

Avari Getchell

AASB Scholarship Application Essay

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Social and emotional well-being has been a critical component of my growth and success throughout my life. My personal encounters, starting from a young age, have influenced my general mindset and appreciation for these traits. My experiences living in the United Arab Emirates and Haines, Alaska, have taught me values that directly correlate to the lessons I have learned in these environments. As an individual who has always desired to be a contributing member of society, I have learned that through life's twists and turns, the utter importance of social and emotional well-being makes an immense impact toward a brighter future.

When I was four years old, my life was practically turned upside down when I found out that my family and I were moving to the United Arab Emirates. I was thrilled for the opportunity to encounter such a vast culture and lifestyle in this new place, but the nerves of living in such a different environment from what I had grown accustomed to, caused this adjustment to be challenging to grasp at first. What I immediately learned upon arriving on my first day of kindergarten in Abu Dhabi, however, was that my ability to communicate with classmates from around the world on a social and emotional scale would be critical to coexisting and creating a positive school setting. Being one of the only English speakers in my class allowed me to learn to communicate on a deep emotional level with those around me. This challenge provided me the ability to collaborate and build relationships with others in a meaningful way, which taught me the positive impact of connecting with others, regardless of background, perspectives, and even language barriers.

When I moved to Haines, Alaska in 2018, I had no idea what to expect in terms of what living in a rural Alaskan community would be like. Within minutes of getting off the Alaska Marine Highway and driving through the town, my family and I were greeted by some of the most down-to-earth, friendly people that I had ever seen. This town feels like a family, and I promptly found myself in situations where

I was able to contribute to this welcoming community. During my five years in Haines, I have been able to involve myself to a degree I never knew possible. I have been able to actively participate in several sports, activities, and volunteer roles, as well as leadership positions such as student government, where I now stand as a student representative of the Haines Borough School Board. Haines has taught me the importance of community when considering social and emotional well-being. People thrive through displaying genuine leadership, which keeps a community like this afloat. This is a town where people lift each other and support the individual accomplishments of the people who are lucky to call this rural town home.

As I approach college and begin to plan for my future, I have decided on a career that will allow me to use my social and emotional skills in the workplace; education. I aspire to become a teacher that will incorporate these values into my classroom on a daily basis. I am incredibly appreciative of all of the experiences that have molded me into the person I am today. My life has enabled me to develop my personal views of well-being in a way that has motivated me to continue to grow as an individual, surrounded by students whom I will be able to encourage and support. I realize how necessary social and emotional well-being is in life and I am ecstatic to provide this anchor of influence on my future students every day, which is why teaching is the perfect career for my values and goals.

Throughout my life, I have lived through experiences that have allowed me to learn and appreciate the true value of social and emotional well-being. Whether it be my first day of school in the United Arab Emirates or life in Haines, I am incredibly grateful for the places that have shaped who I am today. As I look forward to the rest of my life, I don't know what challenges and adversities will arise, but I know that I will be kept grounded through the foundation that I have developed. I am excited and prepared to use my developed skills and successes to support those around me because that is what's most important in the end.