

Junior Handler Scholarship Essay 2009

Age 13

I think being a part of the agility community has already helped me to become a better citizen. There are things that I have learned by being in agility that will definitely help me when I grow up. Citizenship qualities that I have acquired from being in the agility community include responsibility, fairness, caring and trustworthiness.

Being a good citizen requires having good life skills, such as being responsible. One of the ways that agility has helped me become a more responsible person is by teaching me good work habits. Every time I go to an agility trial I always make sure that I am signed up on the worker's schedule. I have learned that when I am scribing I have to focus on the judge so that I don't miss any of the faults that need to be recorded. I also like to help with course building. Some people don't like to help with this job but it is something that I know needs to be done so that we can move on to the next event. Being responsible also means being organized. I have to pay attention to the trial schedule to know if I need to be ready to run my dog or if I am supposed to be working.

When I am at agility trials or training classes I display fairness and a caring attitude by listening and showing respect for other people's opinions. I always show patience with animals and humans both in and out of the agility community. Much of what I have learned over the past few years about patience I have learned by working with my agility dog. Agility is a team sport and I rely on my dog as much as my dog relies on me. It's my job to take care of her needs such as feeding, brushing her teeth and coat, and taking her to the vet for check-ups. All of these things I have learned as a kid I will need to continue doing when I become an adult pet owner.

Because I am a trustworthy person, other members of the agility community know that they can depend on me when help is needed. When there are club activities, like equipment days, I go and help move the equipment, spread gravel, and paint equipment. This teaches me to give back something to our club in return for helping me so much with training my dog. I can always be counted on to be at class on time. I don't like being late because I have fun training and competing with my dog. Agility has provided me a special bond with my dog that I wouldn't have if I didn't participate in agility and spend so much time with her. In my opinion, this is the best part of doing agility; how much we love our pets and all the fun times we share together.

Being a part of the agility community has taught me the positive citizenship qualities of responsibility, fairness, caring and trustworthiness. During the last few years as a Jumping Chollas member I have learned good work habits, organization, patience, how to be a responsible pet owner, and the value of teamwork. When I grow up I will always remember that dog agility allowed me to build a trusting relationship with my dog and a lifetime of friendships with many people who love agility as much as I do. I have learned that being determined to always do my best with my agility partner will make me a successful person with everything that I do now and when I grow up.