

2016 Peace Scholarship

Climate change and warfare are contributing to areas of the world becoming uninhabitable. In Syria alone, there is a humanitarian crisis, people are suffering. Many people do not even know what is going on in the Middle East, and Syria is one of the most important areas. It could be considered the Middle East's core, and if it becomes weak and destabilized, then the violence in Syria could spill over and infect Iraq. The United States just recently, in December 2011, finished a war with Iraq. There are plenty of other countries surrounding Syria that could just as easily be affected by the violence in a horrifying way. If the United States were to end up in a war with Iraq, or any other country for that matter, the economy would take a major plunge. The war with Iraq cost the United States an estimated \$1 trillion.

In the United States, there is evidence that climate change is starting to cause similar problems. There has been a major increase in natural disasters including: forest fires, hurricanes, water wells drying up, tornadoes, etc. Many people ignore this as if it is nothing, but the next generation will be affected by heat waves, floods, droughts, and forest fires. It will be "normal" for these occurrences. Natural disasters have been steadily increasing; in 1970, there were only 78 disasters, and in 2004, there were 348. That number has continued to increase since that year, and it will continue to increase if nobody makes a change. We, as a society, need to stop putting carbon in the air, and repower with renewable energy such as solar and wind power.

Most 18-year-olds do not have a desire to help with something this large and widespread in our society, but I do. It is not only affecting the climate, but also the biodiversity. Loss of the Arctic sea glaciers threatens biodiversity across an entire biome, and that is just the beginning. Ecosystems depend on a constant atmosphere, and when they begin to change rapidly, it does not give the organisms time to adapt to the changes. If an organism cannot adapt to a change, they will die off, and there will be no next generation. If these changes continue to happen, more and

more species of animals will become extinct. This affects humans because it changes the food chain on which we all depend on.

Society needs to know what is happening, and how quickly it is coming upon us. Most of the next generation will experience major changes in the atmosphere that the current generation is already experiencing. Simple changes can be made: instead of driving two blocks down the road to go to the grocery store, walk those two blocks. If everyone would make a few simple changes around their houses, and in their lives, it would make a major difference.

My plan to help resolve these crises does not include enlisting in the military. Instead, I plan on becoming an environmentalist lawyer. Sustainability has become a global priority, and society needs lawyers who can advise clients on green standards, and alternative energy sources. They need to have knowledge of environmental laws and how they define the activities of humans upon both the geological and biological systems that are affected by contact. This is something that I strive for because environmental lawyers advocate for development in the policy and law of environment.

I have always had an immense love of helping, and caring for others; which is why I think it will be beneficial to become an environmentalist lawyer. Climate change will not only affect the current generation, but all the rest to come, and I want to make sure that the future generations can live a life like I did, without as many natural disasters. Fixing all the issues that the earth has endured these past few years will not be the task of just one individual. It will take the effort of many people who all care about society, and the environment as much as I do. I hope that years from now, I can look back at my life and feel accomplished from all that I have done to keep the peace, as well as help the environment in ways that nobody thought a young adult my age could accomplish.

When I was growing up, my mom would always tell me the Parable of the Starfish. The story goes that a young boy was walking along a beach that had thousands of beached starfish on it. As he was walking, he picked up one starfish at a time and returned it to the ocean. An elderly man came along and asked him what he was doing. The little boy replied that he was saving the starfish. The elderly man laughed and said, "There are thousands of starfish. You can't possibly make a difference for all of them!" The little boy then picked up a single starfish, put it into the ocean, and responded, "I made a difference for that one." I always loved this story because it emphasizes the importance of making a difference, no matter how small. When I look at all the issues that the world is facing today, such as warfare, lack of resources, refugee crises, and climate change, I often feel overwhelmed. After all, how can I, a single person on this massive planet, help to solve these problems? Then I remember the little boy and the starfish, and I realize that there are so many small actions that I can take to help make a difference in the big world I live in.

I believe that the first step in decreasing warfare and refugee crises is awareness. So often, people are not even aware that these terrible issues are occurring in the very world they live in. If more people knew the struggles happening across the globe, then they could do more to contribute. I am inspired to become a writer for a living, and spend my days composing words that could educate and inspire. I hope to become a journalist or travel blogger, so I could communicate with others what is happening around the world, and what needs to be done. Until I am able to achieve my writing aspirations, I plan on being an active voice in society. I may not have the power to conduct international relations or make treaties, but I do have a say in who is

in those roles. I believe that one should never underestimate the power of a single vote, petition, or campaign sign. After all, an action does not have to be big to bring about great change.

