

Student Essays on NASA Project

The trip to Washington D.C. for the Quarterbacks of Life program was enlightening for various reasons; it goes without saying that being able to visit the nation's capital, let alone NASA's headquarters, and being informed or shown past, present, and even future projects will surely interest a person and will teach them things they didn't know or may have never known if they had not attended the trip, but on top of the scholarly aspect, there was also a personal or emotional side to it. Being told that you CAN achieve your dreams, or you can be what you want to be as long as you work hard, study hard, and follow the many stepping stones to success is very ensuring and is even inspirational coming from such important, and successful human beings. That encouragement that was shared to our group was definitely helpful, but the stories the speakers told were what hit home to me, realizing that they all were just a normal person like I am, at some point in their lives was so amazing. They weren't always so incredible and smart, but the hard work, time, effort and energy put them above the rest. This aspect of the trip was especially important to me for the fact that I will soon be choosing a college to attend after I graduate next year, and beginning my life as an individual, being ensured and encouraged that I can make the right choices for myself, and I can be successful as long as I want it bad enough, am willing to make necessary sacrifices if needed, and always work hard. The experiences I've had during not only the trip, but also the time we spent doing research and reviewing the stepping stones will stick with me throughout the rest of my life, and through everything I take on in my future. ~ Abby, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

The Quarterbacks of Life program has changed my point of view on things. I went into the program very narrow minded and I thought I was not going to get much out of it. Working with other grades to help plan for our NASA trip helped me become more open minded. Going to NASA Headquarters was such a fun and unique experience. All of the speakers there made me realize many things. Many people say if you come from a small town, you will have a hard time making it big. I disagree with that. Where you are from does not determine your success, your dedication and hard work does. By the time I left NASA I was inspired to never give up. There will be many success stoppers in my life but I will overcome them. Before I became a part of the

group Quarterbacks of Life, I was very interested in space and everything involving it. It has always interested me. When I was asked to be in the group, I was unsure. When I found out I would get to go to NASA and talk to people that work there, I was beyond excited. Going there made me so much more interested and I hope to work there someday. Next year I would like to do this program again. I will remember this trip forever. It has taught me so many things and I cannot wait to see what next year has in store. The Quarterbacks of Life program is such a great opportunity and I look forward to being a part of it until I graduate. ~ Adrian, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

My experience at NASA has been very eye opening. I had some of the most prestige people at NASA talking to me about how hard work and drive has given them the success they have. And that we may not know what we want to be yet, but to work hard at whatever you do. Charles Bolden the Administrator of NASA told us that he didn't even know that he was going to be an astronaut when he was going to school. He knew he liked math and sciences so he worked hard at school to become the best he could be. It made me realize that I may not know exactly what I want to be, but I need to work hard at all the things I do. No matter what I do that I need to be the best at it. Colonel Mathis taught me that it does not matter what your childhood was like, you can make something of yourself. You just can't give up on your goals and dreams. You have to have discipline in your life and don't let obstacles stop you in life. Drive past them and reach your goals. I can use these skills in my future endeavors by applying them to my life. I can apply it my high school career by doing my work and studying hard and doing well in my standardized testing. It could also apply to my college life by guiding me to make good decisions to keep me on track in my life. And to keep my eyes on my dreams and to not let things get in my way. That I will have obstacles in my life no matter what, and that I need to break down those barriers when I arrive at them. Overall, I am very thankful I got to be a part of this program from day one, from meeting and interviewing four time Super bowl champion Rocky Bleier to all of my experiences at NASA, meeting The Administrator of NASA, to hear from an astronaut that has been on a spacewalk, and to hear Colonel Mathis speak. All of these people taught me very important life lessons that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. ~ Ben, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

The Quarterbacks of Life/NASA experience has helped me to not only become a better student, but a better person as well. It has encouraged me to be a better role model and to help set a greater example for my fellow peers. It has taught me to be more presentable, to hold myself to a higher standard, and to always strive to surpass the goals I wish to achieve. It has even taught me proper team building skills.

