

Wartburg College Leadership Certification Program Portfolio Contents

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Service Requirement Student

Senate Reflection

The terms leadership and service are often used together in many circumstances without even a thought as to why. However, the truth is that these two characteristics that a person possesses are tied very close together and can be a huge benefit to a person when in charge of an organization or group.

According to Robert K. Greenleaf, the difference between just a leader and a servant leader is that the servant leader creates opportunities and alternatives in which the individuals of society can choose and build their future. With my experience being involved with Student Senate as both Recorder and Student Body President, I was able to learn and experience many different leadership styles, lessons and success stories that will only help me improve on my service and leadership to others.

When I became Recorder my sophomore year, I was so excited and ready to do anything. I had great leadership on the executive team to learn from and I was ready to take on the world. With that position I learned about organization, time management, interpersonal communication between both Senators and the college administration and motivation to recognize improvements and try to change them with hard work and research. The one thing I realize that I did not gain from this experience was actually how to build up leaders and grow a healthy team environment in your organization.

Now, just finishing my senior year and duties as Student Body President I have trouble putting into words all that I have learned about serving others in leadership. I hope to use these new found lessons learned to improve and impact

Beginning back in the summer of 2003, I was very nervous about my role as Student Body President. I prayed a lot and asked for God to keep me humble with all the authoritative roles that I would be playing in. The corruption of power that so many leaders let themselves fall into is something that I pray I never possess. As I headed into the school year I was excited and confident, but of course you can never know what you will encounter throughout your lifetime.

Since I play soccer, the first semester was very busy. I had learned all about time management in previous years of my life, but it still was an issue at times during that first semester because most days no matter how well you plan; there is never enough time

when you are overloaded! One huge quality that I learned and used was delegation. My vice-president was amazing and did a lot of things that I could not do because of soccer practice and trying to get my homework done. Delegation was something that I did not learn about in any of my previous years of service in student government, simply because our president at the time liked to do many things himself or with one other colleague. This of course was a huge reason why I desired so strongly to rise up and build great leaders on this campus especially through delegation for them to learn.

A huge part of leadership is communication. Since the Student Body President is a representative to the faculty, administration and staff of the college there is obviously a large need for communication between the two parties. This was one area I became frustrated with in many different circumstances because I felt that many times the college was not listening to the students and sometimes not keeping their best interests in mind. I became frustrated with the politics involved and presenting issues that needed to be fixed, but instead they were usually listened too and then ignored and pushed aside. I still feel

somewhat this way today as I graduate, but I have learned more how to try and figure a way to problem solve and try and work for a compromise. I believe that truth and perseverance prevail. As I head out into the workplace I will continue to live by this motto and stay motivated for change. For it is said, the only thing that is constant in life is change.

Another important part of service that I learned was how to work and accomplish tasks with people that you may be very different from in beliefs and opinions. My vice-president and I were very different in ways such as faith and politics, but we both possessed the desire to change and improve our society through hard work, teamwork and communication. When we would have disagreements and or feel very strongly about something but on different ends, we would at first not talk and then after a few days confront the issue and work the problem out. I have learned that in order to work well with others you must be able to be confident enough in yourself and your beliefs so that you can listen to others and see where they are coming from. Listening is a huge thing in our society that we do not do. I will say it again; listening is a very important characteristic that leaders must possess. If you go into a discussion with an open mind, but also strong in your beliefs you almost always come out with a compromise a majority of the time.

Finally, I believe that the most important thing that a leader can do is remember that he or she is there to serve his "followers" and love them throughout everything that happens in this world. As Chuck Swindoll says, "I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it. And, so it is with you... We are in charge of our attitudes."

In conclusion, throughout my service to Wartburg in many organizations not only Senate, I have learned that leadership means choosing my attitude, listening, time management, delegation, knowing myself, and most importantly serving others in love.