

# Katie Westermayer

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Katie Westermayer

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## Welcome to my eFolio!

I am a senior at Minnesota State University, Mankato and will graduate early in December 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in both Psychology and Spanish. I have always enjoyed helping people, especially children, and feel that by becoming an elementary school counselor, I can continue to help others. By studying Spanish, I will not only be able to communicate with students and parents more effectively but I will better understand the Spanish culture and community.



## Mission Statement

I believe in working hard, acting responsibly, and communicating honestly. Whether it is in academics, my work life, or my personal life, I will abide by these principles in order to make a positive impact on the world. I wish to use these qualities to bring more joy and happiness to those around me.

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## About Katie

- Senior at MSU-Mankato
- Enjoys working out, reading, watching movies, and laughing
- Works as a Special Education Paraprofessional at a local elementary school
- Studies Psychology and Spanish
- Often volunteers and gives back to her community
- Studied abroad in Cuenca, Ecuador for 8 weeks during the summer of 2013
- Desires to become an elementary school counselor

## Mission Statement

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## Values

I am a dedicated, motivated individual who values:

**Responsibility** to my work and those around me.

**Empathy and compassion** to those both near and far away.

**Ambition** to learn, grow, and develop both academically and professionally.

**Service** to my community and humankind.

## Goals

### **Academic Goals:**

- I will continue to strive to do my best. Specifically, I will work hard at maintaining a high GPA while I actually learn the material I study in my courses.
- I will develop my research skills through my participation on Dr. Carlos Panahon's research team.
- I will graduate MSU-Mankato with a Bachelor of Arts in both Psychology and Spanish in December 2014.
- I will attend an accredited graduate school in the fall of 2015 in order to pursue School Counseling licensure and Clinical Mental Health Counseling licensure.

### **Professional Goals:**

- I will continue to positively influence those I work with by demonstrating the necessary skills and values a good leader practices.
- I will use the skills I developed during my study abroad experience in Ecuador to further advance my global citizenship skills.

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## High School

I attended Mankato West High School in Mankato, Minnesota from 2007-2011. I was involved in many activities, such as Key Club, National Honor Society, Scarlet Ambassadors, Speech, Drama Club, Band, and Link Crew. I took several Advanced Placement courses including Art History, U.S. Government and Politics, and Language and Literature. While attending school, I volunteered at a local independent senior citizen's living community, Old Main Village, and worked as a cashier and courtesy worker at a local grocery store.

On June 9, 2011, I graduated from Mankato West with a 3.992 GPA and was among the top 1% of my class.

## College

I began attending Minnesota State University, Mankato in the fall of 2011. I chose MSU-Mankato for a variety of reasons, including its welcoming atmosphere and its Honors program. While at MSU-Mankato, I am pursuing a major in Psychology as well as a major in Spanish. When I'm not attending classes, working, or studying, I am often involved with a variety of activities on campus, such as Honors Program activities or church events.

### Mankato West High School



[www.whs.isd77.org/](http://www.whs.isd77.org/)

### Minnesota State University, Mankato



[www.mnsu.edu](http://www.mnsu.edu)

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## Career Portfolio

I am a responsible, caring individual who is passionate about helping others. I hold strong communication skills and the motivation to help improve the lives of others. I have spent hundreds of volunteer hours caring for children and encouraging them to grow and develop. I have received various scholarships, grants, and research grants at the state and national levels due to my academic successes and volunteer work. I also hold a firm belief that all individuals deserve the right to a happy life, no matter their circumstances. I am able to offer my eagerness to learn, my compassion for helping others, and my academic knowledge. I am a responsible and hard-working leader and am capable of working on a team or independently.

