Priest, Eagle Scout, Scholar, Latino. These are a few of the titles that I have acquired over the course of my life. Each one defines who I am. Without one of them, I would not be myself. There are countless pressures in everyday life to try and change individuals into what they will have us be. They may be unwanted pressures that might be found in places such as the workplace, media, or government. But there are pressures found even in families, friendships, and relationships ranging in intensity from benign to profound. It is easy to accept the role the authors of our mortal lives give us. If there is one thing that I feel is the most important thing for humans to remember is the power of choice. We can overcome our own dispositions, obstacles, and weaknesses. We can become who we want to be.

I am an ordained Priest in the Aaronic Priesthood of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Through willingness and worthiness, I was called to this office. I have a responsibility to my local Church members as well as to all those around me to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be a friend. My perspective includes duty to God.

I am an Eagle Scout. Through my dedication from the time I was twelve years old, I have obtained this rank and honor. Learning and living the Scout Oath and Scout Law which includes duty to country, being trustworthy, loyal, helpful, cheerful, and brave. Service projects were many throughout my Scouting career and the final length was the Eagle Scout Service Project. I started and facilitated a donation drive in my community for the Salt Lake City Road Home. I showed leadership with the involvement and participation of my Scout troop. My perspective includes lifelong service to others.

I am a Scholar. Learning has always been a passion of mine. I had the opportunity to conduct research on the suitability of algae protein residue as an effective biofuel which I then entered into the science fair. This research was new. The pursuit of truth and the willingness to share it is something that I will always have.

I am a Latino. Both of my parents originated from Mexico while I was born in the United States. I grew up with the culture, language, and beliefs of my family and ancestors. My name is different. First grade was when I first realized that my name is traditionally a female’s name in the United States unlike Mexico. Since then, my name has made me different in the minds of everyone I met. But I am also American. Many people don’t have the privilege and burden of being different.

People are often quite the same in thought, word, and deed. Backgrounds and opportunities don’t differ as much as we’d hope. But I am still myself. My choices make me who I am. And I can be whoever I want to be.