

HUNTER HERBER

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Welcome. My name is Hunter Herber. I am currently a Senior and [Annexstad Family Foundation Leaders for Tomorrow](#) scholar at MNSU Mankato. I am pursuing a Biomedical Sciences major in addition to a Certificate of Nonprofit Leadership with the intention to attend medical school. This eFolio is meant as a platform for me to demonstrate my completion of the [MNSU Honors Program](#) competencies and to document impactful experiences that lead to my development and growth as an individual.

Personal Mission Statement

I hope for my experience in the honors program to assist in guiding me on a path that allows me to expand my leadership, global citizenship, and research abilities. I believe that mastering these three competencies is essential to pursuing a career in the medical field. In my pursuit of this, I intend to make a difference in the community that I've decided to call home for the duration of my undergraduate career to complete the competencies.

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About Me



Thank you for taking the time to learn more about me! I was born and raised on my family's dairy farm in Altura, MN, a small town of less than 500 people in Winona, County. I am the oldest of 3 and graduated from Lewiston-Altura High school in a slightly larger than normal class of 72 students.

I came to MSU, Mankato to pursue a Biomedical Sciences major in addition to a Certificate of Nonprofit Leadership with the intention to attend medical school or P.A. School. Growing up in a small town has given me many experiences that I wouldn't have been able to have in a bigger city. I am however very excited to expand my horizons and grow as a person at MSU, Mankato. Being the second biggest university in the state, I am excited to see what a large university has to offer.

During my free time, I enjoy spending time with friends and family, running, cooking, baking, watching Netflix, and reading as time allows.

My motto for life is, *"You never really understand a person until you climb into his skin and walk around in it"* - Atticus Finch from *To Kill a Mockingbird*.



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HONORS
MINNESOTA STATE MANKATO



LEADERSHIP



RESEARCH



GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

The mission of the Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato is to create future leaders, researchers and global citizens by providing high ability and motivated students with exceptional learning opportunities, mentoring relationships, and a community of scholars that foster their development as future leaders in a global society.

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LEADERSHIP

As a Freshman Honors Student I thought I knew everything there was to know about leadership because I already saw myself as a strong leader. It turns out there was and continues to be room for improvement. My experience in **Intro to Honors** was where I first realized this. We discussed our core values of leadership and learned what our leadership strengths were through StrengthsFinder. This allowed me identify areas of leadership that I excel in and those on which I still need to work. I believe that my strengths which included Achiever, Analytical, and Input highlighted my focus on getting the job done as a team. Being conscious of this, I have been able to fine tune my leadership based on the needs of any given situation.

I was able to put the knowledge that I gained in Intro to Honors into effect as the **Honors Sophomore Class Representative**. Being that this was the first leadership experience I had after taking the StrengthsFinder assessment, I was able to take my individual strengths and see how they worked with the strengths of my peers. I came to realize the benefits of team-based leadership. Despite none of us in the Honors Student Council having the same leadership style, it ended up being beneficial as we could cover each other's weaker attributes such as my tendency to tunnel vision on different aspects of what I am working on. For example, being in a group of people who prioritized listening to everyone's ideas rather than focusing on just one allowed us to integrate our ideas into the best course of action. This allowed us to work together and continuously reach common goals such the monthly service events that we planned for the Honors Student Body. Although not every service event went just as we planned, each one taught us something new that we would implement into the following service events.

My experience working with peers who all had different values and approaches to leadership allowed me to see the best ways that different leadership styles can work together. Unfortunately, I have also had experiences where I have witnessed poor leadership. As a member of **Student Ambassadors**, we had some good and some bad leadership. I was able to see the difference that good and not so good leadership can have on an organization and its participants. When we had a leader who was positive and wanted everyone's input, the morale at our meetings was noticeably more energetic and engaging than when our leader was more of a dictator.

Seeing how different leadership styles can impact an organization helped me to form my **leadership philosophy**. In my philosophy, I articulate how I find that leadership can sometimes be seen as someone with experience sharing the knowledge gained from their experience in order to guide another person's or a group's actions. From my experience, the best instances of this are when the leader is presenting their knowledge as one of the options rather than the only option. This leadership philosophy has served me well in the leadership experiences I have had since I formed the philosophy as it allowed me to view my role as a leader in the scope of trying to support others, not order them around. I also believe that this will be beneficial to my future career because healthcare is team based and teams that work well together support each other.

My experience as a founding member of **SERVE, Mankato** allowed me to instill my philosophy in the formation of this RSO. We kept in mind the idea of leadership strengths and weakness and made groups based on these. This benefited our team since we all had someone who could handle any given situation and each group supported the others. Although initially our organization was successful, instances out of our control essentially ended the infrastructure on which our organization existed. Despite the implosion of this organization, we all learned just how far we could go when we work as a group of varied individuals with different strengths that we each used to create something that we were all passionate about.

My leadership journey through the Honors Program has allowed me to become the leader that I am today. I am not a more patient, welcoming, and inclusive leader. This will serve me well in my future as a physician because healthcare requires a healthcare team. As a future doctor, I will be required to work well with others, even if this means our leadership values are different. Having the varied experiences that I have had will allow me to work in most settings with a great variety of individuals. My established leadership abilities and leadership philosophy will guide me through the challenges that I may face in the future while in leadership roles.

RESEARCH

Starting on my Honors Program journey, like many, I viewed research as a daunting task. I think this is because of the variety that this competency allows. My first introduction into research was in **General Biology II**. Through this process, we learned the importance of ethics in research and how to conduct scientific research with the scientific method.