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## The Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato

The [Honors Program](#) at Minnesota State University, Mankato was designed to allow students to learn at higher levels with other motivated students while developing their leadership, research, and global citizenship competencies. I decided to be a part of MSU-Mankato's Honors program because ever since I was young, I have sought out challenges for myself, both personally and academically. Throughout middle school and high school, I took advanced or Advanced Placement courses in order to push myself to produce quality work while learning in a higher thinking environment. I wanted to continue that pattern of higher level thinking throughout my college years. At MSU-Mankato, I am able to learn about important skills that will help me throughout the rest of my life while developing relationships with fellow students and my professors.

## Honors Learning Plan

As part of the Honors Program requirements, I needed to complete a [learning plan](#) each year in order to ensure that I was working on my leadership, research, and global citizenship skills both inside and outside of the classroom. In my plan, I listed activities that I would complete each year in order to demonstrate my desire to grow and develop in these competencies. Creating these plans allowed me to create specific goals that truly helped me to further advance these specific skills.

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## Leadership

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## Leadership Philosophy

One's leadership philosophy can make a monumental impact on the way she is capable of influencing others and making a difference in the world. I believe that a leader is more than a simple dictator. She is an interpreter, a motivator, and a supporter of one or more people. I also believe in doing several things as a leader, including being mindful of the implications behind what a leader is actually saying, understanding the impact of supporting others while leading, and recognizing the importance of delegating leadership tasks.

Through the observation of other leaders and my own experiences, I have found that how a leader says something can have more of an impact than what they actually say. Through my job, I have come to the understanding that causing a sense of distrust and fear between a leader and a group of people is not a way in which I would like to lead others. I feel that when leading, it is best to take the time from the start to invest and empower others rather than instill fear and suspicion. I have found this method to be effective by the amount of cooperation and openness I experience with my coworkers. Because I choose not to use threats or forms of humiliation, my fellow coworkers trust me and work more cooperatively.

I have also learned that being a leader doesn't necessarily mean that one must tell others what to do and how to do it. I have been able to lead others through supporting them in their choices, personally acting responsibly and appropriately in situations, and encouraging others through mentoring. I have practiced this type of leadership through various volunteer opportunities, such as at [Royal Family Kids'](#) and through the [Brother/Sister program](#) at the YMCA. In these situations, leading by example can often make a big impact. While leading children, I have found that they really do pick up on a lot of the verbal and nonverbal exchanges that occur between others. When I modeled appropriate behavior and encouraged them to do the same through either of these pathways, I noticed positive changes in my mentees as well.

Lastly, I strongly believe in sharing one's power as a leader through the delegation of additional leadership roles. Although one may be the primary leader in situation, it is important for her to, at times, transfer leadership tasks onto other, responsible members. At times when I have led, I have wanted to do everything necessary in order to complete the task, but have ended up exhausted and frustrated when doing so. I have learned, especially as a [Second Assistant Manager](#), the importance of breaking up tasks in order to more efficiently complete the project at hand. Doing this allows others to practice their own leadership capabilities while contributing their ideas for the duration of the project.

## Leadership Paper

 [FYEX leadership paper.docx](#)

In my paper on leadership, I explore the influential leaders in my life and how I have developed some of their leadership traits. This paper helped me identify some of the qualities that both have been passed down to me from my parents and have helped create me into the person that I am today.

## Five Strengths

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### [FYEX five strengths.docx](#)

During my FYEX course in the fall of 2011, I read "Strengths Based Leadership" by Tom Rath and Barry Conchie. This book helped me discover what leadership qualities I have and how I can balance out these skills by working with people who have different leadership qualities than I do. I took the StrengthsFinder 2.0 test to discover my top five strengths. These strengths were woo, harmony, empathy, learner, and discipline. Overall, I believe that these strengths describe me very well.

## Mentor Philosophy

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### [Final Mentor Philosophy ACTUAL.docx](#)

As part of the HONR 401: Developing Your Mentor Philosophy course, I created an overview of my mentor philosophy. This philosophy will help me be a better mentor and leader.

