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How the Learning Assistant Experience Impacts Learning Assistants as Students BENJAMIN DREYFUS, BAILEY CAKE, NATALIE SCHULTZ, George Mason University — Learning Assistants (LAs) are undergraduate STEM students who participate in a pedagogy course and facilitate active learning among their peers in a variety of courses. Much of the existing research on LA programs focuses on the impact on the students taking courses with LAs, or on course transformation. In addition to this, we look at the impact on the LAs themselves, as students. We asked LAs in physics, other sciences, and math to reflect on how their LA experience has affected them, through interviews with fellow LAs and free-response surveys. We analyze these qualitative data to identify emerging themes. LAs found that their LA experiences had impacts on their conceptual understanding, metacognition, time management, confidence about public speaking and working with fellow students, and relationships with professors.

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