

During my years at Xavier, I have been encouraged to constantly strive for “the good life”. However, as I leave this chapter of my life and begin to build a life on my own, I am faced with the questions: What is the good life, and how do I achieve it? Aristotle wrote, “Human good turns out to be the activity of the soul in accordance with virtue”. He defines virtue as simply “excellence at being human”. I believe that he got it right. “The good life” means striving for excellence in all aspects of life. My experiences at Xavier over the past ten years have placed me on the path to excel in multiple areas of my life, whether it be in my relationships, performances, or academics.

The relationships that are formed at Xavier between friends, classmates, and teachers are incredibly unique. Through my years here, I have come to see how much different Xavier is from other schools. Because of the small class sizes, students are able to build more intimate relationships with their classmates. Creating meaningful connections with all of my peers is something I will always cherish. Xavier’s atmosphere as a whole is so welcoming, and I feel so cared for and understood by my teachers here. Spending my formative years in a place where there is so much kindness has taught me the importance of forming excellent relationships.

Xavier emphasizes unique skills as part of its curriculum. Xavier fosters creativity, and helps students explore their creative passions. We learn to sing, dance, and create art. The inclusion of these “fine arts” as part of Xavier’s philosophy is one of my favorite parts of our school. I believe that providing opportunities for students to find their creative outlet is incredibly important; it gives them a way to express themselves. I am especially appreciative, because I never would have found my love of dance without the diverse education that Xavier

provided for me. I found my passion because of Xavier's unique philosophy. Finding a passion to excel in is the epitome of "the good life".

I appreciate the high academic expectations Xavier sets for its students. Due to the challenging nature of the courses, students are motivated to do their best. Xavier's curriculum offers a unique blend of academia and philosophy. I specifically remember senior compendium as one of the classes most representative of "the good life". This class' particular focus on becoming a good person and learning how to live a moral life has had a lasting impact on me. I appreciate the high-caliber academics offered at Xavier, but what I love most is the thought-provoking instruction we receive that encourages personal excellence.

"The good life" is full of passion, commitment, and effort. Excelling in life does not mean the same thing for everyone, but it can have the same result. In dedicating one's life to meaningful causes and engaging with excellence, life will have deeper meaning, purpose, and impact.