers are women can be discouraging. The fact women earn approximately 73.7% - 77% of what a man would earn over their lifetime can deter other women like me from fulfilling their passion. I do not want other women to feel as though they have nothing to offer in a male dominated career, or a woman like me could never succeed in what is their dream. I want to share my empowerment and realization at Elizabethtown College and my community to never give up on a dream the society has discouraged. I want to show others how even though we cannot connect the dots, we need to preserve. Ronnie Lott said, “If you can believe it, the mind can achieve it.” I am determined to become a successful woman in the field of engineering. I will excel in my career and use my education to enhance the lives of others locally and internationally. I will achieve my dream and work through every hardship to get to the point where I belong.

- Morgan Sommers; Abingdon, Maryland

The word “inspire” conjures up a very specific image in people’s minds – perhaps a person who stands strong against their troubles, perhaps an environment showcasing the beauty and motion of the natural world, or perhaps an idea powerful enough to make one’s heart soar, driving them to do whatever they can to accomplish their goals. To me, the word inspire is a stone turtle. To understand, one must first know how the stone turtle found its way into my hands a little under a year ago in a chaotic mass of sweaty, robed and capped no-longer-seniors, all of whom were rushing to get their diplomas and race away with intended promises of “keeping in touch.” The turtle itself is not exceedingly awe-inspiring on its own, being two inches tall, and five long, eyes closed as if it is in the most peaceful place in the world, despite the pandemonium of the gym around it. Darlene Mahaney has a similar aura about her, standing around five feet three, she is not always the most imposing figure in the room, but she was more than powerful enough to change my life. Oxford, Ohio is a sleepy city, provided all the college students have gone home for the semester, with cornfields stretching out to touch the horizon, and a complete lack of adventure and excitement. Oxford, Ohio is everything I hate. Like the lion craves the gazelle, I crave the unknown, places filled colors and sounds and stories I have never seen before. With the delicate art of flower arrangement and the sharp steel of katana blades, I crave a life in Japan. Devouring language textbooks on my street with cookie-cutter houses, I dream of apartments small in size, but large in character. With a mountain of books unrelated to world history in Ms. Mahaney’s class, it was easy to see what my interest was, and I will forever be grateful for her taking the time to speak to the silent me about the history of Japan, something we could both appreciate and connect over. I spoke with her a total of five times at the most in the year, but it was enough to know I wanted to have her as a teacher again, but this time in something in which I actually excelled – Diversity Studies was the class where Ms. Mahaney went from being my teacher to being something like a mother to me. Speaking five times evolved into me never shutting my mouth as I truly interacted with the class around me and confided in Ms. Mahaney about my life and dreams, helping her with little technical problems as she gave me wisdom I carry with me to this day. The Japanese textbooks still came with me to every class, and she asked me how I was enjoying the language after yet another classmate asked me how to say various profanities in Japanese, and so I told her, and I just kept telling her. Standing in the crowded room, sweat seeping into my white robe, I stood before Ms. Mahaney for the last time in a long time, I was handed a small box wrapped up in a map of the world with an envelope with my name neatly sketched on top of it. Inside was the stone turtle, small and heavy. The real key was the letter. Inside the letter was the last thing Ms. Mahaney had taught me. See, in Japanese mythology turtles are guardians. They are symbols of good luck, longevity, and support. This turtle holds all the love and hopes Ms. Mahaney has for me, giving me all her support. The stone turtle sits on my desk to this day, with its peaceful expression of how I now understand, and it cheers me on, just as Ms. Mahaney does. The stone turtle will sit on my desk when I live in Japan, designing games and spreading its message of love.

- Carly Sherba; Oxford, Ohio.

Imagine finding yourself in a world unknown, surrounded by people you have never met. The feeling of emptiness sweeping over your skin, to a tidal wave of paranoia consuming your thoughts. I never had issues with making friends but for some reason I have found myself in places all over the world trying to make friends. What scares me the most is the terrifying prospect of not being accepted or being rejected because no-one knows me? Growing up abroad and in a family which moved around a great deal, I have had the privilege living and being a part of many different cultures and societies. In my high school career, I moved three times. From a place of comfort and solace, to a place of relative uneasiness, and finally to my unknown home. From Malaysia, to Switzerland and on to the U. S. Working for the United Nations, my dad has had to work all over the world helping refugees relocate back to their homes and onto better lives. With this I have found myself in five different schools in four different countries around the world. For many, this is an irrelevant issue, but for much of my life I have had to deal with this struggle head on. For much of my life growing up, I always held a bit of spite against my parents. For so long I have had to deal with moving from house to house, school to school, constantly being the new kid trying to fit in. Over time, however, I have learned how facing these issues has not only made me the person I am today, but has also given me a life like no other. Recently, specifically at my high school graduation, I have had time to reflect, and have begun to see this lingering struggle as my ultimate triumph. The people I have met, and the relationships I have formed have given me a unique perspective on life and have made me more outgoing and more empathetic to others. Every school, every home, every meaningful relationship I have ever experienced has made me the person I am today. When I imagine life after school, when I am working, I see someone who I know I can be proud of. Why? Because I am so proud of who I have become after everything I have faced. I see myself at a meaningful job, living full of happiness and with a family, and being grateful for all I have seen. I imagine being the best version of myself I can be. More than this however, I know who I will become will be someone I would be proud of. Figuring out what inspires me has always been a hard question to answer, however, this past week, being a part of the Momentum program, helped me solve this dilemma. Momentum threw me into the deep end. I was put into an unknown environment, with unfamiliar people, but through all of this, I have met some of the most amazing people from all different kinds of backgrounds and experiences. I have met people who have made an everlasting imprint on my life. When people used to ask me what inspires me, I never knew what to say. Yeah, there were people who I looked up to and saw as role models, but in writing this piece I have learned how the person who inspires me most in my life is me, the future me. The me who is long gone from Elizabethtown, who has a family. The me who will wake up four years from now as a college graduate. The me who can reflect on his life and be proud of the man he has become. I have been blessed with a very privileged life. I have two parents who love me to death, a place I can finally call my home in Elizabethtown, and filled with the experiences many people are not fortunate enough to experience. The way I live and the way I see the world all stems from an outlook of an outsider. Someone, who never really had a home base but always had a place to call home. Now when someone asks me what inspires me, I have my answer. Not another person, not an idea, but me. Who I have been, who I am, and all I will become.

- James Vernon; West Chester, Pennsylvania

This week has been tiring, but I learned and absorbed different information. I met new and amazing people that I thought I would never have the guts to meet. This week, the Momentum Program has been very eye opening. It consisted of different sessions, different talks, different views, and different mindsets, but all the professors talked inspiration and how it impacted their lives and got them to where they wanted to be. The past few days it took me awhile to figure out what inspires me, and to be honest, what inspires me is not a who or thing, but past tragedies, the things I have been through as a child. When I was younger my mother was not stable enough to take care of me because she was on drugs at the time. So, I was taken away from her. I was put into not one, but several different foster homes until I turned about two years old. That is when my father went to court and fought for custody. From then on, I lived with him and my step-mother. Growing up, my mother was not in my life, she only came around when it was convenient to her and when she wanted people to know how good of a mother she was. In reality she was nothing compared to that. Luckily, I had a step-mother that was more of a mother figure to me than my own mother. As I grew older this motivated me and inspired me to show not only my father, but myself as well, that I am nothing like my mother. I will succeed in life, have courage, be wise, and love life. I will be the first in my family to go to college and have a good career path. As Michael Roy, the Psychology session professor, said, "Take what you learn and apply it to different areas." And so, when I was asked, "How do you imagine the life you want to have," I imagine myself being happy, having kids, being a good mother, and succeeding in life. Also, Tracy Sadd, the meditation session professor, said, "For the moment I am going to love what I currently have instead of grasping for the future." From this, I learned that what I have now and what I have been through in my life will impact my life forever, but how I deal with it now will determine the impact I will have in the future. Thanks to the Momentum Program, I not only learned a lot, but I got to explore, find a part of myself, and step out my comfort zone. I know in time it will lead me to success!

- Juana Fernandez; Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Growing up, I always had an idea of who I wanted to be and what career I wanted to have. How do you know what major is right for you? For me, I knew science was the subject which interested me the most. In seventh grade I was put in an honors science class for Life Science because I was the only person in sixth grade to receive a perfect score on my science final. A couple years from now I imagine myself working in some kind of medical institution or health related area. I can see myself being happy, successful, and confident. Even though I will be busy helping others I will still have time for myself. Everyone has someone who inspires them in some way, shape, or form. The person who inspires me the most is my dad because he taught me how if you work hard it will pay off in the end. He came to America with little money but still had a job. After his medical training, he worked for a county mental health care clinic in northern Pennsylvania. Today, he is a psychiatrist who is very successful in his career while making free time to spend with the family. There are hardships in life but you have to overcome the obstacles and it will be worth it in the end. My dad always loved studying and learning about different subjects especially science. In fact, he was always the top of his class and never below the ranking. I hope to be as successful as him and to make him proud of my accomplishments, goals, and desires. To honor him, I would like to tribute this essay for him. According to me, the most important part of my career is helping people because it makes me feel good about myself. As a member of the Momentum program, I have met new peers, explored strengths, and been able to learn different material. My goal is to have an impact on others by making their lives better, safer, and happier. I have four years ahead of me at Elizabethtown College and I am going to make the most of it. I will imagine myself being successful in career of Biology, learn and become more inspired by my dad, and hope to impact others by providing them a better lifestyle

- Mahnoor Rahat; Lewisberry, Pennsylvania

When I was young, I would move up each grade always wanting to become a teacher. I knew, ever since I was in elementary school this is what I wanted to be. I wanted to teach children so they could go to college and be successful adults. As I grew older, I realized becoming a teacher might not be the best job for me. My classes only became bigger and harder to control. Although I no longer wanted to be a teacher, I still wanted to do something where I could help and teach something with a positive impact on people's lives. By sophomore year of high school, I researched and thought about my major in college. Eventually, I found Occupational Therapy would be the best fit for me. I have many people in my life who have autism or other special needs and used or still use an Occupational Therapist to help them be able to succeed in life. I thought to myself this career is like a teacher, I will be teaching people different skills they could use but at the same time I will be giving individual attention to people who need help. I will not have to worry about teaching thirty students at the same time. Even though I decided not to become a teacher, my teachers still inspired me to want to teach people and help them be able to be the best person they want to be. I imagine I will be able to change people's lives and the way they live in society. Whether I will be helping young children with their motor skills or helping adults with brain injuries re-learn life skills, I will be able to change their lives, which will make me feel good and make me feel like a better person. Although the image of my future changed from when I was younger, it changed in ways which will make me enjoy my adulthood and will let me help people through giving personal attention. Elizabethtown College and the Momentum program are going to help me bring my imagination to reality. Hearing Elizabethtown College's motto, "Educate for Service," made me feel this was the place I was meant to be. I came here to get an education in order to give service to people who need help. By being an Occupational Therapist, I can change people's lives. Specifically, the Momentum program helped me become a more outgoing person and work better in a team setting where I may not know everyone. The Momentum program also showed me to listen carefully to the people I am talking to which helps me understand more about the person I am talking to. With all of the new skills and knowledge I will learn during the Momentum program and all through college, I will be able to have an impact on all of the people I will be able to help and hopefully make their lives better so they can live to their fullest potential.

- Victoria Young; Cherry Hill, New Jersey

Imagine life; life after college, life after all of the hardships, after all of the late nights, midterms and finals. Imagine the life of your dreams. Your dream career, your dream house, dream car, the perfect family, everything is just the way you imagined. Through all of the hardships just remember this quote, "Believe in everything because everything is reachable." Using this quote to inspire me will help me to keep a positive outlook on life and help me to inspire others and guide them through their hardships and struggles. Another quote which inspired me throughout this week of the Momentum program was one related to us by Dr. Skillen from Anthropologist Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, that is the only thing that ever was." Through these two quotes and helping my peers, I hope to start a peer group for counseling throughout my four years here at Elizabethtown College. I hope to leave a legacy of helping peers through their hardships and problems.