This program has kept me on my best behavior. Just listening to a few members of the program speak about everything they had to do and overcome has touched me on a personal level. I have experienced some adverse conditions in my life but after hearing them talk about their lives and how they got through many setbacks I have realized that I can make it through anything. The people I have met have all been extraordinary and I hope to someday become an outstanding and productive citizen like them. It is truly amazing how inspired I am when I reflect on what I have learned from The Quarterbacks of Life.

With all that I have taken away from this program in my first year, I cannot help but be excited about what I could learn from future experiences. I hope to continue being a part of this team throughout my high school years. The Quarterbacks of life has been a great experience for me, furthermore I cannot wait to see what great learning experiences await us in the years to come. ~ Brian, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

The Quarterbacks of Life NASA experience impacted me and showed me that what I learned can be used in future endeavors. Each one of the speakers from NASA showed me that one cannot give up on one's dream no matter what obstacles one faces. Also someone might not discover what they will do because they think a career is too far out of their reach. They showed me that no matter how bad your life is, it is your choice to become more and chase your dream. Nothing comes easy or is handed to anyone. If one was willing to work hard for their dream, there is no dream too big or unreachable. It is ok to make a mistake and when someone does they can learn from it. They explained how without their team they would not be able to fix Hubble. Some dreams may need a team to accomplish something big. It was a great experience to visit NASA and observe the different types of jobs it holds. Although I have no interest in pursuing a career in science, I learned that there are multiple jobs that are hidden in work fields. Someone may see

NASA as holding careers for just scientist, but it has many other jobs. I hope I will be able to experience something this great next year and one day hope to make my dream come true by learning from each quarterback of life. ~ Kaley, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

The Washington D.C. NASA trip impacted me in a way that I can see the greatness in the jobs people do. It is important to have a job that you love. It is amazing that you can have one that could change the world. This trip also showed me that, even if you do not think you can make an impact, you can achieve anything with hard work. Both astronauts that we met worked hard to get where they are and they love their job and what they do for people. They both overcame their fears to get where they wanted to go. They have helped us to discover new things in space and taught us to believe in ourselves. I will continue to push myself to do things that I want to do in my life. I hope that one day, I will be able to do something that will change the lives of people. I learned that I can do anything I set my mind to. The astronauts taught us about space and their adventures out there. I now know more about the Hubble Space Telescope that I did not know before. I also learned the different types of jobs NASA provides and all of the opportunities it gives to someone working there. This trip taught us that the astronauts need things that we use in our everyday lives like the math and sciences they use every day. All in all, this trip was a very good experience for me and all of my friends. We plan on continuing to do things like this in the future because of this trip and what it has taught us. We all had fun and learned new things about space and the responsibilities of a person who worked hard to get what they have. I am glad we got the opportunity to go on this trip and I hope we all get the chance to do something one day that can help people in the future. ~ Lauren, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

The Quarterbacks of Life program is an excellent project designed to help students achieve their goals. Its basis teaches us that it is important to dream big, and even though we may encounter hardships and setbacks if we persevere we can achieve anything. When I heard that we were going to have the opportunity to go to NASA Headquarters and speak with some very important individuals I was ecstatic. That was due to the fact that NASA is a leader in innovation, and I would possibly like study a field of Physics when I continue on to college. We were lucky enough to speak to some scientists who were Astrophysicists. It was great to be able to hear their

stories and learn that they had setbacks, but pushed forward and achieved their goal. I want to possibly become a physicist because I love physics, and I think that I would maybe be able to make a difference. Sadly getting a degree in physics is no walk in the park. I've always put up this sort of boundary thinking that I'm not smart enough to be a physicist. After my experience at NASA that has changed in a positive way. Many of the people who spoke to us said that they felt the same way, and one of the women who spoke said that she had failed a physics course in college. She didn't let that get her down though and she moved past it. She fought for what she wanted. So far this program has taught me a lot and has greatly influenced my decision for what I want to do in life. It has helped me get on track, and I am grateful for that. I am glad I was lucky enough to have been chosen to be a part of it. ~ Ryan, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