I am also incredibly inspired to help fight climate change. The world that we live in is our only home, and we need to treat it with the proper respect and care if we have any hope of saving it. There are countless small actions that can be taken on a daily basis to help fight climate change. For example, one can source locally for all of their food. Buying food at farmers' markets and growing it in your garden cuts back on the impact that the international transport of food has on the environment. Another method that I strive for is a consciousness of the resources I am using. I try to print double-sided, rely on natural lighting, and use reusable dishes whenever possible. These actions may seem minuscule when compared to the massive issue of global warming, but an accumulation of small actions can lend itself to a big impact.

While it is the opinion of many that the world's problems can be solved by militaristic force, I disagree. I believe that nonviolent acts are incredibly effective, and have been proven successful time and time again throughout history. One must just look at Ghandi's Salt March or Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington to know that nonviolence methods can have an impact that resounds for years. I believe that violence only escalates situations that can be solved with communication, consideration, and compromise.

I am extremely passionate about the issues that the world faces, both locally and abroad. In the past few years I have gone on strike with the University of Oregon's graduate teaching fellows and walked in a Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial March, all because I am deeply invested in my community. I aspire to keep making this a more peaceful and socially just world one step at a time, just like the little boy and the starfish.

Essay Question – Logan Mertz

In this day and age, our country's dependence on things we do not need is harming the citizens of not only this country, but our entire world. Oil, which has been, and still is viewed as precious and valuable, has caused the deaths of thousands. Still, some conflicts that were the result of our nation's dependency are still present and complicated today. Domestically speaking, the amount of oxygen that decreases in our atmosphere due to deforestation, and our emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses, is making the air we breathe detrimental to our health.

It is clear that global warming and climate change is effected by our world's vast dependence on fossil fuels. It's also clear that most of our global conflicts relate to areas that have oil production at stake. The common individual views both of these issues as problems far too great for one person to resolve individually. However, one must understand that even small changes in one's personal actions on a day-to-day basis can lead to positive change on a macro-scale. Collectively, we are influenced by the greater impact that one person is making locally; one individual's actions can lead to a world of change if a group of individuals are doing the same thing, leading to great transformation for our global community.

Ever since I was little, I was told to recycle things like cardboard and plastic bottles. Over the years, after learning about the problems of pollution, and seeing pollution's damage in our world first hand over and over, I have tried to maintain my habit of recycling. In our house, we have always tried to take steps to conserve energy. Even though at times it may be easier and more pleasurable to do things like take longer showers and have the heat on high during Oregon's cold winters, our family has put the importance of the conservation of energy as more important than the over-use of energy that our culture in this day in age is so accustomed to.

Regarding the preservation of peace in this beautiful world, I have been trying to display a character of peace and respect to all. As my faith highly values these characteristics, it is a personal and daily decision for me to be at peace with those around me. With deadly wars going on numerous fronts in numerous countries across the globe, many forget that their treatment of others in their own community provides a strong counter-point to the violence that is so prevalent today. Although actions of friendship and respect won't directly stop a war, they can still deeply and positively affect communities, and strong communities can create strong people, who can then be huge positive influences to our world for peace that is so greatly needed. With powerful but peaceful people influencing the world, there is a hope that people can begin to understand that war and peace cannot be waged at the same time.

With my acceptance of this thought, I have chosen not to join the military, but to instead promote peace with my daily lifestyle. The world is full of passionate rhetoric about the world's current refugee crisis. If I am to be an ambassador of peace, it is crucial that I need to be about building bridges rather than walls. I need to be a person of peace to my neighbors across the street... and across the world!

I am majoring in Global Business because I want to work in the field of humanitarian aid. I aspire to be part of an organization striving not only to help people but to teach them valuable skills. A business major may be strange, but this is because there are many different ways to help an organization to provide humanitarian aid that does not equal being a first responder or the military.

There are many different means of offering relief and one way is through the military. The military is a strict body working together to accomplish a pre-established goal much like any other organization. I believe the military is invaluable in areas that are hostile and full of life-threatening conflict because the people who are causing this destruction *do not care* about those they are hurting. In times where those fears are removed, humanitarian organizations are a better fit for afflicted people because they can offer counseling and teach trade skills. The military and other humanitarian aid organizations both work to accomplish their purposes in different ways. While the military may be more focused on a certain people and humanitarian organizations on humanity as a whole, sometimes these goals align and are an option that should be considered. The military can be an integral part of helping the wounded and should not be overlooked for the assistance they may offer. I personally have chosen to go through a different route of helping people, but I commend them for their selfless sacrifice of protecting the citizens they love.

The most vulnerable tend to be the ones with the least amount of resources or knowledge. One huge problem is the refugees leaving the Middle East and coming into Europe. Many of them are escaping into refugee camps, and there is no time limit to staying in refugee camps. For example the Dadaab camps have been occupied by Somali refugees for the last twenty years. The only reason camps such as these are disbanded are when areas they once belonged to are deemed safe to return or if another country embraces them. The biggest problem with these camps is the fact they are not sustainable. They rely on others to provide everything needed to survive with and give the occupants no real purpose in life. This is not a constructive environment to be in, let alone grow up in. Immediate help should be given, but *once the initial* fright is over constructive help must be granted. A school for both children and adults alike would teach skills such as language acquisition and life skills like sewing. This would maximize the possibility of starting a successful and fulfilling life when they were finally able to leave.

