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Part 1: Anonymized Stories

#1:

[Student] recognized a problem at her high school and quickly came up with a solution. As a new driver she realized that there was a clear safety issue with younger children trying to safely get to their parents in a car line during dismissal. She took initiative to come up with a plan, recruiting older students to take shifts throughout the school year to assist with dismissal and walk young students to their parents' cars. This led to a significantly safer environment for students, teachers, and parents.

In this instance, i observed the following:

1- [Student] is a fixer– she is quick to recognize issues that need to be addressed and thoughtful in the way she comes up with solutions. She is not a fan of insufficiency. She likes to fix problems and then move on to the next project. She comes up with ideas, discusses with others, and then implements solutions.

2-[Student] is persistent. She had to reach out to school administrators a few times before they found time to meet with her and listen to her proposal. She is not one to take no for an answer when she feels strongly about something.

3- [Student] found ways to motivate and bring out the best in others, rallying other students to participate and give back to the school. Her personality is such that others are drawn to her. She is well spoken, and can articulate ideas well to others in a way that drums up enthusiasm and willingness to participate.

4-[Student] got frustrated with a few students who were not willing to help or who said they would but then did not follow through. In instances such as this, her natural inclination when others are not giving 100% is to say “well i guess i will just do their work too”. Her fellow students know her as the person who will pick up their slack, as that is just her nature. Long term, in a leadership role, this will lead to burn out, so finding ways to hold others accountable will be important.

#2:

[Student] is a strong leader who always has the best interest of her peers, friends, family, and community in mind. [Student] will fight for what is right and good. [Student] will always defend the truth. [Student] speaks up and uses her voice for those who do not have a voice.

I have known [Student] for twelve years and I have never seen her think about herself. She is always thinking about ways she can love and support those around her. She pours all she has into her relationships and community and ensures everyone in her presence knows they are valued and loved. I have watched [Student] drop everything she is doing to be there for her friends.

One day, during our Senior year of high school. I had a panic attack in between classes. Instead of giving me a quick hug and moving on to her next class, [Student] sat in the hallway comforting me. She missed nearly half of her next class because she did not leave until she was sure I was okay. [Student] did not care that she was going to have to make up what she missed in class and catch up — she only cared that I was okay. [Student] will drop everything for those whom she loves.

[Student] served as Vice President of our high school, senior year. At the time, the student body president, was a student who often times brought a negative attitude. [Student] stepped up, and worked so hard behind the scenes to pull off many different events and help the student body feel united and seen. [Student] was patient and bold.

[Student] and I had played volleyball together and been on the same team for many years. Senior year of high school, our coach gave [Student] little to no playing time; she spend the whole season on the bench. Nobody wants to go to hours of practice everyday for months and never step foot on the court during a game. Yet [Student] did so with a smile. She was patient and kind. She never got frustrated and she spent the whole season cheering her teammates on. She wanted her team to know she always had their back, even if it did not benefit her.

These are just a few stories from growing up with [Student] that reveal that [Student] is a strong, confident, patient leader. She is the kind of person you always want to have in your corner because she will love and support you. [Student] had a heart of gold with pure intentions and simply wants those around her to feel known and seen. It is an honor and privilege to know [Student] and be a part of her life

#3:

[Student] did everything possible to make her high school days memorable, productive and important: she has served others tirelessly and in innovative ways (that she dreamed up), played sports at a high (state champion) level, raised money for a great cause, traveled and embraced people whom others might overlook and taken and conquered the hardest classes Asheville Christian Academy can offer. Indeed, I believe that when you weigh [Student] spirit, work ethic, determination to serve others, maturity, intelligence, and sense of adventure, she will emerge as precisely the kind of young person your program hopes to promote.

I taught [Student] in Ancient Literature during her 9th grade year, and I taught her again during her Junior year in Advanced Placement Language and Composition / American Literature.

[Student] has the characteristics that I most treasure in a student. First, she has an active, clever, quick mind – she is funny and ‘gets’ everything; sometimes, students with profound natural intellectual gifts assume they can coast on those talents. But, instead, [Student] engages with every idea, reading assignment and challenge she encounters in my class. Her love of learning

meets an iron-clad work ethic: she prepares meticulously for every task, and that lets her voice help shape each class discussion we have. These are profound conversations: very smart students contemplating feminism in *The Awakening*, Emerson's new religion in "Nature," Ralph Ellison's presentation of racism in *Invisible Man*. I'm not trying to sell you on my class: I am hoping to explain the compassion, maturity and depth which marks every effort [Student] made in my class. Contemplative and hopeful, committed to a high standard of conduct to which she holds herself yet slow to judge, friendly and funny, welcoming and inclusive, she will thrive in any position, classroom, field of study or social setting in which she finds herself.

