

ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

MOMENTUM

IMAGINE, INSPIRE, IMPACT

STUDENT REFLECTIVE ESSAYS AUGUST 2014



*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)

Momentum. Any dictionary will state how momentum is the strength, force or speed of an object in motion. And any science teacher on this campus will protest that in order for an object to gain momentum it must first be exposed to inertia, which is the property that states an object at rest will stay at rest unless acted upon by an outside force. Now, imagine life as this “object.” Without any force pushing myself forward, I would never be where I am today. Coming from an uneducated, lower-class family, college never seemed like a possibility for myself. I knew how if I did not receive a scholarship I would never be able to attend college because of our financial situation. This was extremely discouraging for myself and led me to apply to Elizabethtown because they waived the application fee; this was also the only school I applied to.

The Momentum program is much like the scientific definitions of momentum and inertia. After given the push to move forward, which started when my parents left me here at school, the anxieties and nervousness of living two and a half hours away from home started to fade. I could feel the acceleration as we moved from the different sessions and traveled to Philadelphia. I have discovered new interests and met new friends. I feel more comfortable than I ever would have without this experience, and I am extremely grateful and now that I have built the momentum and confidence to continue moving forward, I will never be stopped!

- *Matthew Van Cleef*; Hillsborough, New Jersey

I Made It: I want to be able to show people how I made it. Walking across a stage receiving an Elizabethtown College diploma, getting in my car going to my job, and being able to tell people I took nothing and made myself into something. I have seen people struggle and it then transfers to their children who unknowingly follow the same path. I have chosen to change the path to get through schooling and make it in life without worry. The second time we were with Chaplain Sadd she spoke to us about not worrying so much. I understand why it makes for a rough life when you have to worry about anything bills, being able to get Christmas presents for someone, or even just having gas money to get to work. I do not want history to repeat itself in my life.

As a kid my father was military and my mother worked different odd jobs, neither of them had their degree in college. Once they were out of the military was when problems arose. My mother made what was needed to pay the bills and feed us and not much else and my father and her had split up and he had moved but was having a lot of the same issues. My step-father I saw had the same problem and has worked in factories and different stores all his life. But not until my mother received her degree did I experience what normal life with little to no worry was like. I until then was a kid who never expected much knowing we could not have much. Between this and issues I had in elementary school with a couple of other students led to me thinking this was life. That there were very little possibilities to be successful and there was always someone to put me down, and I accepted it I rarely fought back or tried to change anything. What I have learned through my years since and during my time here in the Momentum program is how it is not how it should be.

My mother later went back to school graduating second in her class and moving us here to Pennsylvania. I learned how I could follow in her footsteps and how college was going to be my gateway to a life without struggle. I changed, no longer wanting to be a bullied kid who kept to himself and hid behind a book. So I threw myself into sports not caring what I played until finding my niche in lacrosse. I had not known what it was like to be actually pretty good at something. So between a sport I was good in, the effort I put into classes, and just trying to be more social I set myself into motion to show people history does not have to repeat itself. To show people what a kid who to some people could have been doomed to another life of worry. During our first day of meditation we focused on not worrying, our dreams, and our hopes. I had never thought about it until I actually heard it, but I had longed to never have to worry about providing for a family I would like to one day have. I dreamt of my goal to be successful, play lacrosse in college (no one had been able to play an NCAA sport in college), and just not let my families legacy of struggle due to their lack of education hold me back. My mom could do it as well as my grandparents and they did not have the opportunity I have been granted. They had to work so much harder than I to get there. So why waste this opportunity why not seek Areté. To be the best me is all I really want. As I heard Professor Besse tell us “the goal is not just to live, but to live well.”

On our last day in the Momentum program Professor Benowitz talked to us about what we love in life, what our passion is and is it compatible with our major. Would I love what I was doing in life or was I just in it for the prospects of a successful life. I realized how physics at this time seems like the right path. However, I see it might not stay this way and maybe I will change my major. I will not worry about that though, my focus

must be to excel at what I have chosen and not get caught up so much in the future and the past as Professor Benowitz also told us to live in the moment and take it all in. I do not want to miss any details if I see physics is not for me then I must move on so I may make my impact on society.

Living well would be my impact on society. Or at the very least I can create a ripple in the pond. Me going to college straight out of high school and hopefully succeeding will be something I can transfer to my possible kids. Then they transfer it on to theirs and I have caused at least the slightest change which will in turn affect others. To not worry, to succeed, to show people how I made it. That will be my legacy and what others will hopefully appreciate. Momentum has helped me to realize just what it is I want and is helping me attain that goal. So I will not waste this opportunity the Momentum program has so graciously given me. I will attain my dreams and do something which some would like to say is not easy. Maybe it is not, but I will make it and show everyone just what I can do.

- *Dylon Johnson*; Lancaster, Pennsylvania

“I miss my parents. I am so far away from home. I feel homesick.” I heard this at least twice a day from the start when I met my peers. I am the farthest you can be across the country. I do not feel homesick and I do not miss my parents. Does this make me a cold hearted person or just someone who is really strong? Whichever it is, I have never felt more at home.

Finding out I have a feeling of belonging at Elizabethtown College has inspired me to do whatever I want to do. I proved everybody wrong who said I would not feel comfortable, how I would not belong, or how I would have a hard and it feels great. I have no limits, no boundaries as to what I want to do later on in life or maybe even next week. I may be really short, but the power which flows through my veins from being across the country is gratifying and liberating. It helped how Momentum makes every incoming freshman feel welcome and at home. Maybe it is due to Momentum that I do not have the time to be homesick or sad, but it has made me realize how I want to do the same thing my sophomore year. I would love to be a Kinesis Peer Academic Mentor and help the incoming class feel welcome and at home. I want to help them not miss their home.

What I have found out about myself is what I want others to find for themselves. If I can even make a little push and help them realize how going to college an hour, two, or even ten hours away is not as bad as it seems, it is actually pretty cool. If I can impact at least one kid than I know I have done something right. I feel like Momentum has not only impacted me, but it has also impacted the future class of 2019 by making me want to become a Kinesis next year.

- *Catherine Acosta*; Los Angeles, California

I made the decision to come to the USA right before I graduated high school. In July 2013, I traveled for over twenty hours to the US and one year later, I was moving in to Elizabethtown College. I remember the week before moving in, I felt scared. I was afraid I had made the wrong decision to throw everything I knew away to start a new life far away from home. I was afraid of all the feelings forming inside of me. I was afraid because I did not know what to expect. I was afraid of everything. But when I got here, I figured something pretty important out very quickly. As I got to know all these new people, I found out they were also afraid. We might be scared of different things, but ultimately, we are all just blindly walking around hoping for the best. I learned it is important to know our fears so we can conquer them, but at the same time, we need to learn how to put our fears to the side and learn how to ask for help. And this would not be achieved in just one day, but it is a journey in itself and if we pay enough attention to ourselves and our surroundings, we will be able to find an efficient solution to working around our fears. By knowing this, I will be more aware of how I learn and how I react to new situations and be more prepared for college. This past week has taught me a lot about myself, and even though I am still scared of what will happen in the next four years, knowing how I am not the only one alone in this journey has encouraged me to explore my opportunities and be as open minded as I can, and I know I will always have someone to turn to if I feel lost. I hope I will be able to show my peers and those coming in the following years how I have been and I am still going through the same fears they are, but with the support the Momentum program has given me, I know everything will be alright and all the fears in the world can be eliminated over time.

- *Maya Clare Aphornsuvan*; Merion Station, Pennsylvania

When my family and I pulled up to Elizabethtown College, I felt a whole bundle of emotions: scared, excited, and curious just to name a few. I had no idea what to expect when I signed up for this program. However, all of my fears vanished when I saw how friendly everyone was; this made me feel right at home. Through this I learned how even the smallest gestures can make an impact on someone else's life, even if it is something simple such as saying hello or flashing a smile.

I have learned a variety of valuable lessons during my time in Momentum. One lesson I learned, was how there is a distinguishable difference between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge is just memorization of facts while wisdom is much greater. Wisdom is the beauty surrounding things existing in the world and what makes the world what it is today; it is the reason behind why our world is as advanced as it is presently. Everything that I have learned as a whole in the Momentum program I consider to be wisdom. I learned what "paying attention" really means through our walking meditation session and about the concept of "living in the moment." To live in the moment is to only think about and embrace the here and now, not beating ourselves about the past and not worrying about what will happen in the future. I used to do the latter but, Momentum has taught me how nothing comes out of it except for extra anxiety and stress which is the last thing anybody needs. This has honestly hugely impacted my life as a whole.

