

Turner Intergenerational Essay Contest
Ages 9-18 – 1st Place
Andrew Kloeppel

On January 6th I sat in Seattle Children’s Hospital and looked at the computer screen with a look of absolute shock on my face. I knew the doctor was talking to me, but I couldn't quite process when Doctor Krabac said to me, “you have fractured your acetabulum.” I had no idea what that bone was and I certainly couldn’t believe that I had broken it. Little did I know, the real bad news was still to come. I later learned that I would have to be on crutches for nine weeks, that I was not going to be able to play on my High School tennis team or be able to ski at all this year.

Now, you might be wondering how me breaking my hip relates to The Mount, but, I credit my good attitude towards this horrible news to The Mount. It seems like parents are always teaching kids lessons. But sometimes kids just have to experience something themselves to really understand. I learned life lessons at the Mount about staying positive even through adversity. My resilience was developed from my interactions with the teachers and the residents. I developed compassion towards the sick and suffering through spending time with them and looking beyond appearances. I learned that casts and bandages are outward signs of hurt and to be extra gentle and kind. But more importantly, I learned that sometimes people don’t have outward signs of illness but they can still be suffering or have invisible disabilities. The Mount taught me that we all need help getting through the tough times in our lives.

The Mount instilled values of kindness towards others and of respect for everyone, especially my elders. This helps me interact with my grandparents. I remember visiting residents and then they died the next day. I learned early that life is fragile. When I was 4, my great-grandpa had a stroke. Because of The Mount, I was used to residents with lisps and wheelchairs so I just crawled up in his lap like it didn’t matter. I love my Grandparents so much. They won’t be around forever, so I make sure that every moment with them is a special one. Whether it be cooking with my Grandma and learning her delicious pickle soup recipe, or playing golf with my Grandpa and letting him show me the correct form of swinging a golf club, I learned to value my elders from my time at The Mount.

When I think back to my time at The Mount, I can only recall positive memories. Writing this essay helped me recognize that The Mount provided me with way more than great childcare. The Mount gave me the tools I need to face bad days - like January 6th - with a positive attitude. I am very grateful and I truly believe that I would not be the person I am today without the character and compassion I developed at Mount St. Vincent.

Turner Intergenerational Essay Contest
Ages 9-18 – 2nd Place
Nathan Kellison-Miller

I originally started going to ILC in 2006, a year after I was born. I remember the first time I stayed at a place that wasn't with my parents was at ILC, and many other memorable moments of my life happened at ILC, like meeting my best friend of many years.

One thing that stood out to me as I got older though, was the intergeneration program at ILC. I would often meet with my painting buddy, an eighty or so year-old lady named Willow, and we would paint and draw all sorts of things together. What I remember most about her is that whenever we would talk and paint together, she would talk to me about things I had never thought about before. Things like what I would do after college, and what I wanted to be when I had grown up. Always after talking to her I would have gained a new approach or idea about life.

Sometimes though, my painting buddy would be slow with answering questions or would just forget about them. I remember having to wait on her to remember our conversation or finish asking me that question. This has really stuck with me, that sometimes the elderly can't always be as spry and as quick as when they were young. Just this lesson alone has made me become more understanding towards the elderly, because back in pre-school, my buddy let me see that world for the first time.

When I think about what kind of older person I will be, I like to look back at when my grandfather was in ILC. He had a disease that made it so he couldn't really visit me outside of his room, but I remember my teachers used to take me to see him. During those little visits with him, I just got a sense of family, like this was my mom's dad, and he meant something that was so important to us and our family. I always felt like these visits were just our own special secret moments together. Overall, I think I'm going to be the kind of grandfather that he was when I'm older. Sort of quiet, but able to show that sense of family, and be able to pass my knowledge onto the younger generations.

The ILC intergenerational program really changed my life as a whole. It expanded my view on life while I was in the program and out of it. The memories that I made during it have stuck with me ever since. It really was what made ILC special.

Turner Intergenerational Essay Contest
Ages 9-18 - 3rd Place
Atticus Hodapp

My name is Atticus Hodapp. I was a young student at the ILC. It was where I went to daycare and made friends and learned as a one to five-year-old. The ILC had the greatest impact on me through the 5 years I was there for. To me the ILC was my preschool but looking back I think of as more than just a preschool that I went to for five years of my life.

The ILC taught all the students that went there that you needed to care for others and not just yourself. The reason why it worked, was because of how we learned to talk to one another and how to treat adults and elders. They had the nursing home upstairs and the preschool on the main floor. We would take trips up to visit the elders every day and help them. We would do activities to help people in need, like make sandwiches for the homeless with the elders; and the elders would tell us stories. Some of my fondest memories are with the elders like checking in on Gus every day when we would go upstairs, or when school got out and me my mom and my sister sometimes would go up and check in on how he was doing. When Gus died, I did not realize what had happened. He was the first person that I knew well that died and I had never felt that way, but it helped me understand the real world. These memories are what make me today the person who I am. Another memory is when I stepped on a plastic tray and it broke, I was scared because I thought it was important. After all, we only had one and I broke it into pieces. The reason why I think I was scared was that I was afraid of messing up. When we talked about what happened I found out that it was ok, we could just get another one from upstairs and that it was ok to mess up.

One more memory is of Jim, one of the elders that were living there. He was in a wheelchair and they would map out how far he would travel each day and how far he would have traveled across the United States. It showed me that you could do anything, if you were disabled or not- that whatever you try your hardest at is possible and that is your biggest struggle you can still do anything.

The ILC changed me as a person and helped me become who I am today. The reason why is because of the lessons they taught me and the experiences that I went through. And I could not have been the same person as I am today. The ILC prepared me for the challenges ahead.