Evidence of [Student] desire to serve – and sharpness in finding a concrete means of serving – came during the Spring of 2021 as she spear-headed a new program by our chapter of the National Honor Society (of which she is the Treasurer): students whom she recruited and organized took turns helping with the after-school dismissal effort, directing cars as parents pick up their children (we're a K-12 school; most kids don't drive themselves). As a teacher who has had that assignment many times and wished I could be grading essays or something else instead, I can say how welcome that student initiative was. Likewise, she tackles each assignment with an energy and attitude that creates camaraderie and forward movement.

Perhaps most notably, [Student] worked as the Special Projects Chairperson of the Asheville Symphonettes, which seeks to promote classical music locally, and created an initiative that raised over \$8000 for the local Symphony; classical arts often struggle financially, and did so greatly in a year when they could not perform for live audiences. This remarkable foresight and drive offer some insight into [Student] dynamic and selfless personality.

It is a rare (now!) nineteen-year old who sees the problems that other people are having ... and then creates a solution!

[Student] immerses herself in as many opportunities as she can to serve, play, experience: she played on our state-championship winning volleyball team (Go Lions!) and ran track, and she coaches younger players in a school youth-development volleyball program. She tutored younger students in math and even found time to serve as a 'homework helper' at an Elementary School in Asheville. And she has managed to hold a paying job outside of school ... somehow. I assume the shifts she works must be from midnight to 3 A. M. – I don't know when else she could work. Maybe she's a night watchwoman or a cat burglar.

[Student] loves to travel and discover and clearly has pursued every chance available to better herself and help others – such as on a mission trip to Ecuador. I believe her history at Asheville Christian Academy and beyond prove her to be worthy of serious consideration for your – or any – university. In my AP class, [Student] became our de facto timekeeper and my minder: most days, she reminded me to pass this out, collect that, be aware that the bell was about to ring, etc. (yes, I'm old). She is a great person to have around: she makes things happen, she inspires others by working and leading from the front, she wants to serve and embrace other people; when she was injured during track season, she was at the meets, encouraging and yelling at teammates to run faster, jump farther. I cannot recommend a person more highly as a scholar, leader, pal,

seeker of good deeds to do, encourager, person who will find someone who needs a hug from a friend.

#4:

First this is a very difficult assignment because you have SO many wonderful and strong character strengths that make you a leader (aside from being very beautiful and extremely intelligent...). I could easily list ten but stopped at four.

Positive Attitude/Emotional Intelligence/Self-Awareness (wasn't sure how to categorize it):

Your positive attitude with work or play puts you in situations where you are open to meeting new people and addressing any challenge in front of you head on without hesitation. You are open minded and curious to meet new people and do new things. You are always the first one of your peers to reach out to others in an awkwardly new or uncomfortable setting and have the self-awareness to understand a situation and address it accordingly. You show a genuine interest and as they say are "present" in the person you are speaking with whether a long-time friend or brand new acquaintance. Your big smile and playful nature immediately put people at ease and are disarming when you are speaking with them. You always have a positive attitude which is really impressive.

Mental toughness & Courage: I remember when you were about two years old and did a backflip while taking a bath and landed on your head... I was very concerned not only for your health but mine after what your mother would do to me for not "keeping a closer eye on you"... you came up from the water with a big smile on your face laughing and I knew at that point you were one tough cookie. This trait of your has been played out in many instances over the years with running track and tripping over a few hurdles (literally...) coming up laughing... and playing through all kinds of pain with ankle issues on the volleyball court. You are mentally tough and have the courage to forge ahead in a hard situation and do it with a smile on your face when others would crumble. People look up to and follow you as a person that keeps going when things get difficult.

Bandwidth & Accountability: Your ability to do so many things and do them so well is impressive – you have great bandwidth to juggle many things, keep them all on the front burner, and do them all so very well. When I looked at your resume' and applications for different scholarships and internships, I was blown away with how much you had on there for how young you are... and you continue to add impressive items to the list both with your list of accomplishments in school, a new sorority, young life leadership, internship and study in London this summer along with everything else you have done over the past year. This is also one of those positive-negatives so to speak. Maybe you try to do too much!

Compassion & Conviction: Lastly (and not least), your steadfast pursuit of the Lord and willingness to spread the word both in high school with study groups and now in college through Young Life leading a local high school group is inspirational to me. You are unabashed in your faith and I am very proud of you.