I want to be able to impact others with this information as much as I can. I want to do this by teaching people to have a positive-mindset no matter what and to not worry about things which are not in the present. I also want to teach people to try to have an open-mind as much as possible and to ask questions like the great philosophers like Socrates. I want to teach others how we should not be afraid of change, we should embrace it. If nobody ever asked questions, the world would come to a stand-still, and nothing would improve.

- *Ashley Boland*; East Rockaway, New York

A white coat, once a crisp white, now stained with blood and other questionable body fluids all belonging to different people. From all directions screaming and crying can be heard, some out of extreme sorrow and others out of unrestricted joy while here and there sighs of relief or acceptance are mixed in. The smell of disinfectant hangs heavily in the air giving off a sense of extreme hygiene. For most, this would seem like a scene from a horror movie meant to give nightmares to children, but for me, this will be my everyday routine.

As a Pre-Medicine major, time seems like a non-existent aspect in my journey of having the pretty tittle of "Doctor" written as an introduction to be followed by my name. Any Pre-Medicine students knows very well of the long odyssey they have signed up for. Long nights of studying, a never ending list of books to read, the challenging courses, and worst of all accepting the fact how no one will ever know everything there is to know about Medicine. I know this, which is why my plan since the day I made my career choice has been to work through these first years as fast as possible.

That was until I was told to "Live in the moment."

I have heard multiple people utter this phrase, but it had never stuck out to me until now. Now, I see my plan to run through these four years ahead would have resulted in my own demise, so now I have a different plan. Now, I will make sure I take in every aspect of every day. I will make sure I pay attention to not only my classes, but also life outside of the classroom. By doings so, I hope to learn for the future and not just memorize for tomorrow's test; to make connections extending for years and not diminish right after graduation.

Also, I hope all I learn from absorbing every moment helps me become the best person I can be. I do not wish to be the type of Doctor who as soon as a patient walks out the door, they are forgotten forever and become just another folder in a giant stack. I want to heal people. I do not mean just their physical illnesses, but also the scars others cannot see. I want to leave each patient with a more positive vision of life which will, hopefully, lead them to do the same creating a chain reaction of joy.

Professor Williams told us how "Great moments come from great opportunities." So to summarize everything, take on every opportunity and live every moment you are given.

- *Yanellis Bonano*; Corona, California

“Not Quite Wonder Woman.” I am a hero. Now, do not mistake me; I am not the kind of hero who runs around with underwear outside of my pants and leaps tall buildings in a single bound. I am not the kind of hero who can fly through the air and captivate audiences who exclaim “It’s a bird, it’s a plane!” I’m the kind of hero who looks like an average eighteen year old, but is a breed all her own.

I did not come from what you would call a “typical functional family.” Of my four siblings, two of them are mentally delayed, one was a drug addict, and one was a team mom. Not to mention how my mom was in and out of the psych ward much of my young life. The only constant I had in my life was my dad. I was born into an unfortunate situation and had no choice but to wallow in this fact until I could free myself from it.

Now, I am free from it.

I stepped onto this college campus and was unsure of what to expect. Sure, I had done my research on Elizabethtown and the Momentum program, but staring at a computer screen cannot even begin to give you the real picture of what something is like. Little did I know I would realize how I am an ancient Greek hero who finds herself in today’s times; my arête began here. Arete is not necessarily a point of high birth, but rather the sense of personal achievement and virtue which comes from learning who you are and remaining true to it. Remaining true to yourself does not mean forgetting or erasing your past; it means embracing it and although you have a blindfold on, stepping forward with full courage.

Maya Angelou argued how courage is the most important of virtues because “one cannot practice any other virtue with consistency” if they lack courage. Coming here took an immense amount of courage because, after all, nobody revels in the unknown. It took all I had to accept this invitation and force my feet into motion despite all the inertia in my life telling me how I would not amount to anything.

Thankfully, the inertia was overcome and now I am in motion. I am pushing forward and while my arête came from a low place, I am now a hero. I am the master of my own destiny and those old bruises will not be missed.

- *Erica Buckley*; Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Momentum as defined by Merriam Webster dictionary is the strength or force allowing something to continue or to grow stronger as time passes. As defined by dictionary.com it is the force or speed of movement. At Elizabethtown College, the Momentum program is exactly that. The program is preparing each of us to succeed at all our endeavors and grow academically and socially stronger. It is helping us gain the speed we need to enter into the rigor of the college schedule.

Over the course of the last four days, I have learned about so much; ranging from Plato’s symposium to the meaning of arête. After sitting through classes on philosophy, anthropology, chemistry, psychology, political science, and history to name a few my knowledge on all different majors has been greatly expanded. I have learned the differences between psychology and sociology, watched anime for the first time, and participated in activities outside of my comfort zone.

Although all of these exercises have had an impact, the morning meditation was the most meaningful to me. When Professor Rankin discussed civility focusing in on the importance of paying attention and listening, I realized how often I miss things because my mind is in another place. What I will take away from this week is the importance to give all of myself wherever I am, rather than being focused on or worrying about other situations.

I hope the knowledge I gained this week will shape my mind and character and help me as I begin classes and start my activities. My goal is to also help others with the knowledge I have gained and possibly become a kinesis sometime in the future to further support the Momentum Program.

- *Esther Cargill*; Lancaster, Pennsylvania

If I gained anything from the Momentum program, it was new friends and new views. Listening to the Socratic sessions taught me to connect my career with my passions. My friends told me how they also questioned their lives, giving me someone to talk to. I gained this camaraderie, in less than a week. “Imagine, Inspire, Impact.” This phrase works, and it keeps me on the right path. Momentum is the final piece of my puzzle.

- *Winsum Chang*; Severn, Maryland

Change? I enter the world one way and grow into the mold of what the people want me to become. As I grow and start to be independent I begin to find myself. Then, like a heart attack everything stops. Now in college, I am completely free. A whole new world this becomes. How will I survive, Is this the right place, and what will I become? All these questions run through my mind like a zebra running from a lion.

Since my arrival on Sunday, one thing which has been consistent, is the architecture. There is a Colonial and Greek style to it. As the world changes around the campus, buildings come and go. Nothing seems to be consistent in the world. On the trip to Philadelphia, I learned most of this to be true. Skyscrapers were built every so often, parking lots were everywhere, and colonial buildings survived due to the fact the people stood up to keep them from being demolished. Those buildings survived many decades of change and were one of the most consistent things in the city. When I was thinking what impact I wanted to make, I kept thinking, what will I do to change the world and how can I be known for it?

After Philadelphia, I realized how to make an impact you do not always need change. President Obama used to urge for change, but not everything needs to be changed. My impact is to preserve things like in the environment and nature. Things like parks are being closed, so the youth do not even go there as much. Everything is depleting every decade. Kids will not know what the parents did for fun unless they got to a museum, read a book, or hear stories. I want to be the one who keeps things there so the kids can do what their parents or grandparents did. Think of all the experiences they will lose if everything is gone; it is bad so let us not make it happen. Some adults cannot even decide if they want to stay in their career, so how do they know what is best? I am still unsure how to get to the place I want to be in life. Although I am undecided I now realize my intended major which was going to be International Business may not be the best bet. So now I shall go explore my options. Some people like me are set on a career or a way to change the world. Then when we sit down and talk about it, we realize it may not be the best option. So I need more time to think about my career and so do the decision makers on architecture.

- *Jovanni Diaz*; Reading, Pennsylvania

At the age of eight I came to America. I did not know what to expect but all I knew was how I was not ready for a life altering experience: new parents, a completely new country, and having to make new friends. Since I arrived in America a month before school, I could not wait for it to start since I loved it so much. On my first day of elementary school, I could not wait to make new friends, but my mood changed. I was alone. Nobody wanted to talk to me because I was different with different skin, different language and overall different here was seemed to be perceived as bad. My new classmates made me feel alone and rejected. I got picked on and for the next couple of years I felt like I had no purpose. I just wanted to go back to Mexico.

The Momentum program changed my outlook on life. During the week we went to different seminars with different professors but the one which had the most impact on me had to be the History and Political Science Seminar. Professors April Kelly-Woessner and Gail Bossenga talked about how other countries influenced America and how people throughout American history were different. The professors really impacted me and made me realize how being different is good and learning to accepted others goes a long way. Momentum has taught me how during and after college we will have to learn, work and accept others who are different from me. The professors also made me think about minoring in History or Political Science because it interests me and can also partner with my interest in Spanish. I look forward to working with these professors in the long run and even having them as mentors in the future.

- *Priscila DiDio*; Jenkintown, Pennsylvania

The first day to the beginning of my new life was a hectic and sad day for me. I have never had to be on my own before. My parents took care of everything for me, medical bills, buying my food, my clothes, paying for everything, and making me food. I was so scared to come to college and have to do all of those things by myself. I came in here thinking I was the only freshman terrified of coming to college. Turns out I was wrong. Many freshmen whom I have talked to miss their families and friends just like I do.

