

Shasta E. Cullen

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University of Houston
4800 Calhoun Road
Houston, TX 77004

Dear SSOE Committee,

My name is Shasta E. Cullen, and I am a senior at the University of Houston. I am writing to express interest in highlighting the skills for the SSOE Diversity Seal. My student activity involvement has aided in the development of these specific skills.

- **Civic Responsibility.** In my role as an ambassador, I help lead and organize CDI's Cultural Conversations. During one Cultural Conversation, we discussed the events that happened at the University of Missouri. A student that attended the event stated that the African American football players who walked out were being hypersensitive. I sensed that his comments upset some people. I remained calm and let everyone know that there are multiple ways to look at the situation in Missouri. It was important for me that the student who made the comment didn't feel isolated and that his opinion could be heard like everyone else.
- **Social Justice.** A recent lecture CDI hosted was "Negotiating Black Masculinity in America." After the lecture the presenter had the audience break into small discussion groups. Individuals in my group shared their thoughts on black masculinity or their own personal experience with the topic. At the end of the discussion my small group talked about what we could do to change society's view of black masculinity.
- **Cultural Knowledge and Influence.** Having everyday conversations with my fellow ambassadors about who they are gives me a deep sense of appreciation for others' stories and sharing my own. I often share my story with others through my participation as a panelist for the LGBTQ Speakers Bureau. After the panel discussions, many students ask for advice on how to navigate being a college student as well as a member of the LGBTQ population.
- **Global Perspective.** In my organizations, we had a guest speaker come and talk to us about the impacts of hunger and poverty in other countries. It really made me consider the privilege that I have here in the United States, considering my socio-economic class, family, and education. Understanding the access that I have to resources, I have coordinated several educational tabling events to share more information on how others can make a difference.

Thank you for reviewing my application for the SSOE Diversity Seal. If you need any additional information please feel free to contact me at 713-743-5100.

With Cougar Pride,

Shasta E. Cullen