Being introduced to research early allowed me to conduct my future research projects in this way. In the **Honors Seminar: Leadership Through Social Change** class, I was able to identify a social movement in which I was interested but not yet a part. By accessing various sources of reliable information, I gathered info and data specific to my research question. I evaluated the quality of these sources by cross-referencing them with each other and by evaluating where I got them from to ensure that the data and views within them are not biased. In my research process for this project, I combined various sources and their data to make a conclusion about demographics that are at risk for food insecurity. Before I did this, however, I made a hypothesis. Although I had formulated a hypothesis regarding which demographics would most likely be at risk for food insecurity, I knew it would be unethical to let that preconceived notion impact the results of my research. By holding myself to these standards, I was able to discover that in the Greater Mankato Area, African Americans and children were the most at-risk populations for food insecurity. This knowledge is good to have in order to focus programs, such as the backpack food program, on those most at-risk for food insecurity.

I was able to utilize what I learned writing my Honors research paper in **undergraduate research** with Dr. Land. This experience was the center point of my research competency because it allowed me to take everything I had learned about research to that point and utilize it in the field of my major. I became interested in Dr. Land's research by looking at some of their previous publications. I now knew going into a research process that although I may have a plan, the research process is very fluid, and requires constant critiquing to ensure consistent progress. Identifying the research goal of determining the regulatory role of miRNA on APOBEC. This goal was important because although APOBEC has been studied, the APOBEC enzyme that I am specifically looking at has not. This project has allowed me many opportunities to learn research methods, but more than anything, my critical thinking ability has grown exponentially. The deep thinking required to navigate the challenges that I faced through this research process has forced me to be a stronger critical thinker which in turn has helped me in many areas of academia. Identifying locations to present my research lead me to presenting at the Undergraduate Research Symposium and the American Society for Microbiology Conference.

Presenting at these conferences allowed me the opportunity to present my research to my peers and engage with them on my or their projects. Disseminating at these conferences required me to submit an abstract. This required me to be descriptive, but precise. I also learned that the way one presents their research really depends on your audience. While **presenting at the URS**, I was presenting to many people without a scientific background. I was not prepared for this, and a lot of what I said went over the heads of the people to whom I was presenting. At my next opportunity to present my research, I intend to be prepared to explain my research in a more approachable way.

I certainly see myself engaging in research in my future. Through these experiences, I have gained a level of knowledge that allows me to more readily comprehend journals, which will allow me to better comprehend the new methods presented to me as a future medical doctor. I understand and acknowledge the importance of research in the medical field. Being able to contribute to this has been and will continue to be very fulfilling.

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GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

As a freshman, I thought I was pretty close to achieving global citizenship. I had an open mind, took Spanish classes in high school, and had interacted with people from various cultures despite growing up in a town of less than 500 people. Through my experience studying Spanish, traveling outside of the United States, and my coursework at MNSU, I have grown into a better global citizen and come to realize how much room I have still to grow.

I started taking Spanish classes my freshman year. These classes built my confidence in my previous Spanish education. It also provided me the opportunity to build on the foundation that I already had. Even though I never considered myself a good Spanish speaker, I now feel capable, to some degree, in my ability to communicate in a second language. I intend to utilize Spanish in my future career as a doctor when providing care to patients who may not be able to speak English. I was able to prove my Spanish speaking ability during my **tourism presentation** to my Spanish 201 class. I consider this a culminating experience of my Spanish education because I had to utilize grammar, pronunciation, and vocab all while providing information to my class about why they should visit Quito, Ecuador and what they could see there.

Becoming a **Language Partner** allowed me a unique experience combining my experiences of tutoring a language I was familiar with while learning Spanish, a language that is not native to me. In addition to these tutoring sessions, I often met with one of my three mentees at campus events. Between these two settings, we had the opportunity to discuss the similarities and differences between our cultures. This allowed me to learn and accept the variety of perspectives that exist alongside my own. Hearing questions about my culture from a different perspective made me look into my own culture. This allowed me to better understand how culture impacts our society as a whole. Learning about three different cultures over the course of two years allowed me to see and understand how different cultures impact our perspective and appreciate the effort people give in learning a second language.

Before going to Guatemala as a volunteer on a **medical service trip**, I had never been outside of the United States. Being in a country where I was no longer a member of the majority forced me out of my comfort zone. I had to rely on speaking Spanish to order food, ask for directions, and provide medical care. I even had the opportunity to learn about their culture, healthcare system, and how they intersect. This allowed me to see the value that diversity in perspective brings to a global society. Even when there were views with which I did not personally agree, I found myself respecting and learning from them.

I took Sociology as my last gen-ed. I initially looked at this class as a chore rather than a valuable experience. I soon came to realize that **Sociology 101** was one of my favorite courses that I took in my four years at MNSU. I am glad that I didn't take it any earlier because I may have wanted to add another minor to my degrees. This course put into words what ethnocentrism was. Before this, I simply acknowledged the differences in perspectives between cultures. After integrating ethnocentrism into my global citizenship philosophy, I was able to recognize the validity and benefits of various perspectives. Ethnocentrism explains why people often consider their values to be "right" or "better than" those of other cultures. The variety of different identities that I became aware of after this experience allowed me to better understand the ones to which I belong. Despite my initial belief that I was close to becoming a global citizen, I now realize that being a global citizen requires lifelong learning. Having an open mind only takes you so far when you do not initiate conversations that allow you to learn about cultures and languages to which you have not been exposed. Being comfortable speaking Spanish will allow me to better engage with my future patients and allow me to continue my growth as a global citizen.