Part 2: Summary Table

Common Themes	Examples Given	Possible Interpretation
People Oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I am the first one of my peers to reach out to others in awkward or uncomfortable settings. -I embrace people whom others might overlook. -I show genuine interest and am “present” with people whether they are a longtime friend or new acquaintance -I immerse myself in many opportunities to serve as a coach, tutor, and homework helper. -I am a person who will find someone who needs a hug from a friend. -I have a big smile and playful nature that tends to put people at ease and disarm them. -I speak up and use my voice for those who do not have a voice. -I was a source of comfort for a friend in the midst of a panic attack despite having class. 	I am at my best when I ensure that the people around me feel celebrated, seen, and loved.
Creative/ Innovative Problem Solver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I saw a huge issue at my high school and worked to implement a solution. -I was my teachers “du facto timekeeper and minder”. -I created an initiative that raised \$8000 for symphony during the heart of COVID -sees a problem that people are having and fixes it -My sorority sisters were having a hard time keeping up with all the information thrown at them, so I started making a weekly newsletter to compile information. 	When I see an issue or challenge, I attack it head on without hesitation. By making the world a better place I gain a sense of satisfaction, fulfillment, and joy.

	-I planned out every detail from breakfast to daily walks to sightseeing for my trip abroad to make the most of my time.	
Courageous/ Positive attitude	-I did a backflip and landed on my head when I was two years old and popped up smiling. -I was often injured during track season in high school but I continued encouraging, cheering for, and leading my team. -I have an appetite for life. -I took 17 hours of class this past semester and was drowning in schoolwork yet remaining positive and prioritized finding joy in the mundane despite the difficulty of the situation. -Despite being a benchwarmer my senior year of high school, I worked hard and showed up to practices and games with a smile to support and cheer on my teammates.	I have an unwavering sense of energy and enthusiasm even amidst hardships. My natural tendency is to encourage others to have that same zeal by word and example.
Driven/Persistent	-I steadfastly pursue my faith and encourage others to do the same. -I continually reached out to school administrators again and again before they agreed to my proposal for the implementation of a new school organization. -I have taken and conquered the highest caliber of academic courses. -I prepare meticulously for every task. -I engage with every idea and have an active, clever, and quick-mind. -As Vice President, I worked patiently behind the scenes to seamlessly execute events despite minimal leadership from our president.	I have high expectations for myself, whether in work and leisure. I pursue excellence in all that I do.

Part 3: Summary Statement

I am at my best when I ensure that the people around me feel celebrated, seen, and loved. I am a people person at heart and I care deeply about the thoughts and emotions of others. This makes me instinctively empathetic and comforting. I seem to naturally assure that other people are recognized by seeking out those who are overlooked and marginalized. I speak up for those

who do not have a voice. I am intentional and go out of my way to check on others. I am the first to greet one with a hug and a warm smile whether they are a friend or an acquaintance. My playful nature is coupled with a genuine interest in those whom I am interacting with, and I remain engaged especially when people are talking about things that they are passionate about. I am easily excited by the interests and joys of others which tends to make one feel appreciated. Due to my selfless nature, I find peace when I am confident that those around me feel valued. I act on this desire, to ensure that those around me feel appreciated, by immersing myself in countless opportunities to serve others.

When I see an issue or face a challenge, I attack it head on. I am a problem solver. By making the world a better place I gain a sense of fulfillment and joy. I have the self-awareness necessary to see the faults of a situation at hand and address it by coming up with potential ideas, discussing possibilities with others, and then working to implement solutions. I work relentlessly until the problem at hand is resolved. I am creative and innovative in the sense that I craft unique alternatives to solve unconventional issues, especially during difficult times such as COVID. I like for things to be quite organized, and I veer away from insufficiency. Thus I tend to take initiative to make things happen whether in the workplace, in social settings, in the academic sphere, or in my personal life. Despite the self-sacrifice associated with this quality I seem to be satisfied when the problems around me are resolved.

I tackle life with a positive attitude that casually creates camaraderie and forward movement. I am outspoken and my voice shapes profound conversations and discussions. I have an appetite for life and am always wanting to do more and experience more. I thrive when I am busy and productive. Even when I am already overwhelmed with what is on my plate, I push on with cheerfulness and find joy and motivation in the mundane. Even when I am busy or experiencing hardships, I have an unwavering sense of energy and enthusiasm. I do not dwell on the disappointment at hand, rather I push forward with a smile on my face. My natural tendency, even when I experience frustration, is to encourage others, by word and example, to have a lovely zeal for life. People look up to me and follow me as a person who is courageous and keeps going even when things do not go how they are expected.

