Albert Einstein, the brilliant mathematician, scientist, and teacher once said, “It is not so very important for a person to learn facts. For that he does not really need a college. He can learn facts from books. The value of an education in a Liberal Arts college is not the learning of many facts but the training of the mind to think something that cannot be learned from textbooks.” A simple but true statement is made with these words. The “thinking outside the box” attitude Manchester College has instilled in me with it’s Liberal Arts beliefs has molded me into an educated person of the world. Before joining the tight-knit group of Spartans, I truly was not prepared for the world. As I near the end of my fourth year at Manchester college I am delighted to report that a liberal arts education has prepared me for my future career, helped me to recognize cultural differences and expanded my view of the outside world.

Even if I live to be ninety-nine, I will never forget my Sociology 101 course. A charismatic, witty and talented teacher lead the course in a way that many students will not soon forget. The first day of class began with a run down of how this professor “pegged” our class. By using his seemingly psychic powers, he guessed our economic and social statuses just by the appearance of our race, age and gender. Little did we realize at the time, but these “psychic powers” were no more than a study done for several years about society. He was teaching us without using textbooks. Reflecting back at this required course, only of a Liberal Arts college,
prepared me for my first day of student teaching. Casting an eye over twenty-some eager faces waiting for me to utter my first words was more information to me than I could imagine. I was suddenly brought back to the first day of Sociology 101. Summing up my class by societies idea of race, age and gender let me in on a few secrets about the home lives of my students. By becoming familiar with my class on a deeper level, I understood that asking parents for field trip money, craft money and such would not be easy on the parents. During my student teaching experience in second grade, I made a promise to myself to ask as little from parents as possible money wise. Without a Liberal Arts education, I may have been naive enough to do so without second thought.

The influence the liberal arts education has made on how I view people of diversity has probably had the biggest impact on my thinking about others, especially after a month long course in January entitled Race, Ethnicity and Gender in Today’s Society. Much information about the abuse and neglect my race has shown on others is devastating. By taking this course, it opened up my eyes to the real problems at hand. Had I never attended Manchester, I may still be walking around with blinders on my eyes. Now that I have had the opportunity to take my rose-colored glasses off, I can make a difference in the world and put a halt to prejudice. For instance, Manchester students completing an Education degree must attend a Celebrating Diversity Workshop. A friend and I attended together and still discuss some of the instances that were shared during the session. Each student had the opportunity to share a situation where they were discriminated against. It was heartbreaking to hear some of the stories. One description of an event I will never forget was from a young woman. She was going on a field trip as a 6th grade student on a bus for the physically handicap. A man, whom was very prejudiced against people with disabilities, stood outside their bus with a gun. Obviously the trip was ruined, but
the hurt in that young women lasts to this day. Because of her story, I strive to be the person
who educates others in the face of adversity. When someone tells a racial joke, I do not laugh
but rather try to educate that person on why it is hurtful to others. A skill such as this will be
carried with me when teaching a classroom full of children. A model for the youth is what
Manchester College’s Liberal Arts program has provided.

Due to the Liberal Arts program at Manchester College, my views of those around me
has changed dramatically. I realize more than ever that it is necessary to think of others before
yourself sometimes. I suppose this is how my thinking has changed over the last four years. If
we the people do not, no one will. Our world already struggles and we must take care of it and
it’s people. Just like Dr. Seuss once said, “Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better. It's not.” A school system will be happy to have a person such as
myself on their staff because I am a person that cares. Manchester College has opened my eyes
to the abuse women face in all parts of the world and even the effects poverty has on children.
Because I am going to be a teacher, one on my goals is to educate students on some of the issues
that face our world today. If I can get the youth working on it, we have a better chance to defeat
our worldwide struggles.

Manchester College’s Liberal Arts program provides students with a “think for yourself”
attitude. All opinions and suggestions are welcomed. Liberal Arts has shaped me into a better
person and future teacher through the life experiences I have gained throughout my last four
years. Many facts were learned from the textbooks, but what I will carry throughout the rest of
my days are not the facts, but rather, a mind that can think for itself.