

Lissette Garza

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WELCOME TO MY ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO

Each year I will update my electronic portfolio with new experiences that show my competency in global citizenship, leadership, and research for the honors program at Minnesota State University, Mankato.



MISSION STATEMENT

" To keep a smile on face and approach every task head on. To always keep a positive attitude and to do my best to uphold my moral values in order to allow myself to grow as an individual, learn new things, and diversify my self. "

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO CLASS OF 2021

HONORS PORTFOLIO

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

"Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to exhibit second language and communication competencies and exhibit cultural competency and awareness."

LEADERSHIP

"Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to utilize personal leadership values and guide groups toward a common goal."

RESEARCH

"Upon graduation, honors students will have demonstrated the ability to exhibit information literacy skills, synthesize and integrate ideas, produce original research or creative works, and contribute to knowledge."

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ABOUT ME

My name is Lissette Garza and I am currently a senior at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am originally from Lake Wilson, MN. My major is Dental Hygiene. I am a member of the honors program, the dental hygiene club, and Alpha Chi Omega. In the future, I will graduate in the spring of 2021 and find a job as a dental hygienist. I would like to return to school to get my MS in Dental Hygiene or Public Health with hopes of working as an educator or in the public health field.

WORK HISTORY

BeMobile Sales Associate - Slayton, MN - August 2016 - July 2017

Science Fair Intern - Mankato, MN - August 2017 - May 2019

ACES Child Care Assistant - Mankato, MN - May 2019 - present

EDUCATION

Murray County Central - Slayton, MN - Elementary & High School

Minnesota State University, Mankato - Mankato, MN - Bachelor of Science Degree



HONORS PROGRAM

HONORS PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

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.

HONORS PROGRAM

LEADERSHIP SYNTHESIZING ESSAY

While setting up for my junior prom, I vividly remember my math teacher coming up to me and saying how natural it was for me to be a leader. This has always stuck with me while working on group projects in school or home improvement projects with my family. I'm always the first to delegate responsibilities to others and make sure it gets done effectively and efficiently. During my time at Minnesota State University, Mankato, I have been challenged to understand what leadership is and how to use my strengths and values.

To start my leadership experiences, I had to first learn what entails being a leader and what my leadership strengths were. I took the StrengthsFinder assessment and discovered that my five strengths are futuristic, achiever, arranger, command, and harmony. During my HONR 201 course, I wrote my **Leadership Essay**. In this essay, I explain my current view on what a leader is and how that changed. I also go further in depth on my leadership strengths and weaknesses and how they coincide in difference experiences.

My understanding of who I was as a leader was becoming clearer to me and I took the challenge of becoming **Vice President of Intellectual Development** for Alpha Chi Omega. I was in the position to stand beside others who had been on the executive board before and learn from their leadership styles. My term started in January and ended in December. The first semester was a great opportunity to learn from others and was a small step towards developing my personal theories of leadership. The second semester was perfect for implementing changes I thought were necessary to better our chapter. During my one-year term, I was able to identify my own thoughts on leadership and not a presumption of what a leader is.

An important part of being a leader is being able to identify effective and ineffective leadership styles in any setting. During my time with my **Senior Mentor**, I noticed an ineffective leadership style in a setting that will be familiar during my future career. This experience brought to my attention how the clinician is the leader in their operatory. It showed me how easy it is to fall behind in your appointments and worry about having a long enough lunch break. In these instances, your relationship with your patient can decrease and lead to patients not having enough trust in you. Being able to uphold your leadership beliefs and values is crucial to your patients.

Finally, I was able to finalize my own philosophy of leadership through my experience with **Patient Education**. I was able to implement what I've learned about leadership and utilize my strengths in an experience that will carry over to my future career as a dental hygienist. My strengths and values will be used to help myself work well with my coworker and especially my patients. I learned how to be a motivational leader and find intrinsic motivations for my patients to help them do their best. This experience motivates me to take my philosophy of leadership into my future career and become a great dental hygienist and hopefully educator.

Working with others or within a team is also a big component to leadership. My time as a **Science Fair Intern** allowed me to identify various roles, work towards a common goal, and evaluate an effective leadership style. I had the opportunity to work with individuals with a great work ethic that helped our team be successful, and also some without great motivation to do their best. Working on a team allowed me to see how we all use our individual strengths and leadership styles for a common goal. This experience helped me understand how important teamwork is and how I can do my part in my future career.

These experiences have had a huge impact on my leadership abilities and understanding of teamwork. I have the confidence that the knowledge I've gained will allow me to succeed in my career.

RESEARCH SYNTHESIZING ESSAY

My relationship with research was similar to many other incoming college students. It sounded intimidating and like a lot of hard work spent in a lab looking through a microscope. I didn't have a complete understanding of what research looked like at the undergraduate level. Throughout my experience with the honors program, I have come to understand and comprehend what research entails and eventually conducted my own original research project.

My first experience with research was during my HONR 201 course. This course taught me that research is as simple as writing a research paper and can be as complex as evaluating data in a lab. Through my **Research Essay**, I demonstrated my ability to access and evaluate credible sources and the ethics behind research. Solidifying these skills helped me for future research experiences and will also help me throughout my career.

