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## June Nelson Scholarship Essay Response

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This last winter, I was selected by my coach to be one of the captains on the varsity basketball team. This was a fantastic opportunity to grow and build my critical thinking and consensus skills. As a captain on the basketball team, collaborating and communicating clearly with others was crucial for our entire team working well together. I not only had to talk with and listen to the other two captains, but also with our coaches, with all of our teammates, the referees, and the opposing team. That can seem overwhelming at times, but it has grown my character to be where I am today.

About half way through our season we had a large tournament to attend. At the end of our last practice before the tournament my coach pulled the three captains aside. He reminded us of our goal for the trip, which was to play our best together as a team and to represent our team and school appropriately. Although our coach was putting the pressure on us as upper classmen, throughout the tournament all three of us captains rose to the occasion multiple times. Encouraging, helping and preparing the freshmen and younger girls on our team for the hard games and mental battles each day reminded me listening is as important if not more, than talking and giving out information. When friction between two players came up during the long days together, the other captains and myself learned how to not get emotionally involved, but to be understanding and respectful to both parties. Our coach would not tolerate drama and squabbling between teammates, which was hard at the beginning, but very valuable by the middle and end of our season.

The main goal, at the very end of our season in March, was to win at Regionals. The top two teams who finished in Regionals would advance to the State Championship later in the month. When we came together in the beginning of the year, I didn't think we could finish in the top two out of the six teams. However, by the last game of the official season before Regionals, my coach and other captains thought we were ready. I agreed. While we were warming up for the last game though, two of the girls from our team started bickering. Drama and bad mouthing crept in and pounced on my teammates that game. After the hard fight and difficult loss that night, the two other captains and myself confronted the two teammates about the sickness named drama that had found its way onto the court. After listening to their different perspectives and letting them cool off, I spoke to them all and let them know how much the team and their relationships matter to me. This was a social issue of immense importance to me that effected myself, the players, coaches, and the families who had worked for this team to be where it was, ready to go into Regionals. With the captain's assistance, the two players found a compromise, a good and healthy, give-and-take situation which worked for them both. In conclusion, our basketball team went into Regionals strong and most importantly, together. We were not able to pull off first place, but we did take second to make it to State. Without collaboration and dedication, not one of us would be where we are today with the relationships we have now.