



Welcome! My name is Jacob Tschann and I am currently a student at Minnesota State Mankato and am enrolled in the Honors Program here. I am originally from Zumbrota, Minnesota. I am pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education for Mathematics. In the future, I hope to influence many people with my teaching and build relationships with my students. Thank for taking the time to get to know me a little more and for taking a look at my online portfolio.

## MISSION STATEMENT

My mission here at Mankato is to meet and exceed my three Honors competency areas as well as have success in and out of the classroom.

# ABOUT ME



## My Family

I come from a bigger family. I have two brothers and two sisters. My mom and dad are named Monica and Paul. My two brothers are older and named Juan and Isaac. Juan is adopted from Honduras. He also has three little girls. My older sister is named Emma and my younger sister is named Rachel. I am fourth out of five. Here is a recent picture we all took together.

# HONORS

## MNSU Honors Program

The Minnesota State University, Mankato Honors Program is a program that focuses on developing three competencies: Leadership, Research, and Global Citizenship. I can't really give you the reason why I joined the Honors Program but somehow, I checked a box that said I would be in it. The Honors program has done so many great things for me. It has helped me stay on track with school, become competent in three areas that I might not have otherwise, and I have met my best friends through it. I know much of what I did in the Honors Program will be of benefit to me in the future. As I was reflecting back on all the things I have gone through in the Honors Program, I realized this one of the main things the Honors Program taught me; to reflect. Reflecting is a powerful tool that I know will help me be successful in whatever I do. The Honors Program is not about making your college years as difficult as possible, its about teaching you to become a better person ready to thrive in the world today.

# LEADERSHIP REFLECTION

I came into college with a solid idea of what leadership was because of many of the things I was involved with in high school. My freshman year, I wrote the Leadership Essay for my Honors [First Year Experience](#) Class, where I came to better understand what leadership was and how it affected me. In the class, I also discovered my strengths lie with relationship building and I needed to improve on the authoritative side. I learned a lot about what it meant to lead but still lacked greatly in actual leadership experience. I knew there was a lot more to leadership that I still had to discover but I think this class helped me put me in the right position to start my journey as a good leader.

My sophomore year, I took [Developing Your Mentor Philosophy](#) class with Ashley Kanak. Developing my mentor philosophy was something very new to me but I think it helped me understand more about who I was as a leader. Before taking the class, I had multiple experiences as a mentor, so I knew how to be a mentor but I had never put into words. In “My Mentor Philosophy” paper, I touched on how I discovered that a lot of how I mentored fell under the category of emotional intelligence. This comes down to having intelligence about your own emotions and how you interact with others. For example, when talking to someone about some emotional issue, I try to put myself into their shoes and try to empathize with the that way. I also discovered that I was not as strong in the authoritative area of leadership. This wasn’t much of a surprise because I always pictured it as being mean to someone (that’s not true). With this new understanding of my own leadership, I felt more and more confident to put myself in leadership positions. We also did many group activities such as a bake sale, clothing drive, and setting up the Freshman Honors Retreat. We reflected on many roles in our group and also how to how to lead diverse groups.

It wasn't until my junior year where being a leader became a prominent role in my everyday life. One of the reasons why was because I became an [AVID](#) tutor. I was fortunate to work in both Mankato East and Mankato West high school. During this time as a tutor, I was working hands on with many high school kids and leading small groups to solve homework problems. I had many great opportunities to observe other tutors and also the teacher in the classroom and see what did and didn't go well and add some of those things to my small group leading philosophy. One thing I liked that the classroom teacher did was making a map of the conversation and then showing the students where the conversation happened in the group. It was my job as the tutor to ensure that group was able to function and solve these problems. I was also able to practice many classroom management skills and really test out some of my leadership philosophies for the first time. This included getting to know the students on a deeper level than just knowing their first name, making sure I included everyone in our discussions, and not giving the student the answer rather lead them to it so they could discover it for themselves. One way I was able to reflect on the value of this experience in my “AVID Reflection” was realizing the impact of forming a relationship with the students. Once I formed a relationship with my students, I felt like I had a better feel for how the group needed to be lead. This was most beneficial in my journey to discovering my ability to lead in the classroom. Another place I found myself in a leadership role was leading a [bible study](#) at the Catholic Newman center on campus. I had been a part of a couple bible studies in the past and really thought they were good, so when I was asked to lead one, I wanted to create that same opportunity to grow in faith for others as I had. I found myself using many of the leadership tactics as previous experiences like AVID. This meant making sure everyone felt comfortable sharing ideas and asking members to evaluate on what they were saying so that the group could gain a better idea of what they were saying and so they could articulate it better for themselves. Even though I led a bible study for a whole year, I was constantly reflecting after each bible study on ways I could improve myself and my leadership. Every bible brought something new to the table. That is why I think it is key for a leader to be strong at changing directions and diverting from the original plan. One lesson I learned from leadership was the value of my members time. My members all were taking time out of their day to participate in the bible study and so I needed to make sure I was prepared with the material I wanted to cover. Especially for me in my future classrooms. Before my junior year I was always trying to find leadership opportunities for myself so I could add to my Efolio. Now, it is cool to see the leadership positions I naturally fall into with my interests, beliefs, and what I study.

# RESEARCH REFLECTION

Before entering the Honors program, I had never thought about or considered myself to be someone who could conduct research. Research had always seemed like a huge, impossible task that would keep me from graduating with Honors. My First Year Experience ([FYEX](#)) class introduced me to the idea of research. In FYEX we talked about how to go about conducting research. This included how gather and access information from credible sources, how to cite those sources, and how to present my ideas in a way that people can easily understand. I gained many skills that I know helped me along the way to becoming competent in the research competency.