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## Research Philosophy

Research goes beyond merely investigating a topic and then reporting it. Successful research allows the researcher learn more about the world in an ethical manner, connect ideas and consequences, and disseminate the results. In today's world, researchers are able to connect across the globe in the pursuit of knowledge, so it is absolutely vital that researchers have the necessary skills to do so. I believe in the importance of selecting an intriguing research topic, the vitality of research teamwork, and the advantages of networking.

With my participation in the [Honors World Dance course](#), I was able to investigate a topic I had a large interest in, the tango, and how women were able to use this dance to overcome society's gender roles. This project allowed me to understand first-hand the importance of researching a topic that interested me. Because I held a passion for this Latin American dance and the culture it represented, I enjoyed finding out further information about this topic. I took this newfound knowledge with me and continued to pursue research opportunities that interested me over the remainder of my undergraduate experience.

I also learned the importance of working with a strong team of research colleagues while under the direction of influential faculty mentors. Under the direction of Dr. Emily Stark, my research colleagues and I were able to work on a project involving the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation and their work with the then-pilot program of [Parent Aware](#). Working on this project allowed me to gain the foundation necessary of conducting, analyzing, and presenting research, which would later aid me when I was a member of Dr. Chip Panahon's research team. As an undergraduate researcher on his team, I developed the project, [A Bibliometric Analysis of the School Psychology International Journal](#), which was then presented at the local and national levels before being published in MSU-Mankato's Journal of Undergraduate Research. Working on a team with motivating and encouraging members allowed me to understand how manageable conducting and publishing research could be, especially when working with others.

Lastly, I developed an understanding of the advantages of networking and how it can assist individuals and teams when conducting research. While on Dr. Panahon's research team, I was introduced to the possibility of working with fellow colleagues from across the nation when conducting projects, which ultimately permitted our team to develop research projects. While presenting research at the local, state and national levels, I met fellow researchers and learned about other projects developing nationwide. These research presentation opportunities stimulated conversations that promoted growth and exploration both inside and outside of my primary fields of interest.

Overall, I feel that my ignorance of research was a large contributor to my fear and lack of interest in this field. I was unaware how broad the term "research" truly is and how many opportunities to explore, network, and learn are actually involved in the process. By working together with other scholars towards the common goal of solving a research question, presenting, and publishing our findings, I have demonstrated my capability of

fitting well within this professional community of scholars.

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## Global Citizenship Philosophy

With help from technological and communication advancements, our world has become more connected and interdependent than ever before, making it vital to become a global citizen. In order to have successful relationships while maintaining a peaceful environment, it is crucial that individuals know how to communicate interculturally and understand how one's culture can play a role in these transactions. The world will be a better place when people are able to understand culture, or the unique characteristics shared by a distinctive group of individuals that often consist of elements such as beliefs, values, ways of living, language, religion, and the like. Through various courses and experiences, I have learned that in order to become a successful global citizen, one must have a foundation of understanding culture, have the ability to successfully communicate with others, and have an intrinsic motivation to explore other cultures.

As in life, it is vital to build a strong foundation before creating anything intended to last. By taking courses such as [Honors World Dance in Cultural Perspective](#), [Honors Intercultural Communication](#), and various [Spanish courses](#), I was educated on cultures that differed from my own. Through the exploration of alternative beliefs in things such as religion, values, and personal expression, I became mindful of the unique differences in our world today. Having the building blocks of these cultural elements allowed me to form the foundation of my overall understanding as to what consists of culture.

As a global citizen, it is fundamental that one has the capabilities of communicating with others from different cultures. By having the ability to successfully communicate through both verbal and nonverbal communication, intercultural interactions have less misunderstanding and more opportunity for growth and development. By studying the Spanish language, I have had many opportunities to communicate with Spanish speaking individuals. Speaking Spanish has helped me communicate in a variety of situations, and has even led to me easing transaction experiences with customers at my workplace.