I see education as a gift. A whole generation of thinkers could begin to examine the world more closely allowing understanding and change. Education also plays a crucial part of quality of life. Those with more education generally receive more income, have better employment and are less likely to have a chronic disease.

Most people will not continue ruinous habits if they understand why they are harmful. This is the question education attempts to answer. *The responsibility of education is to show the student* why there is a problem and secondly how it can be eliminated or solved. Through this people will learn to stop destructive tendencies of interpersonal relationships and gain a deeper understanding of the earth and be given means to counteract those choices.

This type of education is important regardless of circumstances because knowledge is power. The world would be a much different place if this were to happen. This is just a simple way of explaining the world needs to be taught preventable actions. It could start in the refugee camps, but it must spread throughout the world to keep it viable. For example, people trapped in poverty could learn how to cultivate their land properly. They would not only grow more crops,

but their soil would stay fertile allowing slash and burn farming to end. These methods are both practical and viable because it appeases both the people and the earth.

It is also important to fix the root of the problem. If one is going to leave a permanent impact on a person, the action must be lasting and not done casually. It must be accomplished considering future generations of users and the earth. An example could be a house carried away because of flooding. It would be irresponsible to rebuild the house the same way. If we do we are just making the problem worse in the long run because the situations will most likely repeat itself and materials like time, wood and craftsmanship will have to be produced again causing it to be counter-productive. As we work to combat poor practices, the earth will slowly become healthier and problems such as drought and flooding will be eliminated.

To create a better tomorrow I plan to work for a humanitarian aid organization focused on not only offering immediate help to those hurting, but educating them with valuable life skills that will be marketable once out of their dire situations. Educating them with skills to succeed and with practices sustainable to both them and the earth will create a positive future for all.

Peace Scholarship Essay

According to scientists around the globe, in the short time humans have inhabited the world, we have destroyed nearly two-thirds of the world's natural resources. This is a frightening fact, as global warming is increasing at a rapid rate with no end in sight. However, global warming isn't the only issue facing the human race. International discord has led to warfare throughout the world. Various issues are the source of war, including resources such as oil, religion, and corrupt leadership. Without compassion, empathy, and education, we cannot work through these pressing issues. In my lifetime, I hope to live a purposeful life that perpetuates a sustainable future and a peaceful Earth.

I believe in the significance of humanitarian efforts. For that reason, I have always planned to join the Peace Corps after receiving my Bachelor's Degree. I know this isn't the only option for people who want to volunteer abroad and I am also looking into the Volunteer for Peace program, along with others. However I end up going about it, I hope to educate and aid other countries in whatever capacity available to me.

Before I volunteer abroad, however, I need to attend college. I am planning on attending Oregon State University to study engineering. I also plan on participating in their Humanitarian Engineering program, which includes traveling to underprivileged countries and building sustainable goods for the people there, including water filtration systems and hydrometeorological sensors (to name a few). I first thought of pursuing this program when I watched a presentation about it and was brought to tears. After that moment I knew that going abroad and volunteering, through any and all programs I've mentioned, was going to be my path.

After my venture abroad, I hope to find a job in a sustainable engineering industry. As of now, I am leaning toward mechanical engineering in hopes of designing and creating sustainable transportation. However, I am also interested in sustainable energy engineering and environmental engineering.

The risk of climate conflict is real and despite the popularity of the focus on this issue being a recent area of media attention, this has been a massive concern for decades. Often times, we hear commentary on this although even our own country's president, President Obama, addressed climate change as a "creeping national security crisis" that will require the armed forces to "respond to refugee flows, natural disasters, and conflicts over water and food." With consideration to the need for incorporating the armed forces into this issue, I remain concerned with the inclusion of a historically and ethically variable intervention due to the conflict for use of unethical standards toward our environment, animals, and humans.

I've been incredibly fortunate to be able to perceive my challenging life experiences as an opportunity to grow and learn in a more confident, capable, and direct manner. In doing so, I have chosen to find empowerment in using personal time to put efforts toward volunteering to improve the lives and experiences of those less fortunate including but not limited to donations toward Angel Hair, Race for the Cure, Lights of Liberty, and the 10,000 Stars Organization. Without those of us who are able and willing putting ourselves in vulnerable and dedicated positions, peace sustains a limited growth.

