

Honorable Mention  
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### A Fearless and Compassionate Leader

The age-old parable of the Good Samaritan is timeless; this man exemplified multiple qualities of a great leader. He went against popular opinion by stopping along the way and helping the defeated and defenseless man. The Good Samaritan showed through his example that leadership is taking the time to influence everyone we meet- not just the few choice, successful people.

When thinking of a true leader many would think of pastors, teachers, politicians, and our forefathers, such as Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. Of course, many of these men and women would be great examples of true leaders, but where I really needed to look was close to home, in my own family: my father.

I am the daughter of a brave and courageous man. He moved his family of nine to a new country, against the advice of his family and friends. Of course, he took their advice into consideration, but as a leader, he did what was best for everyone; he went against popular opinion and took the courageous step. Many factors determined this move, one of which is that Grand Rapid was, and still is, a beautiful place for his family to thrive. No one believed he could do it, with the barriers of immigration fees, the changing of schools, and a new community. They never thought that his family would be able to do the difficult transition, but my father being the leader that he is, was able to make the change.

After we immigrated, Dad started a business. In looking for employees, he did not try to find the best and the greatest; instead he looked for the ones who needed a chance that they had never been given before. One of his employees had only ever been on disability, but my father gave him a chance at a job; he trusted him to work, and this man loved him for it. He used his business, not only as a business venture, but rather as a way to enhance and shape the lives of others. This respect that so many people have for him makes him a true leader.

The more I watch my dad, the more I see all of the qualities of a true leader: he is brave, he takes a stand for what he believes is right, he has a contagious enthusiasm for his job and family, and he has a confidence that cannot be torn apart. My father is an analytical person. He analyzes things and people around him, he views them as a challenge, and through analyzing, he realizes his role plays a major part in their lives.

Leaders are usually seen as someone who forges ahead and can take the stand, but in my life, I have found, through my father, that a leader is often the one who stops and pays attention to those who are often looked at as “a waste of time”, or those who are often cast aside by the popular opinion. He has the best interest of others, not himself at the top of his mind. His employees love him not only as a leader, but also as a father. Employees that are older than he is

have texted him while he is at home with his family telling him they love him as a father. I can only hope that one day I can be as fearless and compassionate of a leader that my dad is.