- Emma Ricciardelli; Brigantine, New Jersey

I walked into the hospital room of my uncle who had been suffering from kidney failure. He reassured my whole family how he would be fine after surgery, but the look on my mother's face told a different story. The nurse came in and wheeled my uncle out of the room, he passed by me with a wink and a thumb's up, but between his optimism and my parents' skeptical fear I was unsure what to believe. I ended up siding with my parents shaking in the waiting room, a confused eight-year-old trying to cope with what I thought would be the last time I saw my uncle. A few hours later we found out he finished his surgery and would be in recovery for a while. My mother went in to see him first, but he was unresponsive, so the nurses advised us to come back in a few days. We made a few visits over the following weeks. The last time I came to visit the nurses asked if he would like to attempt to move out of bed and stand up. After a few attempts he took a few steps out into the hallway, which to me was the most inspiring thing I had ever seen. I got to meet my uncle's surgeon shortly after and from there on I wanted to be as heroic as the doctor who had helped my uncle. Now at the age of nineteen, I still want to be able to help people and I imagine myself going to medical school in four years after college and then completing my residency upon receiving my medical degree. I believe in the quote Professor Benowitz gave us from James Madison, "diversity is our country's strength," which is why I would like to live in a big city in the future. I come from a very small town with one traffic light, where everyone knows each other. This has also been a big inspiration for me to get out of my hometown and make it in a larger city. My other inspiration is my parents who pushed me and believed I can achieve my goals. They have always given me hope and they are the reason I have the opportunity to come to Elizabethtown College. I hope to make a positive impact on the world much like the many doctors who have helped my family. I have job shadowed physical therapists, physical therapists assistants, medical doctors, physician assistants, and surgeons. When I ask them what is the best part of their job they tell me nothing compares to the feeling of having someone who cannot walk or stand, seeking you for help and then slowly you can watch their recovery. Then you see them jump out of bed, hug their families and give you the sincerest gratitude for doing something they love. The impact I hope to leave on Elizabethtown College is to inspire future students the same way my Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors, peers, and faculty have done for me during this week of the Momentum program.

- Collin Griffiths; Pine Grove, Pennsylvania

As I pulled onto Schlosser Loop on our first day of the Momentum program, I could tell this program was going to have a huge impact on me. Before coming to Elizabethtown College, I was so nervous about making all new friends and living on my own. Even though I wanted to explore and go away for college since I was young, I was still scared. Coming to a whole new state and meeting so many new people has been amazing and I can only thank this Momentum program during this week for encouraging me to be myself. By the end of college, I want to be able to be confident in myself. I am majoring in Music Therapy, which is something I am very passionate about. I want to be able to help others no matter what they are going through, and make a positive influence. I am inspired by music, and I want to share my inspiration with others. Using music is amazing because almost every culture has music integrated into it, making it a universal language. Using music as a form of therapy will help me impact the lives of my clients. I use music as a way to cope with anxiety, and I want to share the healing power of music to people who need it, especially teens with mental health issues. During the daily inspirational meditation session, the Reverend Tracy Wenger Sadd talked about positive psychology which states how if we keep track of three things we are grateful for over 21 days, we will start scanning the world for more positive things rather than negative, and this really moved me to try and start thinking more positively about my everyday life. This week also inspired me to take action over things I am passionate about, and it taught me how we are able to be the change we need in the world. During the Personal and Academic Integrity session, it was said how we are connected to people, and I believe the Momentum program connects all of us even though we are all from different backgrounds and stories. While we were on our historic walking tour of Philadelphia, Professor Benowitz mentioned how we are responsible for having equality on our campus, spreading the word about different backgrounds and making sure everyone is treated with respect. I want to encourage diversity throughout Elizabethtown's campus and into the community so everyone knows they are good enough and in the end we are all human. On Wednesday, we went to a presentation on Diversity Dialogues. As Stephanie Diaz went through the power point slides on the screen, she told us many different positive and encouraging words and actions we could do to help us learn and keep the diversity on our campus and throughout our lives. One thing she said which stuck with me was how we should be our authentic self. This advice will be my focal point during my college career, and this week with the Momentum program has helped me start my first year confidently.

- Sarah Peppe; Long Beach, New York

Imagine 8-year old me running around the house. Imagine me stopping outside the kitchen, listening to the quiet words floating across the threshold. A voice says, "She's not really the type to jump into things." The voice belongs to my mom. "She's the type to stand at the edge of the playground and watch every other kid play before she decides to join in." Her words are not unkind; there is even a slight hint of amusement to them. That is something I have heard her say multiple times throughout my life in a few different contexts. Regardless, they are always stated like a fact, like how somebody might tell you the weather or the time. Fast-forward ten years and there I am: dancing under the pouring rain with my best friends in Montreal. Flying to the Virgin Islands to hike for six miles to see the sunrise. Unpacking my bags at Elizabethtown College. When I think about my life, the eighteen years I have experienced, I do not think I have had more personal growth in all this time than I have in the past year. I believe this comes from the fact I have discovered I want to achieve one thing: happiness. Whatever insecurities or self-conscious thoughts were causing me to watch the playground instead of just running at it like every other kid are gone. I think everything I have done until this point, and everything I am planning to accomplish currently, will allow to me to be successful in the future. Right now, I cannot say exactly what success looks like. Maybe it is owning a house and having children. Maybe it is traveling as much as possible and never staying in one place. No matter how things turn out, I imagine in whatever the future holds I will keep an open mind and constantly discover new things about both myself and the world around me. I have found this whole week we have been told stories about the underdogs, the ones who beat all odds, and the ones who never give up. As I was raised, it has been instilled in me to listen to my head and not to my heart. I have always been told to simply be rational, use common sense, do the right thing, whatever this may mean. One thing I realized this week is every single individual in those stories followed their hearts and, more specifically, their passions. On the historic walking tour of Philadelphia, led by Professor Benowitz, most of our discussions were focused on Benjamin Franklin. Hearing about how he and his innovations were constantly rejected was surprising. However, no matter how much adversity he faced, he never stopped trying to make his ideas a reality. Today, he is one of the most recognized and influential historical figures of all time. Listening to the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors and my peers within the Momentum program share their stories has also been incredibly eye-opening. Everybody has had completely different experiences, yet their stories almost all shared a similar message. If you work hard and do what you love, everything else will work itself out. For me, there is nothing more inspiring than those who are able to find success in following this message. It would be impossible for me to list everybody in my life who has impacted me in some way. Before I left for college, I sat on my bedroom floor flipping through past yearbooks and reading comments former teachers, mentors, and friends left me all those years ago. Some of them hold little meaning now, but others I still find incredibly kind and positive. If my teacher from third grade or the people I have just met this week can believe I will accomplish great things, then I should as well. If nothing else here at Elizabethtown College, I hope I can make at least one other person feel as encouraged and comforted as these individuals have made me feel. Maya Angelou once said, "At the end of the day people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel." Even if somebody cannot remember my name or face, I hope I can do or say one thing which will make them feel something they can carry with them forever. Whether this is by eventually becoming a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor myself or simply talking to somebody who looks like they are having a bad day, I want to make a difference on campus. This feels like just the beginning of my journey, and I hope along the way I will be able to impact as many people as possible anywhere I go.

- Lauren Kerr; Kintnersville, Pennsylvania

What do you want to be when you are older? My response to the said question was always business. My parents encouraged me towards a major in business. They believed business was a field where I could succeed. During high school, I took many different business courses to help prepare me for my idealistic future. In reality, I often found myself bored in those business classes. When I decided business was not my calling I was not sure what I would do. When junior year came around, I enrolled into Advanced Placement (AP) U. S. History. I was always fascinated with history but I was told history was a major which would not lead to a successful career. However, the U.S History class changed my perspective. The teacher was passionate about the material. She would share history as if she lived every minute of it. Her passion for teaching history to others is what inspired me to major in Secondary Social Studies Education at Elizabethtown College. I chose this major because I believe it was the best way to share my passion for history to younger generations. Hopefully in the process I will be able to inspire others the way my teacher has inspired me. I also want to get rid of the stigma of history being irrelevant. People believe history has no point in the present but I completely disagree. History is interwoven through our present in culture, religion, even our daily lives. Throughout the Momentum program Professor Benowitz led us on historical tours of Elizabethtown and Philadelphia. On these tours I was able to learn the importance of acceptance of all backgrounds. The lesson of diversity is something I hope to carry on with me throughout all four years. When I imagine myself as a graduate of Elizabethtown College I wish my legacy would be someone who embraced people of all different backgrounds. I plan to make an impact by keeping up this tradition of acceptance by not judging people on their beliefs but their whole character. The lessons I learn at Elizabethtown College will play an important role in not only my character but also in my career.

- Amber Venit; Ridley, Pennsylvania

I have always been the girl who spends too much time trying to decide if I should follow my heart or listen to the logical mind. My heart always wins. The thing about the heart is how it is not always right, and like most things, it gives up over time. In 2012 congestive heart failure took my grandmother who was my best friend and biggest supporter. When I received the news, I swear I felt my own heart failed. I always imagined she would be here for all my big milestones: high school graduation, my first college acceptance letter, my wedding, and the birth of my children. She always encouraged me as a child to use my imagination in everything I do. I used to think up crazy scenarios where the trees would turn to cotton candy or my bed would become a ship and I would sail the seven seas with no cares in the world. My grandmother spent her life taking care of others. She was a geriatric nurse and loved babysitting, taking care of sixty-nine children, including me, in forty years. When I imagine my life in the future, I see myself making the same sacrifices. I want to live with the love of my life and spend my days helping people who would not otherwise receive care. She taught me the value in service and using empathy to impact others. She is the reason I am at Elizabethtown College to pursue a degree in social work. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, social work deals with “providing social services and especially with the investigation, treatment, and material aid of the economically, physically, mentally, or socially disadvantaged.” I chose to become a social worker because since childhood, I have felt the need to give my help to anyone I could, whether they asked for it or not. I hope to influence others by sharing my own story of struggles with loss, depression, and emotional abuse. Spending a week in the Momentum program has helped me realize how people are inherently the same at the core. We all desire to be accepted and loved by someone else. This week has helped me open up to other people without worrying about their opinions of me. I owe everything I am to my grandmother, and I would not have made it here without her.

- Taylor Bennett; Maytown, Pennsylvania

Former Nebraska Corn Husker, James Green said “My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive, with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and a little style.” I am a firm believer in striving to be the best in whatever I decide to do. In my case it is educating and coaching. I imagine myself teaching at the same elementary school I attended as a young student. I also imagine myself coaching wrestling at the same high school I attended and for which I played. As a teacher and coach I imagine having a positive impact on the student’s success in the classroom and in the “real world.” As important as it is to teach it is equally as important to learn. I imagine not only teaching students but also learning from them. This week we have learned a great deal about diversity and how we should learn from everybody. Why would students be any different? I truly do imagine learning from my students because maybe they can help remind me to enjoy the simple aspects of life or how to not judge others and rather accept everybody. No matter where I end up in life I imagine myself living a clean and happy life style. When the word inspire is mentioned most people might think of a professional athlete or someone famous who inspires them but I not only think about famous people but I also think of my parents. My parents are just two inspirations of mine. They inspire me in an untraditional way. My parents never graduated from high school because they had to get full time jobs as teens. I see their unfortunate situation as a motivating factor for me to take advantage of the opportunity presented to me. Also so many people in history have had a vision ridiculed and doubted. Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King Jr. all had visions of equality and they were dismissed and doubted but they still triumphed. When Professor Benowitz led the historic walking tour of Philadelphia we learned how even Benjamin Franklin was doubted with his ideas on improving city’s sewage system, lighting system, and so many other ideas but he persevered and proved the doubters wrong. These people are inspirations to me because they persevered when times get tough and when no one believed in them. At the end of my career I would like to say I left a long lasting impact on my student’s academics, athletics, and life success. I want my students to persevere, work hard, be positive, and to have the knowledge to succeed. So many people did not succeed because they never had a role model or someone to teach through actions instead of words. The best way to lead is by example and this is how I want to teach. I want to impact the world with one student at a time and one success story at a time. We live in a country built around evolution and constantly improving and I am going to do my best to help improve the world through impacting the lives of many students.