Whether in work or in leisure, I have a deep desire to succeed, so I pursue excellence in all that I do. I have very high expectations for myself, and I know that I am capable of achieving anything that I set my mind to. I am one that loves the satisfaction and growth that comes about as a result of various accomplishments. Each time that I find myself in an uncomfortable or difficult situation, my drive and motivation allows for personal growth and further accomplishment of my goals. As a result of my driven personality, I prepare meticulously for every task at hand. This allows me to curb any stress I may have. When others fail to give something 100% I am quick to take on their work and pick up any slack. I am mentally tough and tend to view failure or setbacks as motivation rather than defeat. I am persistent and consistent, unafraid to fight for the things that I believe in or feel strongly about.

Part 4: Leadership Style

Leadership styles and techniques vary amidst different individuals. We all are inclined to act or be motivated in different ways, and this wide variety of leadership dispositions can be incredibly beneficial as different kinds of leaders perform best in different situations. Having identified my passion for people and my strengths that ensure that others feel celebrated, loved and seen in every circumstance, I would categorize myself as a servant leader. Servant leaders tend to be focused primarily on others, and they often make decisions that have benefits beyond their own self interest (Greenleaf, 1977; Peterson et al., 2012). I naturally observe the needs of others and am quick to act in ways that serve them well. As a leader, it is important for me to show kindness and compassion as well as other qualities of servitude towards team members and subordinates. As a servant leader, I am quick to be understanding and empathetic. As I deeply understand the feelings of others, they naturally feel encouraged and cared for. I prioritize the needs of others and empower them to take ownership of their work. This fosters an environment of collaboration where all ideas are valued and often integrated. These actions, along with many others, create a sense of psychological safety amidst a team. This often leads to higher employee satisfaction and naturally constructs an inclusive and safe environment that is optimal for growth, innovation, collaboration and productivity. My actions of servant leadership are a natural result of my prosocial motivation (Batson, 1987). I find intrinsic satisfaction and fulfillment in helping and serving others, so I have a relatively constant desire to do so. Additionally, my empathetic nature results in a rare ability to deeply feel the experiences and emotions of others. I feel a sense of responsibility to ensure that my community is well cared for, appreciated, and loved even when there are minimal benefits to myself. This is a reflection of many of my values, which naturally tend to manifest themselves through my servant leadership as I act in unselfish ways that are beneficial to the well-being of others.

Based on the common themes that were prominent in my self-portrait, it is clear that I am motivated by my strong internal locus of control (Deci, 1971; Deci & Ryan, 1980). I believe that I have the ability to control the majority of events in my life and that my success is driven by my own dedication and hard work. This is beneficial as a leader because I am quick to take personal initiative, do not hesitate to take on any responsibility and am proactive in the way that I go about accomplishing things. As a leader, you must guide your team in how to go about a task at hand and set a pace at which it should be completed. By setting such goals, I, as a leader, can guide my team to be more productive, focused, and determined. This also manifests itself in my leadership as I am naturally a persistent problem solver who is quick to take initiative. These actions are crucial to ensuring that the atmosphere, in a group setting, is proactive and that opportunities are quickly identified and acted upon. Additionally, as a leader with an internal locus of control, studies have shown that I am more inclined to be optimistic and have more positive outlooks, and coping strategies (Gillette, 2022). In a group setting, this energy, or tendency, to be confident and cheerful is often contagious and ultimately creates a company culture that is optimal for success. As a leader I can use my positivity to my advantage by working to increase morale and motivate team members while ensuring that they each feel supported, valued, and cared for.

Finally, when looking at The Big Five personality traits, my analysis above, in accordance with my test, has revealed that I have high levels of conscientiousness and extraversion (Costa & McCraw, 1987). As an extravert, I tend to be personable, energetic, and assertive. These qualities will serve me well as a leader for a variety of reasons. First, as a result of my outgoing nature and ability to connect with others well, I excel at building relationships with my team. This often leads to an environment that thrives in the realm of communication and conflict resolution. Additionally, in an atmosphere such as this, team members feel comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions which results in a more successful company as well as higher employee satisfaction. Collaboration is crucial in any team, and extraverts tend to naturally do this well by facilitating teamwork through verbally discussing ideas with others. Additionally, as an extravert I appear as a confident leader which often leads to relationships that are built on trust. Subsequently, this allows me, as a leader, to be a respite for encouragement or assurance during uncertain times. Furthermore, as an extravert I tend to be at ease in high stake situations which gives me an advantage in a variety of situations that involve public speaking, crisis management, employee recruitment, or company promotion. Moreover, my high levels of conscientiousness lead me to be dependable, organized, and responsible. As a leader this can be beneficial because I pay close attention to detail and manage my time well. These actions are not only beneficial to myself but can be an example for my team as I work to effectively execute the tasks that are at hand. My strong work ethic and desire to pursue excellence in all that I do rarely go unnoticed and serve as an example of the high standard that I set for myself and inspire my team to emulate.