Actually realizing that I was not alone is going to help me get through these next five years. I learned there are many staff members and all of your professors who will help you pass their class but you have to ask for help. You need to go to them as soon as you do not understand something. Going to them will be difficult

for me but if I put forth the effort which I did not have in high school I can accomplish a lot. I am going to use all the information I received these past few days and take it with me the next five years. I can now say how I am ready for college. The small classes help, professors' help, tutoring, Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors, and my FYS Peer Mentors I will most likely get through these years with good grades and good relationships with the people I met and the professors.

This program has already had a pretty big impact on me. I met a lot of new friends and I know the campus pretty well. I was able to open myself up to new people and become comfortable really quick. I do not really think about not being home because someone or something is always distracting me. There is always something to do and this made the homesickness go away a lot easier than slowly getting into the college life. I did not want to join this program at first but I am glad I did. I am not scared like I was when I first got here. I am ready to conquer college.

- *Virginia-Lee Dugan*; Pottstown, Pennsylvania

Discovering Momentum. In my eighteen years of life so far, I have spent most of my life buried in a book. I was quiet and shy, without confidence or self-esteem. I was so afraid of what other people thought of me; I closed myself off to forming relationships with others. I kept to myself to the point where I became my own best friend. However, despite the fact I was so introverted, I dreamt of someday being a therapist; someone who could listen, someone who could advise, and most importantly, someone who could have compassion for others. I knew this was going to require much room to grow and perseverance. With this being stated, going into college, I perceived it as merely a way to educate myself. However, the Momentum program has given me something more than just tools to succeed academically; Momentum has inspired me to be the person I want to be: a person who can inspire others. A person who has the confidence to say what they feel and a person who will fight for others. I have learned that despite all my self-doubts, I can be that person.

Furthermore, I am going to use my newfound belief in myself which I have gained from the Momentum program to appreciate every interaction I have with others. I have found every day is a second chance and from here on out, I am going to seize every opportunity to learn about others because the more you understand others, the more you can understand yourself.

Moreover, the impact I am going to make is how I am going to be the best therapist I can be and help individuals to lead happy and successful lives. I am going to be able to make this impact because the Momentum program has motivated me to be confident and put myself out there. This is the person I have always been deep down, the Momentum program has only pushed me to let the true side of me shine and for this, I will forever be grateful.

- *Carly Foster*; Horsham, Pennsylvania

Momentum- that very word describes why I decided to participate in the program. During the summer, I was imagining what college would be like, and, just as any normal college freshman, I was a bit apprehensive about the whole college thing. So I decided to participate in the Momentum program. I wanted to get a head start in college and I knew how through this program I could move in early, get a feel for the campus, and do the thing I feared most: make new friends. This week, I have not only accomplished these things, but also so much more.

Through different learning sessions, games, and activities, I have met a wide variety of people. And in these few short days, there are already so many people I can call my friends, not just because they are nice or funny, but because I got to know them. And I mean *really* know them. In one of the information sessions, we learned about civility and its importance. The one bit which stuck with me was how getting to know someone is more than learning their name, where they are from or what they look like. It is really about how they are on the inside, specifically looking at their values and wisdom.

This piece of information has really inspired me and has impacted the way I view people. I was encouraged to look past how people look on the outside and just see them for who they are. By doing this, I have found a friend in someone whom I probably never would have talked to in the past. As a future Occupational Therapist, I think it is a good thing to remember how it is not about what someone looks or how they act. It is about getting to know the person well enough so the proper therapy is provided.

This past week has been so amazing and especially helpful. I definitely can feel the momentum building up in preparation for my first week of college. Through it, I now have confidence in myself and in my abilities. This program has inspired me to start off my first semester and hopefully have an impact on others, whether it be through participating in a service project or club or simply talking to the other new freshmen in hopes of making them feel as at home here as I do. Thank you to Elizabethtown College for providing such a helpful and meaningful program.

- *Sage Garvey*; Auburn, Pennsylvania

My Momentum Journey: Before starting Momentum the thought of college terrified me. Sometimes it would keep me up at night. The Momentum program has helped take this stress away and replace the stress with confidence. Momentum has made me realize how I can imagine, inspire, and impact.

During the Momentum program I learned how creativity is key. Every professor who spoke to Momentum students has a different style of teaching but they kept the lessons interesting by being creative. The lessons taught me how learning and studying can be fun if I can make it creative. The meditation lesson taught me how details, no matter how small, are important. The math and music lesson captured my attention because the professor played modern songs and showed Momentum students the mathematical structure of them. The Philadelphia trip taught me about the history of the United States through architecture and paintings.

The Momentum program has also made me realize what I can do with what I have learned. I will take what I have learned from the Momentum program and use it to help the other incoming freshman. Now that I am confident with my college experience I believe I can help others to adjust to the campus life. Also, I would like to take what I have learned and use it to become a leader on campus. I have an unlimited amount of opportunities to become a leader on campus and I am excited to use what I have learned.

The Momentum program has given me a desire to want to make an impact. At this time I do not know exactly what my impact will be, but now I know I have the confidence to make an impact. The Socratic Method to learning about our strengths and weaknesses taught me how I can combine my passion with my major. It inspired me to use what I have learned to stand up for what I believe in. If I see something which needs to be changed I will fight to make the change.

Because of the Momentum program I have gained confidence and made new friends. It has inspired me to think about the future and how I can make a change with my newly found knowledge. I am more confident on campus and I am looking forward to helping others. The lessons from the professors showed me how creativity is a key to learning. I am truly grateful for being able to be in the Momentum program and I now know I can imagine, inspire, and impact.

- *Kristie Hoppe*; Milford, Pennsylvania

Learn and Impact. Do you have the courage to jump out of your comfort zone and make an impact? When arriving at Elizabethtown College, I never considered what I learned during the Momentum program and what I will learn in the next four years could make an impact on myself and others. The Momentum program has taught me to live in the moment, pay attention, listen, and get ahead! Hence the word, momentum!

To be honest, I had no idea what to expect when I applied to be in Momentum. I knew I wanted to have a smoother experience getting adjusted to college, and this is what I thought Momentum was about. Man, was I wrong! It has been so much more. Let me begin with this statement; you are going to learn! In the past four days, I have learned about the college, its architecture, its history, ways to be a successful student, and most importantly, to live in the moment. That is the most important lesson to me because I struggle with being a worrier. I am going to take this lesson, as well as the others, and apply them to the rest of my college career. As for myself, I learned things which have been very beneficial. I learned how I have multiple strengths to my personality such as integrity, good time management skills, and the ability to adapt to change. Secondly, I learned how I am interested in English and I am considering adding it as a minor. All in all, I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of the program.

As for the impact I wish to have, I cannot just think of one. I know how when I become a music therapist, I want to share my knowledge, talents, and story to others. Momentum has taught me to reach out and go the extra mile. During one of our discussions this week, Professor Rankin told us how with everyone you

meet; you touch and make an impact in their lives. This will stick with me when I meet everyone this semester and throughout college.

One last thing I can take away from the past week is to think positively and intently. During our formal dinner on the first night, Professor Benowitz quoted Philippians 4:8. He said, "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things."

- *Amanda Hutson*; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

It was 5 AM, and the sun was barely visible. During the morning I was going through a mixture of emotions, joy and sadness, excitement and exhaustion. The road was long enough to think about all I will miss but not long enough for a proper goodbye. I was guided to my room which would become my place in this college. After I organized my room, I ate the last meal with my parents before the first break then we said goodbye. My parents left, and as I looked around I realized how I was starting a brand new chapter of my life.

The Momentum program was relentless, but I enjoyed every minute of it. Exploring, Learning and meeting new friends were the goals. During this process is when I realized I did not have to worry about making friends or about how difficult the classes will be, because I was surrounded by great classmates and by a wonderful support system. With this confidence I was determined to do well and not to be afraid of what lies down the road. I will not procrastinate. I will not neglect my responsibilities. I will not give up.

During these last couple of days I have looked inward to discover myself and what I want to do with my college opportunity. While doing this exercise it only strengthened my resolve toward my major and I may have discovered a minor which I will want to explore. This program created many memories which will be recorded in the history of this school through pictures and these essays.

During this program, we were involved in many different activities which will not be forgotten soon. The trip to Philadelphia was a learning experience combined with a great time. We gathered together to talk about the meaning of wisdom and knowledge. We were taught how to manage our time and the history of our College. The opportunity and head start that this program gave me helped me settle in without the stress of college classes or the without overwhelming feeling of meeting everyone at once.

