

Edwin H. Friedman once said, "Leadership is defined of as a capacity to define oneself to others in a way that clarifies and expands a vision of the future." I often wonder what it is about me that stands out as a strong definition to others. Is it my name: Kristal Ammerell Hansley? Is it my school: Howard University? Or is it the mere fact that I was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York? Though all these things are important and do in fact define me as a person, I believe what really makes me stand out and defines me as a leader to others, is both my high level of consistent responsibility and strength. It is through both these things in which I have shown to be an effective leader.

Since high school, I have consistently displayed high levels of responsibility. As a previous employee of Starbucks, I was put in charge of a daily cash flow between the amounts of \$800 to \$1500 due to the consistent high level of responsibility I showed while on the job. And now, as Howard University College of Arts And Sciences Freshman Secretary, I show my level of responsibility daily as I have help to organize various events on campus ranging from community service projects such as campus clean up days and homeless walks; to discussion panels on HIV/AIDS awareness, female degradation, and student involvement. In doing these various things, I have consistently shown that I am a person who can be trusted on when the time comes to not only do what is needed, but do what is needed with a high level of class and professionalism. This is an essential quality I believe a leader must possess for in order to be an effective leader, one must be able to be counted upon at all times.

Though the quality of responsibility is important, it is the factor of strength which truly separates me from most. Since birth, the odds have always been stacked against me. Whether it be my childhood, being born into a drug abused family, or the rough neighborhood in which I grew up, I have always found myself having to fight for what many take for granted. However, I stand here a better person for it. It is what I have come from, what I have had to do to rise above my circumstances to where I am now, that makes me a good leader. For if there is one thing a leader must possess, it is strength. Strength to lead, to stand up for what he or she believes, to do what must be done in order to achieve a certain goal. I have this quality in addition to so much more. What defines me as a leader? It is my willingness to use what I have to produce results that in the end are beneficial to both me, and all I work with; willingness I believe which so definitively separates me from the rest.