- Austin Jones; Ephrata, Pennsylvania

When I was a little girl I told my mom the generic dream, being how I wanted to be a dancer. It was a dream every little girl had along with being a superstar or a singer. My mom disapproved and said singing was not a job, it was a hobby, and everyone was already a singer. She wanted me to aim higher. When I was a little older I told her I wanted to work in a zoo because of my love for animals. My mom told me zoo employees were not paid well and how loving animals was not a good enough reason to want to go into such a profession, she gave me all the negatives. She wanted me to aim higher. Next, I asked her about being a Veterinarian because I could still pursue my love for animals but I would be right alongside a doctor. I would always imagine myself in a job where I can explore nature, interact with its inhabitants and love every day of being there. She was satisfied! But even though I had pleased her with my new “dream” I had not pleased myself. Even though I loved animals, working with medicine, operating, diagnosing, and seeing animals every day was not something piquing my interest no matter how much I looked into it or how long I looked at the positives. Eventually, I started to fear the weighted and intimidating question: “What do you want to be when you grow up?” I did not know, and telling people something I really did not want to be, made me doubt it the more I said it. Heading into middle school I began encountering kids who feared this question just as much as I did and how they felt just as confused and wrong when they told the askers something that they did not feel passionate about. I wanted to be the one to find who I yearned to be, faster than the others. I wanted my answer to feel right when I said it. Once I hit the pressures of High School I began cracking down on finding what I loved. Everyone around me had hobbies, events to go to, and friends to spend time with on the weekends and after-school. I aspired to be the person who had a hobby I could immerse myself in and perfect. I craved friends who would contact me and ask if I wanted to go out to eat or if I wanted to go to the movies. My classmates and my peers around me were inspiring me to be that kid who raised their hand and know everything I was saying was fact and could say it with confidence. I immersed myself in my subjects, asked questions, and thought deeply about where my aspirations could take me. Now I am in college, and especially now I am in the Momentum program, this week has shown me how I can chase all of my hobbies and almost anything else which interests me and still achieve my dreams in the process. As much as this world is dependent on money, I do not have to depend on it just yet. I still have and need time to grow while I am here at Elizabethtown College and I intend to make the most of every opportunity. I want to grow my character and achieve the comfort of a life well lived, filled with joy, and filled with well-loved company. I want to do something I love and I want to find someone who will love me while I do it. Ever since I realized my natural magnetism and my ability to make people smile by just being me, I have always wanted to keep people smiling, to help them. My ultimate goal is to become stronger as a woman, while being able to present one of my ideas and have someone truly consider the weight of it and the possibility of putting my idea into motion. If I cannot find someone who will listen, I want to be strong enough to put my ideas into motion myself. I want to be a catalyst of all the changes happening around me. This is who I am and this is what Elizabethtown College and the Momentum program own have helped me quickly realize.

- O’Livia McIntosh; Unionville, New York

Imagine being born with two instant best friends. Being a triplet has affected every day of my life. We are always there to support each other and to help each other achieve their dreams. Being a triplet has made me who I am and will always impact my future. When I imagine my future I envision myself as a chief operations officer for a large international corporation, living near New York City, in a large old Victorian estate. I plan to travel all over the world and learn about other cultures. I imagine myself getting married and possibly having children. The most important aspect I want in my future is to have stability and security in life. There can be so many uncertainties in life and I want to be ready for whatever life may bring. The Momentum program has helped me to feel more prepared for the future and has inspired me to go after my goals. This week the sessions on Inspirational Meditation and Civility in Campus Life inspired me the most. They were very informative and helped me to see aspects of life in a different way. The one person who has inspired me most in life is my grandfather and I never realized it until he passed away. He was a wonderful man and did whatever he could to help someone in need. He was very charismatic and could make anyone smile. He lived an extraordinary life and I want to live a great life too. One passion I shared with my grandfather was a love for history. History as well inspires me to go after my dreams. When I learn about people in history, all the good and bad, I am inspired by their achievements and by them overcoming obstacles. My siblings and I have achieved many things and they inspire me to be my best self. When my brother and sister have reached a goal in their lives, it helps me to reach my goals as well. The Momentum program has had a lasting impact on me with all the different sessions and with all the new people I have met. When I think of the impact I want to leave on the world, I want to do something so great, so meaningful, I will be put into history books. I want to impact people the way historical figures impacted people of their times. I want to have a life changing impact on someone’s life and inspire them the way I was inspired to achieve success. I hope to someday impact and inspire others the way I have been impacted and inspired.

- Kennedy Gilbert; Brookville, Pennsylvania

This is for the students who sit quietly in class, knowing the answer but not saying anything. This is for the students who were labelled as the shy and quiet from a young age and could not break the classification. This was me. When I was a child, I could not imagine myself living anywhere besides my hometown and was scared to do anything on my own. Years later, I have shed the shell of this person; I am now traveling on my own, going skydiving, looking for an adventure at every turn. Every step of the journey, my mom has supported me. She watched me grow, change, and find myself as the years went on. No matter what I did, she was always my biggest fan. She taught me how to have a kind heart and to care for others. She has always been a selfless role model for me. The Momentum program has also inspired me to believe in myself more. Being surrounded by nothing but pure positivity is an incredible experience for everyone. I have become so close with these people who I have only known for a week and they truly inspire me to live up to my full potential. Now, as I picture my future, I see myself graduating from Elizabethtown College with a Masters in Occupational Therapy; walking across the Dell with all the confidence I have gained. I see myself traveling around the world to countries where Occupational Therapy is not widely available. Through the study abroad programs I will create international connections which will be extremely useful in my future endeavors. I hope to set up programs assisting with this issue in as many locations as possible. My drive for my future comes from the unrelenting desire to help people. My entire life I have been surrounded by selfless people who have always helped me, wanting nothing in return. On October 29, 2012 my house was torn apart by Hurricane Sandy. My family and I were left to rebuild the shell of what was once my home. However, we were not alone with this challenge. Friends, family, even strangers came to help us, opening their homes to us and giving us what we needed. I had never experienced such amazing kindness before in my life. From that moment on, I knew I had to do something with my life impacting others. Every action transforms the world, even just in the slightest way and I want my decisions to help make the world a better place. I will make a difference and aim to be a source of hope for others who are struggling. Through the Momentum program I have learned how needing help is not a sign of weakness but rather it exemplifies how strong we really are. I will embody this ideal for the rest of my life and hope to spread it as well.

- Holly Phillips; Toms River, New Jersey

Everyone is born into their life. Their life is chosen for them. You cannot choose the circumstances into which you are born, but you can control the decisions you make helping form the person you can become. Imagine being born into a life having to face the consequences of drug addiction. My sister had no choice but to overcome obstacles given to her by her biological parents. Day after day my sister inspires me. She continues to fight against the aftermath of her biological parents; from physical therapy, to speech therapy, and to occupational therapy my sister experienced it all. After growing up with her and seeing all she is capable of doing because of occupational therapy, I have learned so much about myself. I have learned how I aspire to be as strong and patient as my sister. I have also learned I want to help other people who go through various obstacles like my sister. After being in the Momentum program and taking part the daily reading group discussions the Kinesis led based on our summer reading assignment Paulo Coelho, Inspirations: Selections from Classic Literature, I have learned a valuable lesson; life is not about finding yourself, it is about creating yourself. I was able to get more in touch with my emotions and truly understand more about who I am now and who I hope to be when I graduate. I intend to spend my time here at Elizabethtown College helping others and in return becoming a better, more fulfilled person. Elizabethtown College has an abundance to offer and I plan on taking advantage of all of it, in hopes for a chance to be able to leave my impact on a place which has already began leaving an impact on me.

- Kimberly DeStefano; Parsippany, New Jersey

Just stop and think for a moment. Imagine the life you want to live. How will you get there? Who will you become? These are just a few questions I ponder about daily. As I gaze into my future, I see a successful person who has fulfilled her dream. However, it was not always this way. Through the many hardships of my life, I never imagined myself making it this far. Now, here I am, a freshman in college, ready to begin my journey. There are many inspirations in my life. They all encourage me to keep going, even when faced with the inevitable. However, my most important inspiration would have to be my Mom. Throughout my life, she has always told me "You can do anything you set your mind to do." Even with battling a life-threatening disease, she manages to maintain a strong will and a smile on her face. I wanted to give up and stay behind to support her, but she pushed me through. She did not want me to stop living my life because of her illness. I am so glad she did. On another note, I am very happy I joined the Momentum program. I learned even when times are tough, you must "give thanks in all circumstances and love your life," as spoken by Reverend Tracy Wenger Sadd. This message was very inspiring and so were all the individuals I have met this past week. Being able to listen to their stories and experiences was eye opening. Everyone wants to leave an impact during their lifetime, including myself. I hope my career will not only heal others, but encourage them. I want them to know I came from a first generation, low-income family, and I made it! I want them to see they can get anywhere in life, no matter where they stand.

- Brittney Jarvis; Hartly, Delaware

“It doesn’t matter if you’re born in a duck yard when you’ve been lying inside a swan’s egg... ”As a child I learned early on how it does not matter where you are from or what is different about you, we all have something special inside. As a child being near the Rio Grande and so close to the border between Mexico and the U.S. has shaped me in ways I had never realized before. Mostly because I am more aware of the realities existing for Hispanics who are desperate and longing for a chance to become citizens and how lacking citizenship prevents them from voting, having livable jobs, and most importantly for younger people denying them the opportunity to attend college. Fortunately, I was lucky to have been born in the states but seeing people like me who did not have the same chance has impacted me to take advantage of the life I have now and the doors are opening to me and inevitably inspiring me to push forward and get a degree where I am able to fight for the forgotten, those who have been pushed aside and pushed around. Through my career I want to work with minority children who may or may not have disabilities and prepared to enter school and begin their academic journey with a good start. On the side I want to paint murals or artworks in general as a form of protest in speaking out about issues Hispanic minorities face and give people a visual representation of what they are not seeing, like Frida Kahlo in Mexico and more recently Banksy; Which is why I hope to one day use both my career and my art to serve the community from which I came from to aid them in their struggles and make their struggles known to the rest of society who has hardened their hearts and turned around ignoring the issues and struggles right in front of them. My life so far has demonstrated to me how society makes people believe they live in duck yards to cloud the beauty, power, and specialty they have inside. And having lived these past few days in college and learning how to interact with people and challenging what I have been taught is the first step towards realizing the life I have imagined.

- Ruth Marquez; San Juan, Texas

Growing up, I was constantly surrounded by goodwill. My friends were all honest kids, my mom went to church just about every day, and I was always involved in a multitude of volunteer programs; however, I was without direction. I was going by, participating in these charity events not truly realizing my calling was to help others. I could not seem to fully grasp how I, a small Hispanic boy, could do anything to change the lives of others. This was partly due to my lack of self-esteem. Part of it was because I could not see past myself. I was my own obstruction. Later on in life this self-centeredness and low self-esteem was elevated to new levels when I got into a relationship which was not necessarily good for me. Family and friends alike describe me as the kind of kid who was always smiling and cracking jokes but things started to take a turn for the worst in this relationship. I started to receive a form of mental and slightly verbal abuse from my partner which proved to be a big blow to me as a person. I started to believe I was not truly good enough for the finer things in life and seldom thought of happy thoughts. I was zapped of all of my energy and I was going nowhere. The light was quickly leaving my eyes and I forgot how to smile. Finally, I was brought into counseling and got the help I needed to push through to where I am today. Today I am writing this essay for the Momentum program because looking back at it, the relationship really shaped my goals and helped me to envision what I want in life. Being part of the Momentum Program has really opened my eyes to those around me. Whether it be different culture or different experiences this program has really given me the kick in the rear I needed to jump over my own self. From hearing stories of Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors to stories of students, everything has really made me think how I am not too special (in the best of ways). During the group talks with the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors, I was asked three questions really helping me figure out the whole reason for this paper. Today I realize I am inspired by the absence of happiness within my life during the relationship. When asked “Why are you at Elizabethtown College?” I could not think of anything else but to bring some form of happiness into the lives of those I touch. Having my happiness stripped from me was an experience making me only want to reach out to those in need. I could simply not imagine a life where I was not helping people through their tough times.