The day started with a journey into the unknown. I have learned a valuable lesson about myself and my new school. Momentum was a decision I will never regret. Inspire, Imagine, Impact and Educate for Service, these mottos shall shape my college life and hopefully stick with me for the rest of my life. The longer this college experience lasts the more this college is starting to feel like home.

- *Lucas Klimuszka*; Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania

Living My Dream: Family is most important to me. I would take a bullet for them. Yeah, I know its cliché but, really, I have come to realize at an early age how I would have nothing without each and every one of my family members. Everyone has a hero, whether it be fictional or a real person. I was lucky enough to live with my hero for the majority of my life, my brother, Jon. The impact he has left on the nineteen years of my life is something special, because he is not the only one to impact in our relationship. I have always told him how he is my hero. The more surprising thing was the first time I heard him say the words "Anthony, I am nothing near the hero you are to me." This was the first time in my life I realized I actually do have an impact, and how I have a responsibility to take hold of it and exceed the expectations which have been given to me.

I believe learning from past experiences and learning from other people is the way to improve everyday life. Growing up with my brother is something I could talk for hours upon hours about, and the amount of trust, and respect we give each other is something I firmly believe no one else in the world can experience. Our relationship is unique. College would not be where I am at if my brother does not enforce everyday growing up how important it is to never stop trying and just being free. He was such an inspiration for me to get involved in school and always becoming a better young adult. Whether it was being in the National Honor Society, being a captain in a sport, or as simple as just doing my homework on time, he was there to tell me how if I did what I was supposed to and was myself I would make it. He knew even before I knew, how I was going to do great things.

This week has showed me how to handle my responsibilities on my own. I learned so much out of this week and I feel as if I will have an extra step above the freshman coming this Friday. Coming into Momentum I

learned how I must associate my time well and prioritize certain things. I definitely know I am going to use the information I took in this week for my next four years at Elizabethtown. I know I always have my professors to go to now if I ever have trouble in a class. If I would not have went through Momentum there is no doubt I would have been lost my first week of classes.

Today in the Dell really inspired me to think about what I was doing with my life and what my passion is. I stand firmly that my passion is definitely to impact the lives of middle or high school students the way I was growing up. I feel as if I owe it to myself, my past mentors, and my family to create pathways for kids going through middle school and high school to give them the knowledge they need to become successful. I understand my passion and I reassure myself everyday what my passion is, and this is to guide and show the right ways to grow and mature through high school.

I contribute my success up to this point mainly to my family. Without my family I would be nowhere right now. They have driven me to strive for nothing but success and it amazes me how much I have learned from them. I cannot wait to continue my years at Elizabethtown.

- *Anthony Lippy*; Hanover, Pennsylvania

Sometimes Questions lead to other questions. Eventually, the answers will come up, but is it the one I am looking for? Coming in to college undecided and getting asked constantly "What's my major," raises even more questions for me. I continuously catch myself asking, "What do I want to learn," "What am I going to pursue?" As the day of summer orientation got closer, I felt like I had a weight over my shoulders. Then once I got on campus the feeling would not be the same; all because I did not I know what I wanted to study. As the day of orientation arrived, I later find out how I am a part of the program, called Momentum.

As my parents, the other parents of the students, students, and I sat and listened to Professor Benowitz introduce the program, a sprinkle of hope had me worry free. The concern about not knowing what I wanted to major in was completely ok. The weight on my shoulders seemed to get lighter and lighter as Professor Benowitz went on with his presentation. Why? It was all due to what the program was all about. Helping the students understand what is expected and how the program can help us in our years at Elizabethtown. As well as having the opportunity to hear professors speak about their field.

Throughout the week, there was a lot of useful information thrown my way. Serving as good advice to hold for the rest of my life. Quotes from professors, which in fact sparked ideas and really made me see things with fresh eyes. Seeing how there is more which comes with civility, observation, and focus once we expose each matter individually. Though what did I really take from all this? I saw the opportunity; once opportunities come around it is up to me to take advantage. Take advantage of the help which is offered, the professors, and everything which is going to put me in a good position to succeed.

The lessons learned, views, and thoughts throughout this whole experience really help shape an idea of what the future has in store: Obstacles, struggles, zigzag routes, triumph, and obtainable goals. I reflect and think about the questions I was asking myself in the beginning, and now realize how I was looking at this whole thing the wrong way. What do I love? What is my passion? Well now, I have a clearer image of what this is.

- *Luiny Monegro*; Corona, New York

How can you prepare for something you have never experienced? I cannot count the amount of checklists I read or the number of questions I asked my sister before I came to Elizabethtown College. And yet when I arrived I still felt unprepared and out of place. When my roommate asked about Momentum I described it as a program to help First Generation College students get better acquainted to college through attending sessions where we got to meet professors and learn about a variety of classes. However, I now realize that there is much more to this program.

Before I came to the Momentum program, I planned to only take classes related to my major. But after the sessions we attended, the history filled Philadelphia tour, and the variety of activities we engaged in I am excited to branch out and consider all of my possibilities. The Momentum program has demonstrated to me the importance of chasing your dreams and finding a way to include your passion with your major. One of my biggest fears before coming to college was how I would not be smart enough to do well in my classes. However, thanks to Professor Benowitz's constant reminder about how we will do well because of hard work and effort; I feel more at ease which is something I would not have felt without the Momentum programing.

Thanks to Momentum, I have built relationships with people I would not have met outside of this program and I have made unforgettable memories.

The head start the Momentum program has made a huge impact on the rest of my college years and life. This week has allowed me to form great friendships and see what my college years will hold. I am extremely confident in my decision to attend Elizabethtown College and forever grateful the Momentum program has made my transition in college easier.

- *Janel Myers*; Ambler, Pennsylvania

Imagine, Inspire, Impact. These words have been embedded into our minds from the first email we received about the Momentum program. We as new first-year incoming students have only imagined the start of our college experience. We have imagined coming under the Elizabethtown arch and moving-in to our new homes. We are making connections with our fellow students and new professors. We are making connections with the different areas of classes we will take which we were not exposed to before. Through this experience of Momentum we have learned many ideas from Anthropology to the meaning of Zen and what is in between. We are relating these ideas to the other students in Momentum and soon the rest of our freshmen class. The rest of our class will arrive scared and unknowing, but the Momentum program has given me the opportunity to come ahead. Through the Momentum program we are making connections with the students we are meeting today, tomorrow, and for the next four years.

The morning of our last day of Momentum Professor Rankin spoke to us about the impact we can make even from a brief encounter. Two rain drops can converge for a moment and will never be the same. This story can relate to all of us and how much of an impact we can make onto all of the fellow students around us. Dr. Williams also spoke to us about our impact on this final morning. This opportunity we have been given will lead to our career and from this we will be able to make a greater impact on society. The Momentum program has been our first great opportunity from entering Elizabethtown College.

We have been making connections from our first drive under the arch on Sunday morning. We made a connection to the first Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors who jumped in our car, and then with the fellow members of our residence halls. We have related different areas of interests such as music and math, two areas we may not have done so before. This program has brought so many different ideas and concepts together, and we have only begun to comprehend the extent of the diversity.

- *Elizabeth Peters*; Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania

What inspires me? I get asked this question all the time but the answer did not really come to light until this week in the Momentum program. Throughout the week, the experience was truly unforgettable. Between experiencing the departments of the college, to meeting new people, it definitely kept us on our toes. The prompt of this essay was to address what we learned, what impact do you wish to make with what you learned and what are you going to do with what you learned. Although, this week, we learned so much; I chose to write about the topic which spoke to me the most. By far, the most important thing I learned this week is to stop and take a moment to listen and pay attention to the little things; to seek knowledge and wisdom.

As Ferris Bueller said, "life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it." We are all so used to having things done for us by our phones, computers and other people; we never really take the time to look up and take time to experience the things happening around us. Yes, I am guilty of this infraction but as of this week, I will make a point to make sure I slow down during my daily activities to notice things which I may have not noticed before.

Throughout this week, I was really opened up to what my life would be like these next four years. On our final day, we explored our majors. I noticed how my intended major had nothing do with my passion. My goal for this next year is to find my passion and find my calling. Therefore, people have told me college will be the best years of my life, I am in no rush to finish those years. Sometimes the small details can make a huge impact and I am on a mission to find those small details.

- *Lauren Poland*; York, Pennsylvania

Live in the **Momentum**. Imagine being dropped off by your parents and siblings to some unfamiliar place where you will be calling home for the next four years of your life. Imagine knowing absolutely no one. Imagine starting completely over having the opportunity to be whoever you want to be. Imagine being able to create a whole new life, make new friends, and find a family away from home.

