



school that is not nearly as well-resourced as LFA. The metaphor of a “new family” and “new home” effectively demonstrate Angelica’s ability to adapt. In the third school she moves to, we find out that Angelica’s “shyness had not tagged along . . . The nauseous feeling had left [Angelica’s] stomach and enthusiasm had entered.” This reference to the nervous sensations Angelica mentioned in the second paragraph is an excellent way to show us how her feelings and thoughts have changed. Angelica’s ability to relate parts of her essay together helps tie the narrative into a coherent whole. By referencing back to earlier sections of the story, she prevents her essay from reading like a narrated timeline of her past. The most powerful example of this strategy is at the end of her essay, where Angelica writes, “Now I am visible,” bringing the theme of the piece back full circle.

“Power of People”

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I BELIEVE IN PEOPLE. THIS CONVICTION drives my action and ambitions, and defines me in a world of cynicism and doubt. I have seen the power of people and their ability to come together in times of need and joy and sorrow. I know that ultimately, humans strive for belonging and community; thus, while loneliness and anger may always be in existence, so will be togetherness and bliss. My strong faith in humanity stems from my witnessing of the best in human qualities while doing the MS150 and during Hurricane Ike, and pushes me to pursue a career in helping others. Both of these events have allowed me to see humanity at its best, performing selfless acts of benevolence.

For the past four years, I have participated in the BPMS150 bike tour from Houston to Austin. This 175 mile ride raises funds for the National MS Society, which sponsors medical research for multiple sclerosis and aids the families of its victims. I can say from experience, the ride is grueling; enormous hills, headwinds, fatigue, and body aches are prevalent throughout. Yet every year, over thirteen thousand riders decide to put their minds and bodies through two days of torture so that they can help those who live with it every day. I have raised, over four years, more than eight thousand dollars to benefit the MS Society, and have never regretted any of the painful training or the ride itself. The view at the starting line is one of the most empowering I have ever



witnessed: thousands of people, all of them with their hands on their handle bars, one foot poised on a pedal. All are ready to experience exhaustion for the benefit of others, like my father. He was diagnosed with MS when I was four, and is a constant motivator for me. I witnessed him become blind in one eye, and struggle with a body that refuses to function normally. I participate in this ride every year for him, as do thirteen thousand others. The power of people will ultimately help my father to receive better medical treatment, and maybe even one day, be cured.

While writing this essay, I was also able to observe and be a part of amazing human efforts. Hurricane Ike devastated Southeastern Texas, particularly the Houston and Galveston areas. Much of my extended family lives in Galveston, and so was forced to evacuate. Without hesitation, my parents opened up our home to aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, and pets. This is the environment in which I have always lived; our home is anyone's shelter, our food is anyone's nourishment. Together, our entire family weathered the storm, and comforted one another. My aunt's home received electrical power prior to my home, and so she eagerly welcomed us to stay with her. Large scale displays of altruism could be seen in the hundreds of University of Houston students handing out food and water to those affected by the hurricane. During times of need, people band together for safety and solace. Community is instinctual; dismiss the notions of survival of the fittest. People truly desire closeness with one another.

In the future, I hope to pursue a career in public health. I love studying science and math, and I would like to use this passion to benefit large numbers of people. Many go without basic medical treatment, and this causes a huge discrepancy in quality of life and health in the population. Even if this problem can never completely be solved, I want to help remedy this as much as possible. With small deeds and cooperative effort, humans can accomplish immense good. I know this because I believe in people, and I have seen them at their finest.

ANALYSIS

Suzanne begins her essay with a four-word sentence that is powerful for its simplicity and frankness: "I believe in people." She goes on to explain why this assertion of her beliefs distinguishes herself from the people around her. Several of the statements Suzanne makes are