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Ryan Dang Mobile Care Scholarship

Essay #1: Compassion

I was once a child who found solace and joy in the simple comfort of a stuffed animal. Growing up, my parents worked tirelessly to rebuild our lives after the Vietnam War. As a result, their long hours and absence often left me feeling lonely at home. On days they were gone, my Cinnamoroll plush kept me safe. I remember countless nights drifting off to sleep, hugging a fluffy bear, or whispering secrets to my Barbie doll. These toys were my best friends and a source of emotional support during my childhood.

As I grew older, my compassion grew too. Working with Rose Pageant and SAP-VN allowed me to extend that warmth to others. I embarked on a mission to donate toys to less fortunate children in Vietnam, transforming my childhood treasures into an instrument of hope. Here in America, we often overlook a stuffed animal's significance. But for the children in Vietnam, it represents a beacon of companionship that's missing in their lives. After donating these toys to SAP-VN's office, my heart warmed at the thought of 40 children smiling with their new best friend. Each toy symbolizes love, compassion, and a bridge connecting my experiences to theirs.

Throughout my journey as a Rose, I learned that the inner beauty of a Vietnamese woman shines when she is compassionate. This project taught me that my inner beauty is embodied in my capacity to bring light to others' lives. If awarded the scholarship, I am committed to contributing to SAP-VN's mobile care trip and hand-delivering each toy I donated, whether it be

sparkling wings for a little girl who wishes to become a fairy princess or a Corvette replica for a little boy who dreams of owning a vehicle one day.

More than a crown, being named Miss Philanthropy is a call to action. I'm deeply humbled by the opportunity to work with Rose Pageant's Royal Court and SAP-VN throughout 2024 to support mobile care assistance, attend community events, and bring representation to the Vietnamese community. As I've shared love, from my toy box to their hearts, I encourage everyone to join me in sharing our inner beauty with the world - for it is in these acts of compassion that we truly shine as individuals.

Essay #2: Leadership

From my journey as a student ambassador to a Garden Grove Sister City Association board member, leadership has been a constant theme throughout my life. While there isn't one defining moment, my experiences have shaped me into an empathetic and globally-minded leader committed to providing opportunities for cultural exchange and support to those less fortunate.

It all began during high school when I was sponsored as one of ten ambassadors to travel to South Korea in an exchange program. My bond with my fellow ambassadors and Korean students transcended cultural and language differences. This 10-day trip ignited my passion for global leadership and cultural exchange. When my host student arrived in America, I learned Korean to communicate and address her concerns. To strengthen international relations between the two cities further, I hosted cultural events and games to learn about American and Korean history. It was a magical exchange that opened my eyes to the power of connecting with people from various backgrounds.

Transitioning into university life, I pursued a Leadership Studies minor at Chapman University. As an orientation leader for international students, I drew upon my experiences as a first-generation immigrant to help newcomers assimilate and find community. As my parents and I once felt scared of navigating a new country, I guided others through their journey by fostering friendships and bringing awareness to resource networks on campus.

Building on my commitment to cultural exchange, I became involved with the Garden Grove Sister City Association. I seized the opportunity to give back to future generations of students by joining the organization as a board member. Based on my experiences overcoming financial barriers, my goal was to enhance accessibility to the program. Through fundraising events, such as the Strawberry Stomp 5K Run in Garden Grove, I strived to ensure that every student, regardless of financial standing, can experience the beauty of cultural exchange.

As a board member, I work closely with the city to strengthen the 30-year legacy of the sister-city bond between Garden Grove and Anyang, South Korea. By nurturing this bond, we continue to provide opportunities for students, educators, and delegates in its span. This collective journey exemplifies the transformative impact of my leadership, from personal growth to collective empowerment for my community. As I embark on this next chapter with SAP-VN, I remain committed to advocating for empathy, understanding, and access for all.