The Momentum program has allowed me to do these things. Coming here a few days earlier than the rest of the college students has given me the opportunity to acclimate into the college atmosphere which is a whole new experience for me. I have made new friends and have learned about multiple different courses offered here at E-town. I was able to meet and have a discussion with many different professors and upperclassman about expectations of college.

Reverend Tracy Wegner Sadd gave each and every one of us a rock with one word on it. I chose the one which read: *inspire*. The Momentum program has inspired me to do something great with my life. I have been inspired to “shake the dust,” and overcome all obstacles to stand up for what I believe in. I have been inspired to succeed in my classes. To never give up. To keep trying even when you are about to crash into the hardest part in your life. I have been inspired to be the agent for change. To live in the moment. Momentum has inspired me to be self-aware and responsible for myself.

Imagine. Impact. Inspire. Why not be the agent for change in the world to impact our society for the better?

- *Alyssa Pumputis*; Westminster, Maryland

Our lives can be defined by maybe two or three life changing moments which we will never forget. How do we prepare for these moments when they occur? And how can we anticipate when these moments will occur in our lives? The answer to both of these questions are the same; we cannot prepare or predict when these life-changing moments will happen. Going into the Momentum program, not one thought came to my mind about how I would undergo a life-changing moment in this five day program. I went into Momentum with the mindset of how this program was only made to prepare students for the academic rigors of college and nothing else. Looking back at these five days, it did much more than just prepare me for school, it prepared me for life.

The director of the Momentum program, Professor Jean-Paul Benowitz, said one of the most powerful simple quotes I ever heard, “live in the moment and pay close attention to the message you want to get out of this moment.” This entire process for me has been a life-changing one: Every class session, spiritual meditation, Socratic dialogue, and inspirational lecture has been life-changing for me. It is through the Momentum program I found the confidence in myself to believe that I belong in college, while also gaining the tools needed to succeed in a college environment. Through momentum, I learned it only takes one person in your life to make a difference, and Professor Benowitz was that difference in my life.

The knowledge I gained from the Momentum program and Professor Benowitz is priceless. I plan to use all the tips and advice I was given in Momentum inside the classroom and outside as well. I have been inspired by Professor Benowitz to go above and beyond in college with my studies and my life goals. I gained life-changing knowledge from life-changing people, and I do not plan to let any of this valuable knowledge go to waste. I plan to make my impact at E-Town and on the world. I want to change the world for the better and I believe I have the power to do so through Momentum. I want to thank all of Elizabethtown College’s professors for taking the time out of their busy schedules to prepare my fellow Momentum members and I for the rigors of college. More importantly, I want to thank the founder of Momentum, Professor Benowitz, for providing me with a life-changing experience which I will never forget. Momentum is an amazing program, and I will never forget everything I learned from it.

- *Jaime Ramos*; Reading, Pennsylvania

My life started as a tragedy. My birthmother abandoned me in a small motel room with no food or human interaction when I was only a year old. I was on the verge of death when someone heard me crying and saved my life. That should have been great, but this is where my troubles began. Because of the abuse and neglect, I developed eating and auditory processing problems. These both caused many issues for me growing up. I was able to compensate for the most part, but my grades were terrible and I had trouble interacting with

other people. By the time I was seventeen, I had no job, no skills, and no education. When I realized I wanted to study Japanese, I decided I wanted to work hard to reach my goal. Getting accepted into Elizabethtown College put into reality the fact I could live the life I wanted but never thought I could have. The *Merriam Webster Dictionary* states the definition of failure is a lack of success. I am proof about how this is not true. The Momentum program helped me make friends and come out of my shell and try, try again. Most of the time when I thought about giving up, it was because I did not think I was good enough. The reason I did not think I was good enough was because I had failed in the past. In the Momentum program, I learned how even when things get difficult, you just have to keep trying. Never give up. We are all survivors. As Winston Churchill said "Success is not final, failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts."

- *Jessica Rhoades*; Townsend, Delaware

I used to live life with no purpose in mind, going through each day without paying much attention to anything around me. I used to think everything was pointless and I did not even need to exist. I used to be lost. Confused. Afraid. However what I have learned these past few days in the Momentum program: Civility, the thoughts and questions of Socrates and the simple lessons from the lectures; life is not always what it appears to be on the outside. I plan to use my experience to spread happiness worldwide and show how we can all coexist together.

The first step to coexistence and peace is the comprehension and application of civility. Civility improves personal relationships and can lead to a more peaceful environment, after all most disputes arise from misunderstandings and lack of communication. Simple civility techniques such as attentive listening and being positively involved in someone's emotions and situations can show how you care. Sometimes it is the little details which you notice about someone that can improve their day without you really trying as long as you show a little civility.

Socrates once said "Wisdom begins in wonder." I have learned these past few days how there is always more beneath the surface. I have learned how sometimes we have to look beyond what is shown, stop, and take a longer look at things. I have also learned how you have to sit down and plan your life before you jump blindly into it. Sometimes you will see things in a new and different perspective. A perspective which may be inspiring to others and a perspective which may impact someone. Most importantly it should be a perspective which sparks the mind to be creative and imagine new ideas. Ideas which will bring everyone closer together.

- *Khalil Richardson*, Edgewood, Maryland

As I walked through the history enriched city of Philadelphia my mind began to whirl... image, impact, inspire, the motto of the Momentum program. These three words, which seemed so simple when thinking only about the generic cookie cutter definition now seem so daunting. What can I do to make an impact? When at first asked I could think of nothing, you could literally hear the crickets chirping around in my head, but now after the last few days my thoughts have changed. This daunting question challenged me think, to open my eyes, my mind, and look at the little details. To think about what truly inspires and influences me, because without this how can you truly know if anything you learned can lead you to make an impact?

From the poetry and prose class Professor Walters encouraged us to follow our dreams and not be afraid to pick a major which is not only beneficial to our future, but includes our passions and interests. I was also influenced by Professor Benowitz on the Philadelphia road trip. He asked us to try new things, to make an impact, "Don't ask why? Ask why not?" Ben Franklin's wife was in "charge" of everything when Franklin was away in France. But this powerful woman did not get any credit. Here is this smart, strong woman who ran everything in her husband's absence and yet not one word is mentioned about her impact on history only her husband's. So what have I learned? I have learned to view the world with an objective view. To try new things because what is there to lose? To make an impact by influencing others to be different, because of my own experience being you, being passionate is the only way to live. We get to choose the path we take in life, so do not be afraid to add choose a path which not only holds your interest but a path can make an impact.

As I walked through the history enriched city my head began to whirl. Trapped inside my imagination picturing a time long gone by. A time where strong women stood in the background behind powerful men unsung heroes long dead. Their bones have turned to dust, yet their ideals, and values still echo across time.

Imagine, Impact, Inspire. It is our time to shine, to step outside of The norm and to try. Professor Benowitz's challenge to us not to "Ask Why but to ask why not" it is our time to step up.

-Jessica Royal; Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Picture yourself walking down a path in the middle of the woods. You come to a point where the path splits into three. One path leads to the destination you intend to reach, another goes through a part of the woods where you have never explored before, and the third leads to a part of the woods which you have already been down. Which path should you take? Logically speaking, the right path to take would be the one leading to right to where you want to go. On the other hand though, why are you in such a hurry? Why not explore the path leading to the unknown? You never know what you might find there. What you have already seen is also worth seeing again, for you may have missed something the first time. Before you leave the woods to reach your final destination, you should take your time and explore your surroundings. This is what I plan to do for my college experience, and it was the Momentum program at Elizabethtown College which has inspired me to do so. Seeing previews of different types of courses throughout the duration of this program has given me an idea of which ones I might want to try out.

Many people claim they are afraid of the unknown. I personally have experienced this fear, and it has kept me from trying out new things I may otherwise find to like. Why does the unknown scare us so much? If we do not know what it is, then how do we know if it is something to fear? If you do not explore the unknown, then you will not ever know what you might be missing. There might be something new and exciting down the path. There could be a whole new adventure, and new things just waiting to be discovered. On the other hand, there could be nothing interesting or exciting down that way. Maybe there is just more woods down that area, and you may have just wasted your time by going that way. Being given a preview of a course like anthropology or psychology has given me a better idea as to which of these courses are worth taking. There are courses I never even considered and I now think I should try out and see if I like them or not. Either outcome is possible, but you will never know which one you will get until you actually start walking down the path to the unknown. The unknown might fill us with fear, but it can also fill us with excitement and anticipation of what we might uncover.

