

The Importance of Dance in My Life

Riley Marshall

I've danced for almost ten years of my life, which exceeds any other activity I've engaged in. Every one of those years have been memorable thanks to All That Dance and each one has been enjoyable than the last. This activity morphed into something greater than myself faster than I expected. It started out as something to do outside of school for exercise, to each class being the highlight of my week. The simple activity I signed up for turned into a group of friends, staff, and an overall reliable and supportive community.

I've been thinking a lot about how I'm different and unique compared to others and how I'm special. With so many high schoolers stressing about college applications, it got me thinking about those college essays, and what I want to do in the future. When writing a college essay, you're answering one simple question that the colleges are asking: what are you contributing to our community? I struggled with what I can contribute to a new community that I'm unfamiliar with. My essay is supposed to persuade the college I'm applying to that I am the right fit, and they will benefit from having me there. I know there are many reasons that schools would want me at their campus, but it's very hard to find an overarching story line, topic, or theme to use in these college essays. I only have about two pages to make my case for myself, two pages for them to read, only two pages for them to understand who I am. Two pages to decide my future. Two pages for four years of my lifetime.

This was obviously overwhelming and made me take days, weeks, to figure out a topic that highlights all my great qualities and strengths. On top of the college essays, I am going to need to get scholarships to attend schools like UW and other that's college out of state. And these essays will need great writing, intricate flow, and persuade the reader that I am the most promising student out of all the applicants. I was debating between topics for a while, from attending college as a high school student, to my dream major and how I figured it out, and even my scouting adventures with my local boy scout troop. But none of these completely engulfed what I believed was all my greatness, kindness, and intelligence. So it came upon me that this studio would be the perfect topic to write about. Unlike taking college classes as a high school student, dancing shows that I branch out to new communities and I'm loyal and stick with my passions and work hard to succeed with it. While writing about my journey to picking business to study shows an academic side, it doesn't show anything obviously unique and intriguing about me, but dancing? How many male dancers are going to be applying to UW? Finally, while my scouting troop showed my great leadership, community strengthening, and adventurous personality, it showed nothing about how hard I work towards a goal to achieve it and succeed as well.

Dancing is the perfect activity that brings out the best qualities within me. I am in Honor Club, where I volunteer my time numerous times for many different causes and participate in an amazing performance that encourages student choreographing within the studio. I've also auditioned and performed in Company a multitude of times, and each time I learned more about myself and dance. I attend classes at All That Dance, and I would like to think that I reach out to the studio to offer my help whenever I can. Finally, dancing has helped me mature to the point I am at now, I will always be overly enthusiastic, hyper, and even outright annoying at times. But taking that away, and "calming down" is not what maturing is about, maturing is simply put, becoming more aware of oneself, their environment, and how they impact it. It's about knowing the right time to crack a joke, or the right time to stay quiet and listen. It's about knowing how many kids look up to me as a role model, and how being responsible to the performance will impact them in a positive way. It's taking the initiative to have a conversation with someone who's acting quiet today. Maturing makes someone recognize the responsibility they've always had and understanding how to handle those duties.

All That Dance has helped me grow as a person and as a dancer, for every lesson I get about life, I also learn how to project that to an audience. I learn how to perform, or guide the audience through a story of emotions and feelings that I'm feeling while dancing. I would not be the performer or the man I am today without the studio giving me support and watching my back. I'm just glad I have this story to share and I can give back to the community that has helped me so much.

While I was struggling in school, the studio's classes were there. Even when I struggled with my family, the office staff were there to joke around with. My family is very fortunate to have this amazing studio be so accommodating to our situation. My mother actually recently got laid off her job, and she is currently unemployed looking for a job. The studio has helped so much, more than we could ask for, in helping me and my sister take classes. I know that I have very little time before I'm off to college, and I'm dancing at whatever college I attend, while taking classes. I now understand what makes me unique, what makes me worth the colleges acceptance, what makes me worth the world's acceptance.

Thank you so much for considering my application. I will forever appreciate all the help ATD has given me throughout my time here.

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