- Bruno Coletta; Garnet Valley, Pennsylvania

Rehearsal in fifteen minutes and I am still three stops away. I cannot afford to be late. Rushing up the subway steps into Times Square speed walking on the sidewalks sprinting while crossing the street just to make it through the stage door with seven minutes to spare. My director grilling me as I pass by because I was nearly late. Hours later I will be on stage in Richard Rogers Theater being Eliza Hamilton in the successful and always sold out Broadway musical *Hamilton*. It is 2026... ten years ago I was watching this show from the nose bleeds. Out of all nights, a nomination for a TONY would be at risk. Imagining my life in the future does not scare me. I decided to pursue this. It is what I aspired for. Most Broadway actors, actresses, and eventually TONY award winners have pursued this since they were toddlers. All resources were given to them. I, on the other hand, was [Benjamin West] the Quaker trying to paint with the cat's tail. I was singing, dancing, and acting with limited to no resources like Dr. Kelly-Woessner said, meaning I would have difficulties to improve my craft. In the meantime, I was bullied throughout middle school because people thought my life-long goals were unrealistic. They could not believe a timid, intelligent girl wanted to be a Broadway actress. I desperately wanted to prove all my bullies wrong and express my deep-held belief: the quiet ones also have something to say. I became the injured fox in the snow while the bullies were the vultures, from a painting [Winslow Homer *Fox Hunt* 1893] in the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts. Through all the bullying and limited resources, I was inspired to keep on going. If Lin-Manuel Miranda, the writer and director of *Hamilton* could be laughed at in The White House and later on have everyone in the audience engaged in his performance, then I can be bullied in middle school and be on Broadway years later. Six years old, I was sharing Oreos with my grandfather. Grandpa served in the Navy in the late 1950s before working in the shipyards over by the Hudson River where tons of cargo would enter and exit New York City. His passion was to be a wood sculptor. I vision him craving and sanding small blocks of wood made into intricate pieces. After a decade long battle with Parkinson's, he had a heart attack near 1:30 in the morning of February 20, 2007. Grandpa falls off the bed. Grandma runs around the bed and once she gets to him, she wraps her arms around him. At that moment, he was gone. To this day Grandpa's chair in the dining room is still angled towards the television, like it always was and will be. He would just sit there all day, watch the television, and tell stories. I see him there and those wooden sculptures sit in a china cabinet instead of a gallery. Grandpa's passion got taken away from him by his health. He never got what he wanted. I would do anything to have another pack of Oreos with him. My father had the greatest job in the world. He was an Executive for Bloomberg growing up. In 2009, my childhood was over when my father lost that job. I learned my values by sacrificing some the limited resources I had to improve my craft to help my parents get by. Throughout the years he was in and out of jobs. There is a closet right across the hall from my room at home. It is filled with all his suits and ties. For the last two years he has been a painter in a construction union. The suit and ties sitting in the closet as they collect dust. For these past nine years he kept on going day in and day out, job after job. My father is always tired; he is not happy with the current situation. He had no choice but to get a grip. I was watching him suffer while he was watching me grow up and always told me to excel. My father's passion got taken away because of the Recession in 2008. He is one of the millions of people who lost their jobs. My father does not care about having a great job anymore...he worries about the bills and getting by. Growing up, my mother made it clear I was going to college and there will be no other exceptions. She was born as a first generation American, daughter of immigrants from the Dominican Republic who came to America a year before she was born. Months ago, two weeks before Decision Day, mother sat me down and gave me a lecture. She went to Hunter College in the Upper East Side of Manhattan but never completed her college education. She told me not graduating college was the biggest regret in her life. She would have majored in Nursing or Cultural Anthropology. While meeting Professor Newell and listening to her presentation, I understood why my mother wanted to be an anthropologist. In my eyes she would have been perfect for it. My mother is not happy with her job. Her main reason was, "I have to work with people who I'm friends with, the worst part is I only get half of what they make." She lost her passion by simply not being able to afford college and going on a different path. It was an easy path in her time. In the end, mother concluded her speech saying I could come to Elizabethtown if I got some scholarships, got myself involved, and did not make the mistake she made. I keep my promises. I imagine 2027, the eighty first annual TONY awards, and I have been nominated for my performance as Eliza Hamilton. Even with my glamorous red carpet look and all the cameras flashing I was still sweating on my nose a motif to my anxiety. Whether I win or lose, I am honored to have made it to this point in my life especially from where I started. New York City is all about the beauty, the success, and making it. My family has been hustling and bustling and we still are to this day. My family's journey in America had started from close to nothing. Now it is my turn to take the torch and make life changing strides for myself and my family. I will be the first in my family to actually be happy with their careers. I will make these imaginations happen. While saying goodbye to my father he says, "This is the time where you will develop as a person." While reminiscing I was reminded of Merriweather Lewis' navigation studies [1787 Andrew Ellicott House Lancaster Preservation Trust]. This is the time where I will navigate myself to be more grateful, promising, open minded, outgoing, and be a better person four years from now where I first stepped into E-town.

- Gabriella Marrero; New York City, New York

What do you imagine when you are told to imagine what you would like your life to be like in ____ years? Whenever I am asked this question I do not know what to think. One could say I do not like to imagine what my life would look like because I would have high hopes, and end up letting myself down. This is also the reason I like to say I am more of a realist. When we were told we were going to write an essay about ourselves, before even knowing fully what it was supposed to be about, I was immediately dreading it because I HATE talking about myself. It is sometimes said to write something is to truly say it (I am pretty sure I heard this in a superhero show, but it applies). Then we were told we had to write about how we imagine our lives to be, and what inspires us, and what impact we want to have in life or on the lives of others. Then I knew I was seriously in trouble. Do not get me wrong, I know what kind of impact I want to have on life, and I know what inspires me to achieve as much as I want to (as unrealistic as they might be), but the problem I had is with the imagining what I want my life to be like. Growing up in a “developing” (more like under-developed country), I was told to have realistic dreams, and to be something which would “make me money.” Because of this, I wanted to be an accountant (also, because I liked money,) but then I got to secondary school, and I was told to do something in the STEM department instead. So, I took science courses, trying to figure out what I wanted to do. Multiple times I thought about switching to the arts, (accounting, economics etc.) but then I would just think about how people would tell me to do something to make “make me money,” so I stuck with the sciences. Then four years ago, my life gets uprooted, and I get moved to a foreign country (the U.S) where people can barely understand my accent, and I had to assimilate. When I was registering for my high school courses, I was asked what I wanted to do, and I did not know so instead, I said I liked math, and sciences, and was somewhat interested in engineering. So, throughout high school, I took engineering classes, and actually enjoyed them, then I started to think about the idea of becoming an engineer, but besides this I have always loved music, dance, TV shows and movies, so I used to like to think about the idea of doing something in the entertainment industry, or in the culinary industry, because I also love cooking. But I used to dismiss those ideas because of what I was told as a child about doing something making money and how they do not exactly make a great of money. My experience in my engineering classes, made me love the idea of inventing something. I used to think about my childhood, and how fortunate I was, because I was able to go to a good school, and travel during my holiday breaks, while some other students my age were hawking and working to help support their family, and I would think to myself I got lucky, because this could have been me. So, my main inspiration and the impact I want to make in my life, is to help underprivileged children in my country. I want to give them a better childhood so they could live a better life, and they could make something meaningful with their lives, I want to give them hope for the future. In my wildest dreams, I would have never thought about ending up in an amazing school like Elizabethtown College, and an amazing program like Momentum, where someone like Professor Benowitz would encourage students to do what they feel passionate about, and not what their parents want them to do, or not something which would get them money, because what is the point of having all the success in the world if you are not happy? This past week in the Momentum program, I have actually been thinking about branching out, and maybe trying something with music or entertainment in general, because it is something I am passionate about. Although I do love engineering, I would love to do something else along with it, and I used to think this was impossible until now. On our road trip in Philadelphia, Professor Benowitz talked about how people like Benjamin Franklin would want to create things, and people disagreed, but in the end, he prevailed, so with the experience the Momentum program has given me, I began believing anything is possible again, and you do not have to pursue a career just because it will make you successful, but because it is something you are passionate about.

- Hameedah Odusanya; Laurel, Maryland

Steve Jobs once said, “Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you have not found it yet, keep looking, do not settle. As with all matters of the heart, you will know when you find it.” As part of this program I have learned, from Professor Benowitz, how it is really important to make sure we choose a career reflecting our passions. I am passionate about traveling and getting to know new cultures by integrating myself in them, and I am working towards a life where this will be possible. I cannot say one single person has inspired me. Everything and everyone inspires me every day to go on with the path I have chosen. I have taken everything I have learned from others and my own experiences to form who I am. I hope to one day leave a mark in this place and the rest of the world. I am still finding myself so I still do not really know what I could do to make an impact. But, I am who I am, and I am constantly putting myself out there and just keeping a good relationship with everyone around me. I hope one day the little things I do day by day, and the decisions I make, amount to something meaningful enough to make an impact.

- Dhayibeth Vasquez; Santiago, Dominican Republic.

Imagine living in a huge house, your own pool, a maid to do all the domestic work. You go to work every morning at six o'clock because you live fifteen miles away from work, but the traffic is so congested. Just like your life. You do not have time to throw ball with your kids so you complain they are in their rooms on their phones. When was the last time you told your spouse you loved them, and do you even still feel this way? At work you sit at a desk, only getting up for coffee and a lunch break. This is not the life I want for myself, or anybody else. I do not want my life to become a slideshow on repeat. I want to keep learning and doing something different each day- remembering each moment through photos and memories. I want to travel the world with happiness in the heart. I want to wake up every morning loving the person next to me. June 19, 2017 through July 28, 2017 I lived a life completely unplanned, not knowing where I was going to sleep each night or where I would go the next day and I loved it. Imagine going waking up next to the Grand Canyon one day and in less than a week, riding a motorcycle through the Giant Sequoias of California, feeling the wind tickle your arms. Most people are too scared to live their dream or even imagine their future. This was the scariest thing I have done and it was the most worthwhile thing I have ever experienced. I imagine going to Elizabethtown College will be similar to this experience because it is new and scary, but worthwhile for my education and growth as a person. I imagine my major of environmental science at Elizabethtown College will allow me to live a life of learning and adventure such as this one. My dream is to work at a National Park, studying, learning, and having fun. All I ask is to have fun or at least find the fun in each day. I am inspired by people who do not give up, like my neighbor who lost her husband to cancer, then fought it herself a few years later and made it through. She could have easily given up to see her husband again, but she did not just like so many people I look up to who do not give up because they know what they want and they go for it. I want to impact my community by making them smile and enjoy life through the little things, I want them to see the art in everything. The Momentum program has helped me realize what I want out of life, especially the inspirational meditation sessions the group had with the Reverend Tracy Wenger Sadd. The Chaplain's lessons helped me open my eyes to the worthwhile things to pay attention to in life, like the little things.

