

Personal Statement

2. Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.

For me, creativity is all about freedom and an outlet of everyday stress. I express it through design and writing. These passions are incredibly helpful in developing power points, poster boards, and speeches for public presentations. I would do these activities in times of difficulty, whether it was emotional or confusion. There were times where I could not focus at the task at hand and when that happen, I would take a break and either design or write to free my mind, making it easier to focus on my work.

I found my passion in designing costumes and began in my third year of middle school, all the way to my second year of high school. Although they were not highly, artistically drawn, my designs were drawn well enough for people to get the general idea. I even took a full course in Art in Architecture class to explore other fields involving design. I enjoyed the class to an extent but learned that this was not the industry I would enjoy working in. I would enjoy a career in TV/movie costume design or as a media stylist.

In elementary school, I learned I had the biggest passion for reading, which brought out my passion for writing. I have many ideas for stories and have written many poems. I had entered and won the poetry contest to be published in the *A Celebration of Poets, Spring 2015*. I hope to someday be an author in the future, or at least be a position in the publishing industry. Though in school, I learned it was not easy to write a book. I had this short story assignment during my junior year. I had many ideas for stories, but the problem was I did not know how to organize my story in the limited amount of pages we were given. I also realized that I would have this same problem if I were to write a series. That is why I need to take the classes in creative writing. I have the passion and commitment but I need the experience and structure to develop those skills to achieve this dream.

4. Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.

After my freshman year, I joined the Academy of Finance, the smallest academy with the reputation of being the hardest out of all the academies, and I stayed for the remaining years of high school. This academy specializes in educating students about accounting and business. In addition to those subjects, the AOF also taught their students how to write a resume, prepare for a job interview, and apply for college. Part of the requirements was for this class is that students must attend a semester of a City College class or classes in your second year of the academy. I attended the two hours a day Operations of Small Businesses class taught on Saturdays. It was difficult managing grades for both schools but I was able to do well in that class, as well in my regular subjects.

The AOF was taught in a more modern concept of learning than my other classes. Instead of textbooks and paper worksheets, we were given laptops and flash drives for us to take notes and to type up our assignments. Our grades were mainly based on projects involving research, group work, and presentations. The class was more difficult and there were times that I wish to drop the class. For example, there were times I worked alone while others got to work in groups

or when I had to work with people, who I had creative differences with. But I knew that the AOF would provide the knowledge, skill sets, and fundamentals on how the real world works. To overcome this challenge, I had to do it on my own. I could not turn to my friends or my family for help, for they did not know how to help me. I did ask the teacher for help, but this was mainly a solo effort of me buckling down and powered through it.

I was able to attend a job shadow to KPMG, one of the Big Four, thanks to the AOF. I discussed my plans after high school and resume to the employees that volunteered their time. In exchange, they talk about their experience after high school to their current career. They made me realize that even if I planned ahead, the career I end up with might not be the one I want right now. So I am trying to keep my options open and explore areas out of my comfort zone. Thanks to this academy, I was given many wonderful opportunities.

6. Describe your favorite academic subject and how it influenced you.

My favorite academic subject is Japanese. I was first introduced to the language and the culture through anime and manga, and then it became a desire, which made me want to learn more. I began taking classes in middle school. During my second and last year of Japanese as a middle school student, I participated in the 2012 Cherry Blossom Parade. I also got to experience a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, see a traditional mocha making event, and try on a yukata. So, not only did I fall in love with modern Japanese culture, I also fell in love with traditional Japanese culture. Although my grades for this class were not as well as they could have been, I became more dedicated and worked harder overtime.

After graduating middle school, I took Japanese for three years at Lincoln. During my second year, we had pen pals with Clarendon Elementary school students. When we went to visit them at their school, we did rajio taiso (radio exercises), had lunch, and did small activities together. Along with that, I had done multiple volunteer involving spreading the Japanese culture to people, mainly children, offered by the class. Hopefully, my efforts can encourage a new generation of students who desire to take Japanese.

Japanese 3 Honors was really difficult. I had difficulties in passing the written tests but made up for it in the oral tests. Even though I maintained an A in that class, I knew I wouldn't be able to handle AP Japanese. During my junior year, Japanese Culture Club teamed up with La Raza for JETS, Japanese – Ecuador Terremoto Support, relief fundraisers. I participated in collecting donations and assisting in fundraising sales. We also had guest speakers of representatives from colleges in Japan and organizations that focus on the 2011 earthquake in Japan. One of my plans for college is to hopefully get the chance to study abroad to experience the real Japan.

I am grateful to be able to have the opportunity to study the Japanese language and culture when so few schools have the funding for this program. Even though I did not continue this subject for my senior year, I am still a member of the Japanese Culture Club. In college, I would definitely apply to study it once again. The language and the culture have become a big part of who I am.

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7. What have you done to make your school or community a better place?

Over the summer of 2016, I was in the Summer Gardening Program, a paid internship. I found out about this internship from Enterprise for High School Students, a non-profit

organization in teaching high school students in afterschool programs in college and career readiness skills. I worked in a group of six other high school students and an Enterprise supervisor. Our main station was Buena Vista Park, but we also had visits to the other parks on Tuesdays to work in the Botanical Garden and Stow Lake. In those seven weeks, we work with the San Francisco Park & Recreation workers in weeding, mulching, planting, etc.

The work was tough, the weather was unpredictable, and the hikes were steep. We worked to preserve the beauty and prolong the life of the plants and the park itself so they can be maintained as landmarks and tourist attractions of San Francisco. By joining this internship, I worked for the community and interacted with the community with this work. For those seven weeks, I got to see and experience another side of my city that I did not know or thought I would be a part of. I worked with people I did not know prior to this program. We varied from gender, age, and schools.

This wasn't just a job or learning opportunity, this was a chance for me to grow in ways I did not know existed. There were always people coming and going. They pass us by which ever area we worked in. Most of the visitors are dog walkers, so there were a lot of dogs that we get to pet. Sometimes they would ask if we were volunteers and/or thank us for all our hard work. One time, there was woman, who passed by with her toddler daughter. After we told her why we were here, she said to her daughter could volunteer to work in the park when she gets older. That moment really put a smile to my face. Throughout the program, I become more outspoken, more organized, and more responsible. I am proud to be a member of the 2016 Summer Gardening Program and thankful for the opportunity and the memories made by doing it.