



## Leadership Journey

Catalina Brown, *Westview High School*

**S**traight A student, Westview MCJROTC 3rd Platoon's Platoon Commander, and the captain of the girls wrestling team. My name is Catalina Y. Brown and since joining Westview's MCJROTC program my life has transformed significantly. Before joining I was known as a someone who was shy, kind, and who would let others step over her if it pleased them. I have been in JROTC for 2 years and over these years have learned many qualities that have bettered my life and self – criteria. Three of the many qualities that have helped me the most are enthusiasm, courage, and leadership.

My Enthusiasm has altered throughout my years of growing up. When starting high school, I believed if I smiled, I would be okay and everyone else would be happy. This program has taught me that to be enthusiastic doesn't mean to always be happy. When at a cadet Leadership camp, I was given a chance to learn a truer meaning of enthusiasm. My squad was going through an obstacle course and while going through I cheered and waited for cadets behind and encouraged cadets ahead to do so too. While at the army camp the squads had a baseball competition. I was able to show enthusiasm by not just being happy but serious. My squad wished to win, and I made sure everyone was serious enough to get to the championship by shouting the game score and forming a quick small plan to help our chances.

JROTC has also encouraged me to get a 4.0 GPA. This means staying up late which took so much energy and time but I was able to achieve this goal this year and I am now the top 24 students out of 347 students in my junior Class. I was able to apply enthusiasm when staying up and studying to maintain my As.

Courage is another quality that I have learned through this Program's curriculum. I have always struggled with speaking out and taking chances. I would second guess myself for almost every decision I made because of what others thought. Although I do still have this problem today, I now apply courage to make the best decisions possible with the information given. Last year I was asked by my SMI to try for Platoon Commander. In order to become one, I had to write an essay, show leadership in my previous platoon, and self-execute decisions that I must make. I wrote my essay 2 days before it was due and had it peer-reviewed by 3 people before submitting it and even then, I was still scared. This year my platoon had the highest scored in categories like knowledge, YPFT, and even winning Platoon of the semester. Courage has been something I lacked in but through my years I am now able to trust in myself and try new things like joining wrestling. In the summer I lost so many matches at a tournament I gained a medal for losing every single match. That tournament has stuck with me because I wanted to quit

so bad. JROTC gives me the courage to continue this hard sport and to not give up even after many terrible loses. I would've never joined wrestling if it wasn't for JROTC and my record this year is now at 24 wins and 4 loses.

The most important quality I have learned is leadership. Before starting the school year I read a quote by Thomas Jefferson, "Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail". This quote has encouraged me becoming an amazing Platoon Commander. I have confidence in myself for the orders I give in and out of the program. I am now currently the captain of the girls wrestling team. This is one of my biggest accomplishments and I felt as if I was already prepared for the role because I am a Platoon Commander. I make sure the girls on the team are held accountable for not showing up and help them improve.

Thanks to my school's JROTC program I was given the chance to learn these three qualities. They have made me a straight A student, successful being a platoon commander, and the captain for the girls wrestling team. These are just some of the few accomplishments I have achieved since joining JROTC. These past 2 years of JROTC has transformed me into being the great leader I am today.

## Catalina Brown

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*2024 BBB Ethical Cadet Scholarship Recipient*



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