

Personal Narrative Essay

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Starting Out

I grew up in a family deeply rooted in both education and military service, where the values of dedication, discipline, and lifelong learning were instilled in me from an early age. My upbringing was marked by the unique blend of academic excellence and a strong sense of duty to our country. Throughout high school, I was actively involved in JROTC, which further cemented my commitment to these ideals. I was also in a program called CyberPatriot that works directly with Northrop Grumman to educate youth in all things cyber. It has always been clear to me that I wanted to honor my family's legacy by pursuing higher education and serving my country, embodying the principles of service and scholarship that have shaped my life.

Selecting a College

It may be hard for people to believe that I just so happen to be a twin, but that is what played the biggest role in my decision to attend Old Dominion University (ODU) in Norfolk, VA. When many of us graduate from high school with many acceptance letters we find ourselves stuck, stuck wondering how we are going to pay for college. My parents were faced with what we call a “double trouble.” I was originally interested in attending school out of state till I found out just how expensive it is if you aren't offered a scholarship. Through all of my choices to attend a school that priorities their Cybersecurity Programs. I selected ODU because I was offered an Academic Scholarship for being in state. I should also not that I enjoy watching football and the fact that ODU is a Division One school was that cherry on top.

When I got to ODU

When I got to ODU, I was in a sense of awe. I have never felt so free. I had to learn to balance a strict schedule and also maintain a Job. I joined Old Dominion Army Reserve Officers' Training Corp because I knew that it would help me in ensuring that my military career could start as soon as possible in addition to commissioning as an Officer in the Army. Throughout my freshman and sophomore year I learned more and more about ODU and the Military. I realized I didn't want to wait to join the military, so I enlisted in the Virginia Army National Guard as a Twenty-Five Uniform, Signals Intelligence Support Specialist in which I was able to obtain my security clearance and learn valuable and hands on Information Technology and Cybersecurity skills that I knew would transfer over to my Cybersecurity major at ODU and my Military Leadership Minor that happens to only be offered here at Old Dominion.

Present Day

Today I prepare to enter into my senior year here at Old Dominion University, a member of the deans list with a declared double major in Cybersecurity and Cyber Crime. I also find myself fortunate to be working for the university in the Network Services Group as an Internet of Things specialist. Providing campus-wide support for resolving door access tickets, security/safety camera repair, and camera software management. I am skilled in troubleshooting and resolving technical issues efficiently. Also I demonstrate the ability to work independently and as part of a team to ensure smooth operation of IT systems and equipment. With a proven track record of delivering excellent customer service and achieving high levels of customer satisfaction. I find myself able to handle multiple tasks and projects simultaneously while meeting tight deadlines. Most recently, I started to think about the Army core values of Loyalty, duty, respect, selfless

service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. Though I am actively serving my country, working a job, and attending university. I felt like I could be doing something more. So when I was asked if I would serve on the Board of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct for Old Dominion University I accepted. I am looking forward to making a positive impact on the university's campus environment.

The Future

As I know the future is not set in stone. Though I truly believe if we don't think of it and dream of it how will our hopes come to fruition. So when I think of my future I hope to continue on the path I am on, a path that is set to graduate very soon, and commission into the United States Army as a Cybersecurity Officer. Fully taking advantage of my prior service and utilizing my degree in the field that I love. Using that Army core values and cybersecurity ethics I think that I will be a valuable asset to the United States Armed Forces, especially as cyber warfare is slowly becoming more prevalent in the society of the world today.