

Why Every Student Should Have the Chance to be a Beyond Borders Student

If you would have described the person I am today to the version of myself on the first day of school I would not have believed you. This program has influenced me like I never knew possible. Many others in the past have described Beyond Borders as “life changing” and I often thought how a school program could have such an impact. That is until I gained 46 new family members with 3 amazing role models who encourage us to strive each and every day. I think my entire class would agree with me when I say I have never learned and experienced more in such a short period of time than I did in Beyond Borders. Each day was engaging, exciting, and we were learning in a way that allowed us to develop exponentially. In Beyond Borders, everyday I am excited to wake up and go to school. I never thought I would say that. But the amount of support continuously spread among the group, makes me feel like part of an amazing team that I would never want to leave.

This program has allowed me to connect with friends, teachers, leaders in the community, and myself on such a deep level. There is meaning behind each assignment, project, and lesson that creates a learning environment focusing on understanding, rather than grades. We travel to actual business leaders in the community and learn in a way that goes beyond the typical classroom style. Each student is just as motivated as the next and we all have a general yearn to succeed. What is most meaningful to me is that I was able to learn in an environment that didn't guide me in a certain direction, but allowed me to discover who I was as a student and a leader. I have not only increased my confidence, but I now know that my capabilities are endless and that with hard work and dedication anything is achievable. I have never had such an amazing year of high school and I am so grateful I got to be a member of the Beyond Borders 2018-2019 class. When I talk about the program I am in, people are often so amazed and tell me how lucky I am to have such a unique experience. Or that they wish they had that opportunity when they went to school; and I think that's the most important aspect. Every student should be able to graduate with such passion, hard work, and meaning in their high school education.

Beyond Borders must continue because every student deserves the opportunity to grow, develop and shine in their own special way. Every student gets to feel like they belong. Every student gets to feel like they are the leaders of tomorrow and have the power to make a change. They should be able to wake up every single day and want to go to school because learning is just that much more exciting in Beyond Borders. You are valued, respected, and loved. We celebrate success but also celebrate failure, as we just learned how to be a better version of ourselves next time. I can say with confidence that I have a changed outlook on myself, other people and the world today. There is no reason why education has to be limited to the walls of a classroom. Get out, explore the possibilities, and love learning.

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