

## Winning College Essay

After endlessly waiting in the sweltering heat with my non-vertically challenged friends, we finally made it to the front of the line to ride the scariest roller coaster at Six Flags. As we scrambled to get the most thrilling seat on the ride, an employee in a blue-collared shirt approached me. I knew what was coming, but I looked away hoping to avoid the inevitable. He abruptly stopped at my seat and blurted, “Blondie in the first car...get out and stand next to Bugs Bunny.” My face flushed as I stood next to the measuring stick and the worker announced I was too short to ride. Heartbroken, I dragged myself toward the bench with all the little kids. I watched my friends as the ride zoomed away. While I sat on the bench I couldn't help but wonder why I was cursed with such short genes.

It wasn't until second grade when I realized I was always going to be a “front row kid”. This became my identity. In grammar school I was never proud to be the shortest kid in my grade, but as I got older I learned to embrace my travel-sized self. There are countless perks to being a shrimp. I discovered that being short was a cheap way to live. I could order from kids' menus and buy kids' clothing. After we discovered these advantages, my parents starting loving me a lot more.

Beyond the financial benefits of being fun-sized, I believe this inherent trait has greatly impacted my character. My short stature has not held me back from developing an unforgettable, enormous personality. When I am introduced to a new person, without a doubt, I anticipate a comment about my height. Sometimes they say, “Oh my God! You're so adorable!” (as if I am five years old). I may as well wear a sticker that says *Hello My Name is 4'11”*. Then, I open my mouth. As the conversation continues, my height is disregarded because my personality is six feet tall.

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It's no secret that I am a people person. I'm not afraid to engage in conversation with just about anybody. This summer I traveled from Rome to meet my family in London. Fifteen minutes into the flight, I couldn't hold myself back from striking up a conversation with the Italian man sitting next to me. I was confused by his fluent English, until he told me he travels to California every month to visit his partner. We talked about how difficult it must be to maintain a long distance relationship. We discussed the controversy about Britain's secession from the European Union. At the end of the flight, we exchanged Snapchat usernames to stay in touch.

Most short people dream about being taller, not me. Honestly, the view from down here is amazing. I used to wonder why I was the shortest of all my friends, but as I got older I learned that height is irrelevant. I may not be able to climb through a tall window, but I can crawl through any doggie door.

## Thinking About **College** For Your **Student with** **Learning Differences?**

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- ✓ Process applications
- ✓ Writing college application essays



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*"If a child can learn the way we teach him, we better teach him the way he learns."*