As for the other path, we have already been down this path before so there is really no need to explore it. Are you sure about that? Are you sure you have seen everything? I thought I knew everything about the connection between math and music since this is what I did my senior project on in high school. Listening to the lecture on this subject though, I saw many things which I did recognize from my own research as well as a few things I did not think of before. If you go down that way you might see that you have missed something, or maybe even a lot of things. When you read a book for a second time, you may notice some details you did not notice the first time you read the book. The same thing can happen when you re-explore a previously explored path in the woods. You recognize what you have seen the first time you travelled down that path, and you notice things which you did not see the first time. No stone should ever be left unturned, even if you already turned it over in the past. So go back and explore the path, this way you can see the whole picture which you may or may not have failed to see the first time you were there.

I entered this program expecting only a little bit more than an early beginning to my college experience. Now that it is almost through though, I am beginning to feel the heart of an explorer beginning to grow inside of me. I am aware as to what I came here for, but I should see what new things there are for me to explore and old things to revisit and discover more about while I am here. Yes the path to your destination is clearly mapped out for you and you know exactly how you need to get there, but do not feel rushed to go directly there. Take your time and explore what you have not explored before as well as what you have seen before. You may be surprised and fascinated by seeing what you have not seen before, and you may be amazed by what you have not seen the first time you traveled down the path that you are now revisiting. Your destination will still be there when you are done exploring, it is not going anywhere. You cannot leave the woods without exploring them first. That is what woods are for after all.

- Matt Samson; Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania

“Your race begins here,” the last words said to me as a high school student were very clear that I had not yet begun the fight to find myself. They say high school is the best four years of your life and how those are the years when you find yourself, but if this is true then why was I being told that I had not even begun yet? Moving in and going through this past five days it did not really hit me until now just what they meant that day. College is scary in some aspects. You are sort of on your own and there is nobody here to tell you what to do or how to do it anymore and you have to trust yourself and you are going to make the right decisions.

Although we are going through a big transition in our lives, we are not completely alone because we have each other. Call me corny, but I have always seen family as a special thing and not only a bond of blood, but a bond of love, support, and acceptance. In a way, I view many people in this group, if not all, as another family of mine. The meaning of this program was to get us moved in and to give us an easier transition into the college experience and I can personally say I have received much more than that because I have met people I never would have otherwise and I feel completely comfortable and ready to start the college life.

There is really only one more thing I want to leave you with. This is where you begin to find yourself, not high school. These are the four years which are going to shape our future. So, let me just leave you with the four words which were left for me as I stepped out of one chapter in my life and into another. OUR race begins here, so let's do this.

- *Caila Snyder*; Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Where can I start? Is this true, I am actually in college now. This is my start of a wonderful beginning and wonderful future. I cannot even lie I was very nervous the first day but I must say Professor Benowitz and the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors altered that with their kindness. I appreciate this kindness from them on the very first day. I see very bright young men and women in my Momentum group this year. All of them are interesting, hopefully I can remember all their names. I am enduring a journey on these next couple of days and I cannot wait to experience the college atmosphere at E-Town.

Did you guys think I was finished, not really? Today was an awesome day our Momentum group went to Philadelphia. I learned how to communicate with people, and make many new friends. Learning to innovate and carry out our set goals for this year and further on in the future. I want to inspire people just like I have done in the National Honors society and Future Business Leaders of America. Learning new things about how the professors teach and what their expectations are was very important.

What am I going to do with what I have learned? I am going to inspire, inspire, and inspire others. I want to be a great role model for incoming students as well as current students. I got the word inspire not only from the Momentum informed pieces, I got this from Chaplain Sadd. She was one of our inspirational speakers for our morning sessions. To me having to pick inspire as my saying of what I have learned is very true. Inspiring others is maybe what I plan to do today, tomorrow, or even in the next four years.

I intend to make an impact here at E-Town, I am confident I will be a role model for many individuals. Do you think you are going to inspire someone as well, just think about? You want to know who inspires me. My parents, without my parents I would not even be standing here reading this to you guys. Education is very important to my parents, both my mom and dad want me to do something to inspire myself as well as lead others.

I really hope all of you do well this first year and remember my name. Just joking everyone knows my name. I will leave you with one last thing, a quote by Nelson Mandela; “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Remember this quote, thank you.

- *Alpha Sow*; Gwynn Oak, Maryland

Throughout life, you are going to go to new places and meet new people from all races and backgrounds, who are different from yourself. You will learn about new beliefs, cultures and ideas. But the question is whether you will listen to them and respect them.

From the first day in the Momentum program, it was obvious we were going to be like a little community. But just like any community there is a lot of diversity, I learned how when in a community you have to have respect for diversity. You have to raise above to get along, pay attention to others to grow a relationship, and stand outside of oneself, to understand others. With this new information, I hope to be able to

better communicate with others from different backgrounds, and I hope I will be able to listen to their ideas and beliefs to create a civil community. From this I wish others will see and follow in my lead example in realizing how everyone is equal, and everyone deserves the same amount of respect. The Momentum program has taught me how to do exactly that.

- *Jennifer Welch*; Gaithersburg, Maryland

As soon as my family and I pulled up to Elizabethtown College, I realized I was truly here. I saw everyone was grabbing their bags and totes and my heart began to leap. I could not believe I was really at my college. I started taking my totes upstairs with my family with happy thoughts and in my gaze the third floor of Myer Hall was only steps away....

Coming into college, I had no idea what to expect. From movies like *Pitch Perfect* to *Legally Blonde*, I had so many thoughts and fears. Luckily, I made friends quickly and I am so thankful for all of them. The Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors and Professor Benowitz have shown me how college is not as nerve-wracking as my thoughts led me to believe. Being able to meet all of our professors, mentors, and leaders have pushed me to explore my horizons even more. Dr. Sylvester Williams, gave me a slight interest in doing law and going to the music seminar made me feel like I was back in high school studying music theory. In my hometown I had a legacy and now I have to start all over again. I hope the Momentum program throughout the whole year will push me into doing my best because going into college with different people makes me nervous. I was worried people would judge me for being me. However being here with all of these people; have left me feeling happier than I was in high school. In Momentum, Professor Benowitz taught me to not ask why; but rather to ask, why not. This pushed me to truly make good connections, but not just with my friends, but with other professors and my mentors. It is weird, wanting to see someone and only having to walk a little bit away to talk to them. One experience I was able to have because of Momentum was being able to just talk to people. Modeled on what we learned in the Momentum sessions, my friends and I had a Socratic dialogue in our room. We as a group, coming together as a family have made this whole experience worthwhile...

...So even on my third time up three flights of stairs when my doubts, the love and care from every one of our Kinesis and Resident Assistants put into helping every single one of us into our dorms made me feel like Elizabethtown College was and always will be my true home. Thank you.

- *Brice Williams*; Chambersburg, Pennsylvania

“You are not defined by your past, but rather you are meant to grow from it. Do not allow yourself to be stuck behind the wall of self-consciousness, which you have put up. Do not let your past actions become a pattern and become your true self. This is a new beginning. Be the best person you want the world to see.” This was the last thing my sister told me before dropping me off at Elizabethtown College. The fear of meeting new students, a new roommate, new teachers, and a new home was terrifying. After my week of the Momentum program, I was changed from my high school state of mind to a more expressive and confident person. Being surrounded by the diverse community I was continually shown how you should strive to be true to oneself and not conform to society beliefs and narrow viewpoint. Momentum encouraged me to open up to those around me, and find the best attributes of myself. The faculty and staff inspired me through lectures, literature, and personal connections to come to my own conclusions, and opinions, and not just follow what I am told. They encouraged me to look at how my intended major and my passion would impact other people. Now that I have had the Momentum experience I have been inspired, impacted, and encouraged to imagine by Elizabethtown College and all its treasures.

- *Hannah Wood*; Keene, New Hampshire

My best friend Alex taught me how life is full of possibilities and dreams. I have learned life is not something old and torn which can be refurbished, life is here and now. Life is right in front of me and I have taken my life for granted in the past and he showed me without knowing it how I have talent and skills I cannot just pass by.

Alex has taught me what a real friend is and I learned how no matter where I go in life my friends are right by my side. Alex was born August 7th and was killed November 11, 2011 when I was in tenth grade. In life I have learned you have to take full advantage of the opportunities presented to me because you never know

when you will have another chance. The Momentum program was one of these rare opportunities in life which I wanted to take full advantage of.

There were two things I learned these short few days during Momentum: friendship and passion. Our family is not here to pick us up when we are down or here to encourage us but as my favorite quotes from Pinterest says, "Friends become our chosen family." Friends in life come and go but you always gain more impact your life in different ways good or bad. I hope to make an impact on other lives through the friendships I make with them.