I have a great concern that this is not an area where educators are focusing attention toward providing accurate information to youth in our mainstream schools. As we are the up and coming generation, we have the ability to start making changes. Without the education on how truly detrimental the climate change crisis is, the information isn't being spread to a diverse enough population without intentionally seeking out accurate knowledge. In doing research on this global crisis, I have received a vast knowledge of how intense and immediate the issues are. While in my current education placement, this issue has not been addressed in any subject area. With this crises growing so rapidly, youth need to be educated on what we can be doing to spread the word and implement changes now; not in a year, not in five years, and certainly not when the changes become evident in our immediate existence.

My inspirations are focused toward joining with other like-minded individuals in our community to identify practical steps that we, as individuals and a community, can take to begin this movement. We have a local government who allows the opportunity for individuals to present concerns and issues during city meetings. There is such tremendous power in numbers and we are fortunate to have a local office who is open to hearing our concerns and ideas for making change. As a well-established senior in my high school, I plan to bring this to my school counseling board as a concern around the lack of education being provided to my fellow students. By participating in the application process for this essay, I have benefitted greatly in allowing myself time to explore and learn more about the warfare and climate concerns that are evolving so quickly everywhere in our world.

I am a firm believer in the importance of peaceful communications and feel incredibly fortunate to live in a country where we are provided opportunities for equality. As a citizen of this country, I realize that we are often the responders focusing on the crises in other countries including Syria. With the recent deaths of over 100,000 individuals due to inequality, power

dynamics, violence, and government inaccessibility, the members of that community, who are not being provided opportunities to find empowerment in making peace agreements, are being faced with regional drought and extremely limited resources for sustainability. Without immediate and safe access to basic needs resources including nutrition, water, shelter, and civil rights, those born and living in areas such as Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Kazakhstan, Yemen, Mali, Nigeria, Nepal, and Libya, are struggling merely to survive another day. Without safety and security in our countries of origin, remaining dedicated to growing as a productive member of our communities, families and individuals often need to flee to areas where they are constantly being threatened by the existence of their culture. This brings this portion of the problem to global awareness as resources are being exhausted rapidly.

In my opinion, the only way for us to stimulate a movement for change is to provide awareness, education, and empowerment. Although I personally do not have passion or emotional capacity for enlisting in the military, I do understand the purpose for an organized method for providing support to the individuals residing within a country's borders. An ethically sound military will provide citizens safety identifying problems and providing feedback on ideas for solutions to address those concerns. A military should be protective of freedom and inclusiveness toward the world around us. I respect and honor those serving in armed forces who are there for ethical and productive motivations and feel that this can provide a great service to our planet when used for the betterment of our current and future lives.

Bayanna Jablon

These problems can be solved without enlisting in the military. The first step to finding a solution to any problem is to accept that a problem exists; that said, my inspiration comes from comic books. I don't seek to create superheroes for the purpose of ending war, but perhaps the solution to world hunger is to come up with a new way to create more food. For instance, there is a surplus of dirt in the Great Plains. Despite the obvious nod to the cost, it might be more efficient to dissect that area to create farming skyscrapers. As farfetched as this idea is, it could possibly generate vast quantities of food that would then be able to be shipped worldwide to provide for those in need.

As far as climate change goes, the climate can only worsen if we further the destruction of the world's trees. We utilize wood from trees to build homes and furniture, but I believe it might be better to plant trees and build our homes out of more inorganic materials such as metal and glass. Planting more trees will lead to the production of more oxygen through photosynthesis, which will in turn make the climate more inhabitable.

War is a form of human aggression. It exists because there are those who disagree and haven't the means to settle their differences peacefully. To end war is to end the purest humanity; however, I believe that while it is impossible to end war without changing our entire species beyond possible parameters at the moment, war can be made but a word by inventing defensive mechanism that are far more advanced than what we currently have. Our main defensive strategy as a country has, in the past, been to have the strongest weapons and scare those that would attack us out of attacking. As time wore on, this strategy has proven itself ineffective, and we have been led into a war with a concept. Since that point, our defensive strategy has become preemptive strikes against a perceived enemy. It would seem that this method is highly ineffective as it leads to the deaths of the innocent in great numbers. To end this war, I propose a strategy of ideal on ideal rather than using tangible weapons to fight an intangible concept. Preventing further wars in the world would be possible if people were willing to open their minds to the ideals of others, to understand one another, and to accept one another as friends. If we cannot welcome our neighbor as a human because they feel one way and we disagree with them vehemently to a point of violence, then we will never be capable of ending war. While we end our current wars, I would like to study forms of defense like a shield better than any other because when weapons become ineffective, wars become disagreements.

Over all, I'm inspired to think outside the box to come up with unorthodox solutions. The problems we see in the world today can be solved; however, a problem can only be solved with better thinking than that with which it was created, so I want to do whatever it takes to think of, and enact, solutions to the problems we see in our world today.

James Connolly