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El Paso Strong

Essay Word Count _974 words_

Dancing as a Community

Community is word I have always correlated with dance. As a dancer of 8 years I have experienced the strong dance community throughout the world. It had been my only reference to true community until August 3, 2019. El Paso, Texas has always been a place I consider to be my safe home and it still is. I always knew our people were so down to earth and genuine. Although, I never really saw how we worked together until all of us had suffered from the horrific mass shootings. I was put at peace to know even though my people were attacked because of their skin color, we focused on the path to redeem ourselves instead of dwelling in the hurt. I was even able to work with a team of mine to represent the beauty of El Paso and dedicate a piece of art to the victims.

I was blessed to be a part of a dance company at Coronado High School my last three years in high school. Our team is a mix of all types of different cultures and backgrounds, and lot being from Mexico. The community in dance is so strong and unbreakable. We support each other like no other even though we can be separated by countries and even continents. El Paso is such a beautiful place due to the fact we get to see both Mexican and US borders every day. No wall or border can separate the bond we have between each other. We saw this when we suffered on that day and even for the next months. We got to see many groups and businesses put up

fundraisers to help those effected. Many El Pasoans supported these fundraisers and they had positive and successful outcomes. Even Khalid put on a concert as a fundraiser to help as well. So, as the captain of Coronado Dance Company, I knew it was my duty to support our city through the art of dance.

With the help of my Co-Captain, Victoria Rivera, we were able to choreograph a sentimental piece for our fall show about the work of a community, mainly representing the El Paso community during this hard time. It took some time to think about how to approach this dance and what the message would be, but overtime we wanted to reflect on the positivity El Paso created. This piece was able to represent how slowly but surely, we came together group by group, fundraiser by fundraiser, and prayer by prayer. It included elements of carrying each other's physical weight to support the other. In the end, we demonstrated someone being lifted into a fall to then be caught again by girls standing underneath her. This piece included our 27 company members because every single one of us was affected and every single one of us had our own story to tell together. We performed this piece in front of our show's audience and in the EPISD Border Dance Competition.

Now comparing the two topics dance and community became such a powerful statement for me. As a dancer I am able to express how I feel without verbalizing any words. I express my emotions through the movement of my body, which can be as powerful as having a voice or may be even louder. Creating a piece of 27 bodies working together to help establish a feeling that an audience can understand is the most humbling thing I could have ever done. This is what El Paso Strong means to me, is to be able to be a community with no boundaries, to be able to be as

vulnerable as we can and carry each other. Dance has helped me realize the beauty of our community and how important it is to always take part even if it is while dancing.

As a graduate from high school, I will be continuing my path of education at UT San Antonio this fall. I have decided to major in Biomedical Engineering. Being a part of the engineering field will fulfill my desire to better the technology we use as the human populous. I have had an interest in the medical field for as long as I can remember because I have always had the desire to be able to help others as well as loving human anatomy. Due to these two career paths I had in mind, I became compelled by the field of biomedical engineering. In this career I am hoping to discover modern and scientifically advanced ways to improve medical gear and treatment as well as communicating my findings to others. With the resources we are provided today, I would like to find a way to engineer affordable medical equipment, so more money can be dedicated towards research.

I am dedicated to bettering the medical technologies to help those who are involved with events like the El Paso shootings. Hopefully, in the future we won't need to prepare for cases like these, but I would like to make it possible to create equipment specifically for mass shooting victims. I feel the topic of mass shootings are still overlooked and with creating technology doctors can use easier and quicker to hopefully save as many as they can, awareness will be respected more. El Paso Strong will forever be in my heart and I will always be thinking of how I can better the medical field to save as many humans as I can without draining their pockets. Community is as important as anything else and if everyone works together in whatever field they pursue, we can change lives daily. I am so passionate about the city I live in and especially

about the people who live in it and what we stand for. I will always be El Paso Strong and always reflect my actions off of it.