**SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY EXAMPLE #6**

**Change a Life Foundation Scholarship Essay Examples by Isabella Mendez-Figueroa**

Prompt: Please explain a personal hardship or catastrophic life event that you have experienced. How did you manage to overcome this obstacle? What did you learn and how did you grow from it? This answer is critical to your application as Change a Life Foundation’s vision is to assist individuals who have persevered and overcome a hardship/catastrophic life event.

*Filling out this application, and my college applications, has forced me to face head on the realities that I've grown up in. Looking back and describing my life I see all the ways in which I am disadvantaged due to my socioeconomic status. But I think it's important to note that I wasn't fully aware of any of it growing up. I knew that my parents couldn't buy me everything, but I also knew that they hardly ever said no. I was a very normal child, asking for chicken nuggets and looking at mom and dad any time I was scared or unsure of something. As I've grown I've learned to fight my own monsters but I now also battle the ones that frighten my parents, the monsters of a world that they weren't born into. Monsters of doubt and disadvantage that try to keep them stuck in a cycle of poverty; thriving in a world that casts them to the side and a society that, with its current political climate, doesn't welcome them with the warmest hello.*

*The baby sitter, the house keeper, the driver, it's taken my dad 10+ years of night shifts to attain financial stability, and become an asset to his workplace. He's been one of the millions of people who has been laid off in the last couple of decades and has had to start over multiple times. But each time he's re-built himself with more resilience. I've grown up living in section 8 housing because my parents often found themselves living paycheck to paycheck, not by choice, but by circumstance. They've endured bankruptcy over credit card debt, have never owned a home, or been given access to resources that allow them to save. Every time we've readapted, we get struck by a new change. I currently live in Manchester Square, a ghost town, byproduct of the Los Angeles Airport expansion project. The 16 steps I have always known, soon to be demolished. My neighbors are empty lots, enclosed by fences. Homeless people’s pitch tents, under the roar of airplanes. My home is soon to become an accommodation to an airport, soon to be nonexistent. Knowing that my family has to relocate as I'm applying to college makes me feel a tad guilty, because of my lack of resources, I fear it will become a barrier into my transition to college. My parents finances are not a secret, I know their struggles as I hear about them day after day. My parents now deal with the burden of relocating, no longer having subsidized housing and again, struck by yet another need to readjust and reassemble. Relocating a family of 5 in an area plagued by gentrification of stadiums and demolition is no simple task as rent prices are as high as mortgages. It's odd they don't want me to stress or have it become my problem but I know it is, and I want to do whatever I can to help.*

*My older sister is the first in my family to go to college. I was always the shyer one. She's taught me through her efforts that the only limits you have are the ones you place on yourself. With my sister's example I have followed in the footsteps of never letting money become a reason why I can't or won't do something. If my sister can do it, I can do it. I see the leadership characteristic is genetic and it runs in my entire family. I witness my parents be leaders everyday as they tackle cultural obstacles in a country that wasn't the one they were born into, speaking a language that is not their own, and raising children to succeed in a system of higher education; one they never had the privilege to be part of. My family and I are one. We stack our efforts, and obstacles on top of each other to further our successes as a whole. When I think back to my family's story I'm amazed to think that my grandpa came to the US in the midst of WW2, a bracero, leaving his family to help feed millions of Americans in time of war. My grandpa, a man of the fields, paved the way so I could defy the odds with my prosperity.*

*At home, the teacher role often switches within my family. I am responsible for translating documents to my parents and explaining procedures and concepts as I, myself, am learning them. I have had the responsibility of helping assist my younger sister who has a mild case of Cerebral Palsy. Due to her pre-existing condition, she is a slow learner. I have dedicated a lot of time this past year, helping her with her transition from elementary to middle school and helping her adapt to such a drastic change.*

*Sometimes, I only sleep 4 hours as I wake up and rush out the door in order to make it on time to 6am tutoring. Having to manage my schoolwork and home responsibilities has been difficult but I've managed to maintain high academic achievement by managing my time correctly and being persistent. If I truly want something, I need to go after it, and I will get it done. Sometimes being tired isn't an option.*