The main lesson that the speakers at NASA taught me was that you should never give up on your dreams and goals. This lesson had the most impact on my personal life because it shows me that I can be anything I want to become. The speakers at NASA had many obstacles that they had to encounter to become what they always dreamed about. One of the speakers actually did not plan on going into the space career field when he was younger, but along the way of becoming what he wanted to be he chose to be part of the NASA space program. This speaker related to my life in a big way. This way being that I am not sure what I would like to major in when I go to college, and also I do not know what type of career I would like to have after college. Although I am only a sophomore in high school I feel the need to decide what I want to pursue a career in, but this speaker taught me that I do not have to decide right now. The experience with the NASA speakers taught me many lessons but these were the two that impacted my life the most: In life you will have many challenges that you will have to face, but you should never give up because of those challenges and they will most likely make you better. And the last one being that you may feel the need to figure out what you want to do in life quickly, but in reality you may never know you just have to find something you enjoy. The speakers at NASA were extremely inspirational to my personal life. ~ Lauren, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

At the Quarterbacks of Life NASA field trip I learned many things. I learned to not be afraid of failure. Mr. Charlie Bolden said to always work hard, study hard, and do not be afraid to fail.

There will always be mistakes, setbacks, and challenges, but overcome them and you will be successful. From Charlie Bolden I learned to try different things. Mr. Bolden didn't even think of being an astronaut until he got older. Charlie Bolden attended the United States Naval Academy and when he was there he fell in love with aircraft and flying. Charlie then became an astronaut. Bolden never thought he would become an astronaut, he always thought he would serve in the military. Charlie Bolden tried different things and he learned about what he truly loved to do. Mr. Bolden is now the Administrator of NASA, he is a very successful man. John M. Grunsfeld was also very inspiring. Mr. Grunsfeld also taught me to do what I love and to follow my dreams. John Grunsfeld always had an interest in science and math. Grunsfeld knew from a young age he wanted to be in the science and math field. John Grunsfeld followed his dreams and never gave up. John tried until he got where he is at today. John still never gives up on the things he loves. Mr. Bolden and Mr. Grunsfeld both taught me something very important. They taught me to always be positive, set goals and steps for myself, and you always need someone to encourage and help you. Nobody can succeed unless there are people to believe in you. Everyone needs believe in themselves, but you need others to be there to support their choices. I will use this information and experience in the future to inspire myself. I will be a leader and use the Stepping Stones of Life to help me advance and be a superb woman. In the future, I will follow my dreams and do what I love. Being a part of the Beating the Odds Foundation has been the best experience of my life. ~ Sara, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School

Can you imagine not knowing what you want to do with your life? Not knowing what you are going to do for a job when you grow up. That's how I was before I joined the Quarterbacks of Life. The Quarterbacks of Life has helped me figure out my goals in life. The organization tells stories of people who have went through a rough life but came out on top. It tells real life scenarios of great people who have had to overcome some of the biggest challenges you or I could ever imagine. These people have solved small and worldwide problems. One of these people are Rocky Bleier, Rocky is a retired player for the Steelers. His story was that he was playing for the Steelers. Then, Rocky was drafted to go to Vietnam for the war. In Vietnam Rocky was shot. The doctors told him he would be lucky to even walk let alone play professional football. Well, Rocky did the complete opposite; he learned to walk again then eventually was able to return back to play for the Steelers. Rocky Bleier's story really hit me. After I heard that I

was reminded of how lucky I am. I began to think of all the goals that I wanted to accomplish. Also all the problems I had to deal with and overcome. This year in the Quarterbacks of Life program, my classmates and I traveled to Washington D.C. In Washington, we visited NASA headquarters. We got to hear stories of the people who worked there and what challenges they have faced. We learned that no matter what stage of your life you are in, one will experience successes and the need to overcome obstacles. The Quarterbacks of Life program helped me figure out what I want to do with my life when I graduate. Also how I can overcome the problems I will face when I go to accomplish my goals. That is what the Quarterbacks of Life program is about also what we have done this year. ~ Seth, Mapletown Jr/Sr High School