

Personal Statement Honors Scholar Program Student

Education and Career Goals*

Write a brief statement outlining your education and career goals; if undecided, state what you hope to gain from the college experience.

I am a returning student and a proud member of the Honors Scholar Program at MiraCosta College with many achievements, but I was not always who I am today academically. Somewhere around fifth grade, I became a victim of bullying. Of all the abuse, the attacks that hit me the hardest were on my level of intelligence. My insecurities over my own intellectual abilities consumed me, and for the next 12 years I lacked any motivation or confidence to apply myself to my studies. Consequently, my grades reflected this; however, in the fall of 2013 I decided enough was enough. I bared the freedom to choose my own destiny, regardless of what other individuals thought of me. I enrolled one unit shy of full-time and completed my first semester at MiraCosta College with a 4.0 GPA. Today, I continue to achieve great academic success. My achievements and high GPA have earned me the title of Head Navigator in the Honors Scholar Program at MiraCosta College, the highest student leadership position within the program. Originally, my plan was that I would major in Communications, transfer to UCLA, and eventually work my way into a career with a video game review magazine titled Game Informer. My educational plan took a turn when I enrolled in my first true mathematics course since 8th grade. Feeling confident in my dedication to my studies I enrolled in the accelerated versions of Elementary and Intermediate Algebra simultaneously, and completed both courses with the highest grade in the class. My love for critical thinking and problem solving emerged through the subject of mathematics, and I knew I had finally found my educational purpose.

My goals for my future have expanded beyond my prior vision of UCLA. My top schools are currently UCSD, UC Berkeley, Duke University, and Cornell University with a Bachelor's of Science in Mathematics and Computer Science. Studying abroad at Oxford University to explore not only other cultures but the educational systems beyond my own borders is also something I aspire to do. Due to my high GPA, I will have the opportunity to apply for a semester as a Visiting Student and recognized as a full member of the University. I am also applying for internships to gain research experience in either mathematics or computer science. My career goals with mathematics and computer science are not set in stone, but the diversity of careers I can attain with my degree is partly what enticed me. With mathematics I have the ability to explore research opportunities, and with computer science I may work contractually around the world creating programs for companies to better their systems. My efficiency in computer programming would also allow me to explore my love of video games, and possibly program for a gaming company. I have only recently uncovered this new passion of mine, but I am enthusiastic and trusting that I will take it to great places in my future.

Extracurricular Activities*

List activities you are involved with both on and off campus; for example, clubs, organizations, volunteer service, and sports activities. If applicable, describe your employment experience and how many hours you work per week. Do your activities relate to your education or career objective?

During my three semesters at MiraCosta College, I have been an active member of Associated Student Government. My position is Student-at-Large and entails supporting campus constituent groups and efforts as assigned by the President, and completing specific duties as assigned by either the President or Vice President. I go beyond the requirements of my position by organizing my class schedule around meetings to ensure my attendance, helping with office hours, and dedicating my time and efforts to ensuring our College Hour is a smooth and fun process for the student body. Being a positive and active member of my school's community is something I believe to be a very important asset to my educational career.

During my first semester, I volunteered my services as an Official Note Taker with the Disabled Students Programs and Services offices for a student in need of assistance in my English class. I eagerly volunteered when the opportunity presented itself yet again in an accelerated mathematics course, and again in my computer science course. As a student of MiraCosta College, I believe it is my academic duty to assist in the collegiate success of my fellow peers.

Up until the pursuit of my academic journey, I interned and volunteered with San Diego Youth Services several times a week as an Expressive Art Therapist for homeless and at-risk youth. These therapeutic art sessions offered a positive and creative outlet for their emotions, and gave them a safe and conducive environment to actually be a child; a rare and exceedingly important opportunity as most of their lives involved a combination of drugs, violence, severe abuse, abandonment, and child prostitution. Beyond therapeutic sessions I acted as a mentor and a role model. Adolescence is already a naturally heavy learning period of self-worth that can be very difficult. Adding the uncertainty of where one will sleep in conjunction with the shame they often feel projected from society, it is increasingly important that these children are shown that they are valued and given the tools to cope with their increasing hardships. Unfortunately, pursuing my education at MiraCosta placed me too far north of this influential opportunity. However, I now volunteer my time at the Rancho Coastal Humane Society playing with and tending to the animals as we focus our efforts on finding them a loving and caring home. I always do my best to contribute to and give back to all the communities with which I identify myself.

I volunteered my services as an official moderator at the Honors Transfer Council Conference hosted at UC Irvine where students present individual research. As a moderator I introduced presenters, and kept their presentation within the time constraints.

I also plan to travel to Mexico with a fellow peer and assist in pro bono surgeries for under privileged children with the organization Smiles International. I cannot be more excited to make an impact outside of my own community, and reach others on a global level.

When I am not spending my time in class studying, or volunteering, I am working 20-25 hours a week as a server at a restaurant. Working for others in this way can be a very humbling experience, and has allowed me to work on my communication skills as well as handle less than ideal situations to be a great and experienced leader.

Other Information about yourself*

Please provide information you would like to share about yourself including accomplishments you are proud of, hardships or challenges you overcame in your life, scholarships and/or honors you received. Most important, state your financial need and how a scholarship will help you achieve your education goal.

Previously, my biggest hardship was an internal personal struggle regarding my delayed education as a returning student; however, as my educational journey has progressed, this hardship has shifted. Towards the beginning of my academic career at MiraCosta College, I lived a comfortable life at home with my mother. I was extremely fortunate to be able to fully pursue my education without worry of finances due to her love and support. My mother and I lived in San Diego, and my commute was 20 minutes north to the MiraCosta San Elijo campus. I discovered my passion for mathematics and computer science; and when I changed my major, most of the classes were only offered at the Oceanside campus. Simultaneously, my mother moved further east, and I had only one choice if I were to continue to pursue my academics so rigorously: move in with my biological father. Not only did my commute soar to at least 400 miles a week, resulting in the depletion of my entire paycheck on just gas alone, I am now living with a functional alcoholic. The stress of this situation caused me to drop two of my classes and I had to reevaluate what was important to me and find the balance between caring for a family member and focusing on myself. This was a difficult learning experience, and I am now back on top knowing I can take anything that is thrown my way. Education, as many know, can be very costly, and with my daily commute has made it almost impossible for me to make ends meet. A scholarship would help me immensely as I would be able to continue to afford the gas necessary to make it to my classes, and relieve the stress of having to ask for help from a man who is relearning to take care of himself.

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