The Meaning of Holding a Door

by Matthew Bajor

I believe in holding the door for people. It’s such an easy thing to do, which is why I love it. I have met those people that just push the door open enough for you to walk through and so the door won’t hit you. I have also met those people who let the door fly shut and hit you in the face. But I have also been lucky enough to meet the people that teach you a small lesson about manners. I learned to always hold the door for people from a stranger like that.

After stuffing myself to the breaking point at a diner one night, I stood up with my friends to head out the door. I got through the first set of doors alright, and then this 20-something-year-old boy held open the door for his friend. The boy who was holding the door for him—let’s call him David—looked up and saw us. He then elbowed his friend, who we’ll call Josh, in the stomach while he was midway through the door.

Josh was angry about it and shoved David and asked, “What’s your problem?”

David said, “You always hold the door open for a group of friends younger than you.”

The way he made me feel, just by holding the door open for me, has made a big impact on me. Although I am young and technically shouldn’t have to hold the door, I always do because everyone deserves to feel good.

A few weeks ago, I was heading to a movie with a friend when I decided to teach what I learned to my friend. There were lots of people streaming in and out when we made it to the front door, I stood back and held the door for everyone.

“What are you doing?” my friend asked as he turned around to stand with me as I held the door.

“Just something I promised myself I would do,” I replied, as he looked at me as if I were crazy.

Every single person who went through that door gave me the biggest smile ever and thanked me. I think they meant it.

“Wow, I never really thought people our age did that,” my friend said as the last group headed in and we shut the door behind us.

“I know. You should try it, too, sometime.”
I now realize that holding the door open for people means more than just that. It shows proper etiquette, which is something I always aim to have. It shows manners in such a small, but also a strong way. I believe it’s the little gestures, such as holding the door, that make manners what they are.