- Hannah Swope; Wernersville, Pennsylvania

I imagine myself alone in a room, sitting in a cushioned office chair, wearing my pajamas. Of course, I will probably be spending my time staring blankly at a word-filled screen. My imagination running on an endless high; conjuring mental images by the trillion. Images of a brave heroine fighting for her life, fighting for her rights, and the rights of others. All of this starts with one drop of inspiration. It could be a dream, a thought, or something visual, but it all goes back to the root, and this is me. There may be no troll here trying to take over the world; my inspiration is something much more emotional. It is my drive to strive for greatness, not only for myself, but for my mom. She is the woman who kept me fed, clothed, safe and filled with happiness with little help. She made sure I wanted for nothing, and it is this simple. She is strong and all she wants is for me to follow my dreams. She wants me to succeed in my endeavors, and this my plan in life. So far I have won awards in the Scholastic Art and Writing competition and I have been published in my school's literary magazine along with being in charge of the production of our 2016-2017 edition. During high school in creative writing classes I can honestly say I feel as if I have found my calling. My ambitions were even more so confirmed during the session led by Professor Benowitz entitled "The Socratic Method to Discovering Your Strengths, Talents, and Gifts." When I shut my eyes imagining my future I saw myself doing what I love. Even though the risks are high, the advantages I would gain are much more powerful. I could change the world, or even just entertain. Reading should be a wondrous experience and I plan on making my stories just worthwhile reading. So, here I sit now staring at a word filled screen, thinking of my future as a writer, and a graduate of Elizabethtown College. I want to prove to myself more than anything in the world, because I am my worst critic as I constantly struggle with my anxiety. I want to help others hone their talents and follow their aspirations. For the best feedback is positive feedback in any situation, and constructive criticism is always appreciated. I want to leave my mark as someone who took advantage of every opportunity and sucked the marrow out of life as I lived day by day never giving up on my dreams and striving to reach my goals.

- Mary Kirby; Spraggs, Pennsylvania

Everyone sees those commercials when people ask you to donate money to families in need. Everyone has. Are you empathetic? Are you sympathetic? Everyone watches those commercials and most people turn a blind eye. I am one of those people who turned a blind eye. In the summer of last year, I had the opportunity to travel to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands for a high school trip. I got to personally see the effects of poverty and hunger within children, and it made me see the world in a very different light. Before I went on this trip, I could have never imagined what it was like to live in these circumstances. I went to Ecuador and experienced the everyday struggles children and high-schoolers had to endure. I do not live such a life on a daily basis, but I got a sliver of it and I realized how privileged I am to live the life I have. Ever since then, I have imagined my life to be helping people in foreign countries, specifically children. To help me achieve this goal I want to specialize in biology and political science. In the scientific viewpoint, I want to become a virologist and research cures for the plagued countries all around the world. In the political viewpoint, I want to work with child labor laws and policies benefiting people who do not have anyone fighting for them. I imagine myself working for a non-profit organization, preferably Doctors Without Borders. I think they are an amazing organization working because they care, and not because they want to make money. I have had many positive influences and inspirations in my life, but one of my biggest inspirations is my family. I have a huge family, and every single person in it continues to push me and my siblings to be the best versions of ourselves. When I find out my brother was homeless, I was in complete shock. You never think anything can happen to you or your loved ones until it happens, and then, you cannot turn away. It did not make sense how I could be in a bed every single night, and he was somewhere sleeping on a bench. That was one of the many events inspiring me to be an aspiring advocate for poverty awareness. Another thing inspiring me was seeing the living conditions of children my age. I experienced not having technology for six hours, using textbooks where you could barely see the words, and walking in schools with busted windows and flickering lights. I bet most of the people reading this would not be able to imagine what it was like for me. While I was there, I had the chance to visit an orphanage and meet an amazing little boy named Chris. He was my little companion and we spent the whole day together. In this orphanage, the caretakers take the children on a "bathroom break" while the visitors have to leave because they cannot handle saying goodbye. They get attached very quickly, and when they took them to the bathroom, he knew exactly what was happening. As they were carrying him out, he was screaming. "Chica! Chica!" and was sobbing his heart out. This was a key moment when I realized I do not *want* to help people in need, but I *need* to help. When you see a child sobbing because he continuously has people walking out of his life, you know there is a change needing to happen. I want people to feel the progress and implications I will make in the future. I want to help as many people I can whether it be from curing someone from a disease, helping a family get out of a bad living situation, or changing rules and regulations so it benefits the people needing the help. I will consider my impact big as long as I help free at least one person from the pain and suffering no one should endure. I imagine myself in the future inspiring other people to get involved with the community and world. To allow themselves and others a freedom only true happiness and content can bring. I imagine it and will live it.

- Austin Hall-Bumbray; Hartford, Connecticut.

Imagine going through school with a learning disability and having the teachers talk to you like you do not speak English. What if I told you this student was me, I know you would probably think differently of me. But I am not here at Elizabethtown College to be judged, I am here to become a music therapist inspiring students just like me. During middle school and high school, my mom was the one who always pushed me to do and try my best in all my classes. Even if the class was challenging she would be happier knowing how I was trying my best and not giving up just because it was difficult. My mom also helped me apply to Elizabethtown College, and helped me make sure all the required paperwork was submitted to the Admissions Office. My grandpa also pushed me during school making sure I was also trying my hardest. He also tutored me in some classes and helped me prepare for the SAT. Sadly, he did pass before I graduated from high school. Even though he is gone, I know he is still looking over me, letting me know he is proud of me. Being accepted into the Momentum program has helped me make friends and make the transition into college easier. Being in the Momentum program has shown me how much time I would be putting into my classes. My expectation is the Momentum program will help me with the intense work load of majoring in music therapy and helping me become a music therapist. I know the time I put into the work will be worthwhile when I see the students laughing and smiling because of my work. Using music therapy, I want to inspire students by having them laugh and smile while playing music during the sessions.

- Samantha Partridge; Rochester, New York

When I was a preteen, I dreamed of my sixteenth birthday. I decided this was going to be the best year of my life. In early December, I turned sixteen and life was perfect. On December 26th my "perfect year" made a turn for the worse. My father left without any warning, leaving behind my mother, my little brother, and me. After the separation, I often imagined my father coming back and having a complete family again. It has been three years since then, but I no longer imagine having a "complete" family. My dream focused on the past and distracted me from the future, my future. I now imagine bettering the world by doing what I love—helping others. During the daily reading group discussions the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors led based on our summer reading assignment Paulo Coelho, Inspirations: Selections from Classic Literature, Jaimie Ramos asked the group to really question why they are here at Elizabethtown College. I am here because I want to learn. I want to discover all I need to know in order to help others be able to do the typical occupations most people take for granted. Through the Occupational Therapy program, I am able to learn different therapies in order to reach my goal of knowledge. I imagine creating a better future for those with disabilities. The dream I have created is not just because of myself, it is because of the people/events inspiring me along the way. When I was in elementary and middle school, I was verbally abused by my father. I knew he had good intentions, but his idea of "encouraging" me was taken too far. Eventually, the abuse stopped. It is because of this trial in my life I learned my drive to go to college came from within, not because it is something forced on me by my father. I want to prove to him and to myself how he was wrong about me. Professor Benowitz called the Momentum students to challenge everything they have been taught. Although he was specifically speaking of history in this instance, I applied it to my life in a different aspect. I get my inspiration from challenging what my father told me to be true, but is not. My other inspiration comes from my mother. When my father left, he took all of my savings and half of my parents' joint bank account with him. There were many times I saw my mother cry because she was not sure if she would be able to provide food for her two children or keep our childhood home. She worked hard, picking up extra shifts at the hospital to make sure my brother and I ate, and we did not have to move. She worked hard in community college, earned her Associates Degree, and is one of the most esteemed nurses in her department. She is my main inspiration. The third part of the Momentum motto is impact. This was probably the most challenging self-reflective part of the essay. After going through this week of the Momentum program, I was able to discover just how I want to impact the campus and the surrounding community. The students were taught this college was founded on tolerance and acceptance from members of the Church of the Brethren who were marginalized because of their plain clothes. I want to leave my impact by continuing the legacy Elizabethtown College was founded on. I want to play a part in acceptance of others, despite my own beliefs and backgrounds. Professors and Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors all encouraged the students to look past the exterior and get to know people. This is what I want to do here on campus. I also plan on trying to benefit the community around the college by joining programs like Habitat for Humanity and Relay for Life here on campus. I want to leave an impact by helping others on and off campus.

- Lauren Griffiths; Joppa, Maryland

I was always the shy girl, the one who wanted to disappear in the back of the class with hope no one would notice. But then I decided to attend Elizabethtown College and the realization hit me I could not be this way anymore. I imagine how sometime soon I will be able to step outside of my comfort zone and grow. I can be the person to walk around campus confidently with little to no doubt in myself. By being in the Momentum program I feel more comfortable with who I am going to be without my parents right by my side. I will be able to get around campus because the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors have shown me enough of the campus, and I am mostly confident in where I am going. I would like to have a similar impact on someone like the one the Momentum program and the Kinesis have had on me. I want to make their transition into college easier for them to handle. Growing up I watched the toll working in a mental health field had on my Mom. Naturally, it should have turned me off this career path. But it did not. All I ever knew I wanted to do when I grew up was help people in some way. So, I decided to major in psychology. I want to learn about how the mind works and why I and others act the way we do. I have seen the impact my Mother has had on her clients. This is what I want, I want to impact someone's life one day at a time until they are able to live a functional life on their own. I want to feel the happiness and pride of watching someone better themselves knowing I have helped them get to this point. I do not want to stop until I have impacted the life of everyone who came to me seeking help. My Momma is the one person who inspired me most in more way than one. She is half of the reason I chose psychology; she is the reason I found such a large interest in the subject. And the other half of the reason would be those who have helped me cope with and understand my mental illnesses. They have inspired me to help others in the way they help me get to this point of my life.

- Brianna Miller; Newburg, Pennsylvania

My life was destined for failure. Born in a family of ten in the heart of the jungle of Thailand. Neither of my parents had a college degree, but they taught me as much as they could. Being the only English speaking family in a hundred-mile radius took its toll on me. I had no friends growing up, the only kids I could really interact with were my siblings. No teachers to guide me in issues I had with troubling subjects. All the curriculum I had to use was passed down from child to child, so by the time I got the books most of them had been used and erased. My parents had little time for teaching. When they were not running a church, or caring for our farm, they struggled to provide the family with enough money every month. My mother taught me enough to count as 11th grade. But before I started 12th grade, issues raised with the land, with troubled family members, and with the donations the church depended on to survive. I was left to tend the land filling in for my older siblings who were sent to the states to find their way in life. As a result, I felt discouraged from studying and way behind academically. And then one day my oldest brother came home to visit. I do not remember him, nor did I have much contact with him through the years. We started talking, and our talks eventually turned to my life. He asked me if I really wanted to live on our parent's farm for the rest of my life, and as I thought about it I realized I did not know of any life outside Thailand. As our conversation went on I became enlightened, and it was during my brother's visit I realized I did not want the life I was living. I realized I could never be satisfied anymore if I continued to live a simple farmer's life. He inspired me to continue studying and told me if I got a passing score on the SAT he would buy my plane ticket to the United States. He bought me a computer and for the next year I studied hard using online resources to teach myself. When I started to slip with my school I would think of my brother and all the resources he gave me, the fear of failure kept me going. Now I sit here typing this, and the shock of how fast everything is happening still hits me. In six short months, I have moved to the United States. My oldest sister gave me a place in her home in Baltimore and took care of me, just like when I was younger and our mother was too busy. My sisters-in-law, complete strangers to me, gave me a place to stay in Hershey and invaluable help in adjusting to my new world. I understand now people want to help those who are willing to help themselves. Now here I am starting college and though I came intending to major in mechanical engineering the Momentum program made me realize I should not major in what my family wanted for me. Now I no longer dread my classes, and for the first time am excited to begin learning things which interest me. Seeing just how far I have come makes me shake in excitement and anticipation for the future. I cannot wait to learn and make mistakes, and learn again from those mistakes. I cannot wait to be in the position to help others who felt like I did. I cannot wait to graduate and attempt to give back to the Elizabethtown family. I say family because everyone I have met from the Kinesis to the professors have shown they really care about my success and happiness. I am experiencing emotions I have never felt before, feelings of genuine gratitude, of trust, and safety. Waves of relief are washing over me as I write this. I feel I have left years of worry and stress in Professor Benowitz's office as he showed me how to drop my engineering courses and avoid a lifetime of regret and misery. I know I will never be able to repay the people who helped me and gave me the strength to set myself free. But I take pleasure in knowing I WILL make them proud of my accomplishments. I have often wondered what could compel the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors to give their time and energy to strangers they have never met before. Unruly immature strangers who did not realize what invaluable advice they were being given. And now I can say I know why the Kinesis would share their amazing, unique experience it is because they too were inspired by those before them, and they felt this feeling I feel now. This overpowering emotion of gratitude and realization how much their mentors changed their lives. They inspire me and make me want to live a life worthy of inspiring others someday. So, to you Kinesis, professors, siblings, lovers, and strangers I salute you. With tears in my eyes and pride in my heart. I am so proud to be able to have the opportunity to have met you. Know how I feel this way now and when my time to live, learn, and love has finally come to an end. When I have inspired all, I could and gave more than I could to all of humanity. My last moments will be thinking of you.