While it is not possible to learn every form of language, it is critical global citizens attempt to understand how different cultures communicate and reflect that knowledge in their own intercultural interactions.

Lastly, as a global citizen, I strongly believe in having the intrinsic motivation to explore cultures and learn about other ways of life. One should be willing to accept opportunities to learn about the ideas and values of other people and should eagerly embrace and investigate ways to do so. My personal desire to explore other cultures allowed me to [study abroad](#) in Cuenca, Ecuador as well as to take a mission trip to a [Crow reservation](#) in Montana. Both opportunities exposed me to alternative ways of thinking, doing, and feeling, which allowed me to probe deeper into these cultures. A global citizen is open to exploring cultures and strives to reach the ultimate goal of adapting to a new culture.

Overall, as a global citizen, I will use my skills and experiences to help me continue to learn about cultures, master the ability to communicate interculturally, and continue to explore other cultures. Doing so will not only enable me to help a broader range of individuals while working in my field, but it will also permit me to be more open to new

ideas and ways of thinking.

**"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." -Mark Twain**

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## Staying Involved

Ever since I was a child, I have been involved in a variety of activities. From horse camp to swimming lessons, I grew up learning about the world around me. As I got older, I began to understand the importance of staying involved, understanding more about the world, and meeting new people.

While I attend MSU-Mankato, it is essential for me to get involved with activities both on campus and off campus. By participating in activities that interest me, I can continue to learn about concepts both inside and outside of my fields of study. Staying involved has also allowed me to network with other like-minded students and create friendships that I wouldn't have been able to otherwise.

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## Scholarships and Grants

### ***Hy-Vee Foundation Scholarship***

I have been honored to have been one of eighty people from across the nation to win this scholarship in 2012, 2013, and 2014. This scholarship is for Hy-Vee employees who are high school seniors or college students. The money awarded to me has gone to fund my tuition.

### ***2013 Phi Kappa Phi Study Abroad Grant-Larry Sommers Study Abroad Grant***

I was one of fifty people from across the United States to receive this grant. The money from this award was used to help fund my study abroad trip in Ecuador. I volunteered at La Esperanza, a home for children who had been abused, neglected, or abandoned, during my time there as well.

### ***2011 Music Department Talent Grant***

I received this talent grant for playing flute. As part of the grant, I was active in MSU-Mankato's Wind Ensemble for the 2011-2012 school year.

### ***2011 Maverick Scholarship***

After I applied to MSU-Mankato, I automatically received this generous scholarship due to my GPA and class rank.

### ***Research Funding***

During the Spring of 2014, I received a research grant from MSU Mankato's Undergraduate Research Center for my work on the [Bibliometric Analysis of the School Psychology Journal](#), as supervised by Dr. Chip Panahon.

My research partners and I received the following grants for our work on [Heroism and Gender Roles](#) during the Spring of 2014:

- Minnesota State Foundation Student Research Award
- Research and Professional Development Grant through the President's Commission on the Status of Women at MSU-Mankato
- Special Funding Grant from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at MSU-Mankato
- Research Grant from MSU Mankato's Undergraduate Research Center
- Research Grant from Psi Chi
- Special Stipend Grant from MSU's URC

In the Spring of 2013, I received a grant from MSU Mankato's Undergraduate Research Center for my research regarding the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation's project on [Parent Aware](#).

## Awards and Recognition

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### ***Dean's List***

I have been on the Dean's List every semester I have attended MSU-Mankato, which includes Fall 2011 to the present day. I have qualified for the Dean's List by obtaining and maintaining a high GPA.

### ***Research Awards***

My research project regarding the [Bibliometric Analysis of the School Psychology International Journal](#) was published in [MSU-Mankato's Journal of Undergraduate Research](#) during the Summer of 2014.

At the 2014 Undergraduate Research Symposium, my research partners and I were awarded the URS Outstanding Presenter Award for our presentation on [Heroism and Gender Roles](#).

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## Thanks for visiting!

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