Now for the second thing I learned; passion, I learned the only way you will succeed with success is to do something you love. Your job should not feel like work. I want to be the rare individual who wakes up every morning and is excited to go to their job. I really want to major in business and the Momentum program really helped me be confident in my decision of being a business major. I feel prepared to start and finish this new quest in life. I feel like an emperor, I feel like a young Benjamin Franklin, and I know I am Elizabethtown College's class of 2018.

- *Chae Yocum*; Reading, Pennsylvania

ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

KINESIS

STUDENT REFLECTIVE ESSAYS AUGUST 2014



*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)

Last year, I was just like every other student coming into the Momentum program; feeling nervous, scared and having no idea what to expect. Little did I know how the first ten days of my freshman year would transform me as a person. I made great friends, met faculty and staff, and learned so much about the college I would have not known if I did not join the Momentum program. This program was life changing for me. At the end of the program, we all had the opportunity to apply to become a Kinesis Peer Advisor for the following year. I loved all the help I got from my Kinesis and realized this was an opportunity I did not want to miss out on. I wanted to have the same impact on incoming first year students which I received from my Kinesis.

Being a Kinesis transformed me even more as a person. These five days were incredible. As a Kinesis, I played the role by helping students to imagine where they want to be in life, helping them figure out what impact they will have on others, and helping them to form skills to inspire others. This is exactly what I feel I did. The Momentum students who arrived here early Sunday morning are completely different people than the ones who stand upon us now. I could tell the students were real nervous walking in, not quite ready to begin college yet.

Every day the students began talking more and more to one another and asking me questions about college and telling me more about themselves. On the second night at dinner, I realized all their fears were beginning to go away. They were comfortably sitting with new students and smiling and giggling as they began to know one another. At this moment, I realized this was the exact impact I wanted to have on these students. They were at college and beginning to break out of their shells; one of the hardest things for an incoming first year student to do. The students became more engaged with the college and staff. The students also knew how they could come to a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor and talk with them about anything. Whether it be about school, clubs, classes, or their social life, I knew they felt like they could come to us for help.

My experience as a Kinesis this year, is one I will never forget. I know I was part in helping these students find their place and belonging. Even though the week is over, I know my relationship with these students will not change. I will still help them with any questions or concerns they may have and let them know I am just a phone call away. I am so excited to see these students grow and become part of Elizabethtown College. They are all great people and can do great things in life. I am also very excited to meet with my students and continue guiding them through their first year of college.

-- *Emily Brunell*; Bangor, Pennsylvania

Last year before the Momentum Program began, I can honestly say I was somewhat nervous and scared about how I would handle being a Kinesis leader. After having a year under my belt, I was nothing but excited for the Momentum Program to begin this year. Normally, college students do not want to cut their summer short to come back to school early but this was not the case with me. I was excited to come back so the Momentum Program could begin which would allow me to meet all the new and interesting Momentum students.

The Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors are role models for the Momentum students, and our leadership skills were put to the test this week in various situations. This included making sure the group stayed together and how they were attentive while in Philadelphia and making sure the schedule was followed correctly for the Momentum program during the week. I learned about how being a good leader includes being able to be a good listener and not just someone who is vocal. I loved the fact so many of the Momentum students felt comfortable enough to talk to me about what was bothering them, if anything was bothering them, and that I could provide them with the help they needed in order to make them feel more at home.

Life is all about meeting new people and making connections and I met an incredible group of Momentum students this year. Not only were they a fun group but they were also very inspiring. Some of the students had hard pasts but this did not stop them from succeeding in what they want to do in life which was inspiring to me. This goes to show how the Momentum program never stops giving back to you, even after you are finished with the first week of Momentum. The program helped me when I was a Freshman, and it is continuing to give back to me as I am entering my Junior year of college. I could not be more grateful for being able to take part in this program and I am looking forward to being a part of the program again next year.

-- *Tasnim Chowdhury*; Hawthorne, New Jersey

This past week overall for the Momentum program was a huge learning experience. I learned how the world can be as big as you make it. When you are walking in the world it is easy to be oblivious to your surroundings. This makes us so selfish in our lives, when it can be so much more. Mentoring those incoming freshmen helped me realize this. Not just as a part of our school, but as cliché as it sounds, a part of the future.

It was very humbling, in that I wanted to make the students the best they could be at college. This may be because I saw bits and pieces myself in each of them. The questions, concerns, I had they are all having. I remember myself grasping for some sort of foothold to steady myself in the new environment I had found myself. The Momentum program gave me that. They are looking for the same thing. Not only this; but they want to be the best THEY can be at college. Showing that many of them will not take this experience for granted. They and I can come from a handicapped, crippled, and disadvantaged points of life. It is not really fair, but that is life. All looking for the opportunity to be the best WE can be. They are all different walks and lives, but at the same point in life; a new chapter. The best thing about this is that one can write whatever they want in that chapter. They all decided to start this chapter of their lives with the Momentum program. The opportunity is indeed endless. Causing a great deal of inspiration.

I found that when the Momentum students were reading their essays out loud, I felt an immense amount of pride and inspiration in myself. I just wanted to hear more and more. I felt the compassion for each of these freshmen, which I did not think I would feel.

With this my impact is known. I am and will give them everything I know to help them their first year. They deserve it. Everyone does who works to get this far in life. As a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor I have realized the world is growing with or without me. And if I chose to help foster it, I myself will only grow more.

- *Garrett Clark*; Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

Last year as I wrote my essay reflecting what I learned as a Momentum student, it never occurred to me how different the experience could be as a Kinesis. When I accepted the role as a Kinesis leader for the Momentum Class of 2018 I did not anticipate the experience which was ahead of me. Being a leader in this program really gave me an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of a group of very talented young people. The themes of imagine, inspire and impact really came back to me in a new perspective this year in a refreshing way.

Imagine, this was very impactful in my mentorship this week. I began to imagine the new possibilities I could apply with my major as I learned fresh perspectives from professors. Reverend Sadd giving her inspirational talks every morning made me rediscover what imagination was. I used the information from my training to help the Momentum students imagine what their college experience would be. This year Professor Benowitz said on the Dell how we needed to imagine what we really wanted to follow and study for our lives rather than doing what was pressed upon us. This enabled me to imagine a career path following my dreams but incorporating some practicality. This growing mindset really gave me the opportunity to connect with the students.

Inspire, this was one of the most important things the program and the Kinesis Peer Academic Advisors wanted to accomplish this week. The students entering the college needed to be inspired to really reach for their goals and know there is a support system waiting for them. I discussed with many students what inspires them and how those inspirations can shine in college. Professor Besse in a Socratic session had students go around in a circle and reveal their inspirations and what made them their heroes. Even as this was my second year in the program I still learned new inspirations and how they made me who I am. Using this newfound knowledge I talked with students about their inspirations. The students in this program had so many different inspirations and seeing them inspired me as a leader.

Regarding impact, I feel as though as a Kinesis this is the most important. I wanted to impact these students in a positive way and set them up for a successful education. Throughout the week I continually gave advice to students on how they could improve their college experience. The program provided really helpful information as to how the students could make their own impact on the college. They discussed ways they could not only impact the campus physically but also scholastically. I believe with the information presented this week and the Kinesis's continued support, these students will have a large impact in whatever they follow.

This week has truly developed my leadership skills. Last year Momentum made such a huge impact on my college career and this year the impact was renewed. I grew as a person this week and really connected with some great people. It was refreshing to see so many people my age are excited about their education. Getting to give my personal accounts of my experience on campus thus far really allowed me to impact others as well as analyze myself. This program is genuinely inspiring and the difference it makes in young students lives entering Elizabethtown College is unlike anything I have ever witnessed.

- *Dakota Findley*; Quarryville, Pennsylvania

This year starts my third year being involved with the Momentum Program. It is hard to express everything the program, as a first-year and as a Kinesis, has given me because I am constantly realizing new ways in which it has shaped my character as a young adult. When I first went through the program two years ago I was not aware of the impact the program would have on me as a person. I came to college thinking I would keep my head down and just work hard to get good grades. Momentum has shown me there is so much more to college, and to life. While I continue to work hard every day to keep my grades up I have now opened up to the idea that I can be a leader on campus to help not only myself but others.

Everyone says how in college you find yourself. This program has showed me not only what my full potential is but also how to reach it. Being a leader is about bettering yourself and working hard to better the lives of those around you. Everyone you meet throughout your life impacts you; sometimes in a good way and sometimes in a bad way. If I have even the smallest impact on the Momentum Students then I feel my job is done.

Meeting the Momentum students is one of the most exciting things about coming back to school in the fall for me. I love to see how excited, and nervous, they are to start college. Starting a new school in a new town can be very overwhelming. Helping students move in, get adjusted to their classes, and with the day to day challenges they face in college is one of the most fulfilling things I have ever done. The Momentum Program has given me so much and I hope that through being a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor I have been able to give something back.