My sophomore year, I honestly took [Geography 101](#) because I thought it was going to be a breeze and an easy A. Little did I know that I would need to write a 10 page paper by the end of the year on the drought in the southwest United States. Since I knew very little on this matter, I had to access information from a vast number of sources and look at many diverse perspectives. I also had to come up with a theoretical solution based on what information I gathered. This paper was way out of my league. This is where my research outlook changed. I knew in order to gather that much information ethically, I would need to look at many sources and take lots of notes before even thinking about writing. A lot of what I learned in FYEX came into play here. Then I had to gather my thought and organize them in a way people could understand. At the end of the year, I had put together a paper that I was proud to call my own. I learned a lot about how research works while writing this paper. It gave me confidence because I was able to take a subject I knew little about, and not just write an essay, but gain that knowledge and expand my thinking about the research process.

In an [Honors 401](#) seminar class on social injustice, we were asked to research a social injustice of our choice and write an essay on it. Along with our essay, we had to perform an action or in other words, use my research to be a part of the solution. I chose to research the achievement gap and its causes because I thought it would help extend my knowledge in my discipline of education. Using the research process skills gained from previous experiences, I was able to discover the achievement gap between white students and minorities is slowly closing but more can be done. Part of my action was to make sure incorporate equity in all my lesson plans. Providing all students equity in the classroom is something that I hope to incorporate in my teaching philosophy for the rest of my life.

My junior year I had the opportunity to conduct my own original research with a classmate through the College of Education's [Distinguished Scholar](#) program. My question started off as "what is project based learning and is it the best way to teach kids?" This question applies directly to my discipline so I was excited to research the topic. I discovered that sometimes with research, the question you start with is not always the one you end with. After diving into our research I discovered what I was after was something a little different. We had full control over our project, so we took it a different direction that we were more interested in and changed it to, "What is the best way to motivate students in the classroom?" Again, after conducting more research, we were able to gather valuable information on this question that was applicable to our teaching discipline. We disseminated our results and were able to present our finding at the distinguished scholar banquet in the spring of 2017. Presenting gave me confidence and helped me organize my results into a more practical application for myself. Research is now not some daunting task but something I know I am capable of doing effectively. I know I will be using the skills gained through this competency for the rest of my life.

# GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

I have always been interested in learning about and participating in other cultures. When I was younger I had the opportunity of traveling out of the country several different times before college. After taking [FYEX](#) I was introduced to this idea of a global citizen. I realized that we are all a part of a culture and I started to look at some of the values of my culture. I also started to compare my culture to others around me and be more aware of that. Also through this class, I was able to sign up to talk with Brazilian students to help them practice their English. This was something that was very new to me and it was really cool getting to ask them about their cultures.

I took the [Honors Social Injustice](#) seminar because I knew it would help me grow in my Global Citizen competency, I just did not know how. One of the requirements for the class was that we attend three diversity events throughout the semester. One of the events I went to was a Black Lives matter talk. Up until that point, I really did not know a lot about the social injustices some black people go through and this help me eliminate any bias I had against Black Lives mater movement. The biggest way I felt I grew in this class was just by going to class. The class was a majority international students and so I was always able to ask and learn about the differences in government and cultures from my classmates. This was especially cool hearing from international perspectives on social injustices that were happening in the United States. I was also able to make a bunch of international friends!

The summer going into my junior year of college I had the opportunity to travel to [Poland](#) for World Youth Day 2016. This experience was an incredible way for me to grow in my faith and also gain a global perspective. I lived with a family from Poland, so I immediately dove into Polish culture and tradition. This looked like eating and drinking different foods, interacting with the people, and even having the courage to try some traditional dances. These things were different from my culture but I am so glad I was able to participate. I credit finding this courage from the great experiences I had from the diversity events I attended the year before. World Youth Day naturally included youth from all around the world. There were 2 million people there from 187 different countries all gathered in a couple of cities. I was able to interact and meet many people from different countries. I actually met a guy from France who was studying to be a math teacher just like me. This experience helped me to reevaluate my own culture and compare it with the other cultures around and realize that there is much more to learn about other cultures than I could have ever imagined.

After traveling to Poland I started to catch the travel bug. At the end of my junior, I had the wonderful opportunity to go a mission trip to [Honduras](#). This trip was only a week but it was such an eye opening experience for me. I went to Honduras with a mindset that I was there to help them and change them. This subconsciously made me think that I was somehow culturally superior to them. Now I would never actually say this or claim this to be true but I think this is the mentality that many people have in the United States. We have all the material necessities and so we must have it figured out with every other aspect of our lives. After spending a week in Honduras I was truly humbled by the joy and generosity the people of Honduras lived with. It really made me question why people in the United States do not have this same happiness and what is the source of happiness? What were they doing that we were not? One thing that was different was that everyone there lived as a community. They didn't have phones or much for technology so they spent much of their time together in community and truly living among one another. I left Honduras with a list of things I wanted to change in my life to live more like them. The trip also gave me the great opportunity of using the Spanish that I learned through my classes at MNSU. Because of my language speaking abilities, I was able to act as a translator when we went to different homes to visit. By the end of the week, I really felt like I could hold any conversation and my speaking abilities had really improved immensely. This was all after a week. I know traveling is something I will continue to do and becoming a better Global Citizen is something I will always try to pursue. I have already signed up for another mission trip next May in Trinidad and Tobago.