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New Lancer Days Reflection

When arriving on a college campus the first day of freshman year, one tends to be hit with a newfound sense of adulthood. Along with that comes a feeling of complete ignorance. I know that when I arrived at Longwood, even though I had been on countless tours, I felt as if I knew nothing about student life at this university. I was aware that I would participate in New Lancer Days and although that gave me a good amount of comfort, I had no idea what to expect. I had heard many rumors from the upperclassman, saying that it was an abundance of information we really already knew thrown at us all at once all over the course of very long days. Reflecting on it now, I could not have asked for a better introduction to the university. New Lancers Days taught me the many different aspects of personal responsibility, self sufficiency, and citizen leadership that a Longwood student should exemplify in a way that was not only informative, but fun.

Transitioning into college life takes a great deal of personal responsibility. As new adults, we now have to take responsibility for everything we do. Many different activities that we participated in during New Lancer Days aided in showing us what this new responsibility meant and what we were expected to do with it. Beginning with the Honor and Integrity Ceremony, we took an oath that “we will not lie, cheat, or steal nor tolerate those who do”, ensuring we would be faithful to ourselves and to the university. This ceremony was something that I found very important because it taught us that we are now responsible for our actions and if we are to ever violate that oath, it will be no one’s fault but our own. I also found the “Life as A Lancer” session very informative when it came to personal responsibility. As the chief of LUPD explained to us all the responsibilities that come along with partying in college and underage drinking, it made me realize that although those things may be fun at times, we have to be responsible for what can happen when those situations get out of hand. Although I found both of those sessions very important and informative when it comes to personal responsibility, the session I found the most rewarding was the “Step Up! Bystander Training”. Many of us think that when coming to college personal responsibility means doing your work on time and being able to take care of ourselves, but this session brought a whole new meaning to the term. This session showed us that we need to take personal responsibility when it comes to others as well. Overall I think that New Lancer Days showed us that coming to college brings a lot of personal responsibility and that it is our choice what we do with it.

College students have to be self sufficient. Until now, we have depended on our parents for almost everything. Learning to do things for ourselves can be difficult, but I think that New Lancer Days did a very good job of transitioning us into it. The session we had with Peter Biegalus about managing our money was something that I found very important because up until now, aside from the part time jobs we had in high school, we have never had a real job or a situation where we really needed to manage our money. I think that this session really showed us the possible consequences of not being responsible and how to really be self sufficient with our money. Although I thought that many of the sessions taught us how to survive on our own and to be self sufficient, I think what taught us the most was the peer mentors showing us how to do things independently on campus. Whether it was something as simple as telling us a meeting place we had never been to before so we can find our way around campus independently or answering all of our questions during prime time, the peer mentors taught us so much about campus and how to do things on our own. Becoming self sufficient can be hard, especially when you are used to depending on others for so much. I think that New Lancer Days and the peer mentors could not have done a better job when it came to showing us how to be truly self sufficient.

As soon as we came to Longwood, it was made very apparent to us that citizen leadership is very important. By Longwood’s definition, a citizen leader is someone who exemplifies education, values, and service. During New Lancer Days, many different sessions taught us the different aspects of all of these qualities. Education was conveyed through sessions such as “Wes Moore” and “Loving Your Laptop”, where each taught us completely different things, but were both very informative. Wes Moore taught us so much about the thin line we all have that determines how the rest of our lives can pan out and what freedom really means to us. The session with the RTAs taught us about all of the responsibilities that come with using the student network and how to take properly take care of our electronic devices. Values were taught to us through sessions such as “Molecules That Monkey With Your Mind” and “What’s Your Soundtrack”. Both of these sessions were so informative when it came to showing us how to be responsible and stick to our values in situations that involve alcohol, drugs, and sexual harassment. Although we did not get a chance to do any service during New Lancer days, the peer mentors and presenters told us about so many things that we can do to get involved on campus that not only serve the university, but the surrounding community. Being a citizen leader is something that Longwood thinks very highly of and I think the New Lancer Days set the groundwork for allowing all of us to become one.

New Lancer Days is an amazing way for incoming freshman to not only become comfortable here at Longwood, but learn about everything that is expected of us and what we are encouraged to strive for. With our new sense of personal responsibility, self sufficiency, and citizen leadership, I think we are all better college students because of this experience. Although it was a lot of information to process in such a short amount of time, I think that it was the best way for us to become acclimated with this campus and our newfound adulthood.