- *Zoey Lee*; Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

I was so happy to once again be a part of the program and help the new students adjust to college life. This program helped me when I was a first-year and I enjoy the chance to give back. It was a little strange only having five days this year but we made it work. The students still got to experience everything in years past. I enjoy learning about the students because they all bring a different perspective and background with them and I learn as much from the students as they do from us. This group had a little more people from different backgrounds and place and I think it allowed students to see how others live and where they come from.

Throughout the week the students are reminded of the motto of the Momentum program which is imagine, inspire and impact and I also try to think of these things each year and how I will achieve them. I never imagined I would get the chances I have had at college and a lot of this is due to the Momentum program and can keep imagining what I want to do because of it. I hope this is by doing the program and working as a Kinesis I can inspire others to either follow in my footsteps or do something else which makes them happy. I plan to continue inspiring during my advising meetings with my mentees. I know these students and I have been impacted by this program and I hope I have impacted these students throughout week. Even if being a Kinesis is the only impact I leave on this campus then I know it was worthwhile.

- *Michaela Lehane*; Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania

As a Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor and upperclassman, there is an immense amount of information and guidance to offer the incoming Momentum students. Although this is true, as my second year as a Kinesis begins, I realized despite having learned and comprehended exactly what the program entailed; it nonetheless continues to inspire me. Having the opportunity to be a part of these freshmen's transition into college is beyond explanation. The wonder, excitement, and nervousness which plagues them until they fully experience their first year at Elizabethtown is a transformation which never ceases to astound me. The Momentum Program installs a sense of confidence and an exhilarating rush of determination leading individuals into a stage of seeking and finding oneself through education.

Through a variety of academic sessions, from Greek mythology to the connection between Religion and Science; critical thinking is emphasized, and even I find myself engrossed. Many of the discussions are aimed so the Momentum students examine their passions, and how they can ultimately provide a career to follow. In the first year or two at college, life can appear to be directionless, lagging, fear-filled, and purposeless. What I find to be very crucial as well as exciting is how many of these students feel this way before coming into the program, yet leave on a distinguished note with how their journey is beginning. Goals are born, friendships are formed, and relationships with professors on campus are established. An impact is definitely made and it fills them with courage; without this program I would not have sought out leadership opportunities on campus and I would have never had the chance to contribute nor appreciate the little details adding up to the big picture.

Education is an important aspect which many of us take for granted, and through this experience I believe students grasp how college is about obtaining knowledge and wisdom in order to impact and inspire others.

- *Alysha Lilly*, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

I am a work in progress. I am constantly changing and in many ways, improving. This year is my fourth year being a part of the Momentum program, and I can see the ways in which I am different from the person who joined Momentum's Alpha Class of students. I am much more confident than I was walking up to the tent in Schlosser Loop, frightened and excited, just over three years ago. I am a happier person, a better communicator, and a more experienced leader than ever before, and Momentum has made all the difference.

From the exciting move-in day and tearful goodbyes to students' families, to the academic sessions which help to prepare students for the rigors of college academia and connect them to faculty; and from the evenings spent participating in group activities and bonding with the first-years to the cross-cultural and historical trip around Philadelphia, this year's Momentum week has continued many of the traditions of years past. Momentum Week also continued a custom of making me a more effective leader. I have made connections with the students during the five days and I am confident I will spend a third year building on those connections to support and advise the students in their first year of college. To be a Kinesis each year is a privilege.

The past three years, and undoubtedly the one which lies ahead, have been the best years of my life. I have changed and grown, thanks in large part to the people I have met in my time as a Momentum student and Kinesis advisor. Stephanie Rankin, in her morning discussions on civility, quoted Peggy Tabor Millin: "We never touch people so lightly that we do not leave a trace." Every Momentum student over all four years has left an indelible trace on my heart, and I am better for it.

- *Shanise Marshall*; Red Lion, Pennsylvania

Coming into the Momentum pre-orientation program as a Kinesis student leader I was filled with anticipation, because this year I would be returning not as a Momentum student, but as a student leader, a potential role-model for the incoming Momentum students.

The spring semester training and the summer days of training really allowed me to get to know the other Kinesis on a different level. I was able to bond with them on our trip to Hershey Park and felt our friendship blossom in those two days.

The first day of the Momentum program I felt a surge of excitement rush through me as we awaited the arrival of the students. As we moved the students and their families into their dorms and residence halls I noticed how appreciative the families of the students of the Momentum students were to have us to guide them to their dorms.

Throughout the five days of Momentum I found myself really getting to know the students and I felt myself growing as a leader more and more each day. Whenever I would ask the students about the program and what they thought of it, they would say it was one of the best decisions they made. They would also mention how their confidence grew and how they were ready to take on the college world.

I am happy I was able to take this journey with them and introduce them to Elizabethtown College. Joining and be a part of this program is one of the best decisions I have made. It has been rewarding and extremely fulfilling impacting the students, inspiring them to be the best they can be.

- Nelli Orozco; Reading, Pennsylvania

Confidence; A simple three-syllable word which has meant a lot to me these past three years with the Momentum Program. My freshman year in the program I gained so much confidence I became a different person than I was in high school. Last year as a leader I continued to gain confidence through having to take leadership and responsibility. This year, that continues to hold true. I found myself more willing to be vocal and take initiative this year with leading the group around or explaining what we would be doing as a group. In high school I would never have had the confidence to stand in front of a large group and ask them to line up and follow me somewhere, but this week I did that several times.

This confidence has begun to translate into other areas of my life and made me a better person overall. With this confidence I have felt comfortable joining the Called to Lead Program, and working as their Student Assistant. The added confidence this year will just help me to feel more comfortable in the role as the Student Assistant and continue to work and help the Called to Lead program thrive. I have also found that at other jobs I have had during the school year and over the summers this confidence has helped me to not just blindly listen to what my coworkers ask me to do, but to sometimes put my input in if I feel that what they are doing could be better being done differently.

Additionally, the confidence I continue to build on this year will help me to help make the Momentum Society fundraising efforts a success. In past years I have been a little more tentative to really reach out to the Momentum students and push my fundraising efforts; however this year with my added confidence I will make sure these efforts are successful at raising money for the program.

My confidence I have gained through all three years, but most specifically this second year as a Kinesis Advisor will propel me to make an impact on the Elizabethtown College campus through Called to Lead, The Momentum Society, and Momentum Program. I am no longer the shy girl I was when I first stepped onto the campus, nor the quiet girl from last year. I now have energy and confidence to make my ideas known on this campus that will hopefully leave a lasting impact for years to come.

- Sara Poole; Derwood, Maryland

My journey from Momentum student, to Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor was nothing less than amazing. After Momentum ended in 2013, I could not help but feel how my involvement in Momentum was far from over. Through my first semester I met with my Kinesis Peer Academic Advisor and their guidance not only helped me get through my rough transition into college, but also gave me support and a familiar face when I would have been lacking otherwise.

During my meeting with my Kinesis last semester, I was given the tools to not only succeed academically at Elizabethtown, but I also learned how to thrive socially, and ended up having a great first year. He taught me ways to have a safe, fun time while also making sure my work was getting done and that I was focusing mostly on school work. I am not sure my transition into college would have been as smooth without him. After realizing the impact my Kinesis had on me, I was inspired to be involved in the Momentum program for the rest of my years at Elizabethtown.

When I heard about the Liberal Arts Living Learning Community in Myer Hall, I was anxious to be the Resident Assistant for that hall. I remember attending Fantabulous Friday events during the year where different faculty members talked to students about their classes and what they love to teach. Seeing a lot of Momentum students attending those events assured me that if I was able to be the RA for that hall, I could not only promote the program around campus, but also within the Momentum students. I was even more thrilled when I was given the chance to become a Kinesis Peer academic advisor as well! I hoped that I could impact my Momentum students as much as my Kinesis did with me my first year.

At the start of Momentum week, I was nervous for what the week would bring. I have to admit that I was worried I would let my students down, and not be helpful in their transition to college. Once the students arrived and I started meeting everyone I was very pleased, quickly realizing that the Kinesis training sessions I attended in the spring semester were really paying off. I was completely prepared for the week and what it would bring. I could not have imagined having a better Momentum week. The students had a great week, but overall all I think the Kinesis had just as good a week as the students. Personally, I am beyond excited to start meeting with the Momentum students I will be mentoring, and I know that with the support and tools I have received through the Momentum program, my mentees will succeed in their first year of college. The Momentum program inspired me to not only do well in my first year, but to make sure that I come back and help the following cohorts succeed as well.

- Amanda Robbins; Elkins, Pennsylvania

