

Danielle Gomez
Montwood High School in SISD
Class of 2020 Deputy Pete Herrera Scholarship

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My Aspiration to Serve and Protect

I would like to think of myself as a humble and trustworthy person. I have this desire to make the people around me feel safe. Perhaps it is a trait that comes with being the oldest child. But I would be cheating my parents if I did not attribute these qualities to my upbringing. I am the product of teenage parents who faced many challenges as they tried to tackle being parents, college students, full time employees, and decent members of society. Despite every speed bump they came across, they succeeded. I am proud of what they have been able to accomplish, and I hope to make them proud as I begin my own journey into the real world.

I have decided to follow in my father's footsteps and pursue a career in law enforcement. My goal is to earn my Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice with a concentration in Homeland Security from Sul Ross State University. I have been blessed with the opportunity to play both volleyball and softball at the university. After I finish college, I hope to join the dedicated men and women of law enforcement at the federal or local level. My father has been a dedicated federal officer with U.S. Customs and Border Protection for more than seven years. He takes pride in his job, his port, his community, his agency, and his country. He has earned numerous awards for his dedication and his ability to uphold the oath. But what I am most proud of him for is his ability to treat people with dignity and respect. Whether it is a young child crossing the bridge to attend school, a family making a trip to visit or shop, a man coming to

work, or someone seeking asylum, he makes sure to treat them respectfully and politely all while ensuring the safety of our country. My father is proof that people, more specifically, law enforcement officers, are capable of performing all the required duties without the appearance of the abuse of power that comes with authority. Over the last few decades, law enforcement officers all over our country have faced scrutiny over their use of force and abuse of power. While there have been many bad seeds that live up to the scrutiny, it's officers like my father and Deputy Herrera that remind the nation the way real officers should conduct themselves. In fact, if you took a look into the thousands of law enforcement agencies in the country, you would find that most of the officers conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner. These men and women risk their lives every single time they put on the uniform and report for duty.

Over the last seven years, I have learned to appreciate my father and his sacrifices more. He has reported to different cities along the southern border for different missions. He has never complained. Instead, he tells us how grateful he is for the opportunities that are presented to him. I miss him every time he has to leave town, but I cannot help feeling a sense of pride at the same time. This man who risks so much; who cares so much; who never gives anything less than one hundred percent...is my father.

I try not to think about the "what ifs." I have to trust that my father is where he is meant to be, doing what he is meant to do. His service to our community and to our country are immeasurable. My father has inspired me to pursue career opportunities where I can help others. I have big shoes to fill. I am confident that I can take what I learned from college, personal

experiences, and my upbringing to become a valuable member in law enforcement. Like my father, I vow to never give anything less than one hundred percent.