That experience led me to complete my **Unknown Report** for microbiology lab. I developed strategies such as starting my search at a scholarly article data base and briefly reading each one to evaluate the amount of useful information it will give me. I used these strategies to find credible articles about my microorganism and wrote a brief report about the information I found. This experience introduced me to gathering and synthesizing information for a research paper.


Growing in my research skills allowed me to be successful in my **HONR 450 course, Honor Service Learning**. I had the opportunity to volunteer as an interpreter for the Mankato School District. This experience allowed me to become more knowledgeable about English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and use that knowledge to formulate questions about the program. I wrote my final paper on the effectiveness of ESL programs. For this research paper, I had to incorporate everything I had learned thus far to find credible sources, evaluate them, and synthesize the information. This topic also gave me the opportunity to write about differing perspectives and making sure the opinions were coming from a reliable source was a challenge. This was a great experience that made me feel more prepared for completing an original research project.

Finally, I continued to grow in my research competency when I completed an **Original Undergraduate Research Project** with another honors student Kaitlyn Knutson and our professor Alyssa Delgado. Having a research partner was a great balance for delegating tasks and made the experience less intimidating. First, our professor helped with the brainstorming portion of figuring out our topic. We were interested in magnification loupes and understanding what can affect our eyes, such as familial history, magnification strength, time, or career length. We spent the majority of our time narrowing down our topic and specifically what we were trying to find out. After research and discussion, we titled our project *The Effects of Magnification Loupes on Eye Strain Among Dental Hygienists*. We chose an anonymous survey administered online to collect data because it was the most efficient method we found. It was a very rewarding process that taught me how research can look different for everyone. The main struggle we endured was our time line. We were rushed to have everything completed by the deadline for the Undergraduate Research Symposium on campus. Overall, it was a great experience learning the process and understanding how I can take that with me to graduate school for my masters thesis.

The last step of the research process looked a bit different for us. We were able to virtually present our project at the **Undergraduate Research Symposium** and the American Dental Hygienist Association annual conference. They were both great experiences about how technology has become an important part of our world and how rewarding it is to share your hard work with others.

I am very grateful that the Honors Program pushed me to complete research experiences during my undergraduate career. In my future, having strategies for accessing and evaluating sources will help me recommend the best oral hygiene products to my patients.

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GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP SYNTHESIZING ESSAY

The world we live in is such a diverse place and attending a university that has roughly 1200 international students from over 90 countries provided me the perfect venue to develop my global citizenship skills. Before joining the Honors Program, I was never fully aware of how important it is to be good global citizen, especially when I grew up in a town of 200 people.

To begin my first global citizenship experiences, I wrote my **Global Citizenship Essay**. I was able to begin to understand my importance in the world and how to find out more about other cultures. We learned about the cultural iceberg, which discusses the surface culture and the deep culture. I was able to take this information in to future experiences to understand the deep culture of those around me.

This led me to joining the **Language Partners Program**. My first partners were brothers from Venezuela who spoke Spanish. I was able to connect with them right away from both speaking Spanish and it was a great opportunity to practice my Spanish language in a different setting. We discussed cultural norms and compared their lives in Venezuela to the U.S., which helped me understand the deeper culture. My second partner was a female from Morocco that really challenged me as a cultural citizen to understand and ask deeper meaning questions. Many of our discussions were focused on marriage, religion, work, and birth control.

My **Trip to Vienna** was an eye-opening experience that helped me gain motivation for wanting to be a good global citizen. I had many conversations that challenged me to adjust my behavior. One conversation in particular was about the way Americans assume everyone can speak English. I realized I had never asked before ordering if English was okay, instead I just assumed they could understand me. This experience made me realize that I should always research a country before I visit and be as respectful as possible. It also just showed me ways that I can respect others around me in my own city.

I was able to have the opportunity to immerse myself in a challenging environment as an **Interpreter for Mankato Public Schools** to fulfill my remaining honors credits. This experience brought to my attention immigration in this country and how prevalent it is in our community. Starting conversations with an open mind and learning their story makes us understand their importance in this country. With this experience I was able to step out of my comfort zone and use language to understand culture. There is so much more you can learn about someone through their language and learning a new language is a small step to connect us closer to others. The way people communicate makes their personality whole. On a global level, understanding language can lead to better communication and understanding between different countries.

To round out my global citizenship experience, I have been able to use my Spanish language to connect with patients during my **Clinic Experience**. I am able to provide care to those who have nowhere else to go and make them feel comfortable at the clinic. Dental health varies all around the world and I've learned that many other countries don't have dental hygienists that play the same role we do in the U.S. I can use my experience and language to reach out to the Hispanic population and increase dental hygiene awareness. As a dental hygienist, I will seek out new information and keep an open mind when I see new patients.

My journey at MNSU and the honors program and provided me with the confidence to approach others' that are different from me and understand where they come from. I am excited to work with patients of other cultures and continue evolving as a global citizen.

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