- Yutapong L Suwaratana; Wang See Sot, Thailand

Let us be frank for a moment, this sort of “colloquial composition” depicting personal endeavors and attainments of mine, as well as admirable exemplars, does not come naturally. As a matter-of-fact, the very thought causes my mind to stir rather uncomfortably with anxiety. Rather, the format of my scripture tends to weave in various poetic intricacies lulling the agitated and rapid flow of ideas to a gentle stream in which these words circulate through me. I view writing, as well as all other aspects of language, as an immaculate, ever-changing art form showcasing one’s self; their level of education, their passions, their distastes, their history, and so on and so forth. Language, regardless of regional dialects, differences in parts of speech, et cetera, is a universal construct of humanity. Language, regardless of alphabet, handwriting, et cetera, can adequately, if not wholeheartedly, convey the complexity of human thought. Language, whether it is bodily gestures, verbal expressions, et cetera, fascinates me to the point of vivid jubilation! The very verity humanity as a whole wants to connect with and convey to others validates my vindication about language, regardless of difference, is beautiful. However, being frank once more, I do favor the unique beauty of some languages over others. The top two contenders which have managed to bewitchingly weasel their way into the very culmination of my ambitions are my native tongue of English and the charming distinctness which is Japanese, both of which have been seeing a surge in worldly popularity since World War II. Starting with the former of the two, I first realized my reverence for the love child of Germanic and Latin during my first year in an accelerated writing composition course. During this initial scholastic year, the educator instilled upon her group of puberty-stricken juveniles how one must not limit oneself to the linguistic restraints pushed onto them by their district nor their amount of tutelage; but rather, one will find a grandeur enjoyment in discovering a fresh take on “bland” normative of the every day. Because of this noteworthy philosophy, I grew to appreciate and respect English as an artistic skillset with limitless appraisal. Now, on the other side of the spectrum, I began to actively pursue the rebellious delinquent of the Chinese calligraphy due to the fact the adolescent curriculum imposed onto me was not testing my abilities the way I ought to be examined, which to me was application of the material presented to me rather than just spitting out a jumble of facts which are meant to only be remembered for a particular test. Thus, I began my expedition in order to find the intellectual ambrosia to satisfy my craving for higher learning. Along the way, I happened to cross paths with a rather trendy librarian my first year of secondary schooling. Upon hearing my predicament of cerebral boredom, the aloof female empathized with me and made it her personal mission to find my niche. Ultimately, after trial and error, she eventually exposed me to Japanese via the practice of Calligraphy and, later, pop culture. As one can possibly deduce, I was caught like a fish in a net. Be this as it may, I cannot identify the exact reason as to why I have fallen for Japanese... It could have been the visual appeal or the way the words flow like a car ride on a hilly road pulling me towards it... But, I finally grasped onto a niche to call my own: tying this foreign construct to what I have always known best and showcasing how beautifully these two languages dance together. This newfound revelation led me to consider teaching future generations to appreciate this elegant dance. Now, being frank one last time, educational masters are severely underpaid in comparison to the potentially magnificent impact they can make on the world. To quote the educational activist, Prince Ea, “Teachers should earn as much as doctors because a doctor can do heart surgery and save the life of a child. But a great teacher can reach the heart of that child and allow him to truly live.” And... he is right. A great teacher can make a difference, regardless of their salary. With this in mind, I, by no way, am interested in the monetary value of my career; but rather, I want to reach the hearts of all of my future students and show them how marvelous the world can be if they try to be as proactive in finding their niche just as I was, in similar shoes to them, if not more. This is who I am and this is what I want to become.

- Alyssa M. Tarquinio; Millville, New Jersey

“When I was younger,” writes someone using the anecdotal hook. Launching into a story, likely one of the few clearer ones from childhood, calls the attention of the reader and begins to establish changes in the writer, between some prior time and the present. Calling attention to certain shifts a person has undergone allows them to write a self-centric paper without the awkwardness of coming right out and saying, “Hello, this is a paper about what I think.” With a line of reasoning as clear as this, it would be work in excess not to use something similar. Since my youth I have had some changes. I have left behind my natural hair color for rainbow hues, and said goodbye to greeting every day with two braids. I have gotten a little bit taller, a little more aesthetically gutsy, began making my own wardrobe decisions. However, when it comes to character and motivation, I find myself worryingly unchanged. Instead of a direct drive or inspiration to continue into college, it is based on what I have always done. I have been what people would call a “good student” all my life. Entering into high school I found myself with personal expectations of my performance: the ‘waterline’ was a 4.0 and anything less would put my head under the water and leave me drowned. It was not something my parents told me I had to do, just something I could not grasp what would happen if I did not manage it. When it all came together, I never found out what would have happened, or if the world would have fallen down around my feet; my grades stayed up. Even worse, there was not even enough of an element of adversity or struggle to make it seem noble. I did well enough, did not have to work excessively hard, and left just the same as I entered. With a lack of vision for the future, I was not even pushed forward towards a goal. The only thing I wanted was to keep my grades where they were, nothing beyond. College was not a question, only the next natural step. An idea of what to do is easy enough to find, but not what would this actually entail. Once I remember telling someone what I wanted for the future was stability, and maybe, if I was incomprehensibly lucky, happiness. It was a sort of an afterthought I did not want to spend my life miserable. After all, many people are, and it just seems to be how it goes many times. Luckily, at some point I came to my senses, thinking enough to recall there are some things I am passionate about. I have felt a pull towards literature since childhood, and the written word at time astonishes me. When my SAT scores came back and placed me in the 98th percentile for the reading portion, I suddenly had a strong case for why I ought to pursue English rather than STEM, as I had been doing in high school. I still was not able to picture a definitive future, but ideas about combining my love of writing with my interest in science and my concern for the Environment were forming into some foggy career idea. Perhaps it was not something easily defined, but the need definitely existed. In this way, even though arguably none of us can make a lasting impact considering our entire lifespans are the blink of a cosmic eye, I could potentially do something which would be arguably influential in the other meaningless lives. People are selfish creatures, we consider ourselves all important and incredibly relevant, even though we are very much not. We can see this in innumerable legal cases involving companies and the ways they wronged individuals. I am aware the system is stacked against people, but in the same aspect, when something is so clearly wrong, it is often about providing the information to the masses. An issue that really strikes a chord with me is hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. I am not going into detail about all the issues with it in this paper, but I would see it gone if I could, or at least with greatly increased legislature surrounding it. Perhaps I can, which is what I would love to believe. In the way Rachel Carson wrote Silent Spring to inform people about the dangers of pesticides, I want to be able to use writing to make a difference and maybe just slightly slow the destruction our little blue planet and the lives on it. While it was less Momentum helping me realize this dream and more the 2010 documentary *Gasland*, the Momentum program still helped me to realize it was not impossible for me to make a difference. If people from little Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania can do things with lasting impact and are remembered, then there is not a reason how with some hard work, I could as well. Now, all there is to continue and put in the utmost effort to try and achieve my wildest dreams.

- Aprille Mohn; Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania

We are connected, all of us. Each one of us is an individual built upon certain morals, values, and beliefs. Although we are all connected, our upbringing and foundation differs from person to person. We human beings flourish as flowers do. Flowers rely on sunlight, rain, soil, and nurture to grow. Each component goes into the process of growth for a flower happens to resemble the process of growth for a person. Sunlight can represent happiness and prosperity. Rain can be symbolic for negativity and dullness. The soil and unique foundation of values, beliefs, and morals are what contribute to making you the person who you are today. Imagine being an only child born and raised in one of the most prosperous countries in the world. Sounds great, right? Some people might even call you spoiled. Well if you zoom in on the picture, your perception is bound to change. You will actually see an eighteen-year-old female with a height around five feet tall. Her socioeconomic status is from a low income one. Imagine her skin color as she is of Puerto Rican decent. To top it off, imagine if she wanted to be the first in her family to go to a four-year private college to study medicine. Well, this female you are picturing is me. Society might say I have many “odds” against me. However, I am going to embrace them. Many previous classmates, teachers, and others in authority doubted me. They would doubt a low income Hispanic female could be a physician. Others were doubting my dedication to my true reasoning behind my passion of medicine just because of my appearance and background. No one took the time to truly ask me why or who inspired my future goals. Each doubt or criticism I have received felt as if an imaginary brick was placed around me to build a wall to block me from my dreams. Being one of the only few minorities or the only minority in my classes from kindergarten to senior year gave the many Caucasians more reason to doubt my persistence in continuing my education. I had many people speak about my Hispanic culture and put me under a negative spotlight. Success was something which should be impossible for me to achieve as they knew of all of the “odds” which made me stand out. I was even told various times I only wanted to be a physician for the financial earnings since I came from a low income household. Little did they know my mother actually suffered and to this day suffers with a chronic severe back injury which changed my family’s life forever? Since we could not afford all the medical services, I was the one appointed by the nurses to insert twelve IV injections a day for my mom at home. Her wellbeing was literally in my hands at the age of eight years old. I had this huge responsibility of taking care of my mom while dad went to work. All of this pressure and uninspiring comments have been accumulating over the years towards me have felt as if heavy bricks were stacking upon my shoulders. When there was no more space for them on my shoulders, they started to pile around me and crate huge barriers which wanted to block me from my sunlight. This negativity actually ended up not consuming me but inspiring me to do better. I take all the weight, all those walls, and build a mansion. I have learned to take what has tried to tear me down and let it build me up. Use what is there and build. Challenge yourself. This is why I choose to attend three schools my senior year in order to challenge and enhance my medical knowledge. I was the first in my high school to ever take such courses at a young age. Throughout my senior year, I accumulated twelve college credits while attending three schools and participated in clinical training at Lancaster General Hospital. No one believed I could accomplish this successfully. I not only made an impact on my school’s history but have proved all those stereotypes, negative, or racist comments to be false. The Momentum program has reinforced the idea it is important to continue to tumble down those walls of negativity, ignorance, and oppression. Each one of us has encountered them in some way. No matter your beliefs, moral, or values, we can still come together and appreciate each other. My dream of wanting to become an emergency room doctor and to fulfil my passion of wanting to assist people medically still stands. This program I believe helped remind me and others to not let those walls block the sunlight to let the flower, which you are, grow.

- Veronica Ruiz; Lancaster, Pennsylvania

The selfless act of helping others in need has always been an inspiration for me. In our world where so many live for themselves in their own little bubbles, those selfless acts are even more admirable. Growing up I was the student who wanted to be friends with absolutely everyone. As I began to grow I was exposed to the reality of the world around me. The reality we live in a world where not everyone will be friends or get along. There is hate and judgement surrounding minority groups found everywhere and we see it every day on the news and social media. Events such as Charlottesville or the Pulse shooting, which have affected me on an emotional level. Those events occur because of the lack of education surrounding groups are different than the mass majority. Witnessing these events in our history I slowly began to learn a valuable lesson. The lesson no one will ever be able to achieve meaningful friendships with everyone they meet. Yet, there is no reason why everyone should not try. Yet, there is a glimmer of hope found in peace and friendships inspiring me the most. I have grown up pondering what I could do to enjoy my life and my career yet still spread the message of love and happiness. I still cannot pinpoint my future occupation, but I do know I will do it with passion and all my heart. I will find a way to spread love and inspire as many have inspired me. The more I imagine such a future, the more I think about the kind of impact I will strive to have, an impact making a difference. The kind of difference causing people to perceive others who are not the same as them, as equals. A difference making others be brave enough to be their own person. A future where people will stop, think, and educate themselves instead of continuing to live blind and close-minded to the ever-changing world around them. The key to peace and happiness is educating all based off fact and evidence. This idea drives me to become an educator. Whether it will be in a school setting or in the form of other education, this goal of educating is what I will strive and continue to grow to eventually achieve. Being someone who educates the youth when they are at their most vulnerable and developing state of mind is a great duty to carry. I have been inspired by so many teachers in my life lifting me up and making me the confident individual I am today. This experience itself makes me realize how I want to educate myself and others. Having teachers in my school who have taught me to think for myself and keep my mind open is what has shaped me. I recall having multiple teachers who have inspired me the most. Yet, my high school philosophy teacher, Mr. Rojahn, was the one who inspired me the most. Whether he knows it or not, the ideas he taught me and the conversations I have with him made me become even more of an open minded individual. Teachers like him who are genuine and try to make students feel like they are special, are the ones I believe are to be valued the most. He found a way to connect with each and every one of us to allow us all to get to know him not only as a teacher but as a person himself. I aspire to teach like him, to be as passionate about a subject, yet still instill valuable and real-life lessons in my students. Being part of the Momentum program, this week has also found a way to shape who I have become and who I will grow to be. The opportunity given to me has allowed me to meet with all the other members of Momentum is an opportunity I will treasure in the years to come. Even though we all are found to hold interest in many different majors and subjects, the Momentum program has given us a chance to find a connection. It will be something we all will value as the years continue to push on. The Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors have also given me great insight about my proposed years coming up at Elizabethtown and I will make it a goal to follow in their footsteps in the following years to be part of the program as well. I want to be the inspiration to others and make my own mark on the world around me.

- Savanna Harrison; Dallastown, Pennsylvania

Being a young girl whose parents split up, and never really living with either parent, made it hard for me to get attached. I grew pretty quickly, and became independent at such a young age. I imagined myself growing up not knowing how to love, not knowing what came next for me. I imagined myself forever being lost in my wild thoughts on life. I always asked the question why? Why was my family not like the ones I was surrounded by where their mom and dad were always in the picture, and there for them. The relationship where you can feel the attachment and know it is genuine. I built a wall around myself as I got older, every brick being built with question and frustration. Being a nine-year-old living with their Grandma, but seeing their parents on the weekend, posed the question why was I not able to just be with them? It made me feel unwanted. I never questioned their love for me, but the attachment was gone. Through time and growing I have learned to not dwell on the negative past but work towards a positive future. I have successfully overcome many of obstacles in my life, on my own. I am my own inspiration. Getting through high school without any help from anyone, then transitioning into the college process was stressful and long, since I was doing most of the work on my own. I applied for five colleges, two being my top which was Elizabethtown College and Millersville University. Visiting Elizabethtown College made up my mind for sure. The campus is beautiful, the people are welcoming, and the classes are exactly what I need to further help me reach my goal. I believe Elizabethtown College will help me make a big impact on society in the future. I am intending to major in psychology, and I know Elizabethtown College will help me achieve my goal of teaching lessons to HBCU schools about mental illness and disorders, since so many African Americans place a stigma on getting treated. When I joined this Momentum program I was somewhat anxious. Not knowing if I would fit in or get comfortable. As soon as I got on campus I felt good about my decision, this week has made a great impact on me, I learned so much about the person I am and the person I want to become. The Momentum program has helped me work on patience and communication. The program helps you mature and become more open, and step out of your comfort zone. From this program I can already tell how my college experience at Elizabethtown College will be. Being at Elizabethtown College will help me to “Live without pretending, Love without depending, listen without defending and speak without offending.”

- Gianna Royall; Elkins Park, Pennsylvania

ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

KINESIS

STUDENT REFLECTIVE ESSAYS AUGUST 2017



*Few will have the greatness to bend history itself;
but each of us can work to change a small portion of events,
in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.*

Robert Francis Kennedy (1925-1968)

“It was on the moral side, and in my own person, that I learned to recognize the thorough and primitive duality of man... If each, I told myself, could but be housed in separate identities... the unjust could go his way... and the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path.” This quote from *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, which was featured in the Momentum summer reading assignment Paulo Coelho, *Inspirations: Selections from Classic Literature*, defines a motto I have grown to know as a college student and a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor. The narrator wishes he could separate from himself all which is wrong, imperfect, unjust, or immoral. He realizes, however, this is impossible. Instead, all people are a melting pot of both good and bad, both mistakes and successes, both failures and satisfactions. This realization has recently shaped my entire method of thinking and has inspired me every day. The first-year Momentum students of 2017 have faced many hardships, mistakes, and obstacles. But they are bright, friendly, optimistic, and intelligent. They have stepped beyond tragedy and fear, and now they are gazing into their college years with more excitement than hesitation. My time at Elizabethtown College, especially the past week, has greatly developed my understanding of both myself and others. Not only have I learned how it is perfectly fine to make mistakes of my own (and plenty of them), I have also grown more empathetic. If I am a stirred mix of both good and bad, then it stands to reason so is everyone else, as well? The Momentum program has inspired me to listen to others and critically analyze all points of view, without jumping immediately to my own conclusions. Every time Professor Benowitz provides us with historical context, he reminds us how important it is to question the things we’ve been taught and to critically analyze all situations. This type of thinking inspires the way I imagine my own future. When I do so, I can easily define the simple things I want: a home close to an ocean, a pet dog (or, you know, two or three), an engaging career, meaningful friendships, and so on. However, it is much more difficult to put into words what I hope to accomplish. Throughout my time at Elizabethtown College and beyond, I hope to impact others by helping them to realize how every person is a complex mix of both good and bad, and everyone’s point of view is valid and important. As a Kinesis, I aim to be more than an academic resource. I hope to be a source of empathy and understanding.

- Sam Romberger Class of 2020; Middletown, Pennsylvania

In the blink of an eye, I once again found myself under the white tent in Schlosser Loop, under the sign reading “Welcome Momentum Students.” I silently questioned where the time went, and how a year had passed so quickly. It had felt like just yesterday I was the one stepping out of my car and anxiously walking up to the tent as a first year student, and now I was starting my second year as a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor. This year, the Kinesis team was much different. A majority of the previous members had graduated, and now the amount of sophomore Kinesis surpasses the amount of upper-class students. I was excited to work with this new team, as I had been a part of the group helping the now incoming sophomores. Watching them succeed their first year into becoming Kinesis themselves proved to be extremely rewarding, and this is when it hit me how I have made a difference in each of their lives. My first year as a Kinesis was nerve-racking as all I wanted to do was to make sure I was helping my students. I feared disappointing them, I feared not being good enough, and I feared I could not make an impact. When my students began opening up to me and telling me they wanted to be Kinesis as well, it was as though something had clicked in my head. I was indeed making a difference and impacting not only the students, but the program as well. My Kinesis colleagues and I are constantly inspiring students each and every day just through showing how much we care about their success. This realization gave me the drive and confidence to continue going in order to support others. I entered this year of Momentum with the same nerves, but this time with confidence, passion, and enthusiasm all intertwined. I hope to make the same impression on my students this year as I did last year. All I want to do is help. If I can change the lives of my students, there is absolutely nothing stopping me my junior year of college.

- Olivia Lee Class of 2019; Medford, New Jersey

Everyone in life has a skill in which they excel. Something setting them apart from the crowd. In my time at Elizabethtown College, I discovered my ability to tell stories sets me apart from the crowd. This skill has helped me tremendously not only throughout my time in college, but also as a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor. When I assumed this role three years ago, my goal was to inspire students of all backgrounds to make the most of their four years at Elizabethtown College. This cohort of fifty-eight students reminded me why I enjoy my role as a Kinesis. Hearing the stories of why students chose Elizabethtown College in my Socratic Dialogue sessions was the most meaningful part of the week for me. It has always been the most discerning and important part of Momentum in my opinion because I have the chance to ask students three important questions: Why are you here at Elizabethtown College? Who do you love the most? What impact do you hope to have in your four years here? I could not be more grateful to Professor Benowitz for allowing me to inspire and motivate the last three Momentum cohorts. It is my hope I have changed the life of at least one student. Lastly, I am looking forward to working with the students I have been assigned to help them stay on track and do as well as they possibly can. Thank you for an amazing experience Momentum, and I cannot wait to see what this year has in store for this year’s cohort.

- Jaime Ramos Class of 2018; Reading, Pennsylvania

Last year, I drove past the arch sign over the entrance to Schlosser Loop but I was supposed to drive under and went onto Alpha Drive instead. Even though I started off where I technically was not supposed to go, I ended up in the right place. I anxiously stood in front of a white tent with welcoming people. Professor Benowitz stood there and asked my name in order for me to check in and get my key. When I got my key, I was so excited to start my journey as a Blue Jay. As I went through the Momentum program I got more comfortable with the idea of going to college. Momentum gave me the tools I needed for success. The program teaches you how to become a leader in the campus community, and makes you more prepared than you ever will be when coming to college. The three words *Imagine, Inspire, & Impact* mean more to me now than ever now I am a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor. These three words make me want to put them into action when mentoring the Momentum students. I want the students to imagine the life they always wanted. I want them to be inspired to do amazing things in their community and the world. I hope they can make an impact on at least one person in their life for the better. Those three words make my job as a Kinesis special in many ways. I want to make an unforgettable impression. I took this position to make a difference, and change the lives of the students. The first week of Momentum I saw every student go through a transformation. I saw one student in particular go from a very introverted individual to a social butterfly. This was a big step for the individual because social interaction was a difficult matter to express because of their previous experiences. This made me feel like the Momentum program is doing just what it is supposed to do. For instance, I hear all the time from different Momentum students how the program helped them, and how it is still helping them. As a Kinesis, I learned how even though everyone comes from different walks of life, we all end up making something of ourselves. I hope this program will continue to thrive in the future keeping in mind the three words *Imagine, Inspire, & Impact*.

- Kylar Harvey Class of 2020; Easton, Pennsylvania

As I arrived on campus the second time around for the Momentum program, I was filled with an overwhelming sense of peace, knowing I would be one of the people to help facilitate such a unique pre-orientation program known to consistently create some of the very best students at Elizabethtown College. As a newly hired Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor I was slightly nervous for my first year with a leadership position, since I was just in the first year students' shoes last year, but I was also extremely excited to help the incoming class implement the Momentum motto: *Imagine, Inspire, and Impact* here on campus. Personally, I believe the Momentum program is the reason I excel at Elizabethtown College, and I want to be able to give the incoming class the same type of success. This program has given me the confidence I need to achieve my goals, and I want to inspire others in the same way I was inspired. Sometimes, having someone believe you can do great things is all you need to succeed. When I was a first-year student, my Kinesis was the person who gave me confidence to follow my dreams and achieve for my goals, so I would like to give my mentees the exact same kind of support. I also want to help the students imagine the life they have always dreamed of, not the life people have been forcing them to pursue. There is liberation in following your dreams, and I want everyone to be able to experience it as soon as possible. This program has allowed me to personally connect with the students, which has given me the platform to inspire them to do their absolute best in college. My first year as a Kinesis has been a rewarding experience, and I would participate in this program every year for the rest of my life if it was possible. Being a Kinesis was a wonderful experience and has allowed me to see everything in a more understanding way. The Momentum program gave me the opportunity to personally impact 58 students' lives in a positive way they will remember for the rest of their lives. I hope to take the energy from this week and continue it throughout the rest of the academic school year while teaching others to imagine, inspire, and impact every second of the day.

- Lacie Flores; Port Deposit, MD

This week has been a tremendous experience. I did not expect to feel so connected with my cohorts and the students. It was hard to imagine how two years ago I was part of them and trying to figure how to handle college. I remembered the anxieties I felt before I stepped foot onto the campus. Since my first year Momentum advising, I have been looking for opportunities to give back to the school and honor our motto "Educate for Service." My father and brother, the two main figures of why I came to college, have inspired me to become who I am today. They told me to "Enjoy life," despite all the difficulties it proposes and figures out what I am and what I want to do. The Momentum program gave me this opportunity to be a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor which allows me to impact those students and help them figure out what they need and what they want. Through the first week, I gained a new understanding of myself through the film of "The Motel," a film about Asian-Americans. It helped me reflect on my past and it helps me understand what differences I bring into the Kinesis team. Most importantly, I realized acceptance is the key to figuring out yourself. I am Wei and that is me.

- Hui Wei Liu Class of 2019; Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Momentum is a driving force whether it be as a Kinesis or a student this is my second year working as a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor for the Momentum program. I feel so blessed to have the opportunity to help a group of incoming first year students make the most of being in the Momentum program and Elizabethtown College; the same support I was given during my time in the program my first year. Putting on the maroon and gold polo comes with huge responsibility and the Momentum students see we are there to aid them in making their college experience a success. The students rely on us to help make their transition into college easier because we have been through the program ourselves. Each year, I look at the new group of Momentum students and I can recall how I felt my first year; the feeling of nervousness, being scared and anxious, and not knowing what the next four years in college would hold for me, but Professor Benowitz, the Kinesis, and the friends I made in the program helped me put those emotions at ease, assuring me how they were there for me and your college experience is what you make it to be. During the week, we have the students think about three words; Imagine, Inspire, and Impact. I can remember two years ago coming into the Momentum program and thinking about these words myself. How I imagine the life I was born to live, who and what inspires me, and what impact am I going to make on Elizabethtown College. I imagine my life centered on helping people, and being a Kinesis has provided me to do so. I can help the students organize their assignments, find the best study habits, help them to find a solution to any problem they might encounter, and help them to maintain good grades. These students inspired me this week by the way they were absorbing so much information on the walking tours, the sessions with the faculty, and with the Kinesis. I truly enjoyed watching the way these students built strong friendships with one another in such a short amount of time. As well as the way they were not afraid to ask so many questions, which was their way of showing us their desire to do well. The impact I can make on Elizabethtown College by being a Kinesis is through my encouragement to the students in telling them to do their best and helping them discover what they can do for the college after being in the Momentum program. Being a Kinesis has been an enlightening experience for me because it has helped me work on my social and my leadership skills. I could not imagine my college life if I was not in the Momentum program my first year. The impact this program has made on me has encouraged and inspired to me to become a Kinesis to the incoming students.

- Mikenna Lehane Class of 2019; Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania

The three words Imagine, Inspire, and Impact have become such famous words in the Momentum program. I remember so clearly experiencing Momentum just a year ago. During each session, a professor would share what they are most passionate about among the students. Last year watching the Kinesis inspired to me to want to become a Kinesis during my time here at Elizabethtown College. I want to inspire other students throughout their first year of college; I want to impact their lives for the better, and I want to help them imagine their bright futures. As a future educator helping students brings joy to my life. My experience as a Kinesis during Momentum week affected my life significantly. Being a leader gives me a different outlook on my life, and knowing I am helping other students is fulfilling. At the luncheon picnic on move in day, I sat with a family. The student's father was extremely proud and excited for his son to begin his college experience. You could tell the father loved his son very much, and I felt now the parents were trusting me to take care of their student. I feel it is my responsibility to guide students throughout their first year here on campus. During the daily reading group discussions I led based on our summer reading assignment Paulo Coelho, Inspirations: Selections from Classic Literature, I came to realize some so many students go through so much in their lives. I shared my past experiences which included struggles with my family and school. My goal is to let students know how being here at Elizabethtown College will allow them to start fresh and find their true selves. I told each student they are incredibly special and you are here at Elizabethtown College for a reason. Over the next academic school year, I cannot wait to see how much the incoming class of Momentum students grow and succeed. The class of 2021 Momentum students became a family regardless of what struggles or successes they had in the past. Steve Jobs once said, "The ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are ones that do." I believe Momentum students not only change our campus but also our world. Momentum will last a life time; the memories will live in us in college and beyond.

- Joseph Santos Class of 2020; Southampton, Pennsylvania

I have been inspired beyond my imagination. Coming back to the Momentum program, I have been inspired not only by the faculty and staff but also by the incoming class of 2021. As a rising sophomore, I have been honored to hear students stories, to understand their struggles, and watch them explore new friendships and bonds. One thing inspiring me as a Kinesis this year was Professor Benowitz reminding the students each morning to have an open mind and open heart, and this is “when you find your passion, the money will follow.” Personally, I have forgotten to follow my passion during the second semester of my first year. I have heard family members and my peers to follow the job market, and how happiness is something which could be gained. But hearing those words again has electrified the passion in my heart, and reminded me why I chose Elizabethtown College and to be part of the Momentum program. Not only to search for my impact but to also imagine and to be inspired. The Momentum program has pushed me academically but also made me believe in my capability as a human being; I have personally battled with anxiety and depression, and I never had the skill to open up about myself to others. But because of the Momentum program, I have met individuals reassuring me to be myself, to let go of the past, and have a positive attitude about life. Those people currently count as my part of my family. My Kinesis, Ariel Davis-Robinson, was not only an advisor to me, but she has been an inspiration and a personal icon, and I inspire to walk in her foot steps. I believe my journey has only begun in Elizabethtown College, I am inspired by our college motto “Educate for Service,” and I aspire to leave my mark on our beloved campus, and as Kira, our Kinesis Captain, said throughout the week “to leave it better than we found it.”

- Moh Mohammad Class of 2020; Lancaster, Pennsylvania

At a young age I never thought I would be helping others navigate the path ahead. I mean how could I? I could barely navigate my own path. I never thought I would lose sixty pounds, or become a United States Marine. Incredibly through hard work and motivation I persevered. This week has become more than an experience. It has become a memory, a memory of the first time I would lead and mentor others. For this was the time in which I would put forth my own knowledge and experience to inspire others. Somehow helping my students discern and plan their future gave me a clear view of what I could offer others. Taking the time to get to know each student, learning each one of their names so a foundation could be built. This first week was hard for many students. Naturally they were shy and nervous at first about a college lifestyle. But in the grand scheme of things I was once in their shoes and I overcame feelings of uncertainty. So throughout the course of the Momentum program I was able to speak with many of the students from the position of a mentor and use my words to guide them. It was easy to see the confidence build in the students as we progressed through the week. When they were assigned to a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor it gave me the ability to go even more in depth into their backgrounds and personal lives. I am grateful for being a part of the program because it gave me the chance to bond with other students and learn how we had many attributes in common while honing my skills in mentoring, public speaking, and becoming more people oriented.

- Francis Coster Class of 2020; Baltimore, Maryland

Imagine being in a place where 58 strangers must coexist for a week between the hours of 7 AM and 11 PM. You are one of thirteen student leaders introducing all of these newly semi-independent adults to the new hurdle they are about to face: college. These strangers come from different socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, continents, and other astoundingly contrasting situations. The only thing they seemingly have in common is how they all chose Elizabethtown College. Being the extrovert I am, I was excited, and meeting all 58 of these new individuals was my reality. The Reverend Tracy Wenger Sadd read us a passage from the Tao Di Chang: "Respect and love where you dwell." In my first moments as a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor, this was easy. Learning new names, faces, and taking in new knowledge are all things I love to do. As a Kinesis, meeting these new people, my goal was to help the students relate to one another in ways they may never have considered. Little did I know, this journey would turn the goal into introspection? As I sat through the sessions with the students, I constantly considered my purpose and how I can learn from others as they learn from me. It is my honest belief how the students taught me more about myself than I could have imagined. They taught me how much likeness there is in our differences. They taught me about the shared commonality we all have simply because we are human beings cohabiting the same planet. This gives me a new mindset as I go into classes. I should look for many more similarities than differences. No matter if I am dealing with academic disciplines, people, historical landmarks, I must consider how these are alike and how they impact me as an intellectual and as a human being.

- Lauren Shakes Class of 2020; Randallstown, Maryland

“To find yourself, think for yourself,” is a quote by Socrates embodying what the Momentum program means to me. When In Momentum last year, I remember the life changing walks of knowledge through the college campus inspiring me to go against the odds; against the accepted norm. From there, I joined many clubs on campus, advocated for the voices of those silenced, and I became a member on a panel filled with professionals. During this time I was considered one of the leaders on campus but I personally did not believe it. So what if people knew my name, this does not mean I did anything of substance. I wanted to inspire others like I was inspired: push people out of their little hermit like shells. In order to do so, I applied to be a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor in the Momentum program. Working with the students during the Momentum program cemented my need to impact the community and those around me. I watched each student grow into a strong individual: physically and mentally. No one at the end of the week felt the same as they did on day one for each had found an inner perseverance they did not believe existed. During the daily reading group discussions I led based on our summer reading assignment Paulo Coelho, Inspirations: Selections from Classic Literature, I watched as the students dug deep into themselves and laid themselves out bare, not for any form of pity but understanding and I feel as if I inspired those in my sessions by sharing my story and the growth I achieved during Momentum. As the days slowly turn to weeks, I imagine the students I am now mentoring becoming leaders not only on campus but in the surrounding community. I imagine them taking a piece of themselves and using it as a building block stabilizing the foundation of their class and their generation. As a Kinesis I hope I continue to give them a piece of my gravel to add to their bricks and soon become this words fortress.

- Pleasant Sprinkle-Williams Class of 2020; Orlando, Florida

This year was different. The group was larger, the stakes were higher, and I was Kinesis Captain. I could feel the thrill of my own expectations exhilarate every nerve in my body. The night before the kick-off day of the Momentum program, I could not sleep. I kept asking myself, “Am I ready for this?” Can I live up to standards set by my predecessors? I wanted the students to have the greatest experience of their lives. I wanted the new Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors to grow as impactful leaders. I wanted to make Professor Benowitz proud. This year, the program challenged me to grow as a manager, a position I aim to achieve in the business world in the future. On day one, I already began making quick decisions, adapting to new and unexpected situations. When problems arose, I did not focus on the problem itself, but rather, I focused on the solution. I constantly answered questions asked by the Kinesis team and the students. I delegated tasks and worked to make the program run as smoothly as possible. From dusk to dawn my mind was always thinking, and I loved it. The biggest challenge for me as Kinesis Captain, however, was finding a balance between managing the Kinesis and personally impacting the students. In this aspect, I know I exceeded my expectations. By day three, I already had some students talk to me about the impact the Momentum program has had on them and how I helped make it happen. Many students felt like they could comfortably talk and be themselves around me. At the same time, they saw me as a leader, a role model. The students and the program made this year the best experience of my life. I have never felt so empowered. I have never felt more like a leader with a means of making a difference in others’ lives. I am grateful to Professor Benowitz for giving me this opportunity, and I cannot wait to see what is in store for the rest of the year.

- Kira Kuhar Class of 2019; Merchantville, New Jersey