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When I say The iBELIEVE Foundation changed my life, I don't mean it figuratively. iBELIEVE positively changed the way I hold myself, the mindsets I keep, the ways I interact with others, and even the way I see the world. This foundation is something that has impacted my heart and soul and made me into the person I am today. iBELIEVE has my entire heart and I will forever be grateful for every second spent with iBELIEVE people and every second spent in the program.

Five years ago, when I was asked to attend a summer leadership workshop three hours away from home, by myself, I was terrified. I was not confident in who I was, but I had a passion for people, for growth, and for leading, so I knew it had to be the right choice to attend. By taking that one step outside of my comfort zone, I had no idea how much growth would follow, but I am unable to express properly just how thankful I am that I did. Before iBELIEVE, I was afraid to be my genuine self because I lacked the confidence to believe in who I truly am. After going through the program I learned that I am most valuable to the world by being my most authentic self. I gained confidence in myself and in others. I learned how to genuinely connect with people and lead them toward their goals. I have become proud of who I am and where I come from because of this programming and the people involved.

In my years being affiliated with iBELIEVE, I have been a delegate, staff member, ambassador, and intern which has allowed me to view the foundation from many different perspectives. Each of these positions has taught me immeasurable amounts of life lessons that I carry with me daily. I wholeheartedly believe I would not be the strong and well-rounded person I am today without being a part of this incredible foundation.

The people I have met through iBELIEVE are--to this day--my very best friends. This community has allowed me to feel connected through even the most challenging and isolating times of life. iBELIEVE has taught me that life is about making meaningful connections with the people around you. Life is about striving to make a positive change in the world and knowing that we have the power to do so within our hearts. iBELIEVE gave me the skills I needed to find success through high school, which further allowed me to succeed through college.

Without being a part of iBELIEVE, I firmly believe that I would not be at The Ohio State University thriving in every way. iBELIEVE allowed me to meet and connect deeply with so many people from all over our beautiful region and thus, when I came to college, I had a huge network of friends and peers who come from the same path I did. Because of iBELIEVE, I can never feel alone; instead, I feel consistently supported, encouraged, and inspired. iBELIEVE pushed me to always take positive risks that would allow me to better myself and my future. I now maintain a growth mindset and hold confidence within myself. I now have a network with hundreds of people with whom I can get help from and help them in return. It is because of iBELIEVE that I feel comfortable meeting new people, chasing my dreams, and showing my genuine, energetic, and bubbly self. It is because of iBELIEVE that I have become a person I am proud of every day. It is because of iBELIEVE that I know we are